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Unit II*

An Address to the Sheriffs of California
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It is good to meet with a group who have found over a period of fifty-one years by working together, exchanging ideas, and cooperating in their duties - the enforcement of law and order, the protection of citizens, and the maintenance of the peace - that effective leadership in their communities can best be accomplished. Anything that has lasted that long must be powerful and constructive. And I am particularly glad to be able to be with you at this time when your problems are the same as those faced by the whole world today. It is significant that, even in wartime, you are able to gather here to reaffirm your determination to uphold American ideals and principles. In most places of the world today, a meeting such as this would have to be held surreptitiously in a dark corner with men whispering and on the lookout for secret police. But in America, and in California, we don't have such troubles and can discuss the things that bother us and plan what we intend to do about them.

Today California is peculiarly in the eyes of the world. The San Francisco Conference, which will begin on April 25, is one of the most important international events that will take place in our time. We are glad to have had one of our cities selected as the meeting place, but must be fully aware of the responsibilities such a designation brings with it. Many hundreds of foreign leaders will be here. There will also be more than 500 newspaper correspondents, according to information presently available. These leaders and correspondents will represent every nation of the world with the exception of enemy and neutral countries. And just as the world knows the next day what is said in our Congress today, so will the world know promptly what happens in San Francisco during that conference. There will be Occidentals and Orientals; Europeans, Africans, Asians, Americans; Mongolians, Caucasians, Negroes. These visitors will hear the story of democracy, the story of equality among men. They will be working out the machinery to build a world democracy and a perpetual equality among men and nations. German and Japanese radios mention the Conference in scoffing terms; but our Allies speak of it as a hope for the future - hope for a world without recurring wars. American citizenship with its attributes of fearlessness, self assurance and dignity, means much to the hearts of men who have suffered under the Nazi and Nipponese yokes. We must, therefore, make absolutely sure that nothing interferes with the welcome we extend - that nothing occurs in California to mar the impression on our guests of democracy in operation.

America has long been known as the melting-pot. Even so, as a nation we are not always too easy on the "foreigner". Those of us who arrived first find it easy to resent newcomers. And that process usually doesn't take even a generation. When California was a Frontier, there was a place for everyone. When we started putting up barbed-wire fences, the welcome mat was gradually drawn in until finally it was almost entirely out of sight. This coldness as a rule manifests itself earliest against those who are "different". All over the nation, the color line has been the easy one to distinguish, and members of other races, with the signal of their race clearly showing, have been the victims. In the South, the Negro has stood out; in the Southwest, the Spanish-Americans have been so marked; all over the land the Indian - the only native American - has been pushed from the land of his forefathers; and in California the "yellow peril" has borne the brunt of our growing conservatism.

This morning, I want to bring these generalizations down to earth and talk about Japanese-Americans.

In late 1941, we were all appalled and staggered by the blow at Pearl Harbor. The very words have come to mean to all of us "treachery", and "cowardice", and "savagery". The attack will go down in history as a blot against a nation, and I doubt if Japan will ever be able to erase it. The whole of America was aroused - indignant, horrorstruck, and ready to fight. In California, where many Japanese had settled, there was right in our midst a group we could readily identify. Their faces marked them, and it was possible to segregate and remove them from the State to interior locations. This was a war measure - I want to emphasize that - one deemed essential to the defense of our country, and therefore done without quibbling but with alacrity and dispatch. Just as the whole country was organized against the unlikely contingency of enemy attack, the Pacific Coast made extra preparations against possible subversive activity. The lives and rights of citizens became submerged in our Country's danger.

If we look on the other side, however, and consider the effect on an individual concerned - the man who was taken from his home, forced to store or sell all his belongings overnight, usually at prices ruinous to himself, and interned - the situation will not appear to be so simple.

Now that the emergency has passed and there has been time to ascertain the loyalty of individuals, the highest court of the land has ruled that such an action, without the grave military necessity, would have been unjustified; and the very agency which ordered the wholesale removal has now rescinded the order and declared that those, whose loyalty to this country is no longer in question, are free to return to their homes or to go where they please.

"Military necessity" must have been as grave with regard to Germans and Italians. They, too, were fighting the United States. We are still finding evidences of the spy work of Nazis and representatives of Mussolini who were sent to this country to undermine its defenses and aid the enemy. Germans and Italians from the West Coast were not, however, evacuated en masse and put into internment camps. There was an important difference. Frankly, we couldn't identify them. Hence they were left free to carry on their spy work until they were caught. It is certainly to our advantage that we were able to prevent people loyal to Japan from continuing any fifth column work of espionage or sabotage. I am simply pointing out that we were fighting three enemies, and were able to segregate only representatives of one. And I am glad that the thousands of persons of German and Italian extraction who are loyal to this country did not have to suffer the indignities, humiliations, and economic hardships of internment and removal from their communities.

