

A16.04

SURVEY OF PUBLIC OPINION IN WESTERN STATES OF JAPANESE  
EVACUATIONS

MONTANA

Period: March 1 to April 21, 1942

Source: Montana Standard, Butte; Billings Gazette

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War Relocation Authority  
April 25, 1942

SURVEY OF PRESS OPINION IN WESTERN STATES OF JAPANESE  
EVACUATION

Montana Standard, Butte, March 1-April 21

Billings Gazette, March 28 - April 21

A. SUMMARY

I. Press attitude is conservative. Sole editorial of period surveyed raises issue: Can we afford, in good faith with ourselves, to place them (US-born Japanese) in a new inferior category of citizenship? Future trend in news treatment seems to be slanting evacuation stories with debated use of Japanese to overcome acute sugar beet labor shortage.

II. Governor Sam C. Ford refrains from public statements during entire period, save for general policy clearance on April 11: (a) Montana does not object to Japanese evacuees being immediately employed in beet areas; (b) provided federal government supervises evacuations and furnishes soldiers to protect Montana and Japanese; (c) governor recommends voluntary Jap evacuees be placed under federal jurisdiction. Unofficially, Ford appeals to Montanans not to sell land to US-born Japanese.

Commissioner Albert H. Kruse of State Agricultural Board on April 8, publicly favors use of Japanese in beet areas.

Montana Board of Education postpones until July action on problem of receiving Jap student evacuees at Montana universities and colleges.

III. Private Interests in State divide into two opposite groups over question of using Japanese labor. (a) five sugar beet grower associations are joined by State Chamber of Commerce in affirmative resolutions; (b) State Federation of Labor protests to Gen. DeWitt and Washington.

## B. SURVEY ANALYSIS

I. Pattern of Press Opinion In sharp contrast to the press of several other Western states Montana's two largest dailies, the Montana Standard of Butte, and the Billings Gazette, have shown conservative judgment in handling the story of Japanese evacuations from the West Coast during the period March 1 to April 21. An analysis shows daily developments fall into four main categories: (a) Wire service coverage, both AP and UP, on developments out of General DeWitt's headquarters in San Francisco, and evacuees movements in Los Angeles, 5 references; (b) proposals to use evacuated Japanese to alleviate acute labor shortage in Montana's sugar beet area, 7 references; (c) problem of accepting student evacuees from Pacific Coast colleges and universities for registration at Montana institutions, 4 references; (d) sharp opposition of organized labor in Montana toward relocating Japanese farm workers in state, 3 references.

There is only one important statement from the offices of Governor Sam C. Ford. This, appearing on April 11 in the Billings Gazette under a Helena dateline, quotes Governor Ford as asking General DeWitt to "assume responsibility" for safe delivery of Japanese evacuees from Coast to Montana. The story appeared on Page 10.

During the entire seven week period, only four stories relating to evacuation were judged sufficiently important to receive front page prominence. They are: Montana Standard, March 17, "General DeWitt lists 183 prohibited military areas

in the state"; Montana Standard, April 2, Los Angeles (AP)  
"Mass evacuation of Japanese starts to Manzanar"; April 10,  
Montana Standard, Helena (AP), "Japanese evacuee labor necessary, say Montana beet growers"; April 14, Montana Standard, Helena (AP), "State board of education discusses acceptance of Japanese student evacuees at University of Montana".

The Salt Lake regional conference of governors is referred to only once -- in a Billings Gazette, Page 2 story on April 8.

Not until April 20 does either newspaper comment editorially on the problem of Japanese evacuation. On that date, under the heading "An urgent Labor and Citizenship Problem", the Billings Gazette voices the following opinions:

After pointing out that the labor situation in the state is growing critical and that the labor committee of the state land-use planning committee admits no solution, but suggests that rural communities be combed for all available workers, the Gazette points out that the State Federation of Labor has made a "sharp protest" to military authorities against bringing Japanese labor into the Montana farm picture.

"Of course," says the Gazette, "we have antipathy for the Japanese, even for those Japanese who are American citizens by the privilege of birth. But this much may be said as a practical matter: The Japanese both aliens and Americans, are to be moved out of strategic military areas of the Coast, they will have to be moved somewhere and the military authorities have indicated they may insist upon each of the 10 interior states of the mountain region accepting 10 per cent of the estimated 150,000 Japs to be moved."

