

DIGEST OF WEST COAST NEWSPAPER ITEMS

September 24 to October 6, 1945

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WRA AND ARMY HEADQUARTERS RELEASES:

74 clippings

Factual

Information sent out by Major General H. C. Pratt explaining the responsibility of the Western Defense Command and not the War Relocation Authority, in the return of Japanese Americans from relocation centers, still continues to receive space both editorially and in news columns; also the rescinding of the orders banning American Japanese from the Coast.

WRA releases informing the press of the status of the Relocation Centers, the number of occupants, the closing dates and the general trend to resettlement on the West Coast are given considerable space. Stories also include suggested cut in WRA appropriation imperiling work under way for returned Nisei, and deportation proceedings for those considered disloyal or who have expressed a desire to return to Japan.

JAPANESE AMERICANS IN THE ARMED SERVICES:

49 clippings

Favorable

Stories lauding the bravery of the Nisei soldiers in the Pacific theater are being added to those told of European action, particularly their work in reconnaissance saving the lives of thousands of U. S. troops.

Lieutenant Colonel Wallace H. Moore, U. S. Army Intelligence, decorated veteran of Pacific battles, and commander of an Intelligence unit of Nisei, has been touring the state of California speaking before civic groups in behalf of Nisei and citing the valor of those under his command. He delivered a stinging rebuke to terrorists and perpetrators of incidents such as the burning of the home of a Japanese family who had four sons overseas in the service, one of them killed fighting in Italy.

Capt. Thomas Crowley, officer in the 442nd Combat Battalion, which was made up largely of American Japanese, in Italy and France, has also been traveling up and down the West Coast making an eloquent plea for fair treatment for returning American soldiers of Japanese ancestry.

Lieutenant Roger Smith is another army officer assigned to duty to intercede for the returning Nisei veterans. Speaking before USO clubs and schools, he said, "It's not the slant of a man's eyes that counts, but the slant of the heart."

ACTIVITIES OF CIVIC GROUPS SYMPATHETIC TO AMERICAN-JAPANESE:

11 clippings

Favorable

Lions Club in a number of localities in the West and Southwest have been listening to speakers on behalf of tolerance toward returning Nisei.

The San Francisco Round Table of the National Conference of Christians and Jews sent a letter to Police Chief Dullea commending the prompt police action in protecting Japanese-Americans at the Buddhist Temple following the stoning and attempted firing of the temple. The letter from the Round Table's co-chairmen, Judge Robert McWilliams, J.

(more)

Roger Deas, and Nat Schmulowitz, urged Chief Dulles to neglect no precaution for prevention of further racial persecution.

The University of California newspaper "Californian" published a lengthy account of a speech given by Ernest Besig, chairman of the Northern California branch of the Civil Liberties union at the Wesley foundation, on un-American actions toward returning Japanese.

Edward Runcorn, formerly with WRA and now Southern California field man for Associated Cooperatives, Inc., spoke on behalf of relocated Japanese "Cooperators" before a two-day meeting held by that body in Los Altos.

Los Angeles Women's City Club, and Watts, California, Kiwanians, also entertained speakers from WRA.

The Peoples World held a Welcome Home reception to all returning Japanese Americans, with Nori Ikeda, formerly office manager of the World as honor guest, at the California club recently.

The San Francisco News published a feature article in connection with the War Chest Drive, with a three-column cut, telling plans of the War Chest for work toward inter-racial harmony.

ACTIVITIES OF ANTI-JAPANESE GROUPS:

24 clippings

Unfavorable

The Placer county board of supervisors went unanimously on record against providing support of indigent Japanese returned from relocation centers.

Pajaro Valley Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture stands four to one against return of an estimated 2000 Japanese to the district.

A poll of its membership showed a vote of four and a half to one against hiring or approving employment of Japanese, the same ratio against renting or selling them property, and five to one in favor of resettling them in the middle-west.

