

4-20-42

Letter

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

April 20, 1942

Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
The White House
Washington, D.C.

RESPECTFULLY REFERRED
FOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT
AND CONSIDERATION

W.M. ...
Secretary to the President

146-13-7-2-0

MAY 1 1942

ALIEN ENEMY UNIT

Dear Mr. President:

You must be aware of the fact that if the evacuation order along the Pacific coast is enforced as it now stands, it will mean that thousands of Germans and Italians, many of whom are refugees from Fascism and Nazism, will be driven out - heaven knows where. As a whole, you will find among these groups a very large number who have suffered bitterly from totalitarian oppression and who hate it far more than any one of us can hate it. They have had personal experience with it. After being driven from land to land, they have finally come here as a haven of refuge. They have begun to build up new lives. They are willing to work at anything, however humble. At this time, when they have just begun to reestablish themselves, they will be driven out and once more will be wanderers on the face of the earth.

I particularly know many who are professors and physicians. After all, what can a professor do if he is driven out? Most colleges and universities are in difficult financial straits. Physicians are denied the opportunity of practicing in other states of the Union. In any event, all these people will go forth with a stigma on them as enemy aliens, a stigma which is most unfair and undeserved.

I trust, therefore, with all my heart that hearing boards will be set up to examine the case of each such German and Italian, in order that those who are established as friendly aliens may be permitted to reside here and continue their lives in their wonted homes.

In addition, we find many Germans and Italians who have lived here for many, many years, and yet have not attained citizenship. In many instances this is due to the fact that they have not acquired literacy, but this does not make them any less devoted to American ideals. This does not make them saboteurs or subversive influences.

But in addition to all of these I would like to add the American citizens of Japanese descent. After all, these are American citizens. They have been brought up in our schools and they have lived in American surroundings. When the war is over, they will still be American citizens. This is the first time in our history, I believe, that a group of American citizens have had to remove themselves from a whole area and the selection has been based purely upon ancestry. Throughout the country, communities, partly without any experience with Japanese, but largely because they have been stigmatized as enemy aliens dangerous to our nation, have refused to admit them. It seems to me that the least that could be done would be to permit such American citizens of Japanese descent who request it to have their cases considered.

After all, you will agree, I am sure, that the civil liberties of which but a short time ago we have spoken so enthusiastically should be main-

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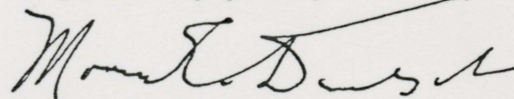
tained to the utmost degree possible, even in time of war. It would be a pathetic thing if we should sacrifice in the war the things for which we are fighting.

I realize, of course, that national security comes first, but we should make the utmost effort to deal with human beings as individuals and not make those who are innocent and loyal suffer. I earnestly urge that everything possible be done to set up such hearing boards as expeditiously as possible.

It would be a splendid demonstration that America can keep its head and its liberties even in wartime.

I am

Respectfully yours,



Monroe E. Deutsch
Vice-President and Provost

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May 7, 1942

Mr. Monroe E. Deutsch, Vice-President and Provost
Office of the President
University of California
Berkeley, California

Dear Sir:

Your letter of April 20, 1942, addressed to the President of the United States, suggesting that Hearing Boards be set up in order that those who have established themselves as friendly aliens may be permitted to reside in their homes and continue their lives in a normal way, has been referred to this office for consideration.

This is to advise you that this Unit now has under consideration the establishment of Loyalty Hearing Boards such as you suggest, and when this program has been completed, it will be released to the public press. We wish to thank you for your interest and views in this respect, and you may be sure that your suggestions will receive careful consideration.

Very truly yours,

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Edward J. Ennis
Director, Alien Enemy Control Unit

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