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THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

April 24, 1946

My dear Mr. Speaker:

Enclosed is a draft of proposed legislation to authorize the adjudication of claims of persons of Japanese ancestry against the United States for losses arising out of the evacuation or exclusion of such persons by the War Department from the West Coast, Alaska, and Hawaii during World War II.

In 1942, the War Department, acting under Executive Order No. 9066, ordered the exclusion of all persons of Japanese ancestry from the Pacific Coast of the continental United States, Alaska and a portion of Arizona. Most of them were removed to relocation centers administered by the War Relocation Authority. They were joined later by over 1000 persons evacuated from Hawaii. For approximately two and one-half years, these American citizens and their alien parents, more than 100,000 in number, were exiled from their homes. After January 2, 1945, the majority of them were allowed to return to the evacuated areas and to pick up the raveled ends of the life they knew before the forced evacuation. By the end of 1945, about half of these people had so returned. The remainder have been scattered throughout the country or, in the case of the thousands who are in the Armed Forces of the United States, are serving with the Army of Occupation in Europe or Asia. It is too early as yet to make a final estimate of actual financial and property losses sustained by the Japanese-Americans because of the evacuation, but it is well established that the losses have been heavy. Some lost everything they had; many lost most of what they had.

The chief military justification for the removal of those 110,000 persons was the possibility of the existence of a disloyal element in their midst, the critical military situation in the Pacific which increased uneasiness over the possibility of espionage or sabotage, and the lack of time and facilities for individual loyalty screening. The persons evacuated were not individually charged with any crime or with disloyalty, and subsequent experience has clearly demonstrated that the vast majority of them were and are good Americans. This is convincingly indicated by the outstanding record of our 23,000 Japanese-Americans who served in the armed forces in both the European and Pacific theatres, and by the fact that the records of the intelligence agencies show no case of sabotage or espionage by Americans of Japanese ancestry during the entire war.

The evacuation orders gave the persons affected desperately little time in which to settle their affairs. The governmental safeguards that were designed to prevent undue loss in these circumstances were somewhat tardily instituted, were not at once effectively publicized among the evacuees, and were never entirely successful. Merchants had to dispose of their stocks and businesses at sacrifice prices. In a setting of confusion and hysteria, many evacuees sold personal possessions for a small fraction of their value. A large number had to accept totally inadequate arrangements for protection and management of property. Valuable leasehold interests had to be abandoned.

Continued exclusion increased the losses. Private buildings in which evacuees stored their property were broken into and vandalized. Mysterious fires destroyed vacant buildings. Property left with "friends" unaccountably disappeared; goods stored with the Government sometimes were damaged or lost. Persons entrusted with the management of evacuee real property mulcted the owners in diverse ways. Tenants failed to pay rent, converted property to their own use, and committed waste. Prohibited from returning to the evacuated areas even temporarily to handle property matters, the evacuees were unable to protect themselves adequately. Property management assistance given by the War Relocation Authority on the West Coast, although it often mitigated and sometimes prevented loss, could not completely solve the problem there, complicated as it was by difficulties in communication with absent owners and local prejudice.

In relocation centers the only income opportunities for evacuees lay in center employment at wage rates of \$12 to \$19 per month, plus small clothing allowances. Many felt compelled to discontinue payment of life insurance premiums. Some found themselves unable to make mortgage or tax payments and lost substantial equities.

All of the foregoing examples of tangible loss to the evacuees are directly attributable to the evacuation and continued exclusion of these persons from their homes. Unlike our fighting men and their families, who also made financial and personal sacrifices in this war, this group was given no statutory right to ameliorating benefits. These persons have had to bear the losses occasioned by the evacuation in addition to the war-time deprivations they have shared with the rest of the American people. For the first time in our history, persons of Japanese ancestry are appearing in substantial numbers on the relief rolls. The least that this country can do, in simple justice, is to afford some degree of compensation for the measurable special losses that the evacuees have suffered.

