

Nisei in U. S. Army Prove Crack Soldiers—and War Bond Buyers

By S. BURTON HEATH
NEA Staff Correspondent

CAMP SHELBY, Miss., Aug. 13—Pvts. Shigeo Fujioka and Jack Y. Oata were among the Japanese-American combat volunteers who came to the main land from Hawaii with fat bank-rolls. Col. C. W. Pence, their commander, suggested that such money be put in some safe place—bonds, bank account, wherever they chose except in pants pockets or barracks hiding places.

A Caucasian soldier in another outfit here had bought \$1250 worth of war bonds at auction for the privilege of squiring a Hollywood beauty around camp. Pvt. Fujioka bought \$2000 worth of bonds.

Not to be outdone, Oata, invested \$2500 in democracy. Fujioka came back with another \$1000 for the war pot, raising his purchases to \$3000.

Maj. Oland D. Russell, press officer for the combat team, heard about the contest and called in a photographer. He asked Fujioka to pass over \$500 in stage money for the camera. But when the time came, Fujioka decided it was beneath his dignity to fake for publicity—and the \$500 he used was good American money, for which he took more bonds.

PUTS UP LIFE SAVINGS

Oata couldn't stand the pace. His \$2500 represented his life savings, including what he had earned helping to build Pearl Harbor installations destroyed by the Jap attackers Dec. 7. He was so broke, in fact, that he had to borrow four bits from his top sergeant to pay for a haircut.

In two days, with no selling campaign except an announcement that war bonds were for sale, the Japanese-American soldiers here bought \$101,550 worth.

It is well known that war bonds are the best investment in the world, and if a bunch of men have \$100,000 in their pockets, war bonds are the place to put them. So you can say, if you want to, that these Nisei were merely demonstrating business good sense.

Be that as it may, there have been just as good soldiers in every other way, since they came to Camp Shelby, as they were in buying war bonds.

BETTER THAN AVERAGE

On the whole, their officers feel that they are just a little better soldiers than most of the Caucasians. Not because of difference of race, mentality or physique, but because these men combine a mission of revenge with a bit of suspicion that they are on a spot and, because of the color of their skins, must be particularly careful.



These Nisei are eager for action, preferably against the Japs. Now in training, Japanese-Americans from Hawaii are said by their officers to be better-than-average soldiers because they are anxious to prove themselves and to be avenged against the land of their forefathers.

Also, they represent a rather select group of men with superior intelligence quotients who almost forced themselves into uniform. Such as the chap who was rejected because his right forearm was 75 per cent disabled. He pleaded for another hearing.

"There's nothing wrong with my thumb and forefinger," he insisted. "I can shoot a gun. I want to go."

He did. He is here now, looking forward to the day when his gun will be pointed at an Axis soldier, preferably Japanese.

The behavior and discipline of the Nisei are exemplary. The only one who has seen the guardhouse was arrested in nearby Hattiesburg by an MP who did not know the Japanese-Americans had special permission to wear summer-weight uniforms ahead of other soldiers here because, having come up from sunny Hawaii, they had no others.

THEY'RE INTENSE STUDENTS

In their first month here, these men spent \$2000 at one bookstore in Hattiesburg for technical and military books costing up to \$5 each. At the library they demand American history, biography, social science, military books and works on the care and maintenance of motors. The library has not yet been asked for any book on Japan.

"Once in a while you may have to

tell them something twice, but not often," said Capt. Pershing Nakada, commander of the 23d Engineers. "They are so eager to learn that they are constantly attentive and usually get it the first time."

Of course Capt. Nakada, being Nisei himself, could be prejudiced, but Maj. Oland D. Russell, who was a top-notch newspaperman for years before he became press relations officer for the unit, agrees. He illustrates it with a story which I accept chiefly because I've known Maj. Russell for a long time.

It was on a week-end and a hundred Japanese-American girls had come down from a relocation center to visit the boys. Having sat in on the finals of a beauty contest at the center, I wouldn't believe this from a stranger, but Maj. Russell swears that the group of Nisei ignored the girls entirely and spent the afternoon in an open field practicing throwing hand grenades.



