

February 19, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

I desire to inform you of the Japanese situation which has arisen at the Yakima Indian Reservation, Yakima County, Washington.

The Sheriff's Office at Yakima advised that approximately 150 local officers in the Yakima Valley plan to raid and search all Japanese residences located on this Indian Reservation, in accord with regulations which permit summary search by the Sheriff or the appropriate Indian officers of any residences on the reservation. There are 110 leases of Indian reservation land to Japanese-American families with whom some aliens do reside. The supervising Indian agent advises that he has no information indicating that these families are in possession of any prohibited articles.

On the evening of February 13, 1942, farm grange met in a joint meeting, about 175 farmers in attendance, and demanded that action be taken concerning the Japanese on this reservation, and wired their Congressman for the immediate removal of these Japanese, indicating that the Government was taking no action.

There has been considerable trouble since 1921 over the fact that certain of the Indian lands have been leased to Japanese, and in 1921 actual bombings of Japanese property took place in an effort to intimidate them to give up their leases. There is indication that the grange leaders of the agitation at that time are active in the present matter.

The Seattle Field Division of this Bureau has advised the Sheriff's Office that it will not participate in any such raids as are contemplated, there being no indication that these individuals are in any manner violating the law. This Indian reservation is located far distant from the coast beyond the Cascade Mountain Range, and there are no particular installations of importance to the national defense, as it is primarily an agricultural area.

In view of the fact that the Sheriff at Yakima had indicated that he would proceed with these raids upon the approval of this Bureau, he has been definitely informed that the Bureau in no way approves such raids and in no way will sanction them.

It appears at present that the raids will not take place. This matter is being followed closely and if there is any change in the situation you will be promptly informed.

A copy of this memorandum is being furnished Mr. Edward J. Ennis, Director, Alien Enemy Control Unit.

Respectfully,

John Edgar Hoover
Director