The only clear recourse which the evacuees now have, through the passage of private relief bills, is totally impracticable. The potential volume of evacuee claims, if added to the load under which the Congressional claims committees are already laboring, might well produce a virtually unmanageable burden. The obvious result would be to postpone the settlement of most evacuee claims for an indefinitely protracted period. To provide for adjudication of the claims by the Court of Claims would be an imposition on that Court, because of the small individual amounts involved and the potential

volume of claims, and unfair to the claimants, because of the expense of prosecuting a claim before the Court of Claims and the probable delay in adjudication. The most economical and practical solution -- one which Congress has adopted on numerous occasions in the past for the handling of case claims arising out of a special subject matter -- is the creation of a special tribunal to hear and determine the claims.

The enclosed bill would establish an Evacuation Claims Commission as such a tribunal. In order to avoid increasing the number of independent agencies and to benefit by the experience which this Department has had with the entire evacuation and relocation problem, the bill would establish the Commission within this Department rather than as a separate Federal agency.

The Commission would have jurisdiction to adjudicate claims by persons of Japanese ancestry for damage to or loss of real or personal property, or other impairment of assets, that arose from or as a natural and reasonable consequence of the evacuation and exclusion program. This standard is sufficiently flexible to permit the Commission to consider claims involving "property" losses only in the broad sense, such as the impairment of going-concern values. At the same time the standard excludes claims that are largely speculative and less definitely appraisable, such as claims for anticipated wages or profits that might have accrued had not the evacuation occurred, for deterioration of skills and earning capacity, and for physical hardships or mental suffering.

In determining the amount of relief to be granted, the Commission would be required to consider other existing or intervening factors that affected the loss. Thus some losses, as in the case of businesses specializing in import or sale of Japanese goods, would have occurred even if there had been no evacuation. Likewise, damage may have been aggravated in some cases by failure of the evacuees to take steps which they reasonably should have taken, even in the abnormal circumstances, to protect themselves. On the other hand, there are numerous instances in which intervening factors immediately causing the loss, such as arson, theft, mortgage foreclosure, loss of goods while in Government possession, or breach of trust, should not affect recovery, because the situation giving rise to the loss would not have occurred had the owners been permitted to remain in possession.

Among the types of claims excluded by the bill from consideration by the Commission are claims of persons who were voluntarily or involuntarily deported to Japan after December 7, 1941, or who are resident in a foreign country. Several hundred evacuees voluntarily repatriated to Japan during the war. Since termination of hostilities approximately 7500 persons, most of them evacuees, have at Government expense voluntarily gone to Japan, chiefly from internment camps and the Tule Lake Segregation Center. In addition, the Department of Justice has been determining who among the aliens (including persons who renounced their American citizenship) should be deported to Japan. This processing is the culmination of the loyalty screening procedures to which the evacuees have been subjected since the evacuation. I do not believe that those repatriates and deportees have any moral claim upon this Government. Similarly, I believe that persons who before the war went to Japan or elsewhere to establish residence have no claim for compensation that we need recognize.

The remaining provisions of the bill are largely self-explanatory and I shall merely mention the more important. All claims would have to be filed within 18 months following enactment, and the Commission would be required to complete its work within three and one-half years thereafter. The Commission would have broad investigatory authority, including the power of subpoena, and each claimant would be entitled to a hearing. Assistance in preparing claims for filing could be extended by the Commission to needy claimants. The Commission's adjudications would be conclusive and a bar to further recovery. Awards would be paid in the same manner as are final judgments of the Court of Claims, except that the Commission would be authorized to pay small awards, not exceeding \$2500 in amount, in order to afford more expeditious relief to those whose need may be acute.

As a matter of fairness and good conscience, and because these particular American citizens and law-abiding aliens have borne with patience and undefeated loyalty the unique burdens which this Government has thrown upon them, I strongly urge that the proposed legislation be enacted into law.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised me that there is no objection to the presentation of this proposed legislation to the Congress.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ J. A. Krug

Secretary of the Interior

Hon. Sam Rayburn,
Speaker of the
House of Representatives.

Enclosure 506

[An identical letter has been sent to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.]

