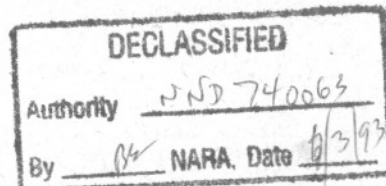


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WAR DEPARTMENT
Military Intelligence Service
Washington

January 4, 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL STRONG:

Subject: Conference re use of Japanese in Army.

1. In accordance with your instructions I attended a conference in Mr. McCloy's office at 2:30 PM, January 2, 1943, on the subject of the use of Japanese in the United States Army. Those present were:

Mr. McCloy (Asst. Secretary of War)
General McNarney (Deputy Chief of Staff)
General White (A. C. of S., G-1)
General Edwards (A. C. of S., G-3)
General Bryan (Chief, Aliens Division, FMG)
Captain Zacharias (Acting Director Naval Intelligence)
Commander Coggins (ONI)
Colonel Barber (OPD)
Colonel Glassford (Chief, Internal Security, FMG)
Colonel Scobey (Office Asst. Secretary of War)
Captain Hall (Office Asst. Secretary of War)
Colonel Crist (MIS)

2. The following is a resume of the discussion:

Mr. McCloy opened the meeting by stating that there was a paper in the War Department relative to the use of Japanese as combat troops, upon which a decision had already been reached. He stated that in arriving at this decision three main points were considered, namely: (1) their fighting qualifications; (2) the propaganda value; and (3) the impact on Asia. Mr. McCloy then introduced Captain Zacharias and Commander Coggins, and said he thought it would be an excellent idea to get the viewpoints of these two naval officers who were familiar with the Japanese in order that we might better understand their qualities.

Captain Zacharias opened his remarks by stating that he realized the Army records relative to Japanese were not as good, in his opinion, as those of the Navy; he said he had approached Colonel Olds on the West Coast on several occasions relative to his securing information concerning this racial group, but that he had been unsuccessful in persuading Colonel Olds to get into this field to any extent. By virtue

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of this fact, therefore, Captain Zacharias was convinced that the Navy had much information on Japanese which was not in War Department files. Captain Zacharias stated that the majority of Japanese wanted to be loyal citizens but their loyalty might be impaired if action was not taken in the near future to assure them that the United States considered them loyal; he said it was our job to get busy on that matter right away. Captain Zacharias said he had watched the Hawaiian Japanese and the West Coast Japanese and he believed they needed our help right now lest their loyalty be broken. He then introduced Commander Coggins.

Commander Coggins remarked that the Japanese at Camp McCoy thought they had been "double-crossed", since when they went there they were under the impression they were to be used, and no use had been made of them to date. He said they felt something was wrong which they could not quite discern. Commander Coggins commented on his own background as an undercover man in Hawaii, where he organized an underground counter-intelligence net of 146 men, all volunteer workers, not one of whom had violated his trust. He said they prepared a pickup list and executed it to the extent of 660 persons. Commander Coggins stated further that one-third the population of Hawaii (160,000 persons) was Japanese, and that in determining which were loyal he used a 40-point check system. Under this system, Commander Coggins said that information on 5 points would not indicate anything particularly bad, but if information was received on 25 points or more, he was unquestionably one that should be investigated further. Commander Coggins mentioned that there was a Citizens' Committee operating in the Norfolk area and aliens who were dangerous in his opinion were allowed to run free, whereas the Nisei, who were for the most part loyal, were restricted.

Commander Coggins said further that in Hawaii the Nisei petitioned to be inducted and allowed to fight; that there was no sabotage in Hawaii attributable to the Nisei, and no espionage among those born in the Hawaiian Islands. He said the Nisei went so far as to call upon a prominent Hawaiian citizen named Dillingham and ask him to intercede in their behalf. Commander Coggins said there were 40 organizations of Nisei formed of mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters in Hawaii; that these people had "lost face" and wanted a chance to recover it; and that Washington was blamed for failure to permit them to regain their self-respect. He said that General DeWitt's solution, that of segregating the Nisei and Kibei, was only a partial answer, and that combat teams should be formed and given lots of publicity so as to erase the impression that the Army was discriminating against this racial group. Commander Coggins said that of course the bad ones should be removed and concentrated in one place; he suggested that members of the Tokyo Club were undoubtedly bad, as well as many first-generation Japanese. He expressed the opinion that his 40-point system was adequate for determining loyalty; that probably 80% of all Nisei were loyal; and that the Navy would be willing to process them.

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General Edwards indicated that an Hawaiian Battalion had been ordered to North Africa and that instructions also had been given to organize a regimental combat team. He said it was estimated that approximately 19,500 would be available. Dr. Coggins said that the Nisei would have no objection to being put into a unit of their own, or would they object to having other Orientals with them such as Hawaiians, Chinese and Koreans. Mr. McCloy then inquired about the training unit for Nisei; Commander Coggins said he thought either Arizona or the location of the Desert Training Command would be appropriate. General White asked why the personnel of such units could not be restricted to volunteers. General Edwards said he thought they could be handled as draftees, with appropriate representation being made to the draft boards where necessary.