First hostility in that area, however, brought a warning from Chief of Police Matt Graves and District Attorney John L. McCarthy that acts of violence or mob riots will be not tolerated and will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. The incident consisted of a blazing flare being thrown at a Buddhist temple being used as a Japanese hostel.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors asked Congress to prevent the return of some 22,000 loyal Japanese-Americans still remaining in relocation centers, basing their action on acute housing shortage in this area.

The large Japanese population in Hood River Valley and the dangers in the years to come of having the concentrated settlement was discussed by the Hood River delegation to the State convention of the American Legion in Portland with National Legion Commander Edward N. Scheiberling.

Salinas councilmen have instructed city officials to enforce zoning laws that prohibit the use of the Japanese mission building in that city as living quarters for returned Japanese Americans.

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California Preservation Association, solely interested in laws that restrict the Japanese, both American born as well as alien, organized its latest chapter at Marysville in September, with a plea for law enforcement and reviving all anti-Japanese laws at once.

The California Association of Nurserymen took action to meet anticipated competition in their business from returning Japanese evacuees, advocating a progressive system of keeping prices down and absorbing rising costs of production.

A notice advertised in the Tacoma, Wash., News Tribune, by the Japanese Exclusion League, invites individuals to communicate with them as to their feelings and those of their communities regarding the question of returning Japanese Americans.

Burbank, Calif., city officials oppose quartering of Japanese Americans temporarily in barracks on city property.

Dave Beck, vice-president of the Teamsters International Union, warns that the Japanese problem is far from solved by the surrender at Tokyo Bay and that the people of the Pacific slope must not relax their vigilance. "We must not permit a repetition of Jap infiltration on this coast, nor the surrender of business enterprises to aliens who hate our people and our institutions."

NEWS CONCERNING RETURNEES:

65 clippings

64 Favorable

1 Unfavorable

The return of some 14,000 Japanese to the West Coast since the end of the war was chronicled in most West Coast newspapers. Their return and taking up the threads of their old existence was well received in most communities, especially where there existed a labor shortage. Provisions for housing, jobs, schooling and protection were made by civic authorities.

There was one dissenting case in Hood River, Ore., when the application of a Portland-born woman of Japanese ancestry to have restored the citizenship she lost by marriage to an alien was refused by United States Judge James Alger Fee.

INCIDENTS:

115 clippings

Factual

There was a flurry of terrorism which greeted the added influx of Nisei following the war's end. The incidents ranged all the way from burning the home of one family who had four sons overseas, striking against hiring of returned Japanese workers, firing a shotgun into the homes of two Eastbay families, to steal the family wash, clothespins and all, from the washline of a Japanese family with six children.

Immediate action by civil authorities was invoked in all cases. In the case of shooting in the East bay, two men, one a Negro, were arrested and charged with attempted murder. In cases where there have been strikes, discussion with WRA representatives has usually brought about an amicable settlement. Every precaution to guarantee the personal safety of the returnees is being taken.

(more)

HOUSING:

36 clippings

31 Favorable
5 Unfavorable

Temporary housing facilities for returning Japanese, particularly families who are kin of Nisei veterans, are being provided in government housing projects and unused army barracks. Buddhist temples and churches are also being converted into hostels for returnees. In most areas the families have been permitted to move in without incident.

In Burbank, California, however, citizens were up in arms because the projects in which WRA proposed to house the returned Japanese were in or near exclusive residential districts. Further, while there were only 100 original inhabitants of Japanese ancestry interned from Burbank, the housing project proposes to accommodate 600, 500 more than the original number. The WRA promised to give further study to the situation before taking action.

UNIONS AND LABOR:

2 clippings
Favorable

Hawaiian CIO leaders, one of Japanese descent and one of Chinese, were in San Francisco en route Washington to a board meeting of the CIO, working in the interests of racial harmony.

ALIENS:

3 clippings
Favorable

Representative Samuel Dickstein, heading a subcommittee hearing on the problems of resettlement of Japanese and deportation of those declared disloyal and who have renounced their United States citizenship, says some Congressmen "fight day and night to keep the front door closed against undesirable aliens, yet they leave the back door wide open for them to pour in." The group plans to devote considerable study to the alien Japanese question, but also to the question of some 100,000 Mexicans in the country suspected of "border jumping".