A B I L L

To Create an Evacuation Claims Commission under the General Supervision of the Secretary of the Interior, and to Provide for the Powers, Duties and Functions Thereof, and for Other Purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled, That there is hereby established in the Department of the Interior, under the general supervision of the Secretary of the Interior, the Evacuation Claims Commission, with authority as hereinafter defined to adjudicate claims arising out of the evacuation or exclusion of persons of Japanese ancestry from West Coast military areas, Alaska, and Hawaii subsequent to December 7, 1941. The Commission shall consist of a chairman and two other members who shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. Two members shall constitute a quorum and the agreement of two members shall be sufficient for the transaction of any business of the Commission.

Jurisdiction

Sec. 2. The Commission shall have jurisdiction to adjudicate any claim by a person of Japanese ancestry against the United States arising on or after December 7, 1941, when such claim is not compensated for by insurance or otherwise and is substantiated in such manner as the Commission may prescribe, for damage to or loss or destruction of real or personal property (including without limitation damage to or loss or destruction of personal property bailed to or in the custody of the Government or any agent thereof), or other impairment of assets, that fairly arises out of or is a reasonable and natural consequence of the evacuation or exclusion of such person by the appropriate military commander from a military area in Arizona, California, Oregon or Washington or from Alaska or Hawaii, under authority of Executive Order No. 9066 dated February 19, 1942 (3 CFR, Cum. Supp., 1092), Section 67 of the Act of April 30, 1900 (48 U.S.C. 532), or Executive Order No. 9489 dated October 18, 1944 (3 CFR, 1944 Supp., 45). As used herein "evacuation" shall include voluntary departure from a military area prior to but in anticipation of an order of exclusion therefrom. Existence or intervention of other causes affecting the damage or loss, including action or non-action by the claimant or his representatives, shall be considered by the Commission in determining the amount of relief that will be fair and equitable according to the facts as they appear in each case.

Limitations; Claims Not to be Considered

Sec. 3. (a) The Commission shall receive claims for a period of 18 months from the date of approval of this Act. All claims not presented within that time shall be forever barred.

(b) The Commission shall not consider any claim:

(1) by or on behalf of any person who after December 7, 1941 was voluntarily or involuntarily deported from the United States to Japan or who is otherwise resident in a foreign country.

(2) for damage or loss arising out of action taken by any Federal agency pursuant to sections 4067, 4068, 4069 and 4070 (relating to alien enemies) of the Revised Statutes, as amended (50 U.S.C. 21-24); or pursuant to the Trading with the Enemy Act, as amended (50 U.S.C. App., and Supp., 1-31, 616).

(3) for damage or loss to any property, or interest therein, vested in the United States pursuant to said Trading with the Enemy Act, as amended.

(4) for damage or loss on account of death or personal injury, personal inconvenience, physical hardship, or mental suffering.

Hearing; Evidence; Records

Sec. 4. (a) The Commission shall give reasonable notice to the interested parties and an opportunity for them to be heard and to present evidence before making a final determination upon any claim.

(b) Any relevant evidence having probative value shall be considered by the Commission in its inquiries. For the purpose of any hearing or investigation authorized under this Act, the provisions of sections 9 and 10 (relating to examination of documentary evidence, attendance of witnesses, and production of books, papers and documents) of the Federal Trade Commission Act of September 26, 1914, as amended (15 U.S.C. 49, 50) are hereby made applicable to the jurisdiction, powers and duties of the Commission. Any person appointed to examine witnesses may be authorized by the Commission to issue subpoenas to procure attendance of witnesses or production of documents and to appoint an officer to serve the same. Subpoenas may be served personally, by registered mail, by telegraph, or by leaving a copy thereof at the residence or principal place of business of the person required to be served. A verified return by the individual so serving the same, setting forth the manner of service, shall be proof of service, as shall be the return receipt or telegraph receipt when service is by registered mail or telegraph respectively. On request the United States Marshals or their deputies shall serve such process in their respective districts.

(c) The Commission shall have a seal, which shall be judicially noticed.

(d) A written record shall be kept of all hearings and proceedings of the Commission and shall be open to public inspection.

Adjudications; Payment of Awards; Effect of Adjudications.

Sec. 5. (a) The Commission shall dispose of all claims filed with it by award or order of dismissal, as the case may be, upon written findings of fact and reasons for the decision. A copy of each such adjudication shall be mailed to the claimant or his attorney.

