

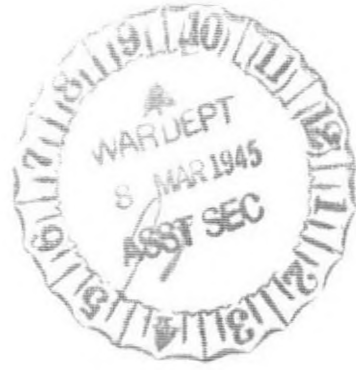
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# THE AMERICAN LEGION

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
1608 K STREET N W  
WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

March 7, 1945



Honorable John J. McCloy  
The Assistant Secretary of War  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. McCloy:

The National Commander of The American Legion, Edward N. Scheiberling, has asked me to tell you that the Hood River, Oregon, Post of The American Legion had wired him as follows: "At our regular meeting here Monday night, we voted to restore the names of fifteen Japanese-Americans to our honor roll".

Since you had written the Commander on this subject, he thought you would be interested in this action.

Sincerely,

*Elbert H. Burns*  
ELBERT H. BURNS  
Assistant National Adjutant

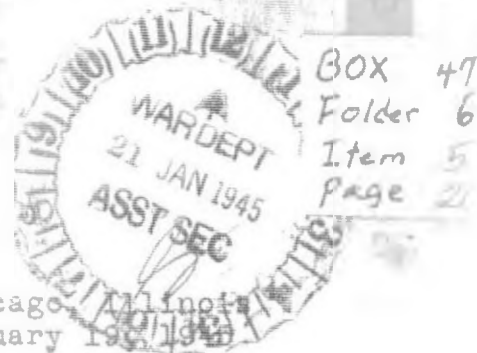
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THE AMERICAN LEGION  
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

OFFICE OF THE  
NATIONAL COMMANDER  
INDIANAPOLIS 6, IND

Chicago, Illinois  
January 19, 1945  
161-1



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

Dear Mr. Secretary:

With reference to your letter calling my attention to the action of Hood River Post #22 in removing the names of American soldiers of Japanese ancestry from its honor roll, after a thorough and complete investigation of the matter, I have just dispatched the following telegram to the Commander of Hood River Post:

"J. B. Edington, Commander  
Hood River Pst #22  
The American Legion  
Hood River, Oregon

After a thorough investigation of the action of your Post in causing to be removed from honor roll on November 29, 1944 the names of sixteen citizens of Japanese ancestry, and after a review of all of the data submitted by you, I believe it will be to the best interest of the war effort and of the American Legion to restore at once to the honor roll the names of those removed, with the exception of one individual whom I am advised, was dishonorably discharged from the Army. Reports indicate all others whose names were removed are serving honorably in the armed forces, many on overseas battlefields. The action of your post has brought much unfavorable publicity and criticism to The American Legion and your action was officially called to my attention by the War Department. The American Legion has taken a very definite position regarding Japanese nationals, but that has no bearing on the status of these men whose names were removed from your honor roll. I therefore recommend that the Hood River Post reconsider its action and restore the names removed from the honor roll, with the one exception noted. Will you please advise me of the action taken.

Edward N. Scheiberling  
National Commander."

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Hon. John J. McCloy

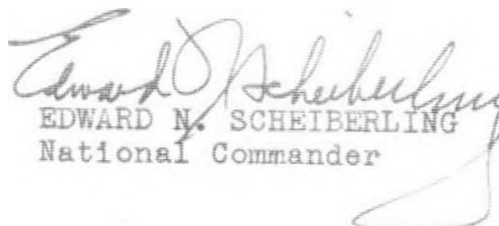
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1/19/45

Also enclosed is a statement which I have issued today outlining the position of the national organization of the Legion, with reference to the action of Hood River Post.

I shall be pleased to advise you of the action taken by the Post.

Very sincerely yours,

  
EDWARD N. SCHEIBERLING  
National Commander

Enclosures

January 19, 1945

National Commander of The American Legion, Edward N. Scheiberling, after a complete and thorough investigation of the action of Hood River Post #22, Hood River, Oregon, in removing the names of sixteen servicemen of Japanese ancestry from its honor roll, today sent the following telegram to the Commander of the Hood River Post:

