

SUBJECT:

H: What have you got on your mind?

B: I thought I'd like to chat with you for just a few minutes on something that is more or less off the record, and for what it may be worth. This plan that has been evolved on determining loyalty, etc.

H: Right.

B: The whole thing scares me to death. I mean it really scares me. But I assume it has gone along pretty far. I thought I'd like to toss a couple of suggestions out for what they may be worth. If you don't think they are worth anything, that is up to you, of course.

1. As I gather it, the plan is in part, is based upon an assumption that the record shows that evacuation was at least in substantial part...due to the fact that there wasn't time to determine loyalty. The record doesn't show that at all. The record shows something very different than that. So that in the development of whatever publicity or public relations - and of course they are two different things - is done, that should be borne in mind, that it doesn't show that. What the record does show is, that here was a concentration of persons on the West Coast -- a concentration that could not be permitted to remain. Not that there wasn't time to determine loyalty. The record shows as a matter of fact that the evacuation would be handled in such a way if there weren't an attack as to take time to insure that there would be plenty of room to receive them at the other end before they were moved. The element of time was not stressed at all. Except that should there be an attack. So I think that's very important to remember. As a matter of fact the record shows that (1) that it was a concentration of a large number of persons of Japanese ancestry in strategic areas near war plants and all that. And that it could not be permitted. And (2) That you couldn't determine loyalty and therefore you had to take the wheat with the chaff. Not that there wasn't time, but that you just couldn't. So that's what the original record shows. So whatever you do, I think you ought to bear that pretty closely in mind. That's what that record shows out here where the main record was made...in the Press and the Periodicals.

H: Well I don't know how well this so-called test is going to work. I think they're going to lean backwards on the strict side. And whether they ever had any connection with Japan or anything like that, he won't be accepted no matter what his other attributes may be. But they think that they have discovered a system which will give you perhaps a 90% result. Probably the 10% will be self-eliminated. In other words they will either become loyal or the loyal people won't have them around.

B: Well I just wanted to make that point. It seemed to be somewhat presumed that the record showed that...

H: I think that's part of the argument that we used here at some time or another. Of course you was here and I was not. But I remember having heard before mention that the justification for the evacuation in mass was that it had to be accomplished in a hurry and that no present solution existed for determining the loyal from the disloyal.

B: That is not what the public record shows...out here. I just wanted to make the point.

H: I certainly think we should be correct on our facts.

B: Yes, I think that's an important thing to bear in mind.

2. I think it is important also - if possible and I don't know that it is possible from the way I understand the plan to have been agreed upon ... I don't know if it is possible, but if it's possible, the War Department should stay out of the Relocation business in view of the record made up to now by the War Department. Now I think you see what I mean.

H: Well the War Department is staying out of the Relocation business except to the extent that it will upon the request of War Relocation Authority examine individual questionnaires and their records and if nothing turns up give their stamp of approval.....on a release. That is to avoid multiple investigations. As it was now, individuals would be released from Relocation Centers under their indefinite leave policy with which the War Dept. was not interfering...in other words they could not say who should go out or stay in, and then these individuals would get to the service commands and the service commands would get worried. They figured investigating the individuals. The individual had already been investigated by WRA and FBI and a study made of such records as were in the hands of WRA. And it was felt that an additional investigation by the Service Command was not proving anything, but to start the fellow off on a bad start...as suspicious individuals.

