

Comments by the War Relocation Authority
On Remarks of Representative John M. Costello
Made in the House of Representatives
June 28, 1943

(Congressional Record, Vol. 89, No. 121, pp. 670607)

1.

"No effort seems to have been made to promote a program of Americanism among these people."

Comment: Positive efforts to promote Americanism have been made continuously at all relocation centers. They have been made through the schools, in adult education classes, in discussion forums, and through organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA, YWCA, Red Cross and many others.

2.

"The papers published at each of the centers are largely written in Japanese."

Comment: Each relocation center newspaper does contain a Japanese section for the benefit of residents who are unable to read the English language. This section ordinarily takes up about one-fourth of the total space of each issue and has never occupied more than 50 percent of the space. Material carried in the Japanese section consists mostly of official announcements and is reviewed as a regular procedure both by the War Relocation Authority and by the Department of Justice.

3.

"....there has been absolutely no genuine effort to determine the fitness of the Japanese being released."

Comment: The War Relocation Authority makes a thorough investigation of the behavior record of each evacuee who applies for indefinite leave at a relocation center. In all questionable cases, a further check is made against the records of the Federal investigative agencies. If there is any evidence from any source that the evacuee might endanger the internal security of the Nation, permission for indefinite leave is denied.

4.

"The majority of Nisei, if removed from a pro-Japan influence, would develop into patriotic and loyal citizens in the main. They readily adopt American customs, American sports, and an American way of life."

Comment: The War Relocation Authority wholeheartedly agrees. We also believe that the most effective way to continue the Americanism process among the Nisei is not to keep them confined in the crowded, abnormal environment of relocation centers, but to restore all those with good records as speedily as possible to the mainstream of American life. In fact, this is one of the principal objectives behind the VRA leave program.

5.

"Unless there is an immediate change of program in these centers the net result will be that practically the entire group of people of Japanese ancestry will be so thoroughly indoctrinated with anti-American principles as to make an undesirable element in our population, this in spite of the fact that no finer opportunity for Americanization has ever been granted any Government agency."

Comment: As stated above, the War Relocation Authority has made and is making every effort to promote Americanization in the relocation centers. It is difficult, however, to carry on a program of Americanization behind wire enclosures among a group of people who find themselves ceaselessly branded as un-American in the press and over the radio by certain public officials and private organizations.