

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

FROM: JHW

DATE: March 16, 1942

TO:

RBF		RD7
copy	MAR 17	
JMP		JMP

COMMENTS:

SUBJECT:

I append letters from Paul Taylor and Dorothy Thomas, both of the University of California, urgently asking that the Foundation assume responsibility for the displaced Japanese students and teachers on the Pacific Coast. I enclose also a letter from my friend Dick Neustadt, Regional Social Security Coordinator for the Pacific Coast, seconding the other two letters. Taylor urges that this country should do as was done in connection with the Boxer Indemnity, - make capital out of a bad situation. I also append my own and RFE's memoranda to the effect that this responsibility, both financially and administratively, is more than the Foundation should assume.

The more I think the matter over, the more I feel that even though ours is not the primary financial or administrative responsibility, we should not respond until we get a clear picture of the problem and see whether by ingenuity, rather than funds, we may not contribute to a humane handling of a difficult problem.

I just talked to Clarence Pickett, of the American Friends Service Committee, which has a committee on the Pacific Coast concerned with the general problem. Their representatives are reporting at a meeting in Philadelphia next Tuesday. I think that I shall attend. I will try also to have a conversation with Neustadt while he is East. If RBF has a chance to find out any information while in Washington, either through the War Department or Francis Biddle, I hope he will not neglect the opportunity. I could do it if you want me to, especially in regard to Biddle.

recommended answer

Let me repeat, I think our ~~answer~~ will be negative, but I don't think, either humanely or from the point of view of the effect on these people, we ought to send a negative reply until we fully understand the problem. I suspect the conclusion will be to appoint the Emergency Committee with full responsibility.

JAW