Relocation Center Japs Readjust Themselves to New Way of Life

By JEANNE RIHA

It was a small room, enlivened by a few gay details—the splashed red and green of wispy curtains, a vase of artificial flowers, golden fish swimming among shells in a bowl of water. On a shelf was a picture of a boy in uniform and in one corner was a play pen with a child's bright wooden toys strewn around.

It might have been the room of many an American family, not too well off but ingenious and creative. It might have—but it was not. It was a typical home in the Japanese war relocation center at Heart Mountain, Wyo., where 9,189 Japanese evacuees are now living. When evacuees came, only a bed, mattress and stove were given them. They supplied the remainder of the furnishings.

The soldier in the photograph was the brother-in-law of Shigeru Sakaguchi, who lived here with his wife and child; he is stationed in Texas.

Outside the building which consists of six rooms, one for a family, was a victory garden. Almost all of the barracks have them and vegetables, rather than flowers, predominate. Although there is no running water and gardeners have to haul water by the bucketsful from laundry centers, which are spaced a block apart, cabbage, lettuce, carrots and an occasional row of corn are thriving.

While 4,758 of the some 9,000 inhabitants work, there is a great number of students, preschool children, invalids and housewives not lucratively employed.

For them and for others who have spare time, activities have been planned, some of them by the recreation department, headed by Marlin T. Kurtz, a Caucasian, and staffed by evacuees, and others planned by the evacuees themselves.

Many are war activities. A Red Cross membership drive now going on has netted about \$545 and this amount accounts for less than three quarters of the total returns expected, according to Miss Virgil Payne, social service head. A raffle of 15 pieces of furniture, including a writing desk and vanity, which have been made without cost by volunteers from material provided by the government to boost the Red Cross fund is scheduled for the near future.

Bond sales up to the beginning of July amounted to \$7,518.75 and stamps to \$2,175. About 200 service flags are flown by wives and parents of American-born Japanese. In the special Japanese-American combat team at Camp Shelby, Miss., are 60 other volunteers from the Heart Mountain center. A U. S. O. entertains visiting servicemen, six or eight of whom are always around.

When a block decides it wants accessories for its buildings, curtains, for example, to brighten the mess hall, it puts on a show. With many talented persons from Hollywood in the center, as one evacuee from there pointed out, a performance is staged for the theatrically minded of the other block inhabitants and, provided enough persons are theatrically minded, the curtains are secured.

Aiming to put emphasis, especially for young people, on Americanized activities in order to remove Japanese culture, groups have been organized such as Boy Scouts, with 604 members; various boys' clubs, with enrollments of 721; Girl Scouts, with 509 participants and clubs for girls with enrollments of 296.

A 42-piece Boy Scout drum and bugle corps is the center of attention when it performs for such holiday programs as the Fourth of July, Memorial day and Flag day.

It is the older persons, mainly, who are interested in Japanese culture, Kurtz said. When classes in Japanese drama are held, those attending are not young people, who prefer the 10-cent movies offered at the center, but the middle-aged or older populace. Likewise, classes in Goh, Japanese chess, draw a crowd of over 1,000 participants.

But Americanized activities for adults are also promoted; courses in tailoring, artificial flower making, flower arranging, sewing and embroidering are being taught.

Although many of the women in the embroidery class, which consists of 189 members, did not know how to embroider before this time, they have learned so quickly and have worked so diligently that the efforts of the "novices" are elaborate, intricate things, soft tan fawns, streaked with white, slim-winged

birds above misty clouds, faint shadows over silver moons.

With the success of these evacuees in readjusting themselves to a new manner of living has come a problem that center officials recognize as very real. It is the possibility of evacuees becoming so dependent upon the security of the center they lose initiative to secure jobs and make normal lives for themselves in the outside world. Many evacuees who have gone out, making a place for themselves in the world have overcome this problem and send back letters similar to this one received by Kurtz from a girl formerly at the center:

"Being on the outside is really a wonderful feeling. It is such a lift to one's morale and spirit. I have discovered also that we tend to see our personal problems of evacuation in a camp life in such an exaggerated manner when we are in camp but, once on the outside, one can see that the people are more concerned with bigger problems than that of the Japanese evacuees.

"People should be told that they have nothing to fear by going out. I think too many are afraid of what people will think and say."

Jap-Americans Make Good



A HEAD WAITER at the hotel is Frank Onishi, who was part owner of one of the largest produce companies in Los Angeles.