(b) The Commission may make payment of any award not exceeding \$2500 in amount out of such funds as may be made available for this purpose by Congress.

(c) On the first day of each regular session of Congress the Secretary of the Interior shall transmit to Congress a full and complete statement of all adjudications rendered by the Commission during the previous year, stating the name of each claimant, the amount claimed, the amount awarded, the amount paid, and a brief synopsis of the facts in the case. All awards not paid by the Commission under subsection (b) hereof shall be paid in like manner as are final judgments of the Court of Claims.

(d) The payment of an award shall be final and conclusive for all purposes, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, and shall be a full discharge of the United States and all of its officers, agents, servants, and employees with respect to all claims arising out of the same subject matter. An order of dismissal against a claimant, unless set aside by the Commission, shall thereafter bar any further claim against the United States or any officer, agent, servant, or employee thereof arising out of the same subject matter.

Attorneys Fees

Sec. 6. The Commission, in rendering an award in favor of any claimant, may as a part of the award determine and allow reasonable attorneys' fees, which shall not exceed twenty percentum of the amount allowed, to be paid directly to the attorneys representing the claimant out of, but not in addition to, the amount of such award.

Any attorney who charges, demands, receives, or collects for services rendered in connection with such claim any amount in excess of that allowed under this section, if recovery be had, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall upon conviction thereof be subject to a fine of not more than \$2000, or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

No former Member or Employee to Practice before Commission

Sec. 7. No member of the Commission or employee thereof shall, after termination of his appointment to or services with the Commission, be permitted directly or indirectly to represent any claimant before the Commission.

Administration

Sec. 8. For the purposes of this Act the Commission may --

(a) Appoint a Clerk and such attorneys, examiners, interpreters, appraisers, and other employees as may be necessary to conduct the business of the Commission.

(b) Call upon any Federal department or agency for any information or records necessary in the prosecution of the Commission's business.

(c) Secure the cooperation of State and local agencies, governmental or otherwise, and reimburse such agencies for services rendered.

(d) Utilize such voluntary and uncompensated services as may from time to time be needed and available.

(e) Assist needy claimants in the preparation of claims for filing with the Commission.

(f) Make such investigations as may be necessary for the performance of its functions.

(g) Exercise any and all of its powers at any place within the continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii.

(h) Make expenditures for personal services and rent in the District of Columbia and elsewhere, for the purchase of law books and books of reference, for printing and binding, for the purchase, exchange, and maintenance of passenger-carrying vehicles, for supplies and equipment, for traveling expenses (including per diem in lieu of subsistence), for witness fees and mileage, for other administrative expenses, and for the payment of awards under section 5 (b) of this Act.

(i) Prescribe such rules and regulations, perform such acts not inconsistent with law, and delegate such authority as the Commission may deem proper in carrying out the provisions of this Act.

Termination

Sec. 9. The existence of the Commission shall terminate at the end of five years from the date of approval of this Act: Provided, however, that if the Commission shall have earlier finished its business its existence shall be terminated forthwith by direction of the Secretary of the Interior.

Appropriations

Sec. 10. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated for the purposes of this Act such sums as Congress may from time to time determine to be necessary.

(3)

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

For Release AFTER 9:00 A.M., (EWT) MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1944.

Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes today issued the following statement:

The Western Defense Command's action in revoking the blanket exclusion orders for persons of Japanese ancestry on the Pacific Coast means, in its simplest terms, that the War Relocation Authority will immediately expand its relocation program to cover the entire country including the West Coast. It most definitely does not mean that there will be a hasty mass movement of all evacuees back into the coastal area. The War Relocation Authority will continue and intensify its efforts to relocate in parts of the United States other than the West Coast, those loyal and law-abiding persons of Japanese ancestry who are willing to participate in this program. It will also aid those who prefer to exercise their legal and moral right to return to the West Coast.

