

All my fuzzy conjectures about how war might come, or
if it would come, ended on December 7, 1941. As I recall,
it happened to me at mid-afternoon of a bright Sunday in
Hawaii time. Together with my wife and I listened to a radio
broadcast of the New York Philharmonic. The lovely music
suddenly broke and silence ensued—suddenly, America was at
war. A dark memory of that day is etched in my mind.

LAURENCE I. HEWES

CHAPTER FIVE

MOVING PEOPLE AROUND

At first there was some panic on the Pacific Coast. Fear
that the attack at Pearl Harbor had extended to the
mainland. But outwardly there was no evidence, of very little
evidence, of the crisis. I continued, as before, my daily
commute from Palo Alto to my office at the corner of Van Ness
and Market in San Francisco. Phone calls from Washington
superiors counseled business as usual for the time being. I
called a meeting of my staff and we agreed that some
safety precautions should be taken. Venetian blinds were lowered over all
windows as a protection against flying glass in the event of
a bombing attack. Containers of water and sand were placed
in the corridors and on the roof as a fire protection measure.
Several employees who commuted by car to the East Bay area
were given the go-ahead to go home early to avoid the
rush hour traffic. This was because of the
possibility that evening traffic when there were no planes

Education of a Bureaucrat,
unpublished manuscript

All my fuzzy conjectures about how war might come, or if it would come, ended on December 7, 1941. As I recall, it happened to me at mid-afternoon of a bright Sunday in Palo Alto. Together, my wife, son and I listened to a radio broadcast of the New York Philharmonic. The lovely music suddenly broke and silence ensued--suddenly, America was at war; a dark journey of the spirit commenced.

At first there was some panic on the Pacific Coast; fear that the attack at Pearl Harbor might be extended to the mainland. But outwardly there was no evidence, or very little evidence, of the crisis. I continued, as before, my daily commute from Palo Alto to my office at the corner of Van Ness and Market in San Francisco. Phone calls from my Washington superiors counselled business as usual for the time being. I called a meeting of all the personnel, and we undertook some safety precautions. Venetian blinds were lowered over all windows as a precaution against flying glass in the event of a bombing attack. Containers of water and sand were placed in the corridors and on the roof as a fire protection measure. Several employees who commuted by car to the East Bay area via the Bay Bridge requested permission to go home early to avoid the evening traffic crush. This was because of near panic in that evening traffic when three small American planes

flying in formation approached the bridge. Some fool screamed "Jap planes", stopped his car and started to run. Someone had tackled him and prevented a tragedy. Still, we were all a little apprehensive, but as day followed day without further events, we tended to relax. However, in a few days, the drop-off of younger men in the organization became noticeable as the result of a vigorous call-up of reserve officers, voluntary enlistment and draft call-up. We soon confronted an urgent need for a reorganization to provide for these vacancies. For a while, as this manpower shortage spread to our many field offices, we were preoccupied and hard pressed to find solutions to this sudden emergency.

Never, I thought, had San Francisco shone so whitely peaceful, never had the Bay area hills looked more lushly green after the winter rains; and as I rode beside it, the blue sparkle of the Bay itself seemed particularly joyous. The physical world seemed so peaceful and beautiful, one could wish only for more time to contemplate its loveliness. But reality was very different. One could only conjecture about its nature and the terrors possibly concealed in the future. It was a quiet interlude before the turbulence to come. And I wondered, too, about the reactions of people. I wondered a little about the reactions of people of Japanese ancestry who

lived among us. What were they thinking? What were others thinking about them?

It seemed likely that there would be overt hostility against these people. But they seemed so peaceful and polite --the ones we came in contact with, the pleasant little shop where we bought our vegetables of such good quality and such reasonable prices, and the small tracts where a Japanese family worked tirelessly to produce the great golden and white balls of chrysanthemums for the San Francisco florist trade and the bouquets that the Stanford girls wore to the big football games. I wondered if, in their outrage over Pearl harbor, my fellow citizens would stop to consider all the contributions our Japanese neighbors had made to California. I was not optimistic. California, particularly, had a long record of both covert and overt hostility to its Japanese residents.

But at first, there was little evidence of hostility toward our Japanese residents. Still, I recalled a statement from somewhere that outbreak of war with Japan would be the signal for a mass lynching of California Japanese. This had not happened. I did receive a call from our field office in the Coachella Valley, near Indio, to tell me that the FBI had picked up a number of elderly Japanese farmers and that their vegetable

crops were suffering from want of irrigation. But this was all the adverse news in those early days after Pearl Harbor. So I began to hope that there might be no serious trouble. After all, there were only a little more than 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry among a 10 million Pacific Coast caucasian population, and at least half of these had been born in the United States and were American citizens. It seemed almost impossible that any one could conjure up a threat to our national security from this handful of peaceable, humble people.

But I was soon to learn the error of my hopeful estimate. It was just because the Pacific Coast Japanese were a tiny minority, politically powerless, and racially identifiable that they were the classical target of racial prejudice. They could be abused without threat of reprisal. It is notable that in contrast there were much larger numbers of persons of Italian and German extraction who resided on the Pacific Coast, but they suffered little inconvenience, and in general, were not regarded with hostility. They were voters, some of them politically active; e.g., the Mayor Angelo Rossi of San Francisco was reputed to have had a large portrait of Mussolini in his office. In addition, these people were not visible; they were not racially identifiable. There were people of the same racial stock in high places to defend them. And finally, abuse of the Japanese could be defended on grounds of patriotism.