The Constitution of the United States has many amendments. None is more dear than No. Five - "No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury..... nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb;nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." No. Six provides "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed....; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense."

It is to protect and maintain these rights that we have Peace Officers. The criminal, your enemy, has no concern for the rights of others. He punishes with a black jack or sawed-off shotgun - and without indictment. He may put the innocent citizens in jeopardy many times; he deprives of life liberty, and property, not by "due process" but by murder, kidnapping and robbery. You are the protector of these rights - not only of the wealthy and strong but also of those who are small and weak.

With the determination by the War Department that military necessity no longer requires the exclusion of the Japanese-Americans from the West Coast, and the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States that the rights of the Japanese-Americans must be restored, these rights again are theirs. Remember--and remind people--that this applies only to those whose loyalty to these United States has been determined and who are hence being allowed to leave the War Relocation Camps. These rights are meaningful - and must be protected. And it is the duty of law enforcement officials to cast aside any personal prejudices they may have and fully to protect the returning Japanese-Americans.

Each of us has, I am sure, given much thought to this problem and to the effect their return will have on his own community. I wonder, though, how many of us have gone to the bottom of the thing; gone far enough to be able clearly to see some of the reasons behind the unwillingness of some people to allow their return without incident. There are several groups to be found among those who are stirring up trouble:

1. In every community, there are some - fortunately, not many in most places - who simply admit to a strong "race prejudice" which they do not excuse or explain, and even seem to take a mild pride in. In dealing with that group, the solution frequently lies in keeping it incoherent and not associated with an active body. Even our personal prejudices are protected in "freedom of thought".
2. The "hoodlums" are frequently found among juvenile delinquents or are youths who think it is "smart" at the moment to take positive action to follow through on some attitude expressed by their elders. We know how to handle these, but must not allow violence to precede our action. After all, a wounded or dead Japanese-American benefits little from remedial action taken too late.
3. There are the professional inciters to violence who seem to feel that the vigilante-type approach proves their patriotism or who simply like to arouse the mob. You will have noticed that they are usually in the background when the shooting starts and seldom get themselves hurt. Also, they seldom act outside the law, and are consequently maliciously dangerous.
4. The "Jap-Baiters" want to fight not in the jungle or on a beach-head against regular troops, but safely at home against defenseless old men, women and children. Can we face our boys returning from overseas, where they have been fighting for the American way of life, if we permit such mistreatment?
5. Last and most vicious are those who cover their selfish economic urges with a pretense of patriotic motives. These are

the people who shall be carefully watched, and whose efforts are most dangerous, since they do put on the guise of patriotism to clothe their real motives.

Actually, it is this last group that we are most concerned with. They are the loudly vociferous and, because they wave the flag, get the most immediate and unthoughtful support. It's time that we get down to brass tacks on the reasons for so much talk. One of the clues lies in what you see in California grocery stores today. Gone are the huge piles of tempting vegetables which once made the shopper's mouth fairly water; and up are the prices on the less-attractive vegetables which are on the shelves.

On January 22 a group in Tulare County, of Orosi ranchers and business men appeared and threatened the evacuee owners of a fruit and vegetable ranch with a deadline for them to leave. Why? Could it have had to do with a desire to prevent the returning Japanese-Americans from resuming their farming operations and putting their products on the market?

On January 18, 1945, two civilian brothers and two brothers AWOL from the Army attempted to burn, dynamite, and did some scare-shooting at Sumio Doi's ranch home near Auburn. Why? The Doi family had a son in the Army unit which rescued the lost battalion of the 30th Infantry. Has that heroism been completely forgotten? Could it be that the Doi's are good farmers?

Some of the recent headlines in California papers are not of the type to make us proud. "Hospital refuses Nisei, Doctor Quits". Too often that same paper has a small item about the valor of a Japanese-American soldier.

It has been wisely said that "Patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels". It is easy to declare patriotic motives - and then to perform acts which are in direct contravention to the very patriotism they avow.

Riders in the night poured shot into the homes of Sam Takeda near San Jose, San Uyeno near Orosi, John Shirokari at Lancaster. At Oakland, Kakuichi Sadamune who has three sons in the Army, was threatened by 'phone at 2:30 AM. Are not these activities more reminiscent of Ku Klux Klans and Vigilantes than of our much-vaunted 1945 methods of protection of rights and maintenance of peace?

Your shield or star is a symbol of your office, your authority, and your responsibility. It is acquired when you assume office and say, "I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of California, and I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Sheriff.... according to the best of my ability, so help me God."