The persons who are eligible for relocation or return to the West Coast have been found by the Army authorities to be loyal citizens or law-abiding aliens. They are entitled to their full constitutional and legal rights, and perhaps to something more than ordinary consideration because they have really suffered as a direct result of the war. In a real sense, these people, too, were drafted by their country. They were uprooted from their homes and substantially deprived of an opportunity to lead a normal life. They are casualties of war.

It is the responsibility of every American worthy of citizenship in this great Nation to do everything that he can to make easier the return to normal life of these people who have been cleared by the Army authorities. By our conduct towards them we will be judged by all of the people of the world.

I call upon state and local officials throughout the country and especially on the West Coast, and on public and private agencies to assist in the enormous task of returning these people to ordinary community life. I believe that the response will be enthusiastic and wholehearted. And I particularly hope that we may see veterans' organizations like the American Legion and church and welfare groups in the fore-front of those who will consider it their responsibility to aid these people, and by so doing, to show their devotion to the American principles of charity, justice and democracy.

All the evidence available at the relocation centers indicates that the majority of the evacuee residents have not yet finally decided whether to return to their former homes or relocate elsewhere, and that most of those who eventually elect to go back will need considerable time in making necessary arrangements before they can actually leave the centers. The War Relocation Authority is now formulating detailed plans for keeping the westward relocation movement on a gradual, orderly and systematic basis.

People of Japanese ancestry both at the relocation centers and elsewhere who have been found eligible by the Western Defense Command for residence in the West Coast area are of course free to go back at any time. However, only those whose specific plans for resettlement in the evacuated area are approved by WRA will be eligible for travel assistance which the Authority now extends to those relocating in other parts of the country. This includes the payment of rail or bus fare to the point of relocation and transportation of personal properties such as household furnishings. Since most of the evacuees at the relocation centers have had little opportunity to accumulate savings over the past two and a half years, they will doubtless need such assistance. Only a few evacuees therefore are expected to leave the centers, either for the West Coast or any other destination, without first having their plans checked and approved by WRA.

In view of the fact that the evacuees were removed from their homes in 1942 by governmental order, the War Relocation Authority will make assistance available to those evacuees, both at the centers and previously relocated, who now have urgent reasons and sound plans for returning to the West Coast area. Simultaneously, however, the Authority will continue and intensify its efforts to relocate evacuees in other sections of the country. One of the

major WRA aims, from the beginning, has been to encourage the widest possible dispersal of evacuees throughout the Nation, and this will continue as a prime objective during the final phase of the program.

Of the 110,000 people of Japanese descent originally evacuated, more than 35,000 have now relocated under WRA procedures outside the West Coast area. This includes nearly 70 per cent of the American citizen evacuees beyond the age of 17 who have been eligible for relocation, and also takes in nearly 2,500 Japanese Americans who have been inducted into the Army of the United States from relocation centers. The great majority of the 35,000 relocated evacuees have become satisfactorily adjusted in their new locations and will probably want to stay where they are. Many of them, in fact will doubtless now make arrangements for having their parents and other family members still at the centers come out and rejoin them at their new homes.

Since the mass exclusion orders have been revoked and the great majority of evacuees are free to establish residence anywhere in the United States, the War Relocation Authority will now work toward an early liquidation of the relocation centers which were established originally for the temporary maintenance of a dislocated people. No center will be closed in less than six months, but it is anticipated that all will be closed within a year. Funds have been provided to the Federal Security Agency for public assistance through state and local welfare agencies for those evacuees who are incapable of self-support.

As the War Relocation Authority enters the final phase of its program, its immediate aims, as always, will be to restore the loyal and law-abiding evacuees of Japanese descent to a normal American environment, to relieve local manpower shortages, and to cut down Government expenditures for the maintenance of a displaced segment of the population. Its long-range objective will be to bring about a better economic adjustment and a more satisfactory nation-wide distribution of a minority group which was doubtless too heavily concentrated before the war in one particular section of the country.

P.N. 103701

File Press Release

Delut

ANTI-NISEI TERRO
CAMPAIGN CHARGED

Ickes lists Shootings,
Blames Coast Officials

Washington (UP)--Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes reported Sunday night that hoodlums are carrying on a program of planned terrorism against Japanese-Americans who have returned to California. One honorably discharged Nisei soldier narrowly escaped death.