Soon the kettle of anti-Japanese sentiment began to boil as fury and frustration reached a higher pitch with the fall of the Phillipines and the tragic events connected with it. A whole unit of the California National Guard from Salinas was reported to have been wiped out in the action at Corregidor. The quietude following the initial panic over Pearl Harbor was followed by a menacing groundswell of hatred of all things Japanese. Politicians, alert to shifts in public opinion, recognized the signs of aroused public opinion and interpreted them as portents of political danger or of opportunity. Practically all political leadership joined the anti-Japanese crusade; one after the other they competed in vocal support of those who claimed that our Japanese neighbors were a clear and present threat to the security of the United States. Attorney General Earl Warren, the chief law enforcement officer of the state, became a leading advocate of sweeping anti-Japanese measures, and this meant that every state district attorney and all county sheriffs were enlisted in a policy of suppression of Japanese rights. The Mayor of Los Angeles followed suit and fired all persons of Japanese ancestry on the city payroll--these were American citizens. The Governor of California at first resisted, and then joined the procession. State civil service rights were stripped from employees of Japanese origin. No official anywhere dared to challenge the wave of Japanese prejudice that swept the Pacific Coast.

My official interest in the problems of the Japanese arose from the fact that more than half the California residents of Japanese ancestry, for the most part, were small farmers. It was obvious that most of them were able to exist only by virtue of extraordinary hard labor and very long hours. Yet a review of our records, and I made one, showed that we had never been asked for assistance by these farmers. Nor, as far as I could tell, had any Japanese been on public relief. But it seemed likely, in the present circumstances, that some support would be needed. It seemed probable that all normal credit channels would be closed to them. So I took steps to let it be known that we stood ready to help if our help should be needed. I made this statement at a meeting in Berkeley of officials of all the agricultural programs of the Federal and State Government. The meeting had been called to formulate war emergency agricultural policies. There was a restless stirring in the group after my statement--so I went on to say that there was no justification whatever for denying equal treatment to Japanese farmers. The meeting became grimly quiet. Finally, the Chairman asked if I wanted my statement to be officially recorded. I said I did. There followed a motion to the effect that this statement did not represent the official position of the group and included the statement that my policy proposal was "an affront to the people of California." The motion was

passed. Mine was the only dissenting vote. Then I rose and said that I would conduct the affairs of my agency without fear or favor to anyone, and that I would not be bound by any anti-Japanese policy. As I recall it, the chairman grimly warned me "if you think you can stop this thing, you are wrong. You will be overwhelmed. No one in his right mind would lay down the challenge you're making. I don't believe your Washington superiors will permit it."

As soon as I reached my office after this meeting, I called Washington to report what had happened. My superiors sympathized with my report of my actions but told me to try and hold my temper. They told me that they had been watching the Japanese situation as it was developing in Washington. A conflict was brewing between General Gullion, Chief of Military Policy, and Attorney General Francis Biddle over the whole alien enemy question, and particularly the Japanese issue. In general, Biddle was for taking action only in valid cases of suspected sabotage and espionage. In other words, Biddle wanted to abide by the regular judicial process. But Gullion, urged on by Lieutenant John L. DeWitt, Commander of the Fourth Army and the Western Defense Command headquartered at the Presidio of San Francisco, wanted to put the entire Japanese population, or a large part of it, under military control. I urged my Washington colleagues to find an opportunity

to get on the record opposing any official measures singling out the Japanese and specifically denouncing any measures at all against American citizens of Japanese ancestry. I was told that such an opportunity was not likely to arise, but that they would advise Tom Clark, whom Biddle was sending to California to get a first-hand impression of the situation, to come and see me. He came. We talked. He seemed rather vague about the whole problem, although alert to the need to protect civil liberties. I must admit that I was not particularly impressed by this future Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. In that same week I had the temerity to call Attorney General Warren to protest against some of the public statements he was making about the need for harsh measures against the Japanese. I told him that in some rural counties his statements had been taken as license for intimidation of the Japanese. I got nothing at all in the way of encouragement from this future Governor of California and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Warren had tight hold of an issue which was to get him the Governorship, and he didn't propose to let civil liberty-type arguments on behalf of the Japanese deter him. He simply told me that the whole matter should be handled as a responsibility of the military and that he intended to keep right on forcing the issue.

General DeWitt was at first inclined to extend to Japanese aliens the same security measures of registration and surveillance applicable to other enemy aliens. It seemed there was also a legal problem. Measures which singled out the Japanese for special treatment could also be used against alien Germans and Italians. But caucasian aliens had significant political support from large numbers of American citizens with similar origins. Indeed, several of the Pacific Coast cities had sizeable enclaves of Italian Americans, and persons of German ancestry were ubiquitous in all walks of life. These people constituted a substantial political clientele and politicians respected their solidarity. But these considerations soon ceased to concern DeWitt. He came to believe that all persons of Japanese ancestry were a military threat in an area that might be attacked and for which he had military responsibility. His views, expressed in vigorous terms, were transmitted to General Gullion in Washington. The message was simply that if Japan attacked the Pacific Coast the entire Pacific Coast Japanese community would be a potential fifth column.

Hindsight has shown that the Japanese on the Pacific Coast, citizen and alien alike, were never a threat. They were exactly what they seemed to be, despite the horrid rumors that daily floated through the Pacific Coast communities. They were hard

working, small businessmen and farmers, for the most part. And in the end, some of them turned out to be heroically patriotic. Certainly, none of them were ever found to have engaged in espionage or sabotage, nor had they ever had any such intention. Their principal offense was their physical appearance and their helplessness. They were without positive value as a political constituency. Indeed, they were a political liability; those who spoke in their behalf did so at considerable risk. Moreover, anti-Japanese sentiment embedded in the cultural traditions of the Pacific Coast could now be openly expressed under the cloak of patriotic fervor. Simultaneously, the desire for vengeance in return for Pearl Harbor was aggravated by frustrations of further military defeat in the Phillipines and rumors of Japanese atrocities. So the political pendulum swung increasingly against the Pacific Coast Japanese.

