

Bigelow

WEEKLY PRESS REVIEW

No. 36

Week ending September 22, 1943

For the Use of the WRA Staff

SUMMARY

Segregation was the greatest source of news this week. The many news stories on President Roosevelt's letter to the Senate regarding the segregation program, surprisingly enough, carried no headlines on his statement that evacuees would be returned to evacuated areas as soon as military conditions made it feasible. The editor of the S. F. EXAMINER, however, commented that this statement, following so closely on the transfer of Gen. DeWitt from his post as commander of the Western Defense Command, implied a gradual easing of the present restrictions. The Milwaukee JOURNAL, carrying the only editorial received thus far on the President's letter and accompanying report by OWM Director Byrnes, termed them "sound Americanism".

A Ray Richards report stated Rep. Costello (Cal.) "pledged prompt and drastic Congressional counteraction" to an expected attempt on the part of WRA to return "certain Japanese elements" to California on the completion of the segregation program. Westerners are "uneasy", said Costello over the President's letter to the Senate.

Earl A. Best, a former WRA employee at Heart Mountain who testified before the Costello sub-committee last June that a Japanese was running the center and that the evacuees had hidden thousands of dollars worth of foodstuff, was arrested in California for extradition to Wyoming on charges of check forgery.

Reports indicated a need for evacuee harvesters in several Mid-western states. Idaho farm leaders are hoping to find 200 or 300 experienced farm workers in the group of "loyal" evacuees arriving this month from Tule Lake.

The California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board ruled that Japanese evacuees are not eligible for unemployment compensation. This affirmed the policy being followed by the California Stabilization Commission which has denied payments to 13 evacuee claimants.

Japanese-American troops from Camp Shelby, Miss. are reported guarding German prisoners of war who are harvesting peanuts in Alabama. Kazuo Komoto, who was wounded while serving with American forces in the Southwest Pacific and whose parents are at Gila River, received the Purple Heart decoration for military merit.

Three West Coast papers gave editorial thanks to Gen. DeWitt for his work in evacuating the Japanese and expressed hope that the new commanding officer of the Western Defense Command, Gen. Emmons, would maintain Gen. DeWitt's firm stand against the return of the evacuees to the West Coast. Gen. Emmons asserted that "no Japanese evacuee will be returned to restricted military areas at the expense of national security".

CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS

Congressman William F. Norrell of Arkansas, in Portland, Oregon with the house appropriations committee's sub-committee, announces the 20,000 Pacific Coast Japanese now in "my" state will have to "get out quick" after the war; adds that evacuees working on draining the land and clearing it of timber have put it in a "high state of production". by David W. Hazen, Portland OREGONIAN, 9/4/43

Rep. John M. Costello, chairman of the Dies sub-committee which recently investigated the evacuee centers, "pledged prompt and drastic Congressional counter-action" to an expected attempt of WRA to return to California approximately 7,500 relatives of Japanese-Americans now in the U. S. Army, following the completion of the segregation program. Story by Ray Richards. S. F. EXAMINER (date not given) and Seattle POST-INTELLIGENCER, 9/13/43.

"Jap centers bad as ever, Costello says". (headline) Ray Richards describes report on evacuation, submitted to the Senate by Office of War Mobilization Director Byrnes as "latest WRA apology-- a repetition of previous defenses of its policies"; states westerners "uneasy" over President Roosevelt's accompanying letter which promised the return of the evacuees to the West Coast when military situation permits. S. F. CALL BULLETIN, 9/14/43, S. F. EXAMINER and Seattle POST-INTELLIGENCER, 9/15/43

Earl A. Best, former associate steward at Heart Mountain relocation center who testified before a Dies subcommittee last June that the relocation camp was run by a Japanese and that thousands of dollars of foodstuff were hidden by the evacuees, is held in California for extradition to Wyoming on charges of check forgery. Billings GAZETTE, 9/15/43 and Wyoming STATE TRIBUNE, 9/16/43. L. A. TIMES account stresses statement by Earl Best that his arrest is "retaliation" for his testimony to the Dies subcommittee. L. A. TIMES, 9/14/43. INS reports Earl Best will "fight extradition"---claims reason for his arrest is a mystery to him. INS, Sacramento BEE, 9/14/43

PUBLIC ATTITUDES

Columnist

Colleges refusing to accept Japanese-American students have "violated their justification for existence, which is to teach scientific candor and freedom from silly emotionalism" says Dr. George Crane, Northwestern University psychologist. Sees no reason for treating citizens of Japanese ancestry differently than those of German and Italian extraction. "The Worry Clinic" by Dr. George W. Crane, GARY POST TRIBUNE, Gary, Indiana.

