Dear Mr. Secretary:

I have received your letter of January 31, 1945, concerning the application of the War Department's pre-clearance procedures to persons of Japanese ancestry released from War Relocation Centers who are seeking employment in war industries.

While it is true that formerly the War Department required a pre-clearance on all persons of Japanese ancestry prior to employment in any plant important to the war effort, this rule has recently been revised so that pre-clearance is required only in a very limited number of facilities. These include only plants on the Master Inspection Responsibility List, facilities engaged in secret or top-secret contracts, and a few other specified categories. Pre-clearance of Japanese aliens and Japanese-Americans is not required for plants not within the stated categories. This is a marked relaxation of security measures applied to persons of Japanese ancestry. I believe that these remaining precautions should be taken before approving persons of Japanese ancestry for employment in vital war plants.

The War Department has recently affected other changes designed to expedite pre-clearances of this class of citizens. In December, 1944, the Japanese-American Branch of the Office of the Provost Marshal General, including all its personnel and files, were moved to the Presidio of San Francisco, California. With the Japanese-American Branch now in the same building with the Civil Affairs Division of the Western Defense Command, clearances are affected in a matter of days rather than weeks as in the past. The necessity for most investigations is eliminated entirely because there is usually a sufficient amount of information available now in the files of the Japanese-American Branch and the Civil Affairs Division to arrive at an immediate decision.

While it may be true that formerly some employees became impatient with the delay of the old procedure, it is also true that many employers hesitate to employ a Japanese-American or alien without some assurance from the War Department that the individual has been cleared for employment in their vital war plant.

You may be assured that the War Department is endeavoring to make every effort to utilize the manpower available from these released Japanese-Americans and Japanese aliens consistent with military security.
If, in spite of measures described above to expedite pre-clearances and eliminate unnecessary investigations, there still remain delays in clearances or discriminatory treatment, further corrections and remedies will be made.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) HENRY L. STimson

Secretary of War