- B: Of course the War Department is now then putting itself in a position of saying who goes and who stays.
- H: No not at all because the other conditions have to be met as to his job, he has to be recommended by War Relocation Authority. All the War Department is doing is making the investigation for the Service Command, so the Service Command won't need to make an investigation.
- B: Well as I understand it, the man won't be released unless the War Dept. approves and says he is loyal.
- H: No, this is supplementary to the indefinite leave.
- B: Supplementary to the indefinite leave?
- H: The indefinite leave procedure of War Relocation Authority.
- B: Well as I heard the plan, it applies to all the Nisei, or practically everybody. That you will investigate everybody. So that I would think it would probably supersede it wouldn't it?
- H: Well, it doesn't supersede it but WRA can take it as an advisory... on an advisory basis, as far as their indefinite leave program is concerned. They take it on a compulsory basis as far as plants vital to the war effort are concerned.
- B: I see. So that for that purpose, the War Department is then saying who goes and who stays.
- H: As far as war plants are concerned...that's what they do as far as any citizen is concerned.
- B: Well, not whether they will be released or not.
- H: It isn't a question of release. It is a question of employment in war plants.
- B: I see.
- H: The War Department...the opinion or recommendation of this Board is simply advisory as far as general release is concerned.
- B: How could you keep him out of the evacuated zone, if you said he was all right to work in a war plant?
- H: Well, that is I think, going to be limited to the areas outside of the evacuated area.
- B: How can you be consistent - do one and say that he can't come in the other?

- H: Simply sensitivity of the West Coast to enemy attack. The reasons justifying the original evacuation still exist in certain degree.
- B: No, I don't see how they do when you say in your program the plan says that you assume that one of the reasons for evacuation was that there was no time to determine loyalty. One of the primary reasons. So that now that you decide that you can determine loyalty you've erased that reason, haven't you?
- H: Well not necessarily. As far as the loyalty of this fellow is concerned, we feel that he is completely loyal. But because of certain military considerations - partly responsible for the evacuation, we feel at least for the present he should not go back into the evacuated area.
- B: Kind of beats the devil around the bush, doesn't it? In a way...
- H: Well would you think it would be wise?
- B: To do what?
- H: To re-enter the evacuated areas?
- B: No I certainly don't. Not if you don't want to confess...to confess an original mistake of terrifically horrible proportions. That's what in my judgment this plan is pointing toward. Very materially so. I mean with all due respect...perhaps I am so close to the forest I can't see the trees. I've been on the ground too close to it, but ...
- H: Seems to me Colonel there are 2 things. Either have the policy of the government to say "these people are no good for all time and we'll get rid of them after the war" or you can say "these people are American citizens like everybody else and give them their chance". --chance to do their part in this war, so that they won't be sufferers afterward. Now if you say the government policy is to get rid of them and send them back to Japan after the war, -- certainly, keep them in relocation centers.
- B: I don't advocate that at all. Never have. Neither has General DeWitt. We don't advocate keeping them in centers. We released them for private employment from the beginning. See no reason why you can't. The indefinite furlough policy has been going on and the War Department never stopped it...the public hasn't stopped it. There are lots of jobs beside war plants that are just as important to the war effort, working on a high-explosive shell... raising tomatoes for instance, or potatoes, or beets. I don't say you should keep them picked up. The idea that you either go whole hog and say that you can determine loyalty as against saying "no work at all"...I don't think anybody advocated that. Not ever, that I know of. That's the point I'm trying to make. Relocation has been going forward, but...

H: But slowly.

B: Very slowly indeed, for a different reason. Not because there hasn't been a demand. There's plenty of demand for agricultural labor. Plenty of it. There are 2 reasons why it has been going slowly. And this plan isn't going to overcome one of them. One of the reasons is that some communities won't take them. And another reason is that WRA hasn't been moving fast enough when there's been places where as I understand it there's a terrific demand for labor in agriculture.

H: Well I think that's true.

B: Well I think this is something so foreign from it, as I understand it, one of the reasons for this whole-hog plan was, the raising of a combat team. It isn't necessary to that. The only persons who'd say it...

H: ...you've got to give certainly opportunities besides fighting. Suppose a guy can't fight. Does he have to be restricted to agriculture?

B: No but there are a thousand and one other jobs he could do. I would think. I mean it's just being so close to it out here and feeling the hot breath of public opinion...

H: That is a very definite fact...I think you are sufficiently alert so that you are able to judge what is sound and what is simply inferior. All the letters that we have gotten about...on these anti-Japanese citizens letters, all against franchisement, owning land and all that. They all come from the Golden West and naturally those are the people that are most familiar with it.