In General DeWitt's behalf, it is possible to claim that he had grounds for apprehension. For, in the first months after Pearl Harbor, the Pacific Coast was militarily defenseless. DeWitt knew this. He knew that there were insufficient and untrained troops, very limited supplies of ammunition, weapons, transport, and communication for more than token resistance. Indeed, tentative plans at one stage were drawn

for complete abandonment of the Pacific Coast as far inland as the Cascade and the Sierra Nevada. The civilian populations of these areas would have to endure Japanese occupation. About the only tangible evidence to support the theory of Japanese attack was a Japanese submarine which surfaced near Goleta near Santa Barbara and ineffectively shelled some oil pipelines. In these circumstances, a good many military men would have done some thinking about the behavior of Pacific Coast Japanese if worst came to worst.

Nevertheless, this was the time and these were the circumstances for a test of American principles, decency, fair play and justice under law, and in this test, America failed, and failed miserably. In dealing with the Japanese at the level of national policy, we used against our Japanese neighbors the deplorable policies and procedures of our Fascist and Nazi enemies. We permitted evil to color official policy. Even under the stress of circumstances, this was all too plain to many Americans. They were appalled to witness the capitulation to rampant race hatred of one after another of our respected political leaders. Indeed, to speak out against the mindless clamor was to court personal attack. The admission of evil into the councils of government was sanctioned in the name of expedience. But it was evil, all the same. Still,

there were a number of people who did speak out. But, here again, the phenomenon of Gideon's Army was repeated in the scattering and dispersion of effort by a handful of academics, some Protestant ministers, a few Catholic organizations (the Maryknol Fathers), an occasional retired missionary, a few newspaper editors and the vigorous dissent of civil libertarians. All these sought in a very unorganized fashion to stem the tide of evil. Thus, Gideon's army of protest was easily brushed aside as many Americans moved headlong to sanction an evil act.

Official planning went on along an axis that ran from the Pacific Coast to Washington. By long distance I was able to keep in touch with the maneuvers at the Washington end. Attorney General Biddle sought to develop procedures consistent with civil law to handle the Japanese problem. He was unwilling to override basic civil liberties, although he was aware of the need to develop a war time procedure for dealing with enemy aliens. At the same time, he was opposed to infringing the civil liberties of Japanese-American citizens. He was willing to formulate procedures for separating those among first generation Japanese who were palpably harmless from those who might be tainted with subversive tendencies. Even with respect to these, Biddle wanted to follow procedures consistent with due process; but at the same time, he wanted

to move such people away from strategic and sensitive military sites. Biddle and his colleagues in the Justice Department seemed to feel the need to formulate action plans only after an appropriate legal theory had been developed to support it. But Gullion and DeWitt, pressing for immediate action, felt that action could be justified after the fact and that, in any event, the authorization in the War Powers legislation was legally sufficient. It was DeWitt's contention that the Japanese had deliberately settled in militarily sensitive areas in order some day to sabotage the installations. He pointed to the Japanese settlement on Terminal Island near Los Angeles and adjacent to a Navy loading area. He wanted them out without delay. Biddle and his colleagues visualized great practical difficulties in meeting DeWitt's military requirements. Indeed, nothing Biddle could formulate could meet DeWitt's military imperatives as transmitted from the Presidio to General Gullion. DeWitt by now was committed to a hypothetical scenario of massive fifth column activity coordinated with invasion.

My personal situation was not pleasant. I had become a marked man--a Jap-lover in the eyes of the California agricultural Establishment which fully endorsed a policy of maximum restriction against Japanese residents. Moreover, antipathy

against the Japanese was strong in rural California. Japanese had entered the West Coast as docile immigrant laborers. In time, many had become independent farmers. California law prohibited them from owning land. However, by one device or another--usually through leases they had gotten access to farm land, and by dint of extraordinary work and skill had produced fine yields on relatively poor and indifferent quality soil. Their success did not bring admiration, but, rather, stimulated jealousy and dislike. Prejudice forced them to live in rural ghetto-like enclaves, partly because caucasians rejected them as neighbors, so they were accused of being clannish. They lived apart because they had to and because they were sensitive to rebuffs. Many of the older generation spoke little English, so communication was limited, and this led to the charge of secrecy. They didn't participate in community affairs, partly because they were not invited, and partly from pride. So they were different. They kept to themselves and were moral, modest, hard-working and sober. They had never been on relief, and few, if any, had engaged in crime. These were their outstanding characteristics. But they also possessed mongoloid features. Yet, in spite of rebuffs, they had always contributed to community projects whenever invited to do so. In terms of ethics and morals, their behavior met the highest standards of the American

tradition. In terms of the American rural mores, they did not measure up. They persisted in being different. So by a curious inversion of wartime hysteria, all their virtues became vices.

Thus, I measured fully up to the ill opinion in which I was held by the Establishment in my continued support of Japanese farmers. I regarded them as fully eligible for their share of rationed farm supplies of fertilizer, wire, implements, pesticides and gasoline. In several open meetings, I indicated that Japanese farmers would continue to be eligible for FSA services, just like anyone else. More and more, the behavior of other representatives of government agencies emphasized my ostracism. I was now a clearly established Jap-lover, and I was made to feel their disdain. I recall driving home to Palo Alto after one of these meetings so full of rage and frustration that I drove miles beyond the Palo Alto turn-off on the Bayshore Freeway. I did not have the political sense to realize that I was the worst possible spokesman for the Japanese. They did not need my kind of support. In Establishment circles, my advocacy tended to confirm Japanese guilt--a sort of "kiss of death". Nor had I concealed my contempt for the cowardice of government people who failed to uphold basic American principles and law. My failure as a diplomat was self-evident. If anything, I exacerbated the growing anti-Japanese sentiment.