"If we do not permit them to work, they may have to be placed in concentration camps.

"But there is another matter which will bother us. We are dealing in large part with American citizens having the same rights as any of the rest of us. Many of these people have shown that they are patriotic and

devoted, that they have no ties with Japan. But they are under suspicion and knowing that, they have agreed to leave their homes and their property. They do this as a test of their citizenship and devotion.

"Have we the moral right to deny American citizens, guilty of no wrong, the right to earn a living, the right to move from State to State? Can we, in good faith with ourselves, place them in a new inferior category of citizenship?

"Such action against minorities have been among the causes of the war in Europe."

## II. Attitude of Official Political Groups Governor Sam C. Ford's

policies with regard to the Japanese evacuation program were undefined in the press until April 11. On that date, at the request of the Montana emergency labor committee, he released the following statement

"It is the policy of the state administration that it has no objection to Japanese evacuees being immediately employed in Montana sugar beet areas provided:

"The United States government will assume responsibility to four designated points in the state; and, further provided:

"That the United States Army will furnish, equip and maintain one company of soldiers who will be distributed in smaller groups over the beet-growing areas to act as district patrols to preserve order, protecting the people of Montana and the Japanese.

"Regarding the problem of filtering in of the voluntary Japanese evacuees; such a policy is considered detrimental to the best interests of Montana; and it is recommended that those who have previously come in be placed under the same jurisdiction as those who will come from the reception centers in California."

Not included in this letter but referred to in the same Helena AP dispatch is an appeal from Governor Ford to Montanans not to sell land to American-born Japanese.

During the entire seven week period, at least one other State agency was studying phases of the Japanese evacuation problem. This was the State Agricultural Board, headed by Commissioner Albert H. Kruse. At a joint meeting of sugar beet associations with members of the state emergency labor committee, held in Helena on April 8, Commissioner Kruse is quoted as saying: ".....if beet production goals for 1942 are to be met we must have positive assurance by April 15 that 5000 Jap workers will be available to Montana growers by May 1."

As in the case of Wyoming, Montana's severe winter apparently prevented any large advance migration of Coast Japanese farmers over northern transcontinental highways in March and April. Helena, so the Billings Gazette reports, had 17 consecutive days of snowfall in late March.

There are no published incidents involving any of Montana's 508 Japanese residents (281 American-born, 227 alien). On April 9, Yoshito Koite, 57, of Santa Ana, was arrested on the main highway, nine miles east of Butte, by State Patrolman William Holdorf and booked in the Butte county jail on a charge of traveling without a proper travel permit. On April 17, Koite was released and Assistant District Attorney R. L. Erown said Koite's statement that he had received federal authorities' permission to travel had been verified in California.

The problem of whether Coast college student evacuees shall be permitted to enroll at inland colleges and universities has stirred up a controversy with the Montana State Board of Education. In sequence, the story develops as follows:

April 7. The Billings Gazette, in a Berkeley, Calif. AP dispatch reports that 14 inland colleges and universities, including Colorado, Denver, Utah, Wyoming and Colorado A. & M. have expressed willingness to accept 300 American-born Japanese students to be evacuated from the University of California.

April 2. The Billings Gazette, in an AP story out of Seattle, quotes Prof. Robert W. O'Brien as saying that Colorado and Montana universities and the Colorado School of Mines are among 16 inland colleges willing to accept American-born Japanese student-evacuees.

But when the Montana State Board of Education meets in Helena on April 14, it says any action regarding the admission of evacuees will be deferred until after the board's July meeting.

III. Attitude of Private Organizations Since March, there are at least two organized forces at work in Montana -- one strongly favoring use of Japanese West Coast evacuees for labor, the other equally firmly opposed. The first group includes many of the farm organizations of the sugar beet areas, the second group is the Montana State Federation of Labor and its president, James D. Graham.