THE HEAD CHEF, George Kumagai, cuts a piece of meat. He formerly was head chef at a leading restaurant in Los Angeles.

By JACK MACKAY

DETROIT LAKES, MINN. — (AP)—Many Americans of Japanese ancestry, uprooted from their homes in Pacific coast states and then herded behind barbed wires in relocation centers under government control, today have found work — and happiness in northern Minnesota and North Dakota.

Through the efforts of Elmer Isaksen, war relocation authority officer stationed in Fargo, a "colony" of 16 Japanese Americans has been placed in various jobs at Edgewater Beach hotel, on the shores of Detroit lake, while a number of others are carving their future on Red river valley farms.

It's a sort of experimental project, placing such a large number of Japanese at one resort, but the experiment is working out so successfully Isaksen's office has been swamped with calls for similar assistance by Minnesota and North Dakota farmers and others who have heard about it.

fearful many jobs will be closed to them after the war, have turned their faces toward the Northwest, searching for a "frontier" where they can start life anew.

During the spring and summer of 1942 about 110,000 men, women and children of Japanese ancestry were ordered by the army to evacuate the Pacific coast area. They all were placed in 10 wartime communities known as "relocation centers" but no charge of subversive activity were made against them.

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Policy of the war relocation authority, Isaksen said, is to urge all employable residents of the centers who qualify for indefinite leave to move into outside employment as rapidly as suitable work opportunities can be found for them.

Seasonable farm work, Isaksen explained, presents some difficulties because the Americans of Japanese ancestry never have been nomadic laborers.

Most of the workers with farm backgrounds owned small farms and truck gardens and made a practice of staying close to home.

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"When they were removed to the relocation centers, they went as families and family solidarity is a notable characteristic of theirs," he said. "Few of them can be employed successfully when they are separated from wives, children and other members of their families.

Two-thirds of the evacuees are native born American citizens who, under our constitution, are entitled to the same consideration as Americans of any other ancestry."

"We have just submitted a number of job offers from North Dakota cafe and restaurant operators, garage owners, ranchers and poultry farmers for help," Isaksen said.

* * *

"In all of these cases the employers are extremely anxious to get these Japanese-American workers, having heard of the Edgewater Beach project and from farmers in the Red river valley where many already are placed."

Fred Wright, proprietor of the hotel at Detroit Lakes, who sought Isaksen's advice in solving the shortage of manpower, had this to say:

"These men are excellent workers, loyal to our government, and doing their part in helping to solve the labor problem.

"They are paid the prevailing wage and apparently they are happy to be out of the relocation centers."

* * *

Some of the Nisei interviewed at Edgewater Beach, still look forward to a return to their homes in California. But others,



AXIS THEIR COMMON FOE—Lieut. T. T. Sucoka, left, of Japanese descent, and Lieut. Sam G. Lew, Chinese descent, are members of Foreign Legion company in training at Ft. Benning, Georgia. United States Army photo

CINCINNATI POST
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Those Japs

Cincinnati can't go along with the American Legion (in convention here yesterday) which wants all Americans of Japanese ancestry sent back to concentration camps.

The Legion, in resolutions, suggested that all people with Japanese blood in them were treacherous, and away with them. This is like Japanese saying that all Americans are gangsters, on account of Al Capone, and that all Americans should be locked up in Alcatraz.

Or it is like saying that since Nazis are awful people, all Americans of German descent should be locked up. Nobody ever thinks of being that absurd.

A number of Americans of Japanese descent are working here now. Cincinnati hears that their employers speak well of their fidelity. Their fellow-workers, after being suspicious, have come to respect them. They see that Americans of Japanese descent do not differ from other Americans of the many races that make up America.

Men of Chinese and Jap Origin Train Together

A Chinese officer and one of Japanese descent are training together in the "Foreign Legion" company at Ft. Benning, Georgia, to fight together against the Axis.

The young officers are First Lieutenant Sam G. Lew, Chinese, of Los Angeles, and a graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles campus, and First Lieutenant T. T. Sucoka, of Japanese descent, born in Honolulu and a graduate of the University of Hawaii.

Both officers received their original military training in the R.O.T.C. units of their respective schools.