I continued to give a running account of the Japanese situation over long distance to Washington. I pointed out that rural Japanese were almost defenseless against physical attack because local law enforcement officials simply stood aside when Japanese were harassed. I reported the increasing number of cases of non-performance in rural areas and discrimination on the part of officials of the Establishment. My ulterior purpose was to suggest the need for corrective federal action, based on the hope that the information I supplied would somehow reach the President or Mrs. Roosevelt, and that somehow they would take steps to protect the Japanese. I visualized some sort of Protective cloak policed by Federal Marshalls or the FBI. Rather hazily, I must admit, I envisaged that the President's War Powers could be used in behalf of the Japanese and against their tormentors. But in the light of what actually was happening and what was in men's minds, I was probably only aggravating a raging controversy between the military and the Attorney General and his advisers.

In the eyes of the military, the Pacific Coast Japanese problem was related to the conduct of the war in the Pacific. And at the Washington level, as I now reconstruct it, the military was testing the issue of civilian versus military control of national war policy. In that context, disposition

of the Japanese residential issue had assumed national importance. My Washington colleagues were passing on the material I gave them to Biddle and his associates in an effort to help them develop a civilian solution consistent with protection of civil liberties for the Pacific Coast Japanese. Now I think that my colleagues and I fell into the same trap. Our mistake was in the assumption that Biddle could influence the President and that his recommendations would become national policy. To oversimplify, we thought that the President would accept any reasonable proposal Biddle might make. In FSA we knew and liked Biddle's people; they seemed to share our civil liberty viewpoint and our antipathy to race prejudice. I believed I was providing the basic facts for Biddle's policy formulation. My hopes were raised by continual urgent appeals from my Washington colleagues for more and more factual information. On the other hand, my messages contained a note of urgency of the need for prompt action. It seemed to me that the Japanese situation was getting more and more out of hand. The number of cases of violence or of threatened violence were increasing rapidly, and Earl Warren's law enforcement machinery was at a standstill. It seemed we were headed for lawless anarchy, at least in some of California's rural communities. I knew of the controversy in Washington

between Biddle and the Military, and it simply did not seem possible that the military would prevail. I was wrong.

II

Executive Order 9066

My associates and I did not realize until much later that on matters involving the military, President Roosevelt intended to support the military. He stood firm on that principle throughout the war. This policy meant that when the question of the Pacific Coast Japanese finally came to Roosevelt for decision, Biddle and the Department of Justice would be overruled. The recommendations of Generals Gullion and DeWitt would prevail.

Perhaps the first concrete public expression of the President's military policy was the signing by the President of Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, seventy four days after Pearl Harbor. This Order authorized the military to remove any persons of Japanese ancestry, including American born citizens from areas which the military might prescribe. In addition, the Order directed all Executive Departments to assist the military in carrying out the Order, and this assistance would be under military control. The Order was a clean sweep victory for Generals Gullion and DeWitt and total defeat for the Attorney General, his staff and all their

supporters inside and outside government. Those, like myself, who had appealed to the need to uphold civil liberties were brushed aside. Of course, we were appalled at what we considered to be an unnecessary sacrifice and a betrayal. The agro-rural Establishment gloated in triumph feeling that Roosevelt had finally switched to their side. I vainly sought a rationale to explain the decision. There was only the purely military grounds formulated by Gullion and DeWitt and their staffs. DeWitt's formulation, in the light of history, was wrong; there was no military threat and there never had been. And the substitution of military expedience for constitutional guarantees and democratic principles led only to the shameful spectacle of a powerful country abusing a small harmless racial minority, primarily because the group was small, politically defenseless and racially identifiable. Not only was basic control now in the hands of the military, but my regional organization and I could be called upon by the military to assist in measures they might devise for containing the Japanese. And this was precisely what was about to happen.

Within a few minutes of the call from Washington with its shattering news of the President's action came a call from General DeWitt requesting me to join in discussions of the FSA role in operations under the Executive Order. I had been told by my Washington colleagues that I might receive such a call

and that I must cooperate--"that's the way the White House wants it." Shortly after DeWitt's call, a starchy military policeman courteously informed me that military transport to DeWitt's headquarters was waiting. I almost felt as if I was under arrest as I walked out of my office followed by my military escort. I could tell from the strained look on the faces of my fellow-workers that they too wondered about my fate. I rode out to the Presidio in a state of shock. I can only recall now that the predominant thought of the many that raced through my mind that sunny afternoon as we rode out Van Ness Avenue toward the Bay and the Presidio was that I could always resign from government service. But that thought was countered by the question of whether that would not amount to desertion in war time.

At DeWitt's headquarters, I met his Adjutant, a colonel, who informed that I had been nominated by Secretary of War John McCloy and Secretary Wickard of Agriculture to handle the agricultural aspects of the evacuation of the Japanese from rural portions of the Pacific Coast. This was a development for which I was completely unprepared. I said that I was willing to lend my organization to help in small ways, but not in any such major undertaking. I also pointed out that I was utterly opposed to the entire concept of evacuation. But, apparently, the Adjutant was prepared for just such a declaration.