He said 15 shooting attacks, one attempted dynamiting, three arson cases and five threatening visits have taken place in the past four months.

Objects of the terrorism are Japanese-Americans freed from war relocation centers last January and returned to their homes on the west coast.

He blamed California officials for not prosecuting the terrorists who, he said, are motivated by a desire to set up "an economic beachhead on the property of the evacuees they vainly hoped would sell out or run out."

He said that in some cases shots have been fired into homes with U.S. Service flags in the windows.

"In the absence of vigorous local law enforcement, a pattern of planned terrorism by hoodlums has developed," he said.

"The shameful spectacle of these incidents taking place at the back door of the San Francisco conference, now in session to develop means by which men of all races can live together in peace, must be ended once and for all."

C O P Y

February 14, 1945

Mr. Luther E. Hoffman
Project Director
Central Utah Relocation Center
Topaz, Utah

Dear Mr. Hoffman:

The following is a Department of Interior release to AM's of Tuesday, February 20. It will be released in connection with delivery of the Department's annual report. There is no reason why WRA should not push it's pick-up, just so long as the release date is observed.

Sincerely,

/s/
M. M. Tozier
Chief, Reports Division

For Release - To AM's of Tuesday, February 20, 1945

The War Relocation Authority's proposal to wind up its affairs before the war ends, made in that agency's annual report for the Fiscal year ending June 30, released today, is being translated into action by a 100 per cent increase in relocation of Japanese-American evacuees over the past seven months, Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes said.

Secretary Ickes said that in the plan to work itself out of a job as early as possible by resettling the 60,000 evacuees remaining in its eight relocation centers, the WRA will be greatly

aided by the recent War Department order which permits the great majority of evacuees to settle anywhere in the United States.

Previously the entire group had been excluded from returning to their former homes in the Pacific Coast area.

Under its Director, Dillon S. Myer, the WRA became a part of the Department of Interior in February 1944. It is scheduled for liquidation sometime within the next fiscal year and is working to close all relocation centers by January 2, 1946.

The 1944 report recorded full scale development of the agency's relocation program. By the end of the fiscal year on June 30, almost 17,000 loyal citizens and law-abiding aliens had been assisted in leaving the centers and adjusting themselves to normal working and living conditions in communities outside the once restricted West Coast Area. Since that date the figure has increased to 33,000 civilian evacuees who are now relocated in 47 states and the District of Columbia, and 2,500 Japanese Americans who have left WRA centers to join the armed forces.

At the close of 1944 fiscal year the WRA was actively enlisting the aid of outside public and private agencies interested in assisting individual evacuees, the report states. WRA aided in the organization of local cooperating committees. It also secured an agreement with the Federal Security Agency, making relocated evacuees eligible for assistance under the program for aiding aliens and other persons affected by restrictive governmental action during the war. Since June 30, this program has been further developed and has become an essential part of relocation.

During the five months following reinstitution of

Selective Service for Nisei in January, 1944, the report shows 460 draft-age men were inducted from the centers into the Enlisted Reserve Corps and an additional 194 entered active duty. That figure, increased by more than 800 volunteers, has grown rapidly since June to the present total of 2,500 men in active service. Parents at the centers and other recently relocated have received more than 500 casualty notices, listing dead, wounded and missing in every war theater.

During the 1944 fiscal year thousands of center residents left on seasonal leave to work in the sugar beet, potato and long staple cotton fields, and were credited with saving priceless war essential crops. Since June 30, permanent relocation has substantially reduced this reservoir of available farm labor, and now with the lifting of the exclusion orders and announcement of liquidation plans, the agency is abandoning seasonal leave entirely in favor of leaves for permanent relocation.

Agricultural programs at the centers produced food crops, poultry and beef valued at more than \$3,000,000 during the 12-month period, all of which was consumed by the residents to effect a saving of that amount in center operation. Present agricultural plans embrace planting of spring crops only at the Arizona centers at Poston and Rivers, where harvesting can be finished by July 1. Farm tracts at other centers will be planted in cover crops where necessary. All farm machinery will be made available for other use as quickly as relocation center needs for it are reduced.