By way of background, Montana acreage produced 793,000 short tons of sugar beets in 1941 as against 1,166,000 short tons in 1940. Sugar beet cultivation has been greatly stepped up this year, however, and according to Agricultural Commissioner Albert J. Kruse (see previous Helena AP citation of April 9) growers of the state have been asked to raise a crop on 86,000 additional acres. This acreage is expected to produce more than 1,000,000 short tons of beets, from which 160,000 tons of refined sugar can be obtained.

At this meeting, Mr. Kruse said the State needed 25% more field hands to harvest the anticipated 1942 crop and indicated that 5000 Japanese evacuee workers would solve this shortage. He said 700 Japanese were needed in the Missoula fields; 1300 in Chinook; 1200 in Hardin, near the Crow Indian reservation, and 1200 in Sydney.

At the same meeting, the following statement was issued jointly by the Montana-Dakota Beet Growers Association, the North Montana Beet Growers Association of Chinook, the Big Horn County Beet Growers Association of Hardin, and the Western Montana Beet Growers Association of Missoula:

"Montana produces annually about 800,000 to 1,000,000 tons of sugar beets, or about 125,000 to 160,000 tons of refined sugar. The Philippine island, which Japan took Thursday, shipped the United States 800,000 tons of raw sugar in the year 1939-40.

"Montana today needs labor for 50,000 (more acres) of sugar beets capable of producing 700,000 tons of sugar beets and 112,000 tons of refined sugar.

"It took an estimated 17 Japanese divisions to conquer the comparatively little band of heroic soldiers defending the Philippines before they could possess a source of 880,000 tons of sugar.

"Over here in Montana it will require only inaction, indifference and loose talking to sabotage for the enemy another 700,000 tons of sugar beets and 100,000 tons of refined sugar just because Montana sugar beet growers cannot be assured a sufficient supply of beet labor.

"The labor they need must come from Japanese evacuees, but there are some people in Montana who are using every means of arousing public opinion against the use of the only labor now in sight for our sugar beet fields.

"We feel that if Montana people clearly understood the desperate need of this labor they would not only cooperate with the sugar beet farmers but would silence both the misinformed opposition as well as shame whatever fifth column subversive elements who may be at the bottom of this movement and promoting it in every way.

"Accordingly we representatives of the sugar beet growers of Montana appeal to both the common sense and patriotism of Montana people to support our efforts to produce all the sugar beets we can for both the civilian and military needs of our nation."

Similar resolutions were passed by the Southeastern Montana Counties Sugar Beet Association, at Miles City, on April 17, and by the Montana-Dakota Sugar Beet Growers Association, at Sidney on April 18.

One civic group, the Montana State Chamber of Commerce, meeting in Helena on April 12, by resolution endorsed the action of the organized growers that Jap evacuee labor be brought to Montana under Army supervision.

On April 15, the Montana Labor Federation, through James D. Graham, its president, voiced protest against bringing Japanese labor into the state on the 17th, following a meeting of the federation executive committee in Helena, Graham said he had been authorized to send a "strongly worded" protest to General DeWitt and he indicated the full text of this protest would be released after its receipt in San Francisco and Washington. He said further his executive committee had authorized him to call a special convention of the Montana federation "if and when that course is deemed necessary". "Very few people are in favor of Japanese labor", he was quoted as saying, "except a portion of the beet growers".

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Mar. 6	Pg 9 Pg 10	(Up undated) Tokio radio calls Jap evacuation (savagery" Los Angeles (UP) Coast Japs will be moved to Owens Valley
Mar. 13	Pg 2	Spokane (AP) Rev. C. E. McAllister asks Japs to be quartered in abandoned CCC camp near Missoula, Mont.
Mar. 16	Pg 2	San Francisco (AP) Montana designated as military area by order of Gen. DeWitt.
Mar. 17	Pg 1	183 Prohibited areas listed in Montana by Gen. DeWitt.
Mar. 20	Pg 11	S. F. (UP) Jap evacuations to "start shortly."
Mar. 22	Pg 7	Sec. III Broadwater County Beet growers would use Jap labor in harvesting crops.
Mar. 27	Pg 7	Helena (AP) Montana Sugar Beet Growers Association agrees to employ 4,500 Japs when evacuated from Coast.
Mar. 28	Pg 2	Jaurez (UP) Mexico moves 80 Japs to Santa Rosalia internment camp.

