

May 21, 1943

Dear Mr. Myer:

Thank you for your letter of May 20, with the two enclosures, copy of a letter from Mr. Merritt to Colonel Gould, and copy of a letter from a Nisei soldier to the Manzanar Relocation Center. This office will take necessary action in both cases.

Sincerely,

(SIGNED)

WILLIAM P. SCORBY
Colonel, General Staff
Executive

Mr. Dillon S. Myer, Director
War Relocation Center
Barr Building, Room 822
Washington, D. C.

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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
WASHINGTON

MAY 20 1943

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

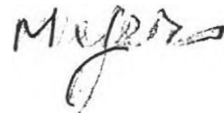
Dear Mr. McCloy:

Attached for your information is a copy of a memorandum from Mr. Ralph Merritt, Project Director at Manzanar, to Colonel Karl Gould of the Military Intelligence Language School concerning the lack of interest among the Nisei for enlistment in the Language School. I would like to call your attention particularly to the situation mentioned in the last paragraph on the first page.

There is also attached a copy of a letter dated April 25, sent to an evacuee in one of the projects, by a Japanese American soldier at Fort Riley, Kansas. We have deleted all names and made one or two other deletions, so as not to cause any difficulties for the boy who wrote the letter. He did not know, of course, that we would receive this letter at the time he wrote it. I have also received verbal reports from other centers concerning the incident outlined.

My only reason for sending these letters to you is because reports of this type have such a drastic effect not only on the morale of the soldiers but also on the evacuees in the centers. I have not passed this information on elsewhere but naturally I will be interested to know, after you have had an opportunity to check into the matter, whether the facts are as outlined.

Sincerely,



Director

Enclosures



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April 25, 1943

Hi _____

Glad to hear from you again--am really prompt this time ain't I?

Boy! wait till you hear what I have to tell you about what happened to us today and the four days preceding.

Remember the day the War Department broadcast and revealed the fact that several American Army officers held as prisoners in Japan were executed for unknown reasons? The very next day after that broadcast, we received orders from our detachment Commander that all of us Jap boys were confined to our barracks not as a punishment, but purely to protect us from physical harm which may occur to us due to some ignorant people around here. Of course, there was some sense in that and I didn't mind that the Japs in the Motor pool and Headquarters were permitted to wonder around the post area and visit the canteens and theatres but we were strictly confined to our barracks--couldn't even go to P.X. We found out that the order was to be confinement to post area and not to our barracks, but our stinking captain was so damn prejudiced that he took advantage of that order and naturally, we couldn't go out. Yes, I read General DeWitt's statement--our commander seems to have the same thought about us. By the way, did you read Senator Stewart's statements. His thought are much more radical than DeWitts.

Today, Easter Sunday, we experienced an action which I'll never forget as long as I live. President Roosevelt came to our camp on his way home from Mexico and we Japs were all told to fall out in dress uniforms. We all fell out with the thought of seeing the President, but what happens? The Captain gives us a speech telling us how much he appreciated our cooperation in conducting ourselves as a soldier and gentlemen during our four days of confinement; and he had the audacity to wish us a Happy Easter when he knew all the time what was to follow. I bet, you won't believe it, but it actually happened here. We were marched double file all the way to the motor pool and as we approached one of the mechanized school buildings, there were about fifty armed guards with rifles and bayonets, posted around this building. Boy! I sure felt lousy when we were told to march single file into this building between two guards standing by the entrance ready to take a pot-shot at us if we made any false moves. Inside this building there were more Japs huddled in a group from Motor Pool with about fifteen armed officers to watch us. Yup, we were in the same category as Prisoners of War. In fact, I even felt like one. Yes, we were wearing the same uniforms as the men outside watching us. Why? One of the officers mentioned something about precautionary measures so that no harm would befall the President while he was inspecting our camp. Yup, we were wearing the same uniforms as the fellows guarding us and they don't trust us. Boy! A million thoughts kept hammering in my head as we were in there as prisoners. I asked myself--what the hell is the use of wearing this uniform--they don't trust us and we aren't accorded the same privilege as the other men wearing the same uniform purely due to our racial ancestry. At least, I know the score down here now. This camp is run by a bunch of prejudiced men who believe in the same doctrines and principles dominant in a dictatorship and totalitarian form of government. What the hell have they got to holler about persecution of the Jews in Germany when they're just about doing the same thing to us down here? No fooling, if they don't trust us, why in the world don't they come out and say so and discharge us. I wonder how those fellows who volunteered for Camp Shelby and Camp Savage would feel if they heard about this incident. As far as I'm concerned I'm really disillusioned and discouraged. They haven't given us the chance to realize what we're fighting for. Of course, in

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fairness I must say that it isn't like this in all the camps. In Texas where the Commandant is broadminded and understands the psychology of the human mind actually showed his trust for the Nisei boys in service by permitting them to guard the railroad track so that the President could pass through safely. Over here, it was entirely an opposite situation--they used negative psychology.

You know, I'm actually wondering as to whether or not our company commander, who happens to hate all Japanese regardless of how loyal he is, is planning to break our moral or treating us in this manner so that we would crack-up and make a slip so that he could pin something on us. If that's the case, he's going to have a hell of a time cause we're determined to prove that General DeWitt was wrong in shooting-off with his bigoted statements. The hard part is that most of the fellows have just about reached the limit of their endurance.

Guess I've said enough so I'll just change the topic. How's _____ and _____ getting along? Has _____ gone to Utah yet or is he still romancing around with _____ up there?

Yes, _____ is back for her Easter holidays, but I couldn't go over to see her due to the confinement business. She wrote and told me that she may come over tomorrow to see me and boy! when she comes over, I'm really going to tell her what happened to us today. I wonder what she'll think?

Next month, I'm planning to take a three days' pass to _____ with _____ and boy! you can bet I'm going to town up there. If I can, I'll try to see your _____ up there but I doubt if I'll have any time.

After what happened today, I doubt if they'll send me to that school. I'd be one surprised guy if they do give me the chance. At least, I have the satisfaction of knowing that I passed the exam.

Guess, I've written enough so I'll be saying adieu. Hoping to hear from you soon.

Name _____