

It is indeed my ⁴ honor and privilege to Deliver

this MESSAGE FROM GENERAL JOHN WECKERLING, FOUNDER OF
THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE LANGUAGE SCHOOL.

ON THIS, THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING, OF THE
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE LANGUAGE SCHOOL, I THINK, IT
WOULD NOT BE REMISS TO TRACE THE ACTIONS OF THOSE OFFICERS,
WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IDEA.

IN THE SUMMER OF 1941, I WAS ON DUTY IN THE PANAMA CANAL
ZONE. LOOKING AHEAD SIX MONTHS OR SO, I COULD VISUALIZE THE
POSSIBILITY, OF A WAR, BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN. I
FEARED, IN THE EVENT OF WAR, I MIGHT BE ASSIGNED PERMANENTLY
IN THE CANAL ZONE - A RELATIVE QUIET SECTOR.

I DECIDED TO TAKE UNOFFICIAL ACTION, IN AN ATTEMPT, TO
SECURE A MORE ACTIVE ASSIGNMENT.

ACCORDINGLY, I WROTE MAJOR C. C. DUSENBURY, AN OLD FRIEND,
WHO WAS ON WAR DEPARTMENT, GENERAL STAFF DUTY (INTELLIGENCE) IN
WASHINGTON, WHO HAD BEEN IN JAPAN, AS A LANGUAGE STUDENT, AT THE
SAME TIME, THAT I HAD THIS DUTY. AT FIRST, HE GAVE ME NO EN-
COURAGEMENT, BUT LATER, WROTE ME TELLING OF THE PLAN, THEN, BEING
DEvised OF ORGANIZING, A NISEI DIVISION (COMBAT), USING U.S. AND
HAWAIIAN NISEI FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE NEXT LETTER, INFORMED ME
THAT, THIS PLAN, HAD BEEN SCALED DOWN, TO CREATING WHAT EVENTUALLY
BECAME, THE 100TH BATTALION, AND 442ND REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM.
THIS WOULD ALLOW, FOR THE TRAINING OF NISEI, AS TRANSLATORS, AND
INTERPRETERS, OF THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE, THE NEED FOR WHICH,
HAVING HAD THE ATTENTION, OF THE INTELLIGENCE DIVISION OF THE
GENERAL STAFF, FOR YEARS. WHILE ON DUTY, AS ASSISTANT MILITARY

ATTACHE IN TOKYO, I WAS SENT TO KOREA, TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF USING KOREANS, FOR THAT PURPOSE.

LATE IN AUGUST OF 1941, I WAS OFFERED AND ACCEPTED, THE RESPONSIBILITY, OF ORGANIZING WHAT BECAME MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE LANGUAGE SCHOOL, BUT ON A SMALL SCALE, PILOT BASIS. ARRIVING AT THE PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO, I BEGAN AT ONCE TO SEARCH FOR A SUITABLE BUILDING TO HOUSE THE STUDENTS, AND FOR CLASSROOM FACILITIES. I WAS INFORMED BY THE OFFICERS RESPONSIBLE FOR QUARTERING, THAT NO SUITABLE SPACE WAS AVAILABLE. I HAD LOCATED A SMALL HANGAR, ON CRISSY FIELD, WHICH I RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED, AS AN EMERGENCY MEASURE IN ORDER TO BEGIN CLASSES BY NOVEMBER 1ST.

PAUSE

AS WE ALL KNOW THE FAMOUS (OR INFAMOUS) ORANGE CRATES HAD TO BE IMPROVISED AS CHAIRS. WITH THE ASSISTANCE, OF THEN, CAPTAIN KAI E. RASMUSSEN, STUDENTS WERE SELECTED AND COMPETENT INSTRUCTORS HIRED, REQUIRING CONSIDERABLE TIME. AT THIS JUNCTURE, I LOST THE SERVICES OF CAPTAIN RASMUSSEN WHO HAD BEEN SELECTED, TO SUPERVISE THE INSTALLATION OF COAST ARTILLERY GUNS, IN THE HARBOR OF SAN FRANCISCO. MAJOR JOSEPH K. DICKEY, BECAME MY ASSISTANT. IN THE MEANTIME, I HAD BEEN PROMOTED TO THE GRADE, OF FULL COLONEL, AND HAD BEEN SELECTED AS, GENERAL DE WITT'S ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF - G-2.

PAUSE

I NEED NOT DESCRIBE, THE SMALL BEGINNING OF OUR PROJECT, FOR THE FIRST TWO CLASSES, BARELY NUMBERED 150 STUDENTS, AND CLAMOR FROM THE FIELD FOR THE SERVICES, OF OUR TRAINED NISEI. AFTER A RATHER SLOW ACCEPTANCE, BY COMBAT COMMANDERS, - GREW GREATLY, LARGELY, BECAUSE YOU MEMBERS OF THE FIRST TWO CLASSES, PROVED YOUR WORTH. THE WAR DEPARTMENT GENERAL STAFF - G-2 - APPARENTLY REALIZED, THE VITAL NECESSITY, OF INCREASING THE

STRESS

ORIGINAL CONCEPT SUBSTANTIALLY, AND THE DECISION, TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF THE COMBAT THEATERS, AND TO MOVE THE SCHOOL INLAND WAS TAKEN.

STRESS → THE OVERWHELMING SUCCESS OF THE CAMP SAVAGE, AND FORT SNELLING PHASE, WAS DUE TO THE ENTHUSIASM AND ATTITUDE OF THE STUDENTS, THE COMPETENCY OF THE FACULTY AND STAFF AND THE LEADERSHIP OF COLONEL KAI E. RASMUSSEN.

PAUSE → IT IS PERHAPS UNNECESSARY TO MENTION THAT THE MAGNIFICENT PERFORMANCE OF DUTY IN THE COMBAT AREAS, BY ALL MISLS GRADUATES, MORE THAN MET THE EXPECTATIONS, OF THE WAR DEPARTMENT, AND FIELD COMMANDERS.

STRESS → SO I WOULD SAY TO YOU, TONIGHT, VIA THIS MESSAGE, THAT YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED, SOMETHING BOTH INDIVIDUALLY, AND COLLECTIVELY, THAT COMMANDS GREAT RESPECT, AND ADMIRATION, NOT ONLY IN MILITARY CIRCLES, BUT AMONG THE THOUGHTFUL PERSONS, IN THIS COUNTRY AS WELL. NO GRUPO, COULD HEROICALLY AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY, CARRY THE VITAL TASKS, AND MISSIONS IMPOSED UPON YOU, BY THE MILITARY, DURING THE TIME, WHEN YOUR MOTHERS, FATHERS, GRANDPARENTS, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY, WERE INCARCERATED, UNDER MILITARY GUARD, AND TERRIBLE CONDITIONS OF LIVING.

PAUSE → I WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE THIS SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS, TONIGHT - "HOLD UP YOUR HEADS, PROUDLY! - THEY WERE NEVER DOWN - AND CELEBRATE THIS DATE, FOR IT IS TRULY, ONE YOU SHOULD COMMEMORATE. I ONLY WISH, THAT I COULD HAVE BEEN HERE, WITH YOU TONIGHT.
GOD BLESS YOU ALL !

JOHN WECKERLING

1984