He laid a copy of the President's Order before me. This was the first time I had seen it. The Adjutant pointed to a relevant portion of the Order; it read "I hereby further authorize and direct all Executive Departments, independent establishments and other Federal agencies to assist the Secretary of War or the said military commanders in carrying out this Executive Order, including the furnishing of medical aid, hospitalization, food, clothing, transportation, use of land, shelter and other supplies, equipment, utilities, facilities, and services".^{13/} How or why my Region of FSA had been selected for this dubious distinction, I never learned. I wondered if, perhaps, it was to be interpreted somehow as punishment for my obstreperous opposition to any discrimination against the Japanese. Could the singling out of my Organization and of me, personally, have been planned by the Agro-rural Establishment as a way to take me out of circulation and to shut me up? Could it be that the military, in collusion with Roosevelt's staff, sought to allay the almost universal bitter condemnation by liberals of E.O. 9066 by associating one of the most liberal New Deal agencies in its execution, and, thus, using us as sort of a symbol of good intentions in doing a dirty job? Or was it that the Administration and the Military were simply appropriating the services of a unit of the Federal Government with a successful record of

^{13/} Executive Order No. 9066, Authorizing the Secretary of War to Prescribe Military Areas; February 19, 1942.

administering a complex rural action program? Both my Washington and Regional colleagues were as bewildered and confused as I was. Given any kind of a choice, none of us would have touched the assignment. But there was no choice. We should take orders and have no voice in the development of policy.

Shortly, I received DeWitt's written orders---"-----you are hereby ordered and authorized as follows:

1. To institute and administer a program which will insure continuation of the proper use of agricultural lands voluntarily vacated by enemy aliens and other persons designated by me, and which will insure fair and equitable arrangements between the evacuees and the operators of their property."^{14/}

The letter went on to provide for financing by the Military of expenses incurred in carrying out these orders. Another letter spelled out in detail what the authority delegated to me entailed:

- "(a) To do everything reasonably necessary to prevent any crop loss subsequent on evacuation and to reduce to a minimum the spoilage of growing crops;
- (b) To assist the evacuee in providing a substitute or operator and at the same time to preserve the

^{14/} Letter of March 15, 1942, J.L. DeWitt, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army Commanding to Mr. Laurence I. Hewes, Jr. Regional Director, Farm Security Administration, 30 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, California.

evacuees' equity to the fullest extent consistent with the circumstances in each case.

- (c) If necessary to take over and operate property where, in the absence of such action, growing crops would be neglected or abandoned or where the evacuees' equity, though of reasonable substance, would otherwise deteriorate."^{15/}

From these letters and conversations with members of DeWitt's staff, there was apparently great sensitivity to the protection of private property. This was in contrast to an equally great disregard for the civil rights of individuals. These had no military status. I have sometimes wondered about the military concepts of the meaning of war, whether the struggle is primarily in terms of property or in terms of the preservation of human freedom.

I also wondered some years later, as I became more familiar with Japan, its history and culture, about the reactions of the first generation Japanese, the issei, to this American exercise of arbitrary military power. They would have been familiar with Japanese militarism and its arbitrary use of power. Were they so shocked at our brutality, or did they recognize and expect the authoritarian use of power? To the second generation,

^{15/} Letter of March 27, 1942, Karl R. Bendetsen, Colonel, G.S.C. Assistant Chief of Staff for Civil Affairs, Directing W.C.C.A.

born in the United States (the nisei) no such rationale was possible. There was no cushion for their feelings; their civil rights were destroyed; they had no recourse; they knew that the entire enterprise was a manifestation of racial prejudice.

Another set of questions have plagued me. Would it have been possible to provide adequate civil protection for all these people given the widespread hostility and the connivance and dereliction of local law enforcement? Action to override local with federal power to protect the Japanese would have had wide opposition. Obviously, extraordinary protective measures would have been necessary. And would these have had to become increasingly stringent as the frustration and terror of the Pacific War increased? Was the almost universal political accommodation to prejudice an indictment of a particular set of political leaders or was it perhaps an inevitable expression of dominant popular sentiment? Would universally applicable, full-scale martial law over all the Pacific Coast, or even a modified form of it, been feasible? Would this have provided adequate protection? Or do we simply have to write the whole episode off as a cost of war? If so, we must accept a contradiction between war in any form and concepts of individual freedom. If these are inevitable costs, must we also accept the inequality with which such costs are imposed?

Looking back now, it seems unfortunate that those like myself who opposed DeWitt's program for evacuating the Japanese from their homes and moving them to government-run Relocation Centers, which were modified concentration camps, had developed no alternate plan for action. Those in the opposition should at least have attempted to devise a program recognizing political and Military realities. Instead, we spent all our time exhorting our opponents in the name of civil liberties. We had nothing concrete to propose and, to a considerable extent, this was Biddle's weakness, too. The clumsy efforts of the Justice Department to separate suspected enemy aliens from loyal Japanese became increasingly unworkable as the Military continually added new restricted areas all along the Pacific Coast. Justice's efforts to handle the problem on an individual case basis soon outran their manpower resources, and new recruits were apt to do great injustice before their mistakes were discovered. People were snatched from their homes and locked up on insufficient evidence or by mistake. So, Justice never presented an effective overall plan to counter Gullion's proposal for wholesale evacuation, and among the top people in that Department, there seemed to be uncertainty and confusion. Perhaps, if more time had been allowed, a workable plan might have been devised. However, in the rural areas of the Pacific shorelands, it would have been difficult to

administer any plan to insure positive security for Japanese residents. Moreover, there was a specific incentive among rural caucasians to secure the Japanese displacement. They had long been jealous of the apparent prosperity of Japanese farmers. Consequently, in addition to race prejudice there was, among some rural Californians, the added aspiration of dispossessing the Japanese and taking over their property with or without compensation.