Editorials

Reprinted editorial from the Washington Teamster relates story of Marine Corporal Kenneth W. Nickelson, son of the general president of the International Laundry Workers Union, who discovered a Seattle classmate among the Japanese soldiers killed at Guadalcanal. Editorial writer advises those promoting the release of evacuees to "tell it to the Marines". Aberdeen, Washington WORLD, 8/27/43

Chicago editor praises Rep. Eberharter for "courage to dissent" from Dies sub-committee majority report; feels "no government agency has faced a more difficult task than WRA". Chicago SUN, 8/28/43

Announcement of the beginning of Japanese repatriation "most welcome"--the advantage of getting disloyal Japanese out of the country "far outweighs" the fact we are giving Japan men of "military age". Twin Falls, Idaho TIMES-NEWS, 9/7/43

The Sacramento Bee, which has consistently advocated restrictive measures against Japanese-Americans, comments on the action of a Superior Court judge who recently upheld the right of a Californian of Mexican parentage to live in a previously restricted residential district. Bee's editorial terms the judge's decision "a practical application of democracy." Sacramento BEE, 9/11/43

The policy of relocation of loyal Japanese, as explained in a report to the Senate (by OWM Director Byrnes), and the President's affirmation of the right of loyal evacuees to return to evacuated areas when military conditions make it feasible are termed "sound Americanism" by Milwaukee editor. Milwaukee JOURNAL, 9/15/43

An editorial from the Miami Daily News asks for "clear-minded and firm action in Washington" to clarify the clash between military and civil authorities over the Hawaiian habeas corpus case; finds it "a situation which is not compatible with orderly government". Idaho DAILY STATESMAN, 9/13/43

Three West Coast papers carry editorial tribute to Lt. Gen. DeQitt after announcement of his transfer. The S. F. NEWS expressed its approval of his work as commanding officer of the Western Defense Command and the Fourth Army by a cartoon titled "Well Done, Sir and Good Luck", and thanked him in behalf of the West Coast, and particularly San Francisco, for his "great service" in the Aleutians and in removing Japanese residents from the coastal area. The Sacramento BEE stressed the hope that his firm stand against the return of the evacuees for the duration would be maintained by the new commanding officer, Lt. Gen. Emmons, while the L. A. TIMES commented that the success of Gen. Emmons would depend on his adoption of his predecessor's "long-range proven policies". S. F. NEWS, 9/11/43 and 8/15/43, L. A. TIMES, 9/12/43 and Sacramento BEE, 9/13/43

Feature Articles

Four pictures of Nisei employed in Milwaukee accompany an article describing the fine treatment they have received there and the ready praise given them for their work by "pleased" employers. Milwaukee JOURNAL, 9/13/43

"Need farm or factory help? Thousands of workers in Japanese relocation camps waiting to be hired." (headline) Article released by Cleveland office of WRA describes the relocation program and procedures by which "an almost untapped supply of intelligent and industrious workers" may be used as a source of badly needed manpower Granada JOURNAL, 9/9/43 and South Milwaukee JOURNAL (date not given)

Four Alaskan Japanese, evacuated to the Minidoka center and now doing farm work near Twin Falls, Idaho, find climate in the states too warm, prefer year-round cold weather of their Alaskan homes. Twin Falls, TIMES-NEWS, 9/13/43

Letters to the editor

The four letters to the editor received this week were unanimously hostile.