ARKANSAS GAZETTE
8/11/43

Nisei Troops In ^{Ark. Gazette} Camp Shelby Review.

Camp Shelby, Miss., Aug. 10 (AP) —A regimental parade was held this afternoon by the entire combat team of volunteer Japanese-American troops as the final feature of "Open House Day" for the Nisei soldiers. Several were newly-decorated for heroism. The troops passed in formal review before Col. C. W. Pence, team commander. They were in direct command of Lt. Col. Virgil R. Miller, executive officer. The units consisted of infantry, field artillery, combat engineers and medical detachment, mostly from Hawaii.

Military observers commented favorably on the crack appearance of the Nisei soldiers, bespeaking their "exceptional aptitude" and declaring they had made excellent progress since arrival last April.

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE
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Editor—Many people believe that certain numbers of loyal citizens of Japanese ancestry should be allowed to return to the Pacific Coast during the war, and not because they are servants, either. After all, there are many talented, industrious and responsible individuals who are a credit and an asset to any State, and these California should allow back. As Mr. Rowell says in The Chronicle August 5, however—nor is it to their credit—people who believe that these Japanese-Americans should be free to return are inaccurate and unwise.

EDITH ROBERTS.
San Francisco

America's First Mass Evacuation

ISSEI, Nisei and Kibei have been uprooted from the Western soil they called home, in the first mass evacuation in American history. The Issei are first generation Japanese, born under the Mikado's flag and never permitted to become American citizens. The Nisei are their children, born and educated in the United States and loyal to the Stars and Stripes. The Kibei, citizens by birth, returned to Japan for their education, and as a result are distrusted by Nisei and Americans alike.

In contrast to cruel Axis evacuations, the democratic American plan for relocation is humanitarian. Danger to the Japs if they continued to live on the West Coast was the prime reason for the move. If Jap parachutists had infiltrated along the shores of the Pacific, all Japanese would face possible death from an aroused populace.

And so, in the spring and summer of last year, more than 100,000 men, women and children were evacuated from military areas. Nearly two-thirds of them are American citizens, and only a few hundred have ever been outside the United States. The Army took over the tremendous task. The mass exodus was orderly. Many of the Japs were stunned, because they had to sever long-standing associations, dissolve businesses, abandon farms, and break up homes—but all were patient and co-operative.

When the evacuees were housed in relocation centers, the WRA (War Relocation Authority) took over the duties of the Army. WRA's objective has been to fit the Japanese-Americans into America's wartime picture in a normal, useful, productive manner. Evacuees are not coddled or pampered, but they are treated as human beings.

"Evacuee-citizens" were housed in 10 relocation centers located in the following areas: Manzanar, Tule Lake, California; Colorado River, Gila River,

Arizona; Minidoka, Idaho; Central Utah Camp, Utah; Heart Mountain, Wyoming; Granada, Colorado; Roher, Jerome, Arkansas.

RELOCATION centers are not to be confused with internment camps for enemy aliens. For most of the evacuated people, the relocation centers are way stations—places to live until they can be re-absorbed into the normal life of the nation.

While an effort is made to have life in relocation centers approach life in a normal community, no more than a remote approach is possible. The residents do not leave the relocation areas without special permission. During daylight hours, they may move within the centers, which include several thousands of acres. After dark they are confined to the residence area—usually a mile square. This area is usually fenced with barbed wire.

WRA furnishes them with food, lodging, medical care and non-Japanese supervised education for the children at public expense. Everyone is encouraged to work.

Employees are paid nominal wages: \$12, \$16, or \$19 a month, depending on the kind of work and the amount of training and skill required to perform it. In addition, each worker is paid a cash allowance for clothing for members of his family.

Living quarters are in one-story barrack-type structures, divided into

compartments about 20 by 24 feet for a family of five or six people. Everyone eats in dining halls. Food is sufficient, but not elaborate. Rationing restrictions are followed as on "the outside." It costs WRA about 40 cents per day for food per person. Menus include both American and Oriental type dishes, because the older people, the aliens, favor the foods they knew in Japan; rice, fish, tea, leafy greens and pickles. Their children, born in the United States, prefer typically American foods. During 1943, the evacuees will produce about one-third of their total food requirements.