Among the Japanese, there was apparently divided opinion with the result that most of their public action took the same form as that of their Caucasian supporters -- an appeal to civil liberties and constitutional guarantees. But, they, too, did not put forward practical suggestions on which action could be based.

In addition, our sense of time was erroneous. We were misled by the lull which lasted from December 7, 1941 to about mid-January 1942. We spent these precious months in hoping that nothing would happen; we made no plans; we simply hoped. No specific event seemed to have triggered the outburst of anti-Japanese feeling, but it flared with such suddenness that we were caught off-guard. The most probable cause was the rapid accumulation of bad news from the Pacific. Everywhere, the Japanese military machine moved from success to success, and everywhere Allied Military forces suffered one disastrous and

humiliating defeat. Not only were these defeats humiliating, but some of them seemed the result of Allied ineptitude and lack of preparation. Most of our planes in the Phillipines were destroyed on the ground. Individual cases of tremendous heroism did not lessen the disastrous total failure. We did not realize how rapidly political leaders like Mayor Bowron of Los Angeles, or Governor Olson of California could shift ground, or that influential journalists like Walter Lippman would move from a moderate to an extreme position. It all happened so quickly! By February 1, 1942, the entire Pacific Coast was a hotbed of anti-Japanese emotion, and by February 1, the issue had been decided. The shame is that it was a contest lost by default.

III

The Evacuation Program

A line on the map along the Pacific Coast from Canada to Mexico designated DeWitt's Military Areas land 2. Roughly, the eastern boundary of Military Area followed the foothills of the Cascade and Sierra Nevada ranges. Military Area 1 began at the waters edge and occupied about a half of the total, with its eastern limit becoming the western boundary of Area 2. For a time, it seemed the Military would be content with the evacuation of Military 1; later, they changed their minds and evacuated Area 2. The evacuation proceeded by stages and by sectors of

the Military Area. The Military designated the sector to be evacuated by publishing Civilian Exclusion Orders. The first Exclusion Order requiring the compulsory evacuation of persons of Japanese ancestry from Bainbridge Island, Kitsap County, Washington was dated March 24, 1942, and the Order was executed on March 29, 1942. Bainbridge Island was selected because of its proximity to Bremerton Navy Yard near Seattle.

Each individual family of Japanese ancestry in an Exclusion area reported to a Civil Control Station located in the area in a public hall, school gymnasium or auditorium. From the moment of posting an Exclusion Order, all constitutional guarantees of personal liberty, including that of habeas corpus, were suspended. Each individual was registered by a team of government and military personnel. Each person then went through a procedure to ascertain the location of his or their property and their health situation. Arrangements were made for custodianship of their property or other assets. This processing went on against a fixed schedule to meet a fixed date of evacuation. The evacuees were then moved in a military convoy, by train or motor vehicle to an Assembly Center where the evacuees were temporarily housed under military guard. Assembly Centers were established in County fair grounds, race tracks and other facilities which could be quickly converted to temporary housing were acquired from the

military. From the temporary Assembly Centers the evacuees were transferred to permanent Relocation Centers administered by a newly created civil agency of the Federal Government-- the War Relocation Authority. At the height of the evacuation there were as many as 43 Civil Control Stations operating simultaneously, and an average 3,750 evacuees were being moved daily.

This procedure for forced or involuntary evacuation had been preceded by an initial stage of voluntary resettlement which commenced on March 2, 1942, with DeWitt's Public Proclamation No. 1, establishing Military Area No. 1. From March 2, persons of Japanese ancestry could, with military permission, leave the area and find new residences in the interior. It had been hoped that if a voluntary evacuation proved feasible that forced evacuation might be minimal. A number of offices were set up to assist and advise people who wished to undertake to move voluntarily. Only some 9,000 people were able to make such a move, and the failure of the effort was signalled by DeWitt's Proclamation of March 27, 1942, which effectively "froze" all persons of Japanese ancestry in their places of residence to await military instructions for involuntary evacuation. The failure of the voluntary stage of evacuation was due to the hostility of the interior states.

Here, again, the absurdity of prejudice was manifest:

"However, the attitude of the interior states was hostile. This group, considered too dangerous to remain on the West Coast, was similarly regarded by state and local authorities and by the population of the interior. The evacuees were not welcome. Incidents developed with increasing intensity, with the result that the Assistant Chief of Staff for Civil Affairs, on March 21, recommended to the Commanding General that evacuation be placed on the basis of complete Federal supervision and control. By Proclamation No. 4, dated March 27, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry were required to remain within Military Area No. 1 and were not permitted to change their residences."^{16/}

The fact of racial prejudice on the West Coast became the excuse for interior states to prohibit relocation.

The real test of our ability in FSA to protect the agricultural interests of the Japanese depended on the speedy development of procedures and implementation of our mission. We were expected to recruit and finance substitute operators for Japanese farms and to supervise the execution of equitable written agreements between the proprietor and the substitute operator. Our vigorous execution of the terms of our instructions from the military and their very literal interpretation was a great disappointment to those who had hoped to exploit the distressed evacuees. We absolutely prohibited the appropriation of lands rented to Japanese farmers by the landlords who claimed that evacuation

^{16/} Final Report, Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast 1942, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1942, page 43.

justified them in taking over on the grounds of "involuntary breach of contract". We insisted that the lease continue in effect with substitute operators acceptable to the original tenant. I must acknowledge that the support of DeWitt's staff was most helpful in brushing aside all such spurious claims. Still, our efforts in behalf of the evacuees were sometimes hampered because of our limited authority to interfere with voluntary agreements between the original farmer and a substitute he might select. One could hardly blame a Japanese farmer from wishing to avoid contact with representatives of a government intent on treating them as enemies.

