

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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Folder 7
Item 11
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WRC
Segregation

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Mr. John J. McCloy
Assistant Secretary of War
War Department
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. McCloy:

From time to time we have discussed whether it would be desirable to segregate the disloyal from the loyal at relocation centers. As you know, I have approved of the purposes of those who have advocated segregation, even though I have not always agreed with the several methods and plans that have been proposed. I have also held the opinion that segregation is but a partial answer to our problem even though the benefits are as great as the advocates anticipate.

It is my judgment that the objective of a program of segregation should be to remove the restrictions from those who are cleared by the segregation process and thereby restore fully to the loyal group those rights which are enjoyed by the rest of the public. Restrictions were placed upon the group as a whole because it contained disloyal elements. Remove the disloyal elements and the need for restrictions disappears.

Most of the plans advocated thus far have been based in too large part on certain assumptions. For example, it has been assumed that certain categories of people -- Kibei, aliens, old bachelors, parolees, repatriates, to name a few -- contain the dangerous elements, although few people seem to agree on the same set of categories. We now know from preliminary analysis of the results of registration, that segregation on a categorical basis would not have accomplished the purposes hoped for. We would have picked up most of the undesirables, no doubt; but along with them we would have picked up many loyal people while leaving behind some disloyal among the Nisei. However, the results of the registration at last give us a basis for forming judgments as to an individual person's loyalty that may be reasonably sound.

As you know from our many conversations, it is my considered opinion that segregation of the disloyal without offering compensatory benefits to the loyal would result in something very close to disaster. All evacuees, loyal as well as disloyal,



would look upon such action as a tightening of governmental restrictions upon a whole racial group; and so would the public. It could serve only to intensify those anxieties and fears which have led steadily to deterioration of the faith of the evacuees in America. How far this deterioration has gone is perhaps indicated in a comparison of registration figures in Hawaii and in relocation centers. It is time to take positive steps to reverse an obvious trend.

I am attaching a copy of a letter which I am sending to Secretary Stimson and which in your absence I have discussed briefly with Colonel Scobey. The plan I call "C" represents my ideas of the kind of a policy the War Department and the War Relocation Authority must jointly pursue if we are to meet with any sort of success in rehabilitating the Japanese-Americans who have been in the government's custody for almost a year.

The carrying out of Plan C would require the closest kind of collaboration between the War Department, the War Relocation Authority, the Office of Naval Intelligence, and the Department of Justice. The War Relocation Authority is quite willing to leave it to the War Department, ONI, and the Justice Department, including the FBI, to determine who should be segregated and placed under closer surveillance in internment camps and who should be permitted free movement, or restricted movement, as outlined in Plan C. We should, of course, offer every possible assistance. Perhaps the board established to clear citizens for war work in relation to the registration program would be the proper body to handle this assignment.

As I visualize the operation of the plan, two kinds of centers would be required after segregation has been completed: One kind for people of questionable loyalty who must be held for the duration of the war with Japan; another kind for those who, though cleared by the screening process, cannot immediately relocate but should. It would be my hope that only a few of this second kind of center would be necessary after a little while. I would recommend that the first kind of center be operated either by the War Department or the Department of Justice.

The program envisioned in Plan C will take some little time to develop. In the interim period it will be necessary for the War Relocation Authority to continue its small scale program of segregating known trouble makers and subversives in order that relocation center administration may continue on somewhat of an even keel as we look forward to a more positive program.

Recently you offered to provide to us (1) a list of the subversives who were discovered during residence in assembly centers, with dockets, (2) a list of trouble makers in assembly centers, with dockets, and (3) a list of G-2 cases, with dockets.

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You have furnished us the lists but not with the docketts on these categories of people. It would be very helpful if these docketts could be furnished us. Among these cases there must be many who should be removed from the relocation centers while the program contemplated in Plan C is getting under way.

} W.D.C. has
been asked
for this.

Meanwhile, we are arranging for the use of the Indian Service boarding school at Leupp, Arizona, as an isolation center. The CCC Camp at Moab is now full.

Sincerely,



D. S. Myer

Director

Enclosure