All work in relocation centers is done by evacuees. The Army, for instance, has availed itself of the craft of these citizens and several hundred evacuees in three centers have just about completed camouflage nets for the Army. Many also are employed on Army map-making projects.

LEISURE time activity has been developed almost entirely as a result of the evacuees' own initiative. They have complete freedom of religion and speech. Almost half the population of the centers is Christian.

Visitors are impressed by the USO clubs in operation for soldiers of Japanese ancestry who return from the Army on furlough. Three brothers volunteered for the Army together and were followed a few days later by four brothers of another family. Post offices at the centers sell war bonds and stamps. The postmaster at one center was caught short one day when an evacuee walked in and asked for \$3000 worth of war bonds. A typical community song session is sure to include such songs as "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" and "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition."

Life in a relocation center doesn't always flow along smoothly. One six-year-old summed up the feelings of most of the evacuees when she said "It's nice here, mother, but when are

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we going to get back to America?"

LAST July, the WRA put in motion a program of permitting Nisei, whose loyalty was beyond question, to leave the relocation centers and live outside. Later, the same program was extended to aliens as well. Few evacuees took advantage of this program, because most of them had few contacts in the interior of the country which would result in jobs or other means of support.

Working with the War Manpower Commission, the U. S. Employment Service, and the U. S. Department of Agriculture, private groups and churches, WRA has arranged for more than 10,000 of these Japanese-Americans to be placed in jobs outside the centers. Only those evacuees whose records have been checked and studied by the FBI and the WRA are permitted to leave.

Farm workers, farm operators, domestic servants, hotel and restaurant workers, wives and sweethearts of Japanese-American soldiers leaving to join their husbands, are the most numerous among the evacuees who have left to date. WRA has placed many in war factories, as lathe operators, foundry workers, drill press operators, machine set-up men, welders, auto mechanics, draftsmen and engineers.

One of the evacuees who has been successfully relocated is a draftsman with a firm which makes machines for marking bombs. This young draftsman helped design the machines which marked the bombs that General Doolittle's men dropped on Tokyo.

In the relocation centers, prospective employers may find a large variety of skills, and professions among the Japanese-Americans. Many young Nisei have received specialized training. Most of them have completed

high schools, and a surprising percentage have college and university training.

In some sections there is a strong resentment against Japanese-Americans. Recently, when President Roosevelt announced that the Tokyo government had murdered some of the pilots of the Doolittle squadron, the mayor and citizens in Marengo, Ill., objected to the proposed employment of 16 evacuee workers by a large farm. Because of adverse community sentiment, WRA withdrew three evacuees already employed on the farm and delayed the assignment of the 13 others. Later, at a town meeting, the citizens of Marengo voted 3 to 1 to invite the evacuees back to their city to take up employment. WRA officials were rather fearful for their charges when the President made the announcement of the murder of the Doolittle flyers, but the incident in Marengo was the only one reported.

In one district, WRA officials have contacted workers of more than 30 war plants in an effort to ascertain whether the present workers would be willing to have Japanese-Americans as fellow workers. In only one instance was there a feeling of resentment.

THE U. S. Army has let down barriers on the enlistment of these evacuee citizens. In fact, there is a special Japanese-American combat team in training now. All of them are enlistees from the Hawaiian Islands and the relocation centers. The members of this unit know they are slated for combat duty only.

Japanese-American soldiers are unanimously agreed that there is no racial discrimination in the Army.

"We are treated like other citizen-soldiers both by Army officials and

our buddies," one American soldier of Japanese ancestry said. "In fact, the only indication which our buddies give us that they consider us different is when they ask us how to say unprintable words and phrases in Japanese—very harsh terms to be applied to the Japs when they meet 'em in combat."

THE WRA believes, after many months of operating relocation centers, that they are undesirable and should be removed from the American scene as soon as possible.

"Life in relocation centers is an unnatural and un-American sort of life," states Dillon S. Myer, director of WRA. "Keep in mind that the evacuees were charged with nothing except having Japanese ancestors. The very fact of the confinement of these people fosters suspicion of their loyalties and adds to their discouragement."

