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# United States of America



## DEPARTMENT OF STATE

All to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

I Certify That the document hereunto annexed is a true  
copy from the files of this Department.

In testimony whereof, I, GEORGE C. MARSHALL,

Secretary of State, have hereunto caused the seal of the Department of State to be affixed and my name subscribed by the Authentication Officer of the said Department, at the city of Washington, in the District of Columbia, this first  
day of August, 19 47.

George C. Marshall  
Secretary of State.

By M. P. Charwin  
Authentication Officer, Department of State.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: July 5, 1945

SUBJECT: Accommodation of Japanese at Bedford Springs Hotel, Bedford, Pennsylvania.

PARTICIPANTS: Representative Harve Tibbott, of Johnstown, Pennsylvania; Representative D. Emmert Brumbaugh, District 22, including Blair, Clearfield and Centre Counties; Mr. Merkling, Assistant to Assistant Secretary Acheson, and Mr. Clattenburg, SWP.

COPIES TO:

*Mr. Merkling and*

Mr. Clattenburg called at Representative Brumbaugh's office. The representative expressed his interest in the Bedford Springs project because his own residence is only 18 miles from the hotel. He stated that the Congressman in whose district Bedford County lies is ill and unable to handle business.

The group proceeded to the office of Representative Tibbott where Mr. Clattenburg gave to each of the Congressmen papers summarizing the activities of the Department of State in behalf of Americans held by the Japanese during the years of our war with Japan. The Congressmen were then given facts with illustrations along the following lines:

The desperate situation of American nationals held by the Japanese.

The difference in Japanese and American outlook toward the treatment of individuals in detention and in making up repatriation lists.

The reasons why Americans were initially given preferential treatment by the Japanese, why every pretext, including remarks of irresponsible journalists, has been seized to deteriorate that treatment, and the fact that there is no length to which the Japanese Government might not carry ill treatment if given anything which

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it could present as a pretext.

The long-term plans of the Department of State for seizure and use of the Japanese officials in Europe.

The value of the present group for exchange purposes attended by the danger of retaliation if the group is not dealt with properly.

The possibility of using the group in a subsidiary manner (interrogation, etc.) in support of the war effort provided the proper atmosphere prevails in the detention facility.

The limiting factors which had to be considered in a survey to find detention facilities.

The scope of the survey made.

The absence of unfavorable reactions at Bedford which were experienced elsewhere in connection with an initial survey.

The conclusion of a contract for the use of the hotel.

The fact that surveys have shown that hotels can be used for detention at a considerably lesser cost than other types of facilities which would involve extensive re-equipment and staffing, if not rebuilding.

The precautions taken to ensure that only such facilities of the hotel will be used as may be required for minimum comfort and that no circumstances lending themselves to a charge of "coddling" will exist.

provision of employment at the facility for guards and hotel staffs.

The advantage to the community of the reduction and re-equipment of the hotel through State Department priorities so that the hotel will be available for public business immediately whenever the Japanese depart instead of waiting until the management can obtain services and equipment without priority.

The fact that this is a part of the war effort and that granted it is distasteful to the people in the community, it can hardly be more serious or distasteful than some of the duties which confront others of our citizens in the armed forces.


The Congressmen stated that they did not intend or desire to dispute the purposes or the methods of the Department of State. Representative Tibbott felt that it was a serious mistake to place such an installation near his highly industrialized county where there are easily-led groups of laborers. Representative Brumbaugh stated that a similar situation existed at Altoona, in his district. They pointed out that in addition to the numerous complaints which they had received, there had been definite threats of violence, including one threat to burn down the hotel.

It was clear from the letters and newspaper articles exhibited by the Congressmen that their constituents and friends were definitely under the impression that the Japanese will have the use of the thirty-six-hole golf course, of the bridge paths, of the swimming pool and of the other luxury facilities at the hotel. It was furthermore clear that the habit of the neighboring wealthy persons of using the hotel more or less as a country club had attached to the hotel a certain reputation in the eyes of the working people which the hotel probably does not merit in its own right. The Congressmen agreed that the Japanese could neither eat nor be made warm by the reputation of the hotel and that the historical reputation connected with the place would have no significance to them, but they pointed out the inability of the local population to understand those facts.

The position of the Congressmen may be summed up to the effect that they definitely hope that the Department will not go through with the plan and that they feel that evil will result if the plan is followed. They advanced the argument that the attitude of the local population might serve to defeat some of the Department's program but they were not fully convinced of the validity of this argument. They wished that there were some other place to put the Japanese. It was pointed out to them that no community in the United States would of its own choice accept these persons as neighbors and that the same considerations would prevail everywhere. They were asked whether it would be possible by interviewing key persons to gauge the public feeling in the area. Representative Brumbaugh was apparently more willing to consider this possibility than was Representative Tibbott. They pointed out that CIO steel workers union has undertaken the purchase of war bonds if the program is carried through, that the UMW is exercised, that the American Legion and Veterans of

Foreign Wars are also upset. It was pointed out to them that the CIO has approximately 1,000 members, former workers on Wake Island, who are held by the Japanese as prisoners of war and that the CIO has in the past exhibited great interest in this group. It was therefore felt that the Washington office of the CIO might be willing to act upon the steel workers union in an effort to moderate its stand. The possibility was suggested of likewise working upon the headquarters in Washington of the UMW, VFW and the American Legion. It was also suggested that a competent expert in public relations from the Department might proceed into the area in an effort to contact key persons and have them act to lessen the present campaign against the use of the hotel. The Congressmen appeared to favor public meetings on the subject (Mr. Merkling and Mr. Clattenburg privately doubted the advisability of such meetings).

At the termination of the conversation the Congressmen appeared somewhat nonplussed. They were told that Mr. Merkling and Mr. Clattenburg would report to their superiors and would recommend any possible action to allay popular discontent in the affected area.

  
SWP:AEClattenburg:BB  