The Vigilantes were originally formed when law enforcement officers did not do their duty and even participated in defiance of the law. They

came about because of the will of law-abiding citizens who demanded that their laws be upheld. It is up to us to see that the powers and duties with which we are charged are not usurped - in other words, we must do our part or be replaced.

Most of the incidents that have taken place are specifically prohibited by law and it has been possible to take prompt and definite steps to quell disturbances and take into custody those who transgress against the peace. I know from firsthand experience how promptly and efficiently all of you have moved. The Department of Justice has been and continues to be at your service for any assistance we can render. Offenders must be apprehended and quickly.

The more subtle attacks - resolutions by which large groups promise "not to do business with the Japs", paint "Jap-lover" signs on doors, or refuse to allow their children to attend the same schools - are more degrading, harder to handle, and result in even more deep-seated discrimination against these people. Actually, if we remember that none of us is doing business with "the Japs", we'll make more headway. We can and should do business with the "Japanese-Americans". Most of those who are endeavoring to prevent the returning Japanese-Americans from being accepted in their communities were the most whole-hearted cooperators in the original orders by which they were evacuated. Many in these same groups wilfully ignore the fact that it is only those who have been proved to be loyal to this country who are being allowed to return to their former homes. If these groups question the methods used by the Army and the War Relocation Authority in determining loyalty, they have a right to make that doubt known to those in charge. But while they are yelling for the "protection of the Coast and its defenses", they might try yelling "Japanese-Americans" instead of "Japs" - and some of their ardor might vanish.

An organization which calls itself "American League" issued a statement on February 10 which declares, among other things, "The facts concerning opposition of agricultural groups to return of the Japanese to the restricted West Coast belies the charge of self-interest. Latest official figures (1940) show that Japanese competition was not a dominant factor in the produce and farming industries." Later in the same bulletin it states that more than 97% of the farms in California, Oregon, and Washington were operated by persons of nationalities other than Japanese. If the cause is not economic, and the competition they might provide is not feared, and if these groups are perfectly willing for the Japanese-Americans to settle elsewhere in the United States, what, then, is it? Methinks they do protest too much. Each of us can do much to reveal some of these "red herrings", and fully carry out our responsibilities for the real protection of the rights of American citizens.

I have seen resolutions passed at three of your Zone Association meetings reiterating your will to back up the Governor, the Law Enforcement Advisory Committee, the War Department and others concerned, in taking positive action to prevent riots, bloodshed, and disturbances brought about by intemperate words and thoughtlessness. We must back up and take cogni-

zance of the desire of the majority of our citizens to see that this return is accompanied not by riots and violence but by quiet and order. Your pledge is another powerful weapon against those who advocate lawlessness. You are to be commended for it.

I shall not dwell on the self-evident additional reason for strong effort on our part in this regard. What ever else reaches the ears of natives of Japan, we may be assured that treatment of persons of Japanese extraction is fully reported to them in every case where that treatment is contrary to our declared democratic principles. The atrocities which have been committed against American prisoners are unthinkable - brutal, inexcusable and savage. We have the urgent duty of protecting them from additional hardships. Ray Cronin, Associated Press correspondent who was in Santo Tomas Prison, told officials of the War Relocation Authority that when the Tulelake riots of November 1945 were on, for three days there were restrictive measures put into effect at the prison. That's how fast they learn about what goes on in this country. Don't give the enemy Japanese a chance to visit worse horrors on our people who are still in their clutches. They may be looking for excuses which would to them justify further mistreatment.

One word further about a matter that is a little hard to put into words but which is as sure as death and taxes: example has long been one of the more powerful influences in American life and in the setting of customs and habits not only of the nation but also of every community. Lawlessness, clanishness, segregation, and mental cruelty are subversive influences which can color the present and future life of the whole community. If they are allowed to exist unhindered and are even tacitly approved, they can and will bring evil consequences of a kind which I daresay none of us would be willing to have a part in. Learning by example is good for youth if the example is good.

The responsibility for the protection of these people does not stop with prevention of shooting. The protection of their basic rights - freedom from fear, freedom to earn their living, freedom to live as peaceful citizens - must also be maintained.

This situation is peculiarly one in which many groups need to cooperate wholeheartedly to assure results. The Sheriffs and Police Chiefs have a direct and immediate part to play; the Department of Justice has a responsibility from a statewide standpoint; the Armed Services for action of soldiers and sailors; the War Relocation Authority for furnishing information which will be helpful in carrying this program through to its ultimate conclusion; District Attorneys to prosecute anyone who violates the law; and all of us, as adults and as responsible members of our communities, to do whatever we can to see that the attitudes, too, of people are such as to allow the Japanese-Americans to live in safety and peace in the areas in which they resettle.