As an example of what has happened to many of the evacuated people, Mr. Myer cited the case of one man who was born in Hawaii and served in the United States Army in France during 1917-18. He was a leader of Japanese-Americans of his community and was a positive force for Americanization. What mental change he went through during the evacuation period can never be known, but after he came to the relocation center, he turned from strongly pro-American to strongly anti-American. He became an agitator for resistance to the WRA. He turned his back on America, because he felt that America turned its back on him.

Approximately 40,000 young people under the age of 20 live in the centers. WRA is most concerned with their future. It is not the American way to have children grow up behind barbed wire and under the scrutiny of armed guards.

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE
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Chester Rowell

War Policy and Loyal Japanese Evacuees

This is merely to clarify what was already known to the informed, but has been busily muddled by the innocent misinformation of some and the malicious misrepresentation of others, regarding the resettlement of Japanese-Americans of accredited loyalty in the ordinary civil life of America, subject, of course, to their exclusion during the war by military order from designated military zones.

What is here said is in one sense a personal view, since it reflects what I individually believe and know, but it is also official, since it is and from the beginning has been the policy of the Government of the United States, approved by the War Department, and is in continued process of being carried through. And it is an accomplished fact, since there is no intention to change the policy and the resettlement will soon be finished, outside the designated military zones, of the remaining loyal evacuees, with the segregation of the remainder in the single camp at Tule Lake. Then it will be done, beyond anybody's jurisdiction to undo.

Since free speech is a fundamental American right, it is anybody's privilege to disagree with this policy, and to argue or to organize movements against it. It is even his legal right to swallow unverified rumors, invented in many cases by those who know or could know better. It is only to himself, not to the law, that he owes it first to investigate the facts and to act only on what stands that scrutiny. This is all that is urged here.

The immediate occasion of this reminder is a resolution, reported (on biased authority, to be sure), as passed by the Assembly interim committee on Japanese problems, urging "detention" of all Japanese for the duration of the war. There was also the statement of

Leo V. Youngworth, past grand trustee of the Native Sons, that he is sponsoring a constitutional amendment to exclude from this country anyone who held dual citizenship prior to Pearl Harbor, and a recommendation by State Senator Jack B. Tenney that the committee inquire into Japanese Buddhist and Shinto church properties in California.

Here are the facts:

In the first place, since long before the war there were some 17,000 persons of Japanese birth or ancestry living as ordinary residents in parts of the United States from which there has never been an evacuation order. Nobody has any list of these, or any jurisdiction over them that does not exist over any other citizens or residents. There is no law, order or authority to "detain" these.

To them must be added some thousands who, at the suggestion of the military, moved individually out of this district to unrestricted portions of the country before the general evacuation took place. There is no way to "detain" them, either, except as any of them, by his personal conduct, might bring himself under other criminal or military laws. And as to the remainder, most of them will soon have been resettled, on temporary or permanent leave, before anything could be done about it. So, right or wrong, this is finished, and any discussion of it is history.

In the second place, nearly all the outcry comes against a pretended movement to bring back the Japanese evacuees to California, during the war. **THERE IS NO SUCH MOVEMENT.** It was invented by confusionists, who know better and believed by others, who did not investigate. There are individuals who write letters disapproving the accepted military policy and there are doubtless those who would like their

Japanese servants back. But they are doing nothing about it; there is no organized movement to that effect, and if there were a sporadic agitation for it, it would receive no sanction from any responsible group now representing those who favor fair play to Japanese-Americans and oppose this agitation over pure fiction.

Further, if there were an amendment removing from America all those who, by the laws of their original countries, hold dual citizenship, it would deport virtually every person of European birth and many of those (including all Italians) of European ancestry in this country. There are no persons, including Japanese, who have dual citizenship by American law. The thing simply could not be done, even by an amendment requiring it, except by dumping wholesale, on Europe, without Europe's consent, a large part of the present population of America.

And any law regarding Buddhist or Shinto church property would have to include Christian church property, in order to be constitutional. There are Japanese Christian churches, too. And there are fanatics who regard every Catholic church or Jewish synagogue as a center of disloyalty to Ku Klux America. For our protection, the constitution has mercifully protected us against these aberrations, among ourselves.

Fortunately, the Government of the United States, including first of all the War Department, is committed to a very loyal and far-seeing policy, on this subject, and is carrying it out in the face of hysteria and demagogic misrepresentation. We will do well to leave it to the Government and the Army.