NEWS FROM JAPANESE INTERNED IN CAMPS:

3 clippings
Factual

Masuo Kodani, Japanese biology and physiology instructor at the high school at Tule Lake Segregation Center, will leave for Rochester, N. Y., to become an instructor at the University of Rochester.

Fujino Ido, 52, Japanese woman at Manzanar, died following a ten-day self-imposed starvation diet, without disclosing a reason for her act.

Five boys sentenced to jail terms for infractions of rules at Tule Lake, following intercession by the American Civil Liberties Union on their behalf, challenging the right of WRA to act in a judicial capacity, were released on promises of good behavior.

(more)

JAPANESE PRISONERS OF WAR:

8 clippings

Unfavorable

A flood of protest has greeted the proposed use of Japanese prisoners of war in California cotton fields and in the harvesting of fruits and produce. Particularly has the Japanese-American Citizens' League been incensed, because of its inability to secure employment for loyal citizens of Japanese ancestry with the growers in the area under question, yet the growers have no objection to "cheap labor" in the form of Japanese prisoners of war. Also has the Committee on American Principles and Fair Play registered a protest with Secretary of War Patterson, stating in a telegram sent him that the use of prisoners in harvest work may "intensify existing prejudices against law-abiding Americans of Japanese ancestry."

The statement of the War Department that the request for the prisoners came from Governor Earl Warren on behalf of the Valley growers brought forth a flat denial from the Governor that he had ever called for Japanese prisoner harvest hands. "I am shocked," Warren said, "to see that I have been reported as having advocated this.....it would cause intense resentment and incite disorder...."

Commenting editorially, the San Francisco Chronicle takes issue with the stand of the Japanese American Citizens' League, that it cannot be fully informed on the cotton situation; that "free labor to pick the cotton is not to be had. It is futile to talk about giving work to the Nisei; they are widely scattered and it is necessary immediately to put massed labor into the cotton fields."....."Under these circumstances protests become academic."

EDITORIAL COMMENT:

30 clippings

20 Favorable

10 Unfavorable

The majority of the West Coast newspapers continue to comment editorially on the still controversial subject of the return to the Coast of Japanese Americans and their treatment. Many newspapers, such as the Burlingame, Calif., Advance, Redwood City Tribune and Palo Alto Times, severely censure the action of Placer County supervisors with editorials entitled "Placer County 'Secedes'", in denying the right of Nisei to county aid it seceded from the Union violated the Constitution of the United States, which says "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States."

Almost without exception, the unfavorable comments appear in those areas where antagonism against the Japanese has always been high, such as Placer County in California, parts of Southern California, Hood River district in Oregon, and Renton, Washington.

LETTERS TO EDITORS:

23 clippings

17 Favorable

6 Unfavorable

Letters to the editor show a majority of those who write such letters are sympathetic to the American Japanese. Recently efforts on the part of WRA and civic groups to find them housing have provoked unfavorable letters, stating more concern was being shown returning Japanese than returning veterans and their families of Caucasian origin.

(more)

Veterans of overseas duty continue to write pleas for tolerance toward return-Nisei soldiers, citing over and over again their bravery on the battle fronts.

MISCELLANEOUS

9 clippings

The question of racial harmony was among those presented at the Chronicle Forum held at the Civic Center September 27 to 30, and talks were given by both Bartley Crum and Robert Kenny on the subject.

A dispatch from Ottawa, Canada, reveals that nearly half of the Canadian Japanese have voluntarily agreed to return to Japan, and that some members of the dominion cabinet favor shipping them back as soon as possible.

Leo A. McClatchy, chief editorial writer of the Call-Bulletin, whose work reporting the violence and rebellion at Tule Lake Relocation Center received much prominence, died of a heart attack at his desk in the Call-Bulletin office.

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