

# Equal Rights Promised Japs by Mayor Devin

Mayor William F. Devin today promised that alien and American-born Japanese who are permitted to return to Seattle by military authorities will be "given equal protection under the law" with all other citizens.

"It is assumed that the War Department has satisfied itself that those American-Japanese who are permitted to return to the West Coast area are not dangerous to the war effort," the mayor declared in a formal statement.

"If this be true, they are entitled to be accorded the same rights and privileges as other citizens. I call upon our citizens to put into effect at this time those principles of democracy of which we are all so justly proud as Americans. Our men are fighting and dying that those principles may be preserved in this nation and in the world.

## Protection For All

"As the mayor of this city, it is my duty to see to it that all of our citizens, regardless of race, color or creed, are given equal protection under the law, and that I intend to do."

Revocation of the Japanese exclusion order for the Pacific Coast won praise from the Seattle Council of Churches, but met criticism from the Remember Pearl Harbor League. The league was organized in the White and Puyallup River Valleys to oppose resettlement of the Japanese.

The Rev. Dr. Harold V. Jensen, pastor of the First Baptist Church and president of the Council of Churches, said the return of the Japanese will be "a real testing period for the city," and made a plea for tolerance.

"Now that the military emergency which caused the evacuation of residents of Japanese descent has passed, the revocation of the order is a much-needed indication of democracy.

"I rejoice that our military authorities, in the midst of the battle for democracy overseas, are acting to preserve that democracy at home.

## Hundreds Have Died in War

"I am confident that the loyalty and sense of fair play of our citizens will prompt them to cooperate fully in the period of readjustment when these Americans of Japanese ancestry begin to return to their homes. In that connection, we should be reminded that hundreds of American citizens of Japanese ancestry have given their lives for the country, and many more are

fighting for us now both in Europe and the Far East."

Taking the opposite view, Benjamin Smith, Kent dairyman and president of the Remember Pearl Harbor League, declared his organization plans to continue its boycott against the Japanese. Smith said the league has 500 persons pledged not to sell, lease or rent farm lands, home or stores to Japanese. A meeting of the league has been set tentatively for tomorrow evening to discuss the situation, Smith said.

"We believe the Japanese still are dangerous to the war effort on the West Coast," Smith said. "We see no reason why they should be allowed to return to the Coast, especially when they are getting along all right where they are.

"Only about one person in 20 thinks the Japanese-Americans have been mistreated, and the rest are going to be mighty indignant when word of the War Department action gets around.

"Our 'homesteading' drive, in which the owners of land, homes and shops are asked to pledge not to sell, lease or rent to Japanese, we hope will deny the Japanese any place to come to."

## Property to Be Returned

Seattle has no organization corresponding to the Remember Pearl Harbor League. Many of the city's Japanese owned hotels and shops. These, in the absence of the owners, are being managed by the government's War Relocation Authority. The Seattle office of the W. R. A. today had not been advised officially of revocation of the exclusion order, but a spokesman said the property of the Japanese undoubtedly would be returned to them as they come back.

Approximately 7,000 Japanese were evacuated from the Seattle area. Many of these own small farms in the White and Puyallup River Valleys.

## Nazis Hanged 35 In Italy, Paper Reports

ROME, Dec. 18.—(AP)—The Army newspaper Stars and Stripes today quoted a person who recently crossed the front line as saying the Germans hanged 35 Italian hostages in Bologna three weeks ago in reprisal for the blowing up of a Nazi ammunition truck by two patriots who escaped.