A contributor from Albany, N. Y. expresses "regret" and "apprehension" on learning that WRA has released "23 Japanese...from a concentration camp"--is afraid

Americans will never learn "that once a Jap always a Jap". N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM, 9/1/43

Criticism of letters, which had pleaded for tolerance toward the Nisei comes from a Milwaukee reader who feels they should receive no sympathy and suggests we "leave the Japs to our military forces". Milwaukee JOURNAL, 9/11/43

A letter to the Sacramento BEE claims the assistance of the Japanese is not needed in view of the fact the fruit harvest has been successfully completed without them, and adds that producers are getting "unheard of high prices for the fruit". Sacramento BEE, 9/15/43

California Joint Immigration Committee asks for end of dual citizenship of Germans, Italians and Japanese, claims the Japanese problem on the West Coast could have been prevented "by careful planning a few decades ago" but for opposition from "blundering idealists". Sacramento BEE, 9/13/43

Resolutions and Statements

President Herbert J. Davis of Smith College announces he has no intention of rescinding the appointment of Dr. Schuichi Kusaka as a temporary lecturer in physics for the coming year, despite protests being recieved from the local townspeople. PM, 9/1/43

Massachusetts Legionnaires adopt resolution expressing "unalterable opposition to discrimination against minority groups because of race, color or creed"--ask for immediate repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act. 8/22/43 (unidentified source)

Lt. Gen. DeWitt warns West Coast of the "growing hazard of organized sabotage and espionage"--points out "the enemy is by nature patient and will strike when the public has been lulled into a sense of security." UP, Sacramento BEE, 9/11/43, L. A. TIMES, 9/12/43

"Chinese exclusion law repeal urged" (headline) in resolution passed by a convention of Chinese War Relief associations held in New York City. AP, L. A. TIMES, 9/12/43

Assistant FBI Chief, Lee R. Pennington, tells Disabled American Veterans convention in New York that no evidence of "foreign directed" sabotage was found in the 11,534 cases of suspected sabotage investigated. Wash. D. C. POST, 9/20/43. A Los Angeles Army and Navy group hears Richard B. Hood, FBI agent, warn that the peril of sabotage still exists although there have been "no important acts of sabotage" so far. L. A. TIMES, 9/16/43

Detroit labor paper carries report of protest by AFL unions that local milk company is a "Jap lover!" AFL protest claims the Johnson Milk company, "the largest employer of Japanese in the State of Michigan," allows them to sleep on the premises of the company stores, contrary to Board of Health regulations. Detroit LABOR NEWS, 8/27/43

Clyde E. Miller of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis testifies before the President's Fair Employment Practice Committee that Japanese and German propagandists are "exploiting" the discrimination against all "colored" people in America, including "Indians, Chinese, Japanese and others" as well as the Negroes. by Louis Stark, N. Y. TIMES, 9/17/43

Lt. Gen. Delos C. Emmons succeeding Gen. DeWitt as head of the Western Defense Command, asserts that "no Japanese evacuee will be returned to restricted military areas at the expense of national security", and warns that the possibility of enemy action in the West Coast area continues to be a serious threat. N. Y. TIMES, 9/19/43

Five West Coast papers carry reports of the appointment of Lt. Gen. Emmons to Western Defense Command post and transfer of Gen. DeWitt to Washington, D. C. as commandant of the Army and Navy staff college. The S. F. CALL-BULLETIN commented on the strict stand taken on the Japanese by both generals in the past. S. F. CALL BULLETIN, 9/10/43, Seattle POST-INTELLIGENCER, OREGONIAN, S. F. NEWS, and Klamath Falls, Oreg. HERALD & NEWS, 9/11/43

Gen. DeWitt announces the appointment of Brig. Gen. James W. Barnett as acting commander of the Fourth Army at Chamber of Commerce luncheon in San Francisco. Headquarters of the Fourth Army will be moved to San Jose but those of the Western Defense Command, under Gen. Emmons, will remain at San Francisco. AP, L. A. TIMES and Sacramento BEE, 9/16/43