J. B. EDINGTON, COMMANDER  
HOOD RIVER POST #22  
THE AMERICAN LEGION  
HOOD RIVER, OREGON

AFTER A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THE ACTION OF YOUR POST IN CAUSING TO BE REMOVED FROM HONOR ROLL ON NOVEMBER 29, 1944 THE NAMES OF SIXTEEN CITIZENS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY, AND AFTER A REVIEW OF ALL OF THE DATA SUBMITTED BY YOU, I BELIEVE IT WILL BE TO THE BEST INTEREST OF THE WAR EFFORT AND OF THE AMERICAN LEGION TO RESTORE AT ONCE TO THE HONOR ROLL THE NAMES OF THOSE REMOVED, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE INDIVIDUAL WHOM I AM ADVISED, WAS DISHONORABLY DISCHARGED FROM THE ARMY. Reports INDICATE ALL OTHERS WHOSE NAMES WERE REMOVED ARE SERVING HONORABLY IN THE ARMED FORCES, MANY ON OVERSEAS BATTLE-FIELDS. THE ACTION OF YOUR POST HAS BROUGHT MUCH UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY AND CRITICISM TO THE AMERICAN LEGION AND YOUR ACTION WAS OFFICIALLY CALLED TO MY ATTENTION BY THE WAR DEPARTMENT. THE AMERICAN LEGION HAS TAKEN A VERY DEFINITE POSITION REGARDING JAPANESE NATIONALS, BUT THAT HAS NO BEARING ON THE STATUS OF THESE MEN WHOSE NAMES WERE REMOVED FROM YOUR HONOR ROLL. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT THE HOOD RIVER POST RECONSIDER ITS ACTION AND RESTORE THE NAMES REMOVED FROM THE HONOR ROLL, WITH THE ONE EXCEPTION NOTED. WILL YOU PLEASE ADVISE ME OF THE ACTION TAKEN.

EDWARD N. SCHEIBERLING  
NATIONAL COMMANDER

Commander Scheiberling stated, "My investigation discloses that the honor roll was erected in September 1943 by Hood River Post #22, The American Legion, and on November 29, 1944 the Post, as a result of official action, caused the names of sixteen men of Japanese ancestry to be taken off the honor roll by painting the names over;

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that all of the men whose names were so removed were born in the United States of America, and under the provisions of the Constitution of the United States are American citizens; that the men whose names were removed from the roll, with one exception, are serving honorably in the United States Army, many of them on European battlefields; that one of the sixteen whose names were removed was dishonorably discharged from the United States Army. I have therefore wired Commander Edington recommending that the names removed be restored to the honor roll with the one exception of the man dishonorably discharged from the Army, and that the Post reconsider its action at once.

"The American Legion, through its national convention, has made definite recommendations to the government relative to the treatment of Japanese aliens, and at the meeting of our national executive committee at Indianapolis in November a resolution was unanimously approved that we sponsor legislation in Washington transferring the full control of all Japanese in America from civilian authority to the United States Army, and that the return of Japanese to the Pacific Coast area be deferred until military emergency has terminated. The government has seen fit to issue an order permitting the return of loyal Japanese to their former homes. The responsibility must therefore rest upon the government for the conduct of those Japanese who do return to the west coast and to areas which are within the zone of military operations.

"The American Legion has always maintained that bigotry and race hatred have no place in American life, and the action of this one individual post, of more than 12,245 posts of The American Legion, was ill-considered and ill-advised, and contrary to the ideals and purposes for which The American Legion is organized."

27 December 1944

Mr. Joe J. Nickle  
Foreign Missions Conference  
155 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Nickle:

Your telegram to the President has been referred through the Department of Justice to the War Department. For your information I am enclosing a copy of a letter Mr. McCloy has written to the National Commander of the American Legion on this subject.

From later press reports I understand that the Hood River, Oregon, Post has stated that they will return the names of the sixteen individuals involved if it is proved that they do not have dual citizenship. The action of this post against American citizens who have offered their lives and services to their country is a sorrowful reflection on those who are responsible for this act.

Sincerely,

(SIGNED)

HARRISON A. GERMARDT  
Colonel, General Staff Corps  
Executive to Asst Secretary of War

Enc.

## Department of Justice

Washington

December 22, 1944

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

Dear Mr. McCloy:

I enclose a telegram dated December 4 to the President from the Foreign Missions Conference of North America requesting repeal of the action of the Hood River, Oregon, Post of the American Legion in erasing the names of sixteen Americans of Japanese ancestry from the county war memorial.

In view of the fact that the discrimination involves persons in respect of their service in the armed forces of the United States, I refer the telegram to you for any action you deem appropriate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Herbert Wechsler".

Herbert Wechsler  
Assistant Attorney General

WDOAS  
HAG:MS

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MS.16 General

14 December 1944

Mr. Elbert H. Burns  
Assistant National Adjutant  
The American Legion  
1608 K Street, NW  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Burns:

This will acknowledge your letter of December 7th to the Honorable John J. McCloy with reference to Mr. McCloy's letter to the National Commander, Mr. Edward Scheiberling, of the 7th of December.

