

Nelson

#5325

"A VOICE THAT MUST BE HEARD"

(A Quotation from Secretary of War  
Henry L. Stimson)

Extracts from statements, regarding Americans  
of Japanese Ancestry, by:

President Roosevelt  
Hon. Henry L. Stimson  
Hon. Joseph C. Grew  
J. Edgar Hoover  
Paul V. McNutt  
and others

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Approximately 100,000 people of Japanese descent are living today in War Relocation centers. There are ten of these centers located in six western states. They were established as temporary homes when every person of Japanese descent was evacuated from the West Coast by order of the military commander in the spring of 1942. This movement was carried out simply as a military expedient. Two-thirds of the people in relocation centers are American citizens. None of them have been found guilty of any crime or accused of any intentions against the national security.

Individual evacuees who have been investigated and found loyal or law-abiding are now being permitted to leave these relocation centers to accept jobs on farms and in factories and to resume normal living. The policies governing this resettlement have the approval of the War and Navy Departments. The program has been sanctioned by the Department of Justice as sound from the standpoint of national security and has been approved by the War Manpower Commission as a contribution to national manpower needs.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt  
February 1, 1943.

*(Text of a letter from the President of United States to  
Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War)*

My dear Mr. Secretary:

"The proposal of the War Department to organize a combat team consisting of loyal American citizens of Japanese descent has my full approval. The new combat team will add to the nearly five thousand loyal Americans of Japanese ancestry who are already serving in the armed forces of our country.

"This is a natural and logical step toward the reinstatement of the Selective Service procedures which were temporarily disrupted by the evacuation from the West Coast.

"No loyal citizen of the United States should be denied the democratic right to exercise the responsibilities of his citizenship, regardless of his ancestry. The principle on which this country was founded and by which it has always been governed is that Americanism is a matter of the mind and heart; Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry. A good American is one who is loyal to this country and to our creed of liberty and democracy. Every loyal American citizen should be given the opportunity to serve this country wherever his skills will make the greatest contribution—whether it be in the ranks of our armed forces, war production, agriculture, government service, or other work essential to the war effort.

"I am glad to observe that the War Department, the Navy Department, the War Manpower Commission, the Department of Justice, and the War Relocation Authority are collaborating in a program which will assure the opportunity for all loyal Americans, including Americans of Japanese ancestry, to serve their country at a time when the fullest and wisest use of our manpower is all important to the war effort."



Hon. Henry L. Stimson  
Secretary of War

(Statement made in announcing the formation of a combat  
team of American citizens of Japanese descent)

"It is the inherent right of every faithful citizen, regardless of ancestry, to bear arms in the Nation's battle. When obstacles to the free expression of that right are imposed by emergency considerations, those barriers should be removed as soon as humanly possible. Loyalty to country is a voice that must be heard, and I am glad that I am now able to give active proof that this basic American belief is not a casualty of war."

Hon. Joseph C. Grew  
Special Assistant to the Secretary of State and  
Former Ambassador to Japan

(From an address given at Union College, Schenectady, N. Y.  
April 28, 1943)

"The Americans of Japanese origin are an invaluable element in our population; I welcome their presence, and regret the bitter necessity of imposing on a trustworthy and loyal majority of nisei\* the restraints which are made needful by the bad behavior and evil repute of a minority. There are among Americans of Japanese race as fine people—individually—as you can find anywhere, and many of them are peculiarly anxious to repay America for freedom by making especially arduous efforts in the prosecution of the war. I welcome the policies of our government which are designed to relieve the nisei of discriminatory restrictions as rapidly and as fairly as possible, and I applaud the Army in setting up facilities whereby these Americans will be able to show the world what they are able to do.

"These Americans of Japanese origin are to Japan what you and I are to England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, France and other European countries. They are Americans, but they are also 'the cousins in the New World'. I am proud of my trans-Atlantic cousins, and do not feel myself to be any the less American for that; and I would respect any American of Japanese descent who tried to contribute to our common, free American life those especially good qualities which he may have inherited from his Trans-Pacific origin.

