Memorandum for the Secretary of War:

1. Hereewith the transcript of telephone conversation with General Dewitt, Jr. spoke of last night.

2. Page three is the essence of it.

3. It was I who misunderstood General Dewitt's plan— he has no mass movement in mind.

4. This copy is for your files.

Karl R. Benedetti
Lt. Col. G.S.C.
General Dewitt: How are you tonight?

Col. Bendetson: Oh, pretty well.

General Dewitt: You have had your dinner, haven't you.

Col. Bendetson: Oh no, Sir, not yet.

General Dewitt: It is about ten minutes of eight.

Col. Bendetson: Oh yes Sir, it is about 10 minutes to 8. I haven't had dinner yet, I've been with Mr. McCoy until just now. I am going to see the Secretary of War shortly at his home after he has had dinner.

General Dewitt: Well now, Bendetson, I have talked to Mr. McCoy since I talked to you.

Col. Bendetson: Oh yes Sir, I heard the call, I was there and was on the other phone.

General Dewitt: He said he was in your office. I am just talking to Mr. Peiper now. When will Clark get out.

Col. Bendetson: We had a reservation for him on the plane tonight but for some reason he could not make it but he is leaving tomorrow and that will bring him in there Sunday. Tomorrow is Saturday, he will be in there Sunday. I am going to try to see the Secretary at his home around 9 o'clock tonight and get him to sign the order and if so, I will put it on the plane tonight around 9:30 P.M. and it should be in San Francisco by Saturday night. That will be the same kind of an order that I read you except a slight change that is not material, which Mr. McCoy explained I believe.

General Dewitt: He said there were some slight changes in language but it didn't change the general tenor of the instructions. Now, I cleared up with him, I think, and understood that I wasn't going off half-cocked, and it would take me some little time to organize this thing, and I've got the staff working on it and have given them until Monday to think about it and bring in any suggestions based on certain instructions I gave them, and I will have to confer with the Governors and I will also have to confer with other agencies and collect certain information because the perspective of the whole problem is changed more or less in view of the fact that a great many of these aliens have already moved out of these restricted areas as of February 15 and a lot of them will move out by the 21st, and I have got to let that proceed along its natural course and then see what the situation is after that. I am of the opinion, just in the blue, without having any data to confirm what I say, I think the problem (part of it) will be solved as a result of the movement as of the 21st, but Washington and Oregon, there have been no areas delimited as yet and I have got to re-designate all these areas as military areas which had formerly been classed as prohibited and restricted you see one way or the other and when
I do it, I am going to do it for all of the 8 states at the same time. Yes, I expect to do that, at least with these states on the coast. We have sent in now to the War Department every one of the eight states.

Col. Bendetson: Yes Sir, I know you have but now that we have the Executive Order signed, I don't see any reason why they should go to the Attorney General, do you?

General Dewitt: No, they should come back to me to be retained there for your information. Either one, I, of course, have copies of them here.

Col. Bendetson: You can have the originals if you want them.

General Dewitt: No, you can keep them, because we have copies of all of them here.

Col. Bendetson: Then we won't send those that came in last night to the Attorney General in view of the fact that we got the executive order signed.

General Dewitt: Yes, there would be no necessity for it. Now, what I am going to do then, there won't be a single change, if there were any necessity for the designation of category areas of 10 days ago, there is no reason why I should change the military areas.

Col. Bendetson: In other words, you will for the entire eight states you will go ahead and declare as military areas all of the areas you have already sent in, but then after that has been done, you will thereafter proceed, feeling your way as you go on the exclusion from those areas.

General Dewitt: Oh yes, I have got to study that whole question over again based on the instructions in the Executive Order.

Col. Bendetson: So, that you will take for instance, as the initial step, you will take all the prohibited and restricted areas which have been designated by the Attorney General and take those military areas.

General Dewitt: I may have to change the restricted areas some.

Col. Bendetson: Yes that is right, changing the restricted areas some but in the first step taking all the prohibited areas. Then the next step you would take all the category areas you have recommended up to now for the 8 states and include those also as military areas.