This distrust was particularly evident among the older Japanese, the issei. Their knowledge of our language and of our legal forms was limited. They preferred to trust some Caucasian neighbor or businessman with whom they had prior dealings. Some of these Caucasian surrogates were outraged when we insisted in reviewing these "voluntary" agreements. But, even after we were certain that these agreements were fraudulent and made under duress, we were helpless if our Japanese client insisted on honoring the agreement. Still, one of the endearing characteristics of Japanese people is their intuitive sensitivity to the attitudes of others. And soon enough, they became aware that, within the limitations of our assignment, we were on their side.

We had also hired young nisei men and women as temporary help in our field offices. This was surely an anomaly! The Federal Government putting on its payroll people who it had identified as dangerous to national security! Still, we figured out a way to do this in such a fashion that the Military did not object. And it was an enormous help, for these young people could speak to their elders and explain in Japanese our desire to be helpful. And the young men were frequently farmers in their own rights. Often, they knew intimately the farms and the associated agricultural operations that were involved in a transaction. They could tell us what amount was needed for credit to enable a substitute operator to function. We also had, by virtue of DeWitt's lawyers and our own, a very severe legal weapon which we barely used. However, the fact that we could "freeze" a property, i.e., expropriate it, meant that we could prevent any outrageously exploitive agreement, and this deterred a good many people from perpetrating outright plunder. Of course, the more we insisted on protecting the agricultural properties of the evacuees, the more frequently we became "Jap-lovers". Since we were aware that all our efforts in behalf of the Japanese were limited to the period up to their removal, we tried to achieve maximum security for their property in advance of evacuation, knowing that we should have no responsibility or authority

after the evacuation. We speculated that the manner in which our arrangements were followed through was critical if substantial loss was not to be incurred. We anticipated that after the Japanese had left and our authority ended, there was going to be more or less routine supervision and enforcement of contracts. Who was going to control refusal of substitute operators to abide by contracts? And what would be done in the event of outright abandonment? It was evident, in advance, and in spite of all our efforts, that our clients were to sustain very heavy economic loss. It was some comfort to feel that their control of land would remain, for the most part, intact. And, even this was not always the case.

We were haunted by another problem of which we only became gradually aware and that was the inferior to mediocre quality of the soil on which these small farms had flourished. And the magic of Japanese intensive cultivation could not be transferred. Quite a few people whose mouths had salivated at the thought of gaining possession of these flourishing farmsteads had assumed that the lush production they had noted was due primarily to good soil. But, the real input was not soil fertility, but rather extraordinarily detailed Japanese management based on knowledge and skill. Moreover, the fields were usually small and often irregularly shaped and, hence, not adaptable to the

use of the constraints which Japanese farmers had learned to overcome. In our anxiety to find substitute operators, we were forced to accept substitute tenants who were mainly motivated by an opportunity to capitalize on high wartime prices for agricultural products and the misfortunes of the evacuees. Many had not had any long farm experience. What the evacuation would accomplish, among other things, was the displacement of a very successful agricultural system.

Another problem was the timing of Exclusion Orders for the evacuation of Exclusion Areas. The Military refused to disclose to us in advance their schedule for issuing Exclusion Orders. We tried to demonstrate that by working without advance knowledge of timing, we were at a serious disadvantage, because once an Exclusion Order was posted, we had less than a week to complete all arrangements for the people in that Area, and, of course, we could not know in advance the size of the Exclusion Area or how many people were involved. We pointed out, too, that it was extremely difficult to find substitute operators for the more exotic enterprises, such as goldfish hatcheries and nurseries for ornamental plants and shrubs. For the most part, the Military curtly brushed aside our remonstrations. We did our best, but substantial loss was inevitable.

Our assignment in each Exclusion Area ended when the military convoy departed and after military police had entered each residence to insure that no one had escaped or remained behind. And when the last evacuee departed from the last Exclusion Area in Military Area No. 2, our wretched assignment was completed; this was on August 8, 1942. I have written elsewhere: "Finally, in August, the nasty business was over; 7,200 farms, with a total of a little over a quarter of a million acres, had been transferred to Caucasian operation. I had lent about four million dollars, and all other costs of our work was \$226,857.53. General DeWitt thanked me formally and told me we were through. Karl Bendetsen (Assistant Chief of Staff for Civil Affairs for DeWitt) (parenthesis supplied) had become one of the Army's youngest full colonels, and received a splendid military decoration. So, at last, the Pacific Coast was secure; some 110,000 people were behind the barbed wire of Relocation Centers." ^{17/}

IV

The Administrative Milieu of the Evacuation

At best, the evacuation was, for me and all the people engaged in our participation, a wretched experience. We were resentful in being made to participate in a massive act of injustice. Still, we worked hard at our assignment because we

^{17/} Hewes, Laurence, Boxcar In The Sand, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957, Page 175.

of an administrator's dream. Our misery came from our involvement in an immoral and tragic undertaking, not from administrative details.

