

PETITION

TO: The President of the United States of America  
White House, Washington, D. C.

FROM: American Citizens of Japanese Ancestry at  
Heart Mountain Relocation Center, Wyoming

SUBJECT: Restoration of Rights to American Citizens  
of Japanese Ancestry.

Dear Mr. President:

X We, the American citizens of Japanese ancestry at Heart Mountain Relocation Center, are in complete accord with the decision of the War Department, that we are to be inducted into the army through the Selective Service, and hail it as significant recognition of our loyalty, and as a big step toward the application of American principles in the treatment of minority groups.

However, since the evacuation, the treatment accorded us, was far short of dignity and consideration as should be given American citizens.

We doubt, whether or not you are aware that we have been, for almost two years, behind a barbed wire fence, with our little sisters and brothers and elderly parents, under the strict guard of Military Police, which gives it the resemblance of a concentration camp. The spiritual shock and physical hardships caused by the evacuation have been the greatest in our lives. We are not charged with any crime or accused of disloyalty, the only crime being, we are people of Japanese ancestry.

We never lost faith in America in the long confinement here, but kept faith in your immortal words, "Americanism is a matter of the mind and heart; Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry."

We took the only way that any good American would take in the predicament, that was to co-operate with the war effort in whatever was assigned to citizens. Finally the time came when we were given the same chance as the majority of other Americans, to serve our country.

Many of us may be called any day, many of us may not return until victory is won, and some of us may never return.

With this thought in our minds, we appeal to you to give your careful consideration and cooperation to the following petition, and rightfully demand, which we hereby set forth.

1. UNIVERSAL APPLICATION OF THE DRAFT.

When the volunteers of the Japanese American combat team were inducted, the reasons given were, it has a distinct and very definite advantage, and the value of bringing the Japanese American question to the American public, and to establish their position as loyal American citizens, the adoption of Selective Service met with this requirement. Any further segregation from other Americans is unnecessary and undesirable, as it is much against our wishes to be segregated at all.



2. INDUCTION INTO OTHER BRANCHES.

That we shall be permitted to be assigned to any service branch, such as the air-force, coast guard, and navy as well as the army.

3. RETURN TO THE WEST COAST.

- X Although the decision rests with the War Department, we firmly believe, the reasons for evacuation, which existed two years ago, do not exist any more, except the political pressure group, prompted by prejudice and selfishness for promoting agitation. It is our primary conviction, that until we are allowed to return to our original homes and business, our citizenship rights, are not, and will not have been restored as American citizens.

4. GOVERNMENT AID TO ABOLISH ANTI-JAPANESE PROPAGANDA.

we believe that Americanism faces the supreme test, both at war and on the home front. The enemies of Americanism within, are those sinister forces with selfish motives, under the guise of patriotism, who tread upon the rights of minority groups, who work through radio, movies and the unscrupulous press. This condition is rampant on the Pacific Coast. The Government should counteract with firm measures.

5. FULL RESTORATION OF OUR CIVIL AND INALIENABLE RIGHTS.

As in the case of Civil Service and other rights, which they were deprived of by City, State and National Government.

6. ACCORD THE SAME TREATMENT TO JAPANESE AMERICAN SOLDIERS AS OTHER AMERICANS.

Discrimination actually exists in all Army camps and Armed Force. We request that no distinction shall be made to them in any service and that they be promoted according to their ability.

7. PROTECTION OF FAMILIES IN WAR RELOCATION CENTERS.

Continued protection after their re-settlement and assurance of this, in the form of an announcement by the War Department through the press and radio.

We are requesting the restoration of our inalienable civil rights, accorded other Americans, which we firmly believe, is our right, guaranteed by our Constitution. When this hope of ours is fulfilled, the heroes of the 100th Battalion Combat Team of Japanese ancestry, who perished on the battlefield in Italy and elsewhere, shall not have died in vain.

With these firm convictions, we hereby present our petition for your esteemed consideration.

Dated this 28th day of February, 1944

Heart Mountain Relocation Center

Heart Mountain, Wyoming