

Box 53
Folder 7
Item 2
Page 1ASW 342.18 J. A. MOTELO
ASW 358 munde

17 January 1944

Dear Mrs. Kingman:

Your letter of January 12 to Colonel Scobey has been received. Colonel Scobey left this office last October for an assignment in the field.

We had already heard of the difficulties referred to in your letter. With respect to the school situation it was thought, after an examination of Mississippi law and pertinent decisions of the United States Supreme Court, that it would do more harm than good at this time to try to force the attendance of Japanese American children at the local public schools.

As far as the local police are concerned, there has been some trouble between them and the Japanese Americans. There have also been some incidents with the local bus drivers. However, on the whole, things have not been too bad - merely what you would expect from an area which has always been super conscious of racial matters. The camp commander, General Halloran, and Colonel Pence, Commanding Officer of the Combat Team, have a good understanding of the situation and are doing what they can to work it out gradually.

Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

(SIGNED). JOHN E. HALL

JOHN M. HALL
Captain, P.A.
Assistant Executive

Mrs. Ruth W. Kingman, Executive Secretary
Committee on American Principles and Fair Play
465 California Street, Rm. 203
San Francisco, California

OASW:JMH:maw

CC to Col. C.W.Pence, C.O.

442nd Infantry Combat Team
Camp Shelby, Mississippi

X- Hall
X- Kingman
342.18 J. A. Infantry, 442nd

R7 Jan 44

January 12, 1944

Col. William P. Scobey
Executive to Assistant Secretary of War
War Department
Washington, D. C.

My dear Col. Scobey

When in Camp Shelby last October, I was fortunate to be able to see much of the work and program of the Japanese American Combat Unit. While there Col. C. W. Pence showed me every courtesy and the then Public Relations Officer, Major Oland D. Russell, saw that I got as full an impression of the place as could be received in a very full afternoon.

Representing an organization which is keenly interested in recognizing the full rights of these men, we are concerned with some of the things which I saw and some others of which I have heard.

As you know, the general morale of the Unit is excellent, but I have received reports from several of the men, indicating the presence of certain discriminatory practices which cannot but have a negative effect on that morale. May I quote from one of the men, a man whose general attitude and judgment are excellent, and whose concern is not personal but for the group as a whole.

"Regarding discrimination and prejudices against us in the deep South, which is the reason for this letter, may I say that in addition to the usual minor difficulties and misunderstandings which are bound to crop up, two situations have developed which merit serious consideration. One is that the children of the enlisted men and officers cannot attend public schools in Mississippi and two is the vicious attitude taken by the local civilian police.

"There is a law in Mississippi which declares that non-White persons may not attend schools with white children. This law was passed in the reconstruction days and was aimed at the Chinese shrimp fisherman on the gulf who married Negro women. The Supreme Court of the United States in a decision some years ago ruled that Chinese were not white and that this discriminatory law was valid, and so today the children of our volunteers, etc. etc.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ RUTH W. KINGMAN