General McNarney directed General Bryan to "get rid" of Camp McCoy. General Bryan has advised me informally that the camp will be returned to the control of the Service Command.

The discussion then turned to the use of Hawaiian Japanese reserve officers in the proposed Japanese unit; Mr. McCloy said that this could be done. He said further that he had several requests from Colonels in the War Department to command the proposed outfit. Commander Coggins said that the ROTC officers at the University of Hawaii would probably like an opportunity to be in this command.

General Edwards then asked me for the comments of G-2 on the formation of a Hawaiian Japanese unit. I said that I had no authority to speak for G-2 on that specific question, but I would say that in my opinion it was regrettable but true that the records of the War Department were not complete enough to enable us to check the loyalty of these people, and in the event the proposal was put into effect we would have to depend on the Navy for recommendations on individuals. The naval officers indicated that this would be agreeable.

After some further discussion and some general remarks, General Edwards asked me to continue on the expression of G-2's opinion; I said that I had had an opportunity to get only a general opinion from General Strong on the use of Japanese in the Army, and that his thoughts were (1) that any units formed should be not larger than battalions, and (2) that they should not be used in Theaters of Operation. Mr. McCloy said, "I can't see why General Strong's opinion differs from that of the language students". I made no reply to Mr. McCloy's remark.

The next point discussed was that of rechecking American Japanese who are released from a Relocation Center to be moved to some other area. General McNarney said that PMG and G-2 should get together and work out some scheme for eliminating the duplicate check. General Bryan and Colonel Glassford stated that the Service Commander was responsible for his area and therefore wanted to assure himself of the loyalty of people

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therein. It was suggested that there might be stationed at each Relocation Center an Army officer responsible to the War Department, who would advise on the release of individuals. It was also stated that the War Relocation Authority keeps information on each releasee, showing current residence, and that this information could be furnished the Service Commanders. General McNarney re-stated that he did not want the checking to be done a second time. I informed General McNarney that arrangements would be made to eliminate any duplicate checking of these people.

The subject of the Citizens' Committee in the Norfolk area was again discussed, and the naval officers were informed that the Army could intern any enemy alien it saw fit; the naval officers said they were glad to know this and would make appropriate recommendations.

The matter of training the proposed Japanese units in Arizona was mentioned again and Commander Giggins stated that he thought any such units should be trained near ordinary non-Japanese units, for morale effect.

General McNarney said that in connection with loyalty checks it should be remembered that G-2 sometimes took two years; he was apparently referring to the case with which you are familiar, concerning which Major Lansdale of CIG was called to General McNarney's office. I made no comment.

After the meeting adjourned, I approached Captain Zacharias and told him we would like to depend on his assistance in the matter of checking the Japanese Nisei for the Army; he said he would be glad to help. While I was talking to him, Mr. McCloy came up and said, "With reference to General Strong's objection to these units, what do you think?" I said that in my opinion you felt very strongly that there was insufficient information available upon which G-2 could judge the loyalty of Japanese; that you without a doubt had vividly in mind the Japanese fifth-column activities which preceded their occupation of other countries; and that you probably considered their use from a nationalistic rather than an ideological viewpoint. I pointed out further that while in a large military operation a single unit may not seem extremely important, the failure of one unit could result in the defeat of all forces involved in the operation. Captain Zacharias said that he thought about 85% of the Nisei were loyal.

3. Comments. a. We will communicate with the Navy relative to the use of their records on Japanese and ask them to make recommendations on individuals, for screening purposes.

b. A request will be submitted to G-1 through you to set up additional special organizations to which potentially subversive Japanese soldiers may be assigned.

c. An officer will be detailed to confer with representatives of PWG to devise a means of eliminating duplicate checks of Japanese released from a Relocation Center.

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4. Informal inquiry made on Monday morning, January 4, elicited the following information from Lieutenant Weldon, ONI, with reference to the use of Japanese by the Navy:

- a. The Navy has no enlisted men of Japanese descent.
- b. The Navy may have a few Japanese officers from the Hawaiian Naval Reserve.
- c. In the United States, the Navy employs Japanese civilians only as lecturers in language schools. In Hawaii the Navy has had a good many Japanese civilian employees; they are being released gradually in accordance with General Emmons' direction that no wholesale discharges be made.
- d. The Navy has no specific policy against the employment of Japanese, but as a matter of practice, all bureaus of the Navy are opposed to it.

/s/

W. E. CRIST,
Colonel, General Staff.

Approved:

/s/

John T. Bissell,
Colonel, General Staff,
Chief, Counterintelligence Group.

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