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APR 25 1945

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The Honorable

The Secretary of the Interior

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I have your letter of 29 March 1945, concerning the application of War Department clearance procedure for persons of Japanese ancestry who are seeking employment in vital war industries, in which the conclusion is reached that there is discrimination against Japanese-Americans because certain individuals previously released from War Relocation Authority centers and permitted by the Commanding General, Western Defense Command, to return to the West Coast area, have been disapproved for employment in war plants.

It must be appreciated that there are two separate screening procedures which have entirely different objectives, and for that reason these seemingly inconsistent actions by different agencies of the War Department are not in fact inconsistent and are not the result of discrimination.

The War Department's clearance of the approximately 96,000 persons who were permitted to return to the military areas of the Western Defense Command was not intended as an approval of such individuals for employment in vital war plants in which highly classified projects are being carried on.

One of the two persons mentioned in your letter is Masato Sere who served in the United States Army from 28 December 1941 through 27 December 1944. The disapproval of this young man for employment in ordnance depots was based on his service record and not in spite of it. Among other things in his record, it appears that after he was assigned to Military Intelligence Service Language School he stated to his commanding officer that he could not conscientiously accept combat assignment outside the United States. This refusal to accept combat duty was made after more than two years service in the Army and at a time when he was being especially trained for intelligence duties against Japan. Subsequent investigation has revealed that he received most of his early education in Japan from 1922 through 1934 with an additional six months' visit in 1940. It also appears that his only living relatives, his mother and sister, are now residing in Japan.

Mr. Yamaguchi, the other person mentioned in your letter, was

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disapproved because it was found upon his evacuation at Mareed, California Assembly Center, that he was in possession of a large number of Japanese propaganda recordings which were confiscated by the Federal authorities. In addition, the records of the War Department reveal that almost every male member of his family, including a brother now in the Army, had been contributing members of Heimshu Kai, a pro-Japanese organization whose regular members were largely Japanese Army reservists in the United States, and whose purpose was to support the Japanese campaign in China and to set up an Army Relief Department for the mother country.

Individuals considered for employment at Tooele and Sioux Ordnance Works are disapproved only for security reasons. Records of the Provost Marshal General's Office, Tooele Ordnance Works, and Sioux Ordnance Works reveal that a total of 544 individuals of Japanese ancestry have been approved for employment. Of the 384 approved for Tooele, only 135 have reported for work, and of 190 approved for Sioux, only 64 reported. Thirty-six requests for employment of aliens were favorably considered. It is unfortunate that only 265 of a total of 544 approved individuals reported for work. I have been informed that the Provost Marshal General has no backlog of requests for employment at Tooele or Sioux.

In the absence of the names of the other five cases which are referred to in your letter, I am unable to furnish specific data. Should you desire to furnish these additional names, I shall be pleased to have their files reviewed.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) HENRY L. STIMSON

Secretary of War

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