Page 8 S. F. (UP) Montana Japs further restricted.

III (Continued)

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Continued

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Mar. 31	Pg 5	Picture (Central Press) showing soldier looking at Jap exclusion order posted at Brainbridge Island, near Puget Sound Naval Base, Bremerton, Wash.
April 2	Pg 1	L. A. (AP) Mass evacuation of Japs to Manzanar.
April 7	Pg 10	(BG)* Berkeley (AP) 14 inland universities, including Colorado, Utah, Denver, Wyoming and Colorado A. & M. expressed willingness to accept 300 American-born Japanese evacuated from West Coast.
April 8	Pg 2	(BG)* Salt Lake (AP) Four Western governors say the evacuation and relocation of West Coast Japs is problem for federal government.
April 8	Pg 5	(BG)* Sydney, Australia (AP) Army Minister Francis Ford says Japs killed captives in cold blood during occupation of New Guinea and New Britain.
April 9	Pg 3	(MS*) Jap alien from California arrested near Butte enroute to Chinook beet fields.
April 10	Pg 6	(MS) U. S. Atty. Gen's aide checks Jap alien's permit to travel from Calif. to Chinook beet fields.
	Page 1	Helena (AP) Jap evacuee labor necessary, say Montana beet growers.
April 10	Pg 7	(BG*) Helena (AP) Sugar beet growers appeal to both "common sense and patriotism" to silence "misinformed opposition" to bring 5000 Jap evacuees from West Coast to work in beet fields.
April 11	Pg 2	(MS*) S.F. (AP) Evacuation of Coast Japs to be completed by May 20.
April 11	Pg 10	(BG*) Helena (AP) Governor Sam C. Ford, at request of Montana emergency labor committee asks U. S. Army "to assume responsibility" for safe delivery of Jap evacuees from Coast to Montana, in letter to General DeWitt.
	Pg 6	(BG*) Washington (AP) Sugar industry 1941 totals given by Department of Agriculture (for western states) in short tons.

(SURVEY OF PUBLIC OPINION IN WESTERN STATES ON JAPANESE EVACUATIONS)  
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April 14	Pg 1	(MS) Helena (AP) State Bd of Education discusses acceptance of Jap student evacuees at University of Montana.
April 15	Pg 6	Helena (AP) State Bd of Education says any action regarding admission of Jap student evacuees will be deferred until July meeting.
April 15	Pg 6	(MS*) Helena (AP) Montana Labor Federation James D. Graham protests sending evacuee Japs labor into Montana.
April 12	Pg 2	(BG*) Helena (AP) By resolution, State Chamber of Commerce proposes Army supervision of Jap evacuees brought to Montana as farm laborers.
	Pg 5	(BG*) Seattle (AP) Colorado and Montana Universities and Colorado School of Mines among 16 inland colleges willing to accept U. S. born Japs says Prof. Robert W. O'Brien, Chairman University of Wash. student relocation committee.
April 14	Pg 7	(BG) Helena (AP) Graham, president of State Labor Federation says executive committee has authorized sending of strongly worded protest against sending Japanese labor into State. Protest sent to General DeWitt. Text to be released after it had been received in San Francisco and Washington.
April 17	Pg 9	(MS*) Jap alien, detained in Butte on April 9, released to travel to Chinook beet fields.
April 17	Pg 6	(BS*) Butte (AP) same story.
	Pg 3	Miles City * Resolution passed by Southeastern Montana Counties Sugar Beet Association endorses importation of Jap labor.
April 18	Pg 9	(MS*) Helena (AP) Labor for operation of Montana farms must be found in communities, says labor sub-committee of Montana land-use committee. No specific mention of Jap evacuees.
	Pg 8	(MS) Sidney - Montana-Dakota Beet Growers Association urges use of Jap evacuees in beet fields.

(SURVEY OF PUBLIC OPINION IN WESTERN STATES ON JAPANESE EVACUATIONS)  
Continued

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April 20	Pg 2	(MS*) Anchorage, Alaska (AP) All Japs in Alaska to be evacuated to State of Washington assembly centers by order of Maj. Gen. S. B. Buckner Jr., commanding general of Alaska Defense Command.
April 20	Pg 4	(MS*) Editorial "An Urgent Labor and Citizenship Problem".