SEGREGATION

WRA Director Dillon S. Myer announces increase from 15,000 to 17,000 in number of evacuees to be segregated at Tule Lake. WRA will have complete control in the center itself, and there will be, Ray Richards reports, "no sterner discipline there than in the nine other relocation centers, where conditions have given rise to both official and public complaint that the evacuees are coddled...." (Like most of Richards' stories this one is largely inaccurate. The statement about discipline at Tule Lake was not obtained from WRA sources and is apparently a figment of Richards' imagination.) L. A. EXAMINER, 9/4/43

Sixteen scattered papers carry AP, UP and INS reports dealing with the President's letter to the Senate on evacuee segregation and OWM Director Byrnes accompanying report on the WRA program. The N. Y. TIMES (9/14/43) prints President Roosevelt's letter in full, while the S. F. EXAMINER (9/15/43) adds an editorial comment that the President apparently approved "the WRA program of permitting the Japs to filter back into the Pacific Coast area" and notes his statement came shortly after the transfer of Gen. DeWitt who was "strongly opposed" to their return.

Major Verne, commander of military troops guarding the Tule Lake center, is informed of his promotion to Lt. Colonel by the War Dept. Klamath Falls, Oreg. HERALD & NEWS, 9/11/43

INS report on changes being made at Tule Lake says 20,000 "disloyal" Japanese can now be taken care of there. OREGONIAN, 9/11/43

Approximately 7,000 evacuees will remain at Tule Lake and their number will be increased to about 20,000 by incoming segregants from the nine other WRA centers. Many chose to stay for various reasons although not proven disloyal, states project director Raymond R. Best. Klamath Falls, HERALD & NEWS, 9/10/43

"Loyal Japanese scattering" (headline). Evacuees not segregated at Tule Lake will be relocated "as rapidly as possible". This is "WRA's answer" to West Coast residents who claim it is impossible "to tell a loyal from a disloyal Jap". Lawrence E. Davies, N. Y. TIMES, 9/19/43

EMPLOYMENT

Farm leaders in Twin Falls, Idaho hope for an additional 200 to 300 experienced farm workers in the contingent of Tule Lake evacuees due to arrive at the Minidoka center between September 25 and 30, says Roy C. Lane, manager of local farm labor camp. An expected reduction in the number of Mexican workers to be imported increases need of evacuee aid in the fall harvest. Salt Lake TRIBUNE, 9/9/43 and Twin Falls TIMES-NEWS, 9/14/43

Opening of a farm labor camp for Japanese-Americans harvesters at Spanish Fork, Utah is announced by Lee Sumsion, chairman of the Utah county farm labor committee. Salt Lake TRIBUNE, 9/13/43

Joe Carroll, Heart Mountain chief of project employment, reports 600 evacuees are sought as harvest workers for farms in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho, and another 600 job offers are expected before the end of the harvest season. AP, Wyoming STATE TRIBUNE, 9/14/43

New California Stabilization Commission follows policy of the former State Employment Commission in denying unemployment insurance payments to 13 Japanese claimants in war relocation camps. AP, L. A. TIMES, 9/15/43. The California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board affirms the above decision of the Stabilization Commission by ruling that Japanese "internees" are not eligible for unemployment compensation. S. F. NEWS, 9/15/43

MILITARY SERVICE

"Eight Nowell Japanese join armed forces" (headline). Report finds six evacuee men leave Tule Lake for Fort Douglas and two women residents become WAC members, one as a second lieutenant in the army nurse corps. Klamath Falls, Oreg., HERALD & NEWS, 9/9/43

Four Japanese-American brothers, members of the Nisei combat unit at Camp Shelby, Miss. enlisted because of dying fathers wish "that you honor and serve this country of your birth". Granada JOURNAL, 9/9/43

Kazuo Komoto, Japanese-American soldier reported wounded while serving with American forces in the Southwest Pacific (Sept. 8th Review), receives Purple Heart decoration for military merit. Komoto's parents are at Gila River. Arizona REPUBLIC 9/12/43

Japanese-American troops from Camp Shelby, Miss. guard German prisoners of war who are helping harvest a \$30,000,000 peanut crop in Alabama. AP, Wash. D. C. STAR and Arkansas GAZETTE, 9/16/43

