

March 9, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES FROM W. B. POLLARD

This afternoon Mr. Herbert Armstrong, Mr. Naiden of the Treasury, and I attended a session of the Japanese American Council, a national association, which is having a three or four day session here in San Francisco. We arrived at the meeting about 2:30. We were taken into the meeting after it had assembled for the afternoon session and arrived just before the Chairman introduced Colonel McGill. There were approximately two hundred delegates present, and I was told that they were from five states.

Colonel McGill explained that there would be no evacuation order until the machinery had been set up and until places had been prepared for the evacuees to go. He stated that the military authority was advocating voluntary evacuation in so far as possible and that they hoped to avoid mass evacuation. He assured the group that every effort was going to be made to take care of their problems as efficiently as possible and that steps were being taken to protect their property in every way possible.

The next person introduced was Mr. Tom Clark, who is Chairman of the Committee on Civilian Evacuation, to which post he was appointed by General DeWitt. He made a short talk, but rather appointed himself as the spokesman for the general evacuation movement. Personally, I think Mr. Clark could have been more dignified. I don't think he did much to gain the confidence of the group. He did quite a bit of wisecracking and left the impression that he did not regard the individuals' problems as seriously as he should.

Mr. Armstrong was then introduced, and he explained that the Reserve Bank was anxious to do everything possible to help the evacuees with the management of their properties. He explained that the organization work was now in process and that they planned on having the branches of the Federal Reserve Bank and such other offices as may be necessary at the service of the evacuees. Mr. Armstrong made it clear that at the present stage there was very little definite information that could be given because the organization had not yet been perfected.

The meeting was then thrown open for questions, Colonel McGill, Mr. Clark, and Mr. Armstrong serving as a panel for the group. Numerous questions had been submitted in writing by the delegates and the questions turned over to a delegate from Pasadena, who acted as spokesman. Mr. Clark undertook to answer practically all of the questions, and in most instances he did a very poor job.

I undertook to write down all of the questions asked at the meeting to show the problems with which these people are faced. Many of the questions are of such character that the Federal Reserve Bank apparently

will not be concerned in them. The answer to practically every question was, "That has not been worked out yet." Consequently I did not undertake to draft the replies to any of the questions. The questions asked were as follows:

1. Will the Government purchase property for evacuees in the locations where they are to be sent?
2. Will there be protection against anti-Japanese restrictions in the places where they are to move?
3. Will the evacuees be issued permits for their return after the war?
4. What is the maximum amount of personal property which the Government will transport for the evacuees?
5. Will there be a moratorium against the debts of the evacuees?
6. Will farmers be reimbursed for growing crops?
7. Will the Government make loans to the evacuees to put in new crops in their new locations?
8. Can those engaged in a business move their equipment for continuing that business? Example cited: Restaurant business.
9. Should the Japanese people undertake to sell their properties now if they can get a fair price for them?
10. Will provision be made for transporting the farm equipment owned by the evacuees?
11. Will the evacuees be subject to draft for labor in the localities where they are settled?
12. Will federal aid be extended to the evacuees?
13. Some church and community groups are planning evacuation on a voluntary basis. Will the Government pay transportation expenses if done on that basis?
14. Is there any assurance of protection against bodily harm to the evacuees while en route to their new locations and after they arrive when the evacuation is on a voluntary basis?
15. Is it likely that the evacuees may be required to move again after they have once been settled in a new location?
16. The Council has advised local organization officers to remain behind until evacuation has been completed. Will these officers then be able to join their families? In answer to this question Colonel McGill stated definitely that they would.

17. Will funds be available in the new area for use by the evacuees?
18. Will any federal agency serve as guardian for minors and orphans?
19. Will individuals be permitted to name their own agents? Mr. Armstrong answered that question by saying that in his opinion it would not only be permitted but would be encouraged.
20. Will bond be required of the agents named?
21. In the case of automobiles and other items purchased on conditional sale contracts and where there is a balance due on the purchase price, can these items be taken along by the evacuees?
22. Some question was asked which I didn't get about arrangements for issuing travel permits.
23. Will the necessary aid which will have to be extended to the evacuees be in the nature of a loan which will have to be repaid?
24. Isn't the evacuation on a military order and not by choice, and shouldn't the Government foot the bill for the evacuation as a military problem? In connection with this question Colonel McGill said "No," and he cited that men being drafted into the Army did not receive that sort of consideration.
25. Is it likely that voluntary evacuees may have to move again? In this connection Colonel McGill stated that he thought within the next few days the entire West Coast Defense Area would be defined and that this question would be settled.
26. Will the evacuees have to settle back from the railroads, and if so, what facilities will there be for transporting their products to the railroads?
27. Will arrangements be made for license reciprocity for Japanese doctors and other professional men moved to other states?
28. Will there be public utilities in the new area?
29. Will dates for the evacuation be announced soon? Colonel McGill replied that he could not make any statements on that as it had not been decided. Mr. Clark was asked about a statement he had made over the radio that evacuation was expected within sixty days. He said that he meant to say that there would probably be some evacuation begun within the next sixty days.
30. Does the evacuation plan contemplate that communities, families, and groups will be kept together in the new area?