SURVEY OF PUBLIC OPINION IN WESTERN STATES OF JAPANESE EVACUATION

MONTANA

Period: March 1 to April 21, 1942

Source: Mantana Daily Standard; Billings Gazette

Prepared by Norris James, Information Service Staff, WRA

Briefed by Gro zins with additional info, from press clippings.

A 16.04

SURVEY ANALYSIS

**I. Pattern of Press Opinion.** In sharp contrast to the press of several other Western states, Montana's two largest dailies have shown conservative judgement in handling the story of Japanese evacuation during this survey period. Daily developments fall into four categories: a) wire service AP and Up coverage on developments from De Witt's headquarters in San Francisco and evacuation movements in Los Angeles, 5 references; b) proposals to use evacuated Japanese to alleviate the acute labor shortage in Montana's sugar beet fields, seven references; c) problem of accepting Pacific Coast students in Montana colleges and universities, four references; d) sharp opposition of organized labor in Montana toward relocating Japanese farm laborers in state, three references.

There ~~there~~ is only one important statement from the office of Gov. Sam C. Ford. This, appearing on April 11 in the Billings Gazette under a Helena dateline ---- of below

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"Of ~~of~~ course, we have antipathy for the Japanese, even those Japanese who are American citizens by the privilege of birth. But this much may be said as a ~~practical~~ practical matter: The Japanese both aliens and Americans, are to be moved out of strategic military areas of the coast, they will have to be moved somewhere, and the military authorities have indicated that they may insist upon each of the 10 interior states of the mountain ~~region~~ region accepting 10 per cent of the estimated 150,000 Japs to be moved.

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as a test of their citizenship and ~~their loyalty~~ devotion.

"Have we the moral right to deny American citizens, guilty of no ~~war~~ wrong, the right to earn a living, the right to move from State to State? Can we, in good faith ~~xx~~ with ourselves, place them in a new inferior category of citizenship?

"Such action against minorities have been among the causes of the war in Europe."

## II. ~~Attk~~ ATTITUDE OF OFFICIAL POLITICAL GROUPS

Gov. Sam C. Ford's policies with regard to the evacuation program were undefined in the press until April 11. On that date, at the request of the Montana emergency labor committee, he released the following statement:

"It is the policy of the state administration that it has no objection to Japanese evacuees being immediately employed in Montana sugar beet areas provided:

"The United States government will assume responsibility to four designated points in the state; and, further provided:

"That the United States Army will furnish, equip, and maintain one company of soldiers who will be distributed in smaller groups over the beet-growing areas to act ~~as~~ as district patrols to preserve order, protecting the people of Montana and the Japanese.

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During the seven week period, at least one other state agency was studying ~~xxxx~~ phases of evacuation. This was the State Agricultural Board, headed by Commissioner Albert H. Kruse. On April 8 a joint meeting of sugar beet associations and the state emergency labor committee was held at Helena. The Standard on April 10, carried the story: (p. 1)

"Sugar beet growers appealed Thursday to both the 'common sense and the patriotism' of Montana citizens to silence the 'misinformed opposition' to bringing some 5,000 Japanese evacuees from the Pacific Coast to work in the beet fields.

"Some objections to such American-born Japanese as laborers is coming from 'fifth column subversive elements', the growers representatives charged.

" . . . Albert H. Kruse, state agriculture commisssioner said that 'if beet production goals for 1942 are to be met, we must have positive

assurance by April 15 that 5,000 Japanese workers will be available to Montana growers by May 1~~1~~<sup>15</sup>.

"We are asking the army to guard these Japanese while they  
are here working in our beet fields . ." ~~xxxxxxx~~ Montana ~~xxxxx~~

The statement signed by representatives of four beet growers associations said in part: "It took an estimated 17 ~~divisions~~ Japanese divisions to conquer the comparatively little band of heroic soldiers defending the Phillipines ~~islands~~ before they could completely possess a source of 880,000 tons of sugar.