LEGAL

Two residents of the Rohwer relocation center and 46 soldiers from Camp Robinson are naturalized in United States District court ceremony in Arkansas. (The story does not make clear the circumstances under which the Rohwer residents were naturalized and may in fact, be in error on this point. Information has been requested from the project.) Arkansas GAZETTE, 9/9/43

REPATRIATION

Up report announces arrival of the Swedish liner Gripsholm at Rio De Janeiro where it will pick up additional repatriating Japanese before continuing on to the exchange port of Goa on the west coast of India. UP, N. Y. TIMES, 9/18/43

AGRICULTURAL

An estimated 700 visitors attend the agricultural fair recently held at the Granada center. Report describes "exceptionally fine" exhibits of produce grown by the evacuees, and displays of mounted insects and snake skins. Granada JOURNAL, 9/16/43

Manzanar Director, Ralph P. Merritt, issues invitation to the general public to attend a fall fair and harvest festival at the center Sept. 18th. Inyo, Cal., INDEPENDENT, 9/10/43

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Nineteen residents of Minidoka relocation center participate in Labor Day golf tournament at Twin Falls, Idaho. Twin Falls TIMES NEWS, 9/7/43

Powers County and Amache center all-stars baseball series now stand at 2-all, says latest report. Granada JOURNAL, 9/16/43

REPORTS

Announcement is made of the publication of a special 20-page edition of the Manzanar Free Press containing more than 75 pictures of center activities. Inyo INDEPENDENT, 9/10/43

EDUCATION

Report from W. C. Sawyer, superintendent of education at Gila River, states approximately 3,000 evacuee students are enrolled for the coming school term. Of the 100 teachers employed at the center 83 are evacuees; the report adds that all those teaching above the kindergarten level must be American citizens. Arizona REPUBLIC, 9/14/43

MAGAZINES

Friends Intelligencer: May 8, 1943: "Friends and Japanese-American Resettlement". by Esther B. Rhoads

An account of the help given by members of the American Friends Service Committee to evacuees through (1) conferences and visits in the centers and (2) aid to relocating evacuees in adjusting to a normal life in the communities where they are employed.

The Christian Century: "Untruths About Japanese-Americans", by Galen M. Fisher: August 18, 1943

The first article of a series to be published on evacuation describes it as a "military success, a social failure, an international tactical blunder". Seven "untruths" are exposed as a part of the work of vicious forces which brought about the widespread demand for evacuation.

"News of the Christian World": August 18, 1943

A CHRISTIAN CENTURY correspondent finds statements on segregation and relocation of evacuees, given to the press by WRA Director Myer at Denver, and carried in the DENVER POST, a "wholesome" contrast to that paper's "misrepresentations" of the Japanese-Americans.

Editorial, "The Army and the Law": Dept. 15, 1943

The constitutionality of the decision made by Lt. Gen. Richardson in the recent Hawaiian habeas corpus case is challenged and the opinion is expressed that the exercise of military power has been pushed beyond what the emergency requires.

"News of the Christian World": Sept. 15, 1943

Three hundred missionaries are expected among the 1500 Americans to be exchanged for Japanese via the Swedish liner Gripsholm.

American Friends Service Committee opens Hostel in Des Moines, Iowa to aid relocation of Americans of Japanese descent.

Editorial, "Federal Council Creates A New Commission": Sept. 22, 1943

The new Commission on Democracy in Racial and Cultural Relations formed by the Federal Council of Churches to collect "essential facts" is a "move in the right direction" but might be used to greater effect if it concentrated on "wiping out the racial tensions inside the churches".

"Correspondence": Sept. 22, 1943

California teacher thanks CHRISTIAN CENTURY editor for articles presenting "truthful facts" regarding the Japanese-Americans; deplores stubborn refusal of other Californians to face facts fairly.

Seattle correspondent notes (after searching "hundreds of news clippings") that although law enforcement agents express fear over the possibility of mob violence toward Americans of Japanese ancestry, they give no official warning that individuals would be "held strictly accountable under the law" for such violences.

"News of the Christian World": Sept. 22, 1943

Colorado council of churches reissues booklet, "The Japanese in Our Midst"; sixteen pages of information "for those who would have truth rather than prejudice".