General Dewitt: But I see a way we can do it all at once.

Col. Bendetson: I see, you will do it all at once, and then, at the time you do it, from that point on you will proceed from there with the exclusion gradually. In other words, that doesn't mean they will all be excluded at once, it will depend on circumstances.
General DeWitt: Oh no, that has got to be a gradual process. Oh yes, I am not going to have any mass movement. We will do it step by step. In other words, I have got to work those steps out very carefully. I have got to get a lot of information together before I can even start the first one.

Col. Bendetson: Surely, so that the steps will be first to make a military area so that you will have control and not have to throw out any individual you want to, but from then on the exclusion by classes will be gradual, depending on the developments and the means at hand and the situation.

General DeWitt: That's it. We've got to watch my troops, you see. I can't use a whole lot of troops, and I don't want any mass movement.

Col. Bendetson: Well, that is certainly very sound and I know that is exactly what the Secretary of War wants.

General DeWitt: Well now what I want to do, if I can do it, is the first order I issue will cover all restricted -- I say, and if I can do it, and I am not going to decide on that until Monday morning, I am going to issue an order. The first order will give all of category A and B areas restricted and prohibited as for, at least, the coast states.

Col. Bendetson: Yes Sir, probably on Monday.

General DeWitt: Well, I don't know that I can do it that quick.

Col. Bendetson: No Sir, I wouldn't think so, no.

General DeWitt: I may not get it out for a week yet, see.

Col. Bendetson: Certainly, certainly.

General DeWitt: Then I may include in that first order, whenever it is issued, the strip along the coast. I have got to study that question and I have the staff working on it now, because I want to be sure or what I do, and do it all at one rather than piece meal, and then after I have defined that as to what I consider the definition, I will be collecting information as to the numbers involved, and where they are moved to, those that are moved out of California, and how I will handle the movement, which I think as I look at it now, I will probably take the Japs first, then maybe the Germans and then last the Italians, but I am not going to make a step until I am sure of the whole procedure, and then it will be a gradual one from beginning to end, and it is going to cover quite a period of time and I may not be ready to start at all for ten days or two weeks.

Col. Bendetson: That is right, and I think that is a very sound plan and I know the Secretary is very reassured by that.
General Dewitt: I will go into it a little more and I will talk to you, say, Monday.

Col. Bendelson: I will report to you, let me see, if I see the Secretary tonight at night and get this signed off on the air mail at 11, that will be too late to report to you but I will call your headquarters first thing in the morning.


Col. Bendelson: I will try my best to get it signed tonight by the Secretary and in the air mail tonight so that it will reach your headquarters tomorrow night and be on your desk Sunday morning, and that will be just a few hours before Clark and Howland arrive. Then we are also trying to line up some man who can take over all the resettlement of it as a government representative, and trying to get him fixed up with enough money so that he can go ahead on his own hook, which probably will be helpful.

Gen. Dewitt: After I decide what I can do, what I want to do before I announce anything, I am going to talk with anybody that is concerned with it. Now the papers have already come out with great big headlines about it and there is going to be a great deal of pressure on me but if I give out anything at all, it is going to be that it is not going to be handled in any way until it has been carefully studied and worked out, so as to kind of quiet the people out here and not going to upset the whole coast.

Col. Bendelson: Of course in the meantime, you can say that you haven't received anything from the War Department until you have had a chance, until Sunday anyway.

Gen. Dewitt: Yes, but I talked to Mr. McCoy and told him in view of the fact that this stuff had all come out in the papers (you probably heard what I said over the phone) with the Tolan committee, of course, I will be as restricted like he told me. Mr. Tolan just called me up and I am to see him sometime after 1 o'clock tomorrow, so I am going to be rather free in what I say with the understanding that it is to be given no publicity.

Col. Bendelson: Yes Sir, off the record to then. All right Sir.

Gen. Dewitt: Thank you for calling up old man.

Col. Bendelson: Yes Sir, goodnight General.