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August 26, 1981

To: Federal Commission of Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians

From: Br. General A. W. Beeman U.S.A. Ret.

This letter represents my views of the events that took place in the Seattle area during and after the Japanese dastardly attack on Pearl Harbor killing our military and civilians and destroying our ships. I was officer of the day at Fort Lewis and issued the instructions called Rainbow Plan which dispatched 115 Infantry to set up frail defenses on our coastline.

At that time the Japanese were not fully accepted by most Americans. Many were illegally in the country, not citizens, and some held dual citizenship. A tremendous hatred developed against all Japanese. If Japan had landed forces on our shores, and they could have, undoubtedly, all Japanese Americans would have been killed as no time would have been taken to identify who were Japanese invaders and infiltrations and loyal American Japanese. I remember top commanders addressing the troops stating: "Never forget that every Japanese man, woman and child is an enemy and must be killed." Japan had the order out to kill every white person if we invaded.

You have a recent example in Vietnam where our soldiers killed innocent civilians. Apparently innocent civilians would approach our soldiers, end up throwing hand grenades at them. The soldier could not identify innocent civilians from those who were about to kill him.

Nothing in history has been as brutal as Bataan Death March. Alfred Joe Galloway, who was on the march, who is in the audience, can testify to these facts.

Resolution

The life of a Japanese American was an extremely dangerous position. They were placed in ~~internment~~ camps away from the coastline, for their own safety. They and their descendants were alive, and returned to the mainstream of American life and are now leading and exemplary citizens, in every phase of American life and have made immeasurable contributions to the success of our country.

They made a sacrifice with part of their lives and their property for which this nation is forever grateful.

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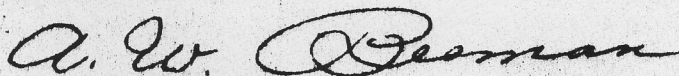
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Relocation
It would do immeasurable harm to these fine Japanese Americans to single them out for special payment because of their sacrifices. Race relations would be set back 100 years. Thousands of my soldiers in the jungles of New Guinea facing death daily, from Japanese bullets and disease would have gladly changed places with those in protective internment camps. Resentment would be great from those who lost their loved ones, on the Bataan Death March, Pearl Harbor Bombing, and the battle throughout the war. In addition, to grant funds to a successful race, when the country has so many poor, elderly, and widows with children, would be grossly unfair.

President Roosevelt made a just and sound judgement in saving the lives of these Japanese Americans.

I urge this committee recommend to Congress that the United States appreciate and commend the Japanese Americans who were interned, for the contributions that they made to this great country.

Sincerely,



A. W. BEEMAN

Br. General U.S.A. Ret.