"We in America are in a real sense the apostles of the future; we show the rest of mankind what men of diverse races and cultures can accomplish with a common good will. We Americans of all races and creeds, fight the evils of despotic and selfish militarism. There can be no compromise between ourselves and the arrogant exclusiveness of self-styled men-Gods of Japan—no more than between ourselves and the self-styled Aryans of Germany. In our war—against caste and privilege, wherever they may exist or occur—the contribution of Americans who are of Japanese descent is of real value; first, because they are a living proof of our non-racial free unity; secondly, because they make a valuable and wholesome contribution to the sum total of our American civilization."

\* Native-born Americans of Japanese extraction.

Elmer Davis  
Director of the Office of War Information

(Excerpts from a nation-wide radio broadcast on  
April 23, 1943)

"The assassinations [of American flyers by Tokyo] have had no effect in this country except to produce universally a grimmer determination to fight through to complete victory-- a determination that seems to be felt by American citizens of all sorts. Let me read you some extracts from one newspaper editorial --'We know today the nature of the brutal enemy we face across the Pacific, and this knowledge should serve to intensify our efforts to achieve a speedy and complete victory. The American people will not brook a negotiated end to this war. There can be no peace with murderers. We must and will gain the unconditional surrender of our axis enemies. The enemy will give no quarter, and the salvation of our way of life rests on complete and irrevocable military victory.'"

"Those passages come from a Salt Lake newspaper called the Pacific Citizen, the organ of the Japanese-American Citizens' League; and it shows that American citizens of Japanese ancestry who have grown up in this country and absorbed the American faith in freedom and democracy feel just the same about this outrage as do all other American citizens. At Camp Shelby, in Mississippi there are three thousand American soldiers of Japanese ancestry; and they turned out yesterday and put the better part of a month's pay into war bonds, to show what they thought of this performance in Tokyo. Thousands of other Americans of Japanese blood, from Hawaii and from the relocation camps in the west, are now being inducted into the army--all of them tested and known for their loyalty to their country, and all of them just as eager to avenge this sort of behavior as are any other Americans."

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Colonel W. P. Scobey, Executive Officer  
Office of Assistant Secretary of War

"It is hoped that the Japanese American combat team will become one of the outstanding units of the American Army. This combat team will fight with and as a part of a Caucasian force. The War Department has faith in the loyal Japanese Americans. This is a splendid opportunity to demonstrate to the American people and to the War Department that the Japanese Americans have faith in America. A success of the program and the voluntary feature of induction will be a great step forward in the rehabilitation plans for the Japanese Americans."

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Milton S. Eisenhower, Associate Director\*  
Office of War Information

(From a recent letter addressed to the  
Pacific Citizen, official organ of  
the Japanese American Citizens  
League)

"Like millions of Americans I was deeply gratified when our government reopened the ranks of our Army to loyal Americans of Japanese descent. Those who are eligible for enlistment have an opportunity to make a particularly significant contribution to our common fight for a better world. This war will end in absolute triumph for the United Nations. This war must usher in a day of greater decency and brotherhood among all men. In such a war, the participation of men of every land, men of every descent, is the strongest possible force and guarantee for a re-born and strengthened freedom."

\* Former Director of the War Relocation Authority, the civilian agency of the government which administers the relocation centers.

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Hon. Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior  
April 15, 1943

(Statement at press conference after announcement had been made that Secretary Ickes and his neighbor had employed evacuees from a relocation center)

"I interested myself for two reasons in the location of seven United States citizens of Japanese ancestry. The first reason is that I believe we should do all we can to ease the burden that the war has placed upon this particular group of our fellow citizens. I do not like the idea of citizens, no matter of what race or color, being kept in relocation centers any longer than need be. The second reason is that these citizens have a background of farming in California and we need competent farm help badly."

