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Item 18A /

2 October 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL MCNAULY:

I understand that the Japanese-American Combat Team, which the War Department established last February, has just about reached its authorized strength (including 15% overstrength). The question arises as to what War Department policy should be with respect to volunteers of Japanese descent for whom there will be no room in the Combat Team. Apparently there are around 70 or 80 volunteers from last February who have been cleared by MIS but who have not as yet been inducted because of Selective Service complications. In addition, new applications for voluntary induction continue to trickle in and will continue to do so as the youngsters reach 16.

Of those who cannot be accommodated in the Combat Team, some having the necessary language qualifications can be assigned to the MIS Language School at Camp Savage for training as interpreters. This, however, will take care of only a part, as the ordinary Japanese-American educated exclusively in this country could not be Japanese sufficiently well to qualify.

We have now assembled about as complete a set of records on Japanese-Americans as has ever been gathered together for any segment of our population, sufficiently so that loyalty can be determined pretty accurately. There continues to be a strong feeling among people who are or who have been in close touch with the Japanese situation in favor of reinstituting Selective Service for all persons of Japanese descent. I appreciate that serious administrative difficulties arise if we do that. On the other hand, I feel rather strongly that we should keep the Army open for eligible volunteers. To stop inducting volunteers now would not only be a repudiation of what the Secretary of War said in his press release, to the effect that "it is the inherent right of every faithful citizen, regardless of ancestry, to bear arms in the Nation's battle", but would also constitute a slap in the face to those of our Japanese population who are trying to be the best Americans.

I do not think it is necessary to create another separate unit for these additional volunteers. In fact I think it would be undesirable. As soon as we start treating these people like everyone else, three-quarters of our difficulties

General  
The Deputy Chief of Staff  
The Chief of Staff  
The Adjutant General  
The Quartermaster General  
The Inspector General  
The Engineer General  
The Signal General  
The Medical General  
The Veterinary General  
The Chaplain General  
The Judge Advocate General  
The Inspector General  
The Quartermaster General  
The Inspector General  
The Engineer General  
The Signal General  
The Medical General  
The Veterinary General  
The Chaplain General  
The Judge Advocate General

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disappear. A few may have to be yanked from specific units, but that is a small matter. And there is no real reason why we should not take loyal alien volunteers along with citizens. The studies which have been made thus far show that birthplace alone has little significance with respect to loyalty.

Would you take this up with G-1. They may have some objections, but I think first of all we are pretty well committed to keep the Army open to loyal volunteers, and in the second place I think it is sound long-range policy both from the Army's point of view and from the civil aspects.

(SIGNATURE) JOHN J. McCLOY

John J. McCloy

Comment:

As it is now there has been a tendency to run the Combat Team as an instrument of segregation. I think the Combat Team should be left as a fighting unit and that it is a good idea but it is not expected to be the one pool for all Japanese in the Army.

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Room 3-E 936  
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O/SW JMH:MEE