At the close of the fiscal year WRA was given administrative responsibility for operation of an Emergency Refugee Shelter at Port Ontario to house nearly, 1,000 war refugees from Southern Europe until they can be returned to their homelands. The refugees arrived in August, and have made satisfactory adjustments to Shelter life and activities. The project has been accepted by the American public as a gesture of this country's good will and an indication that the United States is assisting the other United Nations in meeting the refugee problem.

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

COPY

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
War Relocation Authority
Washington, D. C.

Project Press Release No. 128
For publication in project newspapers

Release on receipt

To aid WRA in its relocation and liquidation program, the Treasury Department has informed the W. R. A. that they unblock all but a limited number of the accounts of evacuees on the Army clear list.

Through the Project Director, forms to request unblocking orders will be forwarded to the Federal Reserve Bank in San Francisco. The bank will determine whether the statements on the individual forms are correct. Individual unblocking orders will be mailed in care of the Project Director, and private banks will be notified.

Evacuees in these categories are ineligible to apply for unblocking orders through this special arrangement with Treasury: (1) persons not on the Army clear list, (2) those who have been issued specific blocking orders, (3) evacuees who have represented or acted as agents for any person outside the continental United States on or since July 26, 1941, and (4) persons who now hold funds belonging to blocked nationals.

Those who are not eligible may, however, apply for reconsideration of their cases by filing Form IFU-1 with the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. Business enterprises may apply for unblocking through the same procedure.

Unblocked persons and business enterprises are subject to specified reporting and other requirements.

Certain individuals may be denied unblocking orders. However, they will be permitted to withdraw sufficient funds to allow them to relocate. Former internees whose accounts remain blocked may upon application withdraw up to \$200 a month for living expenses. Other persons whose accounts are not unblocked may withdraw as much as \$500 per month.

Any blocked person or enterprise may apply for a special license which will permit sufficiently free use of funds to conduct business.

Evacuees who wish further information or wish to secure necessary application forms should see the Project Attorney or the Relocation Program Officer. Resettled evacuees may communicate with the Director of the project from which they relocated.



WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

234 Atlas Building
Salt Lake City 1, Utah

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

May 14, 1945

COPY OF DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

Project Press Release No. 125

For Publication in Project Newspapers

Release on Receipt

RED CROSS INSTRUCTS CHAPTERS ON NEEDS OF EVACUEE SOLDIERS AND DEPENDENTS

Officially acquainting its local chapters with WRA's post-exclusion trend, the American Red Cross Home Service Division has sent instructions to every chapter -- one in each county in the United States -- highlighting the relocation program and pointing out how local Red Cross Chapters can assist evacuee resettlers with family members in service.

Home Service Division workers of the ARC have been advised to provide any needed service within their program to evacuees who are veterans, members of ex-servicemen's families, or members of families of active service men.

At the same time WRA has suggested to District Relocation Officers that they contact Home Service Directors of chapters in their district to check on special services available through ARC to families of evacuee soldiers.

ARC emphasized to its Home Service Directors the immediate importance to newly relocated dependents of soldiers of its service providing reclassification of dependency allotments when servicemen's families move from centers. While dependents receive their chief support at projects they are usually eligible only for the \$37 maximum Class "B" allotment. After Resettlement and with a soldier son their chief support, the family may be eligible for the considerably higher Class "B-1" allotment.

In addition to assisting in the application for family allowances, claims for pensions and other benefits, the Red Cross Home Service Program provides additional services and assistance to soldiers, veterans and their families. Chief among these are: (1) Assistance with communications between servicemen and their families when normal means are ^{un}successful or unavailable; (2) supplying information on legislation and regulations affecting this group; (3) Providing military and naval authorities and the Veterans Administration with information necessary in questions involving diagnosis, medical and psychiatric treatment, discharge, furlough or clemency, and for veterans ratings; (4) guidance and counselling in personal and family problems, or referral to appropriate agencies; and (5) financial assistance to servicemen, disabled ex-servicemen and their dependents and dependents of deceased servicemen, on the basis of need and not of citizenship, settlement or legal residence, but subject to certain limitations.