"Over here in Montana it will require only inaction, indifference, and loose talking to sabotage for the enemy another 700,000 tons of sugar beets and 160,000 tons of refined sugar just because Montana beet growers who are ready to plant a record acreage cannot be assured a sufficient supply of beet labor. . . .

"WE feel that if the people of Montana clearly understood the desperate need of this labor they would not only cooperate with the sugar beet farmers, but would silence both the misinformed opposition as well as shame whatever fifth column subversive elements who may be at the bottom of this movement and ~~promote~~ promoting it in every way."

As in the case of Wyoming, Montana's severe winter apparantly prevented any large advance migration of coast Japanese farmers over northern transcontinental highways in March and April. Helena, so the Billings Gazette reports, had seventeen consecutive days of snow-fall in late March.

There are no published incidents involving any of Montana's 508 Japanese residents (281 American born; 227 alien).

The problem of whether Coast college students will be permitted to enroll in Montana schools stirred up a controversy in the State Board of Education. In sequence, the story developed:

April 7. The Billings, Gazette, in a Berkeley Ap dispatch reported that 14 inland colleges and universities, including Colorado, Denver, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado A & M had expressed willingness to accept 300 American born Japanese students to be evacuated from the University of California

April 2. Billings Gazette, Ap story from Seattle, quotes Prof. Robert W, O'Brien as saying that Colorado and Montana universities and Colorado Schhol of Mines are am ng 16 inland colleges willing to accept evacuated students

April 14. Meeting of Montana Board of Education meets in Helena, says any action on admission of evacuees will be deferred until after the Board's July meeting.

### III. ATTITUDE OF PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS

Two opposing groups, the farm organizations of the sugar beet areas

Mont. Standard  
March 22  
P.T. met. 3  
Broadwater County  
Beet growers  
want Jap. labor

which strongly advocate use of Japanese as laborers; the Montana State Federation of Labor (James B. Graham, president) strongly opposing the use of Japanese labor.

See statement of beet growers above. Similar resolutions were passed by the Southeastern Montana Counties Sugar Beet Association at Miles Cit, on April 17, and by the Montana-Dakota Sugar Beet Growers Association, at Sidney on April 18.

One civic group, the Montana State Chamber of Commerce, meeting in Helena on April 12, endorsed by resolution the action of the organized growers that Jap evacuee labor be brought to Montana under Army supervision.

On April 15<sup>th</sup> the Montana Labor Federation, through its president, voiced protest gainst bringing Japanese labor into the state. Graham said he had been authorized to send a "strongly worded" protest to General De Witt and he indicated that the full text of the statement would be released after its receipt in ~~xxx~~ San Francisco and Washington. He said further his executive committee had authorized him to call a special convention of the Montana Federayion "if and when that course is deemed necessary." "Very few people are in favor of Japanese labor except a portion of the beet growers," he said.

Montana Standard

March 13, 1902

Spokane, Wash.-A. - Very Rev. Charles E.  
McAllister, Dean of the Episcopal Cathedral of  
St. John the Evangelist, said he had asked the  
regional forestry office at Missoula, Mont., for  
cooperation in a move for the prompt evacuation of  
Ameri-c. - born Japanese from the North West Coast to  
abandoned CCC camps in the Spokane region.

Seeking haven for two Christian congregations of  
Japanese. "It is absurd to confine Japanese designated  
as enemy aliens in cannibal's quarters at Fort Missoula  
while Christian Japanese & those who are citizens are driven  
from pillar to post," Dean McAllister said.

Montana Standard  
March 27, 42, p. 7

Beet growers & processors met in Helena  
with Gov. Ford & with James E. Harrington  
representing the U. S.

"Although the present representatives  
were agreed that 4,500 Japanese laborers would be  
needed to enable the state to meet its 1942 quota  
of sugar beet production set by the U. S. Dept. of  
Agriculture they unanimously insisted that Japanese  
should not be permitted to remain after the war  
and that they should be under supervision of some  
(one)

governmental agency during their stay in Montana.

Fromers recommended reception centers for areas where Japs. to be used — rather than allowing an "infiltration." Protection of the Japanese workers was recommended as few restrictions.

Permanent Committee called.