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NAVY DEPARTMENT
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
Washington

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March 15, 1943

From: Director of Naval Intelligence.
To : Distribution List Appended.
Subject: Relocation of Japanese.
Enclosure: (A) Copy of Letter from President Roosevelt to Secretary Stimson, dated February 1, 1943.
(B) Copy of War Relocation Authority List of Relocation Offices.

1. For background information the District Intelligence Officers are advised that since January 20, 1943 the War Relocation Authority, Provost Marshal General's Office and the Military Intelligence Service of the Army, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Office of Naval Intelligence, as well as several other federal agencies, have been jointly engaged in carrying out a directive (issued by the Adjutant General's Office on January 20, 1943) which calls for the determination of the loyalty of evacuees with a view toward (1) the formation of an all Japanese-American combat team and (2) the utilization of other suitable evacuees in "plants and facilities important to the war effort."

2. The President approved the undertaking in a letter to the Secretary of War dated February 1, 1943 (see Enclosure (A)).

3. To date approximately 10,000 nisei (9,000 of them from the Territory of Hawaii and 1,000 from the mainland of the United States) have volunteered for induction in order to serve on the above-mentioned combat team. In addition there are on file at the present time in the War Relocation Authority approximately 12,000 applications for indefinite leave from the War Relocation Centers. It is anticipated that before the present mission is completed the total number of evacuees who will be involved in the leave clearance procedure will amount to 50,000 or 60,000.

4. Enclosure (B) is forwarded herewith for use by the Ninth, Twelfth and Thirteenth Naval Districts and for the information of the remaining addressees. The Relocation Offices listed thereon are of interest to the District Intelligence Officers for the reason that Japanese-Americans or Japanese aliens who in future are granted leave from War Relocation projects will clear through the Relocation

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Office in the area to which they are destined. Although detailed arrangements have not yet been completed, it is anticipated that these Relocation Offices will make available to the District Intelligence Officer concerned the names of all evacuees who enter the Naval District.

5. In the case of those Districts where there are no Relocation Offices, it is contemplated that the Office of Naval Intelligence will obtain the names of evacuees from the War Relocation Authority headquarters and disseminate them whenever the need may arise. This procedure will undoubtedly undergo revision as the War Relocation Authority enlarges its operations and opens sub-offices in various places other than those listed in Enclosure (B).

6. Although the task has been underway since January, 1943, as mentioned in the first paragraph, no cases have yet completed the processing which has been prescribed for them. Certain mechanical details remain to be solved and in addition it has been deemed advisable to process a few hundred test cases slowly and thoroughly in order to detect and remedy as soon as possible any flaws which may exist in the machinery which has been set up. It is hoped that such precautions will result in a minimum of confusion in the field.

7. The Office of Naval Intelligence will endeavor to keep the Districts informed of the major details involved and of the arrangements made here in Washington which concern the District Intelligence Officers. By the same token the District Intelligence Officers are requested to keep the Office of Naval Intelligence advised of all circumstances in the districts which pertain to subject problem.

/s/ Wallace S. Wharton

Wallace S. Wharton
By direction.

Distribution:

List X-r (except 10ND, 14ND, 15ND and Intelligence Center, Territory of Hawaii).

Following is the text of a letter received by the Honorable Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, from the President:

"February 1, 1943

"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.

"Very sincerely yours,

"/s/ FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT"

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