I am enclosing for your information, a copy of a newspaper article which gives the details you request.

Sincerely,

(SIGNED)

HARRISON A. GERHARTZ  
Colonel, General Staff Corps  
Executive to Asst Secretary of War

X X X  
X - Scheiberling

Enc.

14 Dec 1944



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## MEMORIAL BARS JAPANESE

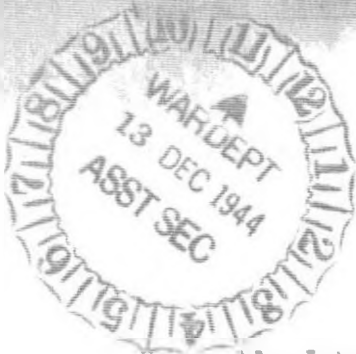
Hood River Post Erases Names of 16  
Serving United States

HOOD RIVER, Ore., Dec. 2 (AP)—The Hood River Post of the American Legion has erased the names of sixteen Americans of Japanese ancestry now serving in the United States Army from its World War memorial. Comdr. Jess Edgington said today. Many of these soldiers are serving on overseas battlefronts, the post reported.

Mr. Edgington said his post would attempt to have excluded from the Hood River Valley all persons of Japanese ancestry, including those removed from their homes to inland camps for security purposes by the government. The commander added that his post would cooperate with the Hood River, Ore., Legion in a similar effort there.

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
1508 K STREET, N. W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 12, 1944



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

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Dear Secretary:

Your letter of December 7 addressed to Mr. Edward Scheiberling, National Commander of The American Legion, will be given Mr. Scheiberling on the 16th when he comes to Washington. He is at present on the road and it is not possible to get the letter to him.

It occurs to me that the Commander might like to have something a little more specific about the occasion on the West Coast. Nothing has come to our office except the first paragraph of your letter and a telephone call in which some woman reporter represented that a Post Commander in Oregon had forced the removal of three names from some memorial plaque located somewhere; she didn't know where or when. I am sure the Commander could reply more intelligently if he had more information but in any event, we will see that your letter comes to his attention as promptly as circumstances will permit.

Sincerely,

*Albert H. Burns*

ALBERT H. BURNS  
Assistant National Adjutant

EEB:15

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7 December 1944

Mr. Edward Scheiberling, National Commander  
The American Legion  
1608 K Street, NW  
Washington 6, D. C.

Dear Mr. Scheiberling:

It has recently been called to my attention that a post of the American Legion on the West Coast has erased the names of a number of soldiers of Japanese ancestry, now serving in the United States Army, from its county war memorial.

Many of these soldiers whose names were stricken are serving on overseas battlefronts. There are at the present time approximately 13,000 Japanese-Americans who are serving or have served in the armed forces. You may recall that the 100th Infantry Battalion has been serving overseas for more than a year in combat on the Italian front, and has established an outstanding combat record and been cited for gallantry. The 442nd Combat Team, also a unit composed of Americans of Japanese ancestry, has fought courageously and well on the European front. It seems incongruous and wholly inconsistent with American ideals of democracy that these men who, just like millions of other Americans, have demonstrated their loyalty to their country by bloody sacrifices, should be subjected to such unworthy discrimination.

I am quite sure that the American Legion with its fine record of protecting the interests of the veterans, as well as the position which it holds in the minds of the American people, cannot condone such unfair acts.

Sincerely,

(Sgd) J. J. McCloy

JOHN J. McCLOY  
Assistant Secretary of War

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Washington

WBS NL PD

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*Justice*

MS NEWYORK NY DEC 4 1944

THE PRESIDENT

WHITE HOUSE

SECRETARIAL COUNCIL FOREIGN MISSIONS CONFERENCE OF NORTH  
AMERICA RESPECTFULLY REQUESTS YOU PROTEST OR OTHERWISE USE  
INFLUENCE TO SECURE REPEAL UNAMERICAN ACTION OF HOODRIVER  
OREGON POST AMERICAN LEGION IN ERASING NAMES SIXTEEN  
AMERICANS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY FROM COUNTY WAR MEMORIAL AS  
REPORTED NEWYORK TIMES DECEMBER THIRD

SJD  
ASJD

95-61-10  
DEPT. OF JUSTICE  
DEC 12 1944  
WAR DEPT.  
CRIM. GEN. CRIME SEC.

JOE J MICKLE FOREIGN MISSIONS CONFERENCE OF NORTH  
AMERICA 156 FIFTH AVE NEW YORK.

*NEW*