

IN REPLY KINDLY ADDRESS
"COMMANDANT"
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COMMANDANT'S OFFICE
ELEVENTH NAVAL DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

ND11/CF-33J
(Al-Hs)
(Serial A-041)

January 30, 1942

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

From: The Commandant.
To: The Chief of Naval Operations.
Subject: Japanese Population in Eleventh
Naval District.
Reference: (a) OpNav Conf. despatch 122230
of January 1942.
(b) Comeleven Conf. Airmailgram 212130
of January 1942.
(c) Comeleven Conf. Serial A-019 of
January 21, 1942 (Coastal Fishing)
(d) Comeleven First Endorsement Serial
I #75 of 26 January 1942 forwarding
Report on Japanese Question prepared
by Lt. Comdr. K. D. Ringle, USN of
26 January 1942.

1. In reply to Reference (a) Commandant of the Eleventh Naval District transmitted Reference (b) to the Chief of Naval Operations. The present letter shows in more detail the conditions existing at Terminal Island and the steps being taken to minimize the hazards caused by the presence of Japanese population and canneries.

2. The location of this alien population is such that it has unexcelled opportunities for continuous day by day observation of the activities of the Naval Air Station, including the arrival and departure, number, type, and kind of planes; the arrival and departure of all shipping, naval and commercial; number and composition of convoys; the number and composition of escorting vessels, and a very good idea as to direction of departure of such convoys; a daily observation of the progress and construction of naval vessels at the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, or repairs to naval and commercial vessels at that plant; a daily observation of the progress of

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construction of vessels at the California Shipbuilding Corporation; observation of the progress of completion of the Naval Operating Base, San Pedro, and any activities that may take place there after completion; observation of oil and other commercial shipments out of Los Angeles Harbor, including oil loading facilities in use, oil pipeline and berths used for loading, etc. In other words, this population is in the most ideal spot in Los Angeles Harbor for the complete and thorough observation of every activity - naval, civilian, or military, which goes on there.

3. The fish canneries and processing plants are the reason why this population is settled where it is. The canneries have leased land from the Los Angeles Harbor Department, and erected thereon not only the plants themselves, but the houses or barracks adjacent thereto. These houses the canneries in turn lease to their employees on short-term leases. These employees are the Japanese who are engaged in rather large numbers in the canning and processing of fish on shore. The number so engaged far exceeds the number engaged in actually fishing at sea. Hence, it will serve very little purpose to require the Japanese population to change their residences if they are allowed to come daily or in shifts to Terminal Island to work at the canneries. Observation would still continue. The only solution to the problem would seem to be in the removal of the canneries to some area outside the critical defensive zone such as Port Hueneke or Anaheim Landing.

4. The danger from sabotage lies in the accessibility to these people of oil storage facilities, exposed pipelines, freight sheds, railway and highway bridges, etc. In this connection, it must be remembered that there is only one bridge providing access to Terminal Island, which carries both railroad and highway traffic. The destruction of this bridge would result in a serious interruption of necessary traffic to and from Terminal Island.

O-N-FI-D-E-N-T-I-A-I.

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5. The above facts are well recognized by both governmental and civilian authorities, and the following steps have been taken to minimize the hazards:

- (a) No effective action has been taken to minimize the hazard of observation.
- (b) Twenty-six known leaders and agitators in this population were placed in custodial detention on December 7, 1941, and warrants for the apprehension and detention of additional leaders have been requested by the F.B.I.
- (c) F.B.I. and the Naval Intelligence Service are attempting to cover this settlement through the use of informants in this area.
- (d) A certain additional degree of alertness is being maintained by the local civil authorities; i.e., the Harbor Department officials and the local San Pedro police force.
- (e) Marine oil terminals have been emptied under the orders of the Commandant, Naval Operating Base, and the oil loading terminals reduced in number, the oil being supplied by pipe lines from the back-country refineries.
- (f) The Coast Guard is maintaining a patrol boat within the limits of the inner harbor, and the Los Angeles Police Department has likewise recently extended its protection to the waterfront property and ships in the harbor through the use of a police boat.
- (g) The Captain of the Port has required certain definite precautions to be taken by ships in harbor for the prevention of sabotage and minimizing of damage.
- (h) The bridge leading from Terminal Island to the mainland has been placed under continuous 24-hour guard.

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(1) The Captain of the Port is endeavoring to require that strategic material, both incoming and outgoing, be left in the dock warehouses the minimum amount of time, and endeavoring to ascertain that adequate watchman force is provided. These efforts have not been entirely successful, due to non-cooperation on the part of importers and shippers. For instance, for a period of approximately two months, many thousands of tons of crude rubber were stored in these warehouses.

6. The problem is further complicated by the huge number of transitory workers who come into this area every day, since the area comprises such activities as the Naval Operating Base now under construction; Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation; Los Angeles Shipbuilding Corporation; California Shipbuilding Corporation; Craig Shipbuilding Corporation; Consolidated Shipbuilding Corporation, all of whom are working on a 24 hour, seven-days-a-week basis, as well as the necessary longshoremen, teamsters, railway employees, etc., necessary for the handling of goods on the harbor wharves, including the personnel of the various oil companies.

R. S. HOLMES.

Finished [Signature] 1/11/42

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Op File No (30) A8-5/EF37

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