There is something Kafkaesque in the evil of such an assignment. Everything was so quiet and orderly. A field office in an Exclusion Area had the outward appearance of normalcy. Evacuees sat quietly beside desks, soberly answering questions as an official form was filled out. It was heartbreaking to witness the cooperation of human beings in preparations for their disposal. Loud expressions of rage and despair would have been a relief. The quiet acceptance of injustice was unnerving. These offices did not have the depressing atmosphere of a police station, though their function was similar, and the background presence of armed Military Police lent the essential tone of latent force. One could almost imagine a doomed prisoner quietly discussing with a warden the details of his execution. Of life these people were not being deprived, but certainly "of liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

So we were glad to be done with a miserable assignment and looked forward to resumption of our normal FSA duties, but, now, there were almost two separate FSA programs with a separate organization for each program. There was the "old" or regular FSA program and organization, and, in reality, a separate organization to handle the war emergency programs. I was forced to

take direct charge of the latter and delegate direction of the "old" program and depend on confidence in the "old" staff to see that it was properly administered. At the time, I was too busy to consider the implications of this arrangement in terms of my own tenure. I did not realize that it would be a simple matter to transfer the war emergency program to some other agency and to fill the post I had delegated with someone else. I did not realize that there would continue to be war emergency programs that would continue to separate me from my normal responsibilities. Our capacity for handling emergency situations requiring fast action and ability to perform was well known by now to permit us to slip back into the anonymity of former routines. I did not realize that the two pronged organization system would be the means for permanently separating me from the FSA program.

The leaders of the Agro-rural Establishment on the West Coast were as shocked as I was to learn of my selection to handle the agricultural aspects of the evacuation. They had assumed that their Establishment prestige and their role in the anti-Japanese agitation entitled them to preference in such a selection. One such incident was amusing. I had called the Director of Agricultural Extension of Oregon to ask him for the assignment of some of his people on a temporary basis. I was astonished to have him commence the conversation with a statement that he was

If one inquires into the Public Administration and political power aspects of the evacuation, it is clear that a client relation was involved between FSA and the Japanese evacuees. But it is also clear that no power flowed from this relation. As far as the military role is concerned, their power stemmed directly from the entire federal establishment headed by the President. The other two branches of the Federal system, the legislative and the Judiciary, were also to lend their support to the Military. In the relation of the Military and FSA, the simplest analogy is between a government department and one of its subordinate bureaus or divisions. In that role, FSA power was entirely delegated to it by the Military. That the tripartite Agro-rural syndical power remained effective was indicated by the anti-Japanese agitation and support of the Land Grant Colleges, state and Federal agricultural programs and support of members of congress from Pacific Coast rural constituencies. This Establishment succeeded, temporarily at least, in a long-term objective of forcing the Japanese out of West Coast agriculture. While this turned out to be a short-term gain, the intention, as indicated by subsequent post-war behavior, was to make it permanent.

The evacuation violated basic civil guarantees of the American Constitution. It was accomplished with the cooperation and participation of several major departments of the Federal Government,

including the White House, Treasury, Justice, Agriculture, Federal Security Administration and the Federal Reserve System. A number of the officials of these agencies, both senior and junior, were opposed to the evacuation, and, prior to the final decision, participated in conferences where these objections were voiced. Yet, in the end, they all lent their services to facilitate the Military phases of the evacuation operation. State and local political leadership was initially uncertain, but finally came around to saying that the Japanese presence was a real danger, and that harsh measures for dealing with them were justified. This is particularly true of the entire law enforcement apparatus of the State of California under the specific leadership of Attorney General Earl Warren who was particularly adamant. Only a few political personalities remained firm in opposition to the evacuation, most notably Mayor Cain of Tacoma, Senator Sheridan Downey of California and Congressman Jerry Voorhis from a southern California district. Another aspect was Japanese quietude and apparent acquiescence to fate. The official ~~vote~~^{voice} of the younger Japanese-American citizens, the Nisei, was the Japanese-American Citizens League. The League's councils were divided between active protest, including legal action, and accommodation, finally accepting the latter position. The tactical situation seemed to be that the Japanese themselves

did not oppose evacuation, and, in any event, they had no counter-plan.

If the councils of those opposing evacuation were divided and largely preoccupied with formulating moral protest, the councils of those favoring evacuation were single-minded, action-oriented planning sessions. It must be conceded, too, given the objective of evacuation, that the Military plan for reaching the objective was well done. It was both detailed and integrated. All parts fitted, timing was precise. Monstrous as was the objective, the plan was technically superior. It seems that a compact, single-minded political majority supported by good technical planning will, in the short run, override a morally correct opposition if that opposition is not compactly organized and does not have an implementable plan. Perhaps the conclusion is that moral and ethical philosophy without an associated capacity to plan is, in the short run, ineffective as agencies for action. Planning, in itself, is ethically and morally neutral; it is a means, not an end. The moral content of planning is its end purpose. The purpose behind the evacuation plan was a combination of military considerations and racial intolerance. The military considerations turned out to be irrelevant so the residual purpose of the evacuation plan was to satisfy the ends of injustice, and that was what was accomplished.

in conference on the Japanese problem in Oregon and that my call was timely because they were considering what role FSA was to have in the organization they were planning. He could not believe that I was in charge and wanted some proof. I told him to take a plane to San Francisco and be in my office the next day. When he arrived, I went with him to the Military and had them tell him the facts of life. I actually heard some of the Establishment representatives say that they could not understand why an organization in which they had no confidence should suddenly be given superseding authority. I would gladly have traded places with them. As far as I was concerned, my new assignment was not a position of honor. However, they were soon reconciled. I made few claims on them, and in a sense, they got what they wanted--evacuation of the Japanese and my absence from their meetings. Probably wiser heads among them knew it was as well that the assignment had not fallen to them, because they had neither the administrative nor executive talent for such an assignment. Perhaps, too, they saw, more clearly than I, that FSA would not survive the war. I really didn't sense in my preoccupation that the diversion of our energies implied a new set of priorities in which FSA work had lower rank, and that this, in turn, signalled the decline of FSA, at least in its original New Deal context.