

their close control by a pass and permit system in eight Category B zones. Many of the Category A areas were uninhabited or had no alien population, but the execution of this recommendation nevertheless would have required the evacuation of more than 7,000 persons. Only 40 percent of these would have been Japanese aliens, and the majority would have been Italians.<sup>14</sup> The Secretary of War's letter (drafted in the Provost Marshal General's office) forwarding this recommendation to Mr. Biddle added the following comments:

In recent conferences with General DeWitt, he has expressed great apprehension because of the presence on the Pacific coast of many thousand alien enemies. As late as yesterday, 24 January, he stated over the telephone that shore-to-ship and ship-to-shore radio communications, undoubtedly coordinated by intelligent enemy control were continually operating. A few days ago it was reported by military observers on the Pacific coast that not a single ship had sailed from our Pacific ports without being subsequently attacked. General DeWitt's apprehensions have been confirmed by recent visits of military observers from the War Department to the Pacific coast.

The alarming and dangerous situation just described, in my opinion, calls for immediate and stringent action.<sup>15</sup>

Actually there had been no Japanese submarine or surface vessels anywhere near the west coast during the preceding month, and careful investigation subsequently indicated that all claims of hostile shore-to-ship and ship-to-shore communication lacked any foundation whatsoever.<sup>16</sup> Similar recommendations for restricted areas in Arizona, Oregon, and Washington followed, and were forwarded to Justice by 3 February.<sup>17</sup> By then the position of the Japanese population was under heavy attack, and in consequence the alien exclusion program was being eclipsed by a drive to evacuate all people of Japanese descent from the west coast states.

Agitation for a mass evacuation of the Japanese did not reach significant dimensions until more than a month after the outbreak of war. Then,

<sup>14</sup> Ltr and Incls, CG WDC to Atty Gen (through PMG), 21 Jan 42, PMG 384.4 (California) General. The initial Category B recommendation would have affected an estimated 28,672 Italian, 13,305 Japanese, and 8,404 German aliens.

<sup>15</sup> Ltr, SW to Atty Gen, 25 Jan 42, PMG 384.4 (California) General. The transcript of General DeWitt's telephone remarks reads ". . . we know there are radios along the coast; and we know they are communicating at sea. They may be communicating with each other. . . ." Tel Conv, Gen DeWitt with Gen Gullion, 24 Jan 42, WDC-CAD 311.3 Tel Convs (DeWitt 42-43).

<sup>16</sup> On Japanese operations, see ch. IV, above; on communications, Ltr, James L. Fly, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission, to Atty Gen Biddle, 4 Apr 44, quoted in WRA monograph by Ruth E. McKee, *Wartime Exile: The Exclusion of Japanese-Americans From the West Coast* (Washington, 1946) (hereafter cited as McKee, *Wartime Exile*), pp. 154-58.

<sup>17</sup> Ltr, SW to Atty Gen, 3 Feb 42, AG 014.311 (1-13-41), sec. 1, forwarded the Oregon-Washington recommendation and reviewed the earlier ones. General DeWitt's final recommendation in this series, with respect to Utah, dated 16 February 1942 (copy in PMG 384.4 WDC), lists and describes the seven preceding ones.