B: Well I think that's true. There's...that's where the greatest incidence comes, naturally. That's where they were. Perhaps my judgement is dulled by having been too close to the picture for too long. I mean that happens often in anything. But I merely wanted to chat with you. Merely wanted to throw out one thing - particularly - what the public says here .... another thing, I sort of have an innate fear of getting the War Dept. as a military establishment into the relocation business when it has leaned over backwards to stay out, and in the third place, when you come out with a plan and say that you can determine loyalty for working in a warplant around high-explosives, that you can hardly say that "well he can go back to San Francisco... it will be difficult to say that he can't" and when you do that you confess a very original, horrible mistake. I mean those things... those are the points...

H: ...confess an original horrible mistake. Because the possibility of Fifth Column activity of landing of parachute troops dressed as

civilians, the possibility of confusion. I think those are still very real factors. Suppose you have a group of... Suppose we let a number of American citizens of Japanese ancestry...

B: Suppose you drop white troops dressed as civilians. You don't evacuate all the white folks. That's no point. Suppose white people drop dressed as civilians. You don't evacuate all the white people.

H: Your danger on the West Coast is ....Japanese.

B: Well your danger on the East Coast is from Germans and Italians, who are white.

H: Yes but there are too many of them out here.

B: Too many what?

H: Far more assimilated than the Japanese population ever have been.

B: You mean too many white people on the East coast. That's not a point, because the enemy could drop white soldiers dressed as civilians, and could speak English. That...

H: But that would be on the East coast.

B: Well they could do it on either coast.

H: Not so easily on the West Coast.

B: I'm just trying to give you my reaction to the point.

H: There is a logicity there, there's no doubt about it. But I think it might be wise to take this as a first step, perhaps looking toward (if this works all right) toward eventual return to the evacuated area providing the military situation warrants it.

B: Well I think that's certainly true, when the peace comes. That's when I think the military situation would warrant it with consistency.

H: Your position as I understand it is...

B: Mind you, however, I didn't make the original decision you know.

H: Your position is that there are some loyal Japanese and also that there are some disloyal Japanese and you can't tell them "one from 'tuther."

B: Well the record merely says we didn't know. We didn't make any determination. You couldn't.

H: Impossible to disseminate.

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- B: That's right. Of course it is probably true of white people, isn't it? You know that old proverb about "not being able to look into the heart of another"? And "not even daring to look into your own"... well maybe there's something in that. Well, that's about it. I just wanted to talk to you because we haven't had a chat for a long time.
- H: Did you speak to Mr. McCloy last night?
- B: He called me up, yes. I didn't say much because he was in quite a hurry and he explained the plan to me in detail, but I didn't say much either way. I didn't have a chance.
- H: Yes he is very anxious that it work.
- B: I have no doubt of that, and I don't want you to misunderstand me. I just am scared to death of it for reasons I've given you.
- H: Well I don't know how it is going to work.
- B: I'm scared to death principally because of the public relations part of it. That's it, to put it in a nut-shell. I don't know that they'll blow up any plants, maybe they won't. Maybe they will. Who knows? Maybe somebody else will blow up a plant using a Jap as an excuse. You know that's an old saw too. But I'm just scared to death of the public relations part of it.
- H: I think that probably the net result will be that there probably won't be very many of them in war plants.
- B: To go over it again, No. 1. There are millions of jobs other than in war plants that just must be filled.
- H: Is the pay as high?
- B: Pay as high? Sure. Why certainly. Matter of fact if I could get out of my present job I could earn a lot more money as a carpenter. I wouldn't even have to know how to...know what side of the saw the teeth were on. As long as I paid my union dues. Sure there are lots of jobs with plenty of pay. And No. 2, there's no bar to it now. And 3., the War Department is supposed to be out of the relocation business. 4. If they say they now can determine loyalty they're going back on what the public record said originally. And mind you first of all, (1) I think they should not be kept from private employment. I think every ounce of manpower should be used. That's one thing...
- H: Even in Western Defense Command. Even in your evacuated areas?
- B: No, not in the evacuated area, but anyplace else in Western Defense Command. I wouldn't make the evacuation merely an academic exercise...