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April 13, 1943

Dear Mr. Eisenhower:

Thank you for your letter of April 8 and the suggestion that the War Department dispatch letters of commendation to the parents of Japanese American volunteers.

I agree that such a letter probably would produce a favorable reaction in the recipient parents and it might even increase volunteering, but I question the desirability of singling out this racial group for special consideration. Such action, I believe, would lay the War Department open to criticism that it is playing favoritism to the Japanese. The Japanese themselves repeatedly have asked to be treated as other Americans, and the War Department policy is being oriented in that direction.

I shall insist that the Japanese Americans be accorded the privileges of other American soldiers and that meritorious service by them be rewarded appropriately, but it occurs to me their act of volunteering, although recognized as an act of loyalty and patriotism, also carried with it the opportunity to establish more favorably their position among the American people generally.

While I am not in accord with the suggestion that the War Department initiate such a letter, I do feel a letter of the type suggested should be dispatched by the commander of the unit to which the volunteer is assigned. I am told that some unit commanders make a practice of sending letters of similar nature to next-of-kin when their recruits arrive. It is my feeling that the organization commanders' letter, being an official communication, would

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be held by the recipients in somewhat the same high regard as would a War Department letter. With this thought in mind I am having an inquiry made as to what action along this line is contemplated by the commanding officer of the Japanese American Combat Team.

I appreciate your interest on this matter.

Sincerely,

(SIGNED) JOHN J. McCLOY

John J. McCloy

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