

## OFFICE OF FACTS AND FIGURES

WASHINGTON

February 9, 1942



Dear Jack:

I am sending to you herewith a copy of a confidential memorandum showing preliminary results of an exploratory study of West Coast reactions to Japanese. This was prepared on the basis of data only recently gathered. Although it is only preliminary and conclusions based thereon can only be considered tentative, we feel that it is entitled to weight and fair consideration in the current discussions of policy.

In my opinion great care should be taken not to reach a grave decision in the present situation on the basis of representations of officials and private pressure groups alone. The decision may have far-reaching effects.

Incidentally, I should like to remind you of the experience of the Department of Agriculture in connection with opinion sampling. Repeatedly interviewers of the opinion sampling unit in Agriculture turned in findings which seemed at variance with reports coming to the administrators through the usual administrative channels. One cause of the difference was that the interviewers talked directly with farmers, were under no pressure themselves to obtain one result rather than another, and in fact could hold their jobs only if time proved their results accurate. Administrative channels, on the contrary, were subject to pressure, both political and organized. The Department found, as an example, that the attitude of farmers towards the effectiveness and wisdom of certain AAA policies and practices often differed materially from the attitude of employees of the AAA. At one time, for example, the Department heard rumblings of opposition to the AAA program from tenant farmers, because of the way certain regulations applied to them. These rumblings were not conveyed through

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the AAA administrative channels, however. When the opinion sampling unit reported week after week that the rumblings were widespread and well-founded, the regulations were changed.

Faithfully yours,

*AM*  
Archibald MacLeish  
Director, Office of Facts  
and Figures

P.S. The attachment may be of interest to you.

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

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February 4, 1942

~~SECRET~~

To: Director, Office of Facts and Figures  
 From: Bureau of Intelligence  
 Re: West Coast Reactions to Japanese

DECLASSIFIED  
 NND 740000  
 ERG NARS Date 6/24/74

As pointed out in the first paragraph of the attached report, this is a small exploratory study, and the findings should be treated only as suggestive, not as conclusive. Work is continuing in the field along the same lines and will be in more definitive stages in about two weeks.

Even with such a small sample, however, one can infer that the situation in California is serious; that it is loaded with potential dynamite; but that it is not as desperate as some people are said to believe.

About half the people interviewed are concerned about the Japanese problem in California, but some of these are only moderately concerned. There is a general atmosphere of suspicion which pervades even the people who think that most of the Japanese-Americans are loyal.

We can be pretty definite in saying that a majority of people think that the Government (chiefly the F.B.I.) has the situation in hand. But there is a sizeable minority, somewhere between 23 and 43 percent\* of the California population which does not think the Government has the situation under control and feels the need of further action. Since even a 23% minority is a danger signal, we are studying this group further to find out what kinds of people are involved, how they feel on other questions in the study, and how intensely they feel.

From the present data, we can infer that these people tend to cluster in the low income, poorly educated groups, and they are the ones who are most suspicious of local Japanese in general.

We believe, however, that this needs a good deal more study, and we prefer not to draw definite conclusions about this group until more information has become available, in about two weeks.

\*With a sample of 100 people, the statistical probabilities are that a figure of 33% represents a true figure within this range. Other figures in the report should be treated with the same caution, allowing a 10-point difference in either direction.

*read 2/14/42  
 To Gen Sullivan*

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