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Edgar Hoover, Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

*(Excerpts from testimony before the House  
Appropriations Committee on the Department  
of Justice appropriation bill)*

"We have had practically no trouble with the Japanese in Hawaii. I made the statement before that there has been no sabotage or espionage committee in Hawaii, subsequent to Pearl Harbor. There was espionage committed prior to Pearl Harbor, but not by the Japanese population as such, but by espionage agents and consular agents of the Japanese government.

"I want to mention briefly the work which the bureau has performed in the field of enemy control.

"Immediately following the incident at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, we were called upon to effect the apprehension of potentially dangerous aliens enemies.....

"The action taken and the prompt manner in which it was taken, took out of circulation those individuals who might have been the nucleus of any espionage or sabotage rings of either Japanese, Germans, or Italians in the United States.

"I think that is the reason why we have had so little trouble from subversive agents in this country at the present time. Of course, we are constantly on the alert as to the activities of such groups that are still in the country in the alien enemy class.

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Paul V. McNutt, Chairman  
War Manpower Commission

*(In a letter to Director Dillon S. Myer  
of the War Relocation Authority, dated  
November 27, 1942)*

The War Manpower Commission heard with considerable interest the informative presentation, which Mr. Thomas Holland, Director of the Employment Division of the War Relocation Authority, gave at one of the Commission's meetings last month, on problems and relationships of the War Relocation Authority program for evacuees of Japanese ancestry with the general war manpower program.

The employment data which were contained in the written statement have given us a comprehensive background for study of this possible source of labor supply. As I understand it, the War Relocation Authority has formulated an employment program for those of Japanese ancestry who have been evacuated from the West Coast to encourage their employment and adjustment, under proper safeguards, into the customary channels of American life. This policy should have the dual effect of benefiting the evacuees, many of whom are American citizens, and of making available to the country several thousand people for employment on farms and in industry.

The War Manpower Commission thoroughly endorses the employment program developed by the War Relocation Authority and assures it the continued cooperation of the United States Employment Service in its recruitment and replacement activities.

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Lt. General Delos C. Emmons  
Commander of the Hawaiian Department  
April 3, 1943

"Enough Hawaiians of Japanese ancestry have responded to the call for volunteers to form a combat team of approximately 4,000 men...The response to the call was highly gratifying... I believe they will make a splendid record...I hope no further call for volunteers will be made now, because many can ill be spared by Hawaiian industry."

Colonel Kendall J. Fielder  
Chief of Military Intelligence  
Hawaiian Department

*(Excerpts from speech given at the University of Hawaii  
Forum, March 1943)*

"Without revealing secret military information, I can say truthfully that members of the Japanese race have themselves constituted our chief liaison with the Japanese community and our most reliable check on its morale, its needs and its activities.

"How differently a Himmler or a Rosenberg would have handled this delicate situation. Does anyone believe for a moment that a any of the axis crowd would give one of enemy race a fair chance to prove himself? Yet that's what was done in Hawaii--and so far it has proved militarily sound. That the situation is working out well is a tribute not only to wise administration, but to tolerance on the part of the rest of our good Americans here. We have lived up to President Roosevelt's description of democratic peoples as "men of good will."

"It would take much too long to tell you of the many concrete ways in which many of these people who were put on the spot have proved their love for America and have helped solve an otherwise ticklish military problem here. For the information of all who might be misled, there is none among us who has been led into this policy out of a mawkish sentimentality or gullibility. To us Japan and her people are a race of stubborn, hardy, despicable warrior zealots, who would stop at nothing to snuff out our lives and our way of life. Her army and navy must definitely be crushed. The question of Americans of Japanese blood is far different. They are Americans--and until they prove (or show themselves dangerously capable of proving)--traitorous, they should be treated as Americans."

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Chester C. Davis  
War Food Administrator  
May 28, 1943

(Text of a letter addressed to the War Relocation Authority)

"The War Food Administration urges the use of persons of Japanese ancestry released by the War Relocation Authority to work on farms. Thousands of these workers were used successfully last year and are now helping to produce vitally needed farm products. Additional labor is needed. Those who cooperate in making the best use of this valuable source of farm labor are rendering a real service to the United States and the war effort."

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