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THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

Washington

JUL 19 1944

My dear Mr. McGloy:

In his letter of December 14, 1943, the Director of the War Relocation Authority informed you of the reasons for the decision of the War Relocation Authority to begin releasing evacuees directly from relocation centers to destinations within the Eastern Defense Command or the coastal area of the Southern Defense Command, without waiting for clearance of the cases by the Japanese-American Joint Board. In that letter he further informed you, however, that in any case where the Joint Board had recommended against the issuance of indefinite leave he might be eligible for leave to other parts of the country. After further careful consideration, I now believe that it is necessary to discontinue the last mentioned restriction.

As Mr. Myer pointed out in his letter, the situation has changed markedly since July 1943, when the War Relocation Authority agreed to impose restrictions on issuance of leave to areas in the Eastern Defense Command. Since then the Authority has carefully worked out investigatory procedures for sifting the evacuees and has segregated those deemed dangerous to the national security. Only persons whose records are clear under the criteria established by the Authority are eligible for release from the centers. The Authority has taken additional precautions before releasing any evacuee who has received a Joint Board negative recommendation. No such person is eligible for release from a relocation center until after a supplemental investigation has been conducted and leave clearance has been granted by the Washington office of the Authority. The adequacy of these screening techniques is amply demonstrated by the excellent record established by the evacuees -- now 24,000 in number -- who have been granted indefinite leave from relocation centers.

The military situation on the East Coast has improved substantially even since the date of Mr. Myer's letter. In view of this and in view of the effectiveness of the War Relocation Authority's screening procedures, any additional precaution with respect to the issuance of leave to the Eastern Defense Command or to the Southern Coastal Zone appears to be unnecessary. For that matter, as Mr. Myer indicated, the restriction is actually ineffectual, because it cannot prevent evacuees from coming into those areas if they wish to adopt the simple expedient of first obtaining leave to go to other parts of the country. Many evacuees with negative Joint Board recommendations have done just this.

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I believe, therefore, that the restriction is both unnecessary and ineffective from a security standpoint. It nevertheless operates as a decided deterrent to the relocation of evacuees.

One of our primary objectives is to obtain as wide a dispersal of evacuees as possible, and as quickly as possible, throughout the country. However, relocation in some of the Western States has reached a saturation point and relocation in some states in the Midwest is rapidly reaching that stage. The Eastern States afford us our best opportunities for relocating families now in relocation centers. So long as the restriction is in effect, however, we cannot take advantage of these relocation opportunities. There are thousands of persons in relocation centers whom we cannot persuade to relocate in the East because some family member, though determined to be eligible for leave to any other part of the country outside the evacuated areas, has a negative Joint Board recommendation.

Full utilization of the Eastern States in relocating evacuees is also necessary to minimize a potentially dangerous post-war problem. The distance from the evacuated areas, as well as the more favorable community acceptance that is found in many eastern localities, provides considerable assurance that evacuees relocating in the East will not return to the West Coast when the exclusion orders are rescinded, but will remain in the East permanently.

In view of these considerations, I am convinced that it is in the best interest of the Government to remove the restriction and I am instructing the Director of the War Relocation Authority to do so.

Sincerely yours,

Acting Secretary of the Interior.

Hon. John J. McCloy,

Assistant Secretary of War.

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Statement by Secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickes.

"I interested myself for two reasons in the location of seven United States citizens who are of Japanese ancestry on my farm at Olney, Maryland, and on the farm of a neighbor. The first reason is that I believe we should do all that we can to ease the burden that the war has placed upon this particular group of our fellow citizens. I do not like the idea of loyal citizens, no matter of what race or color, being kept in relocation centers any longer than need be. The second reason is that these citizens have a background of farming in California and we need competent farm help badly. The individuals involved compose family groups. They have been investigated not only in the usual manner by the F.B.I., Military Intelligence, and others, but also have been observed by an agency over which I have jurisdiction, the Indian Service, since they have been for eight months at Poston on the Colorado River. I have had excellent reports on them."

April 14, 1943.

RECEIVED

TO THE DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF RELOCATION

FROM THE DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF RELOCATION

RECEIVED

