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OTTAWA 19 Sep 44

SECRET
CABINET WAR COMMITTEE
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SUMMARY TO: WAR COMMITTEE OF THE CABINET
RE: ENLISTMENT IN ARMY OF CANADIAN BORN JAPANESE AND
LOAN OF PERSONNEL TO SEAC AND AUSTRALIAN ARMY

1. Purpose:

To enlist in the Canadian Army a maximum of 300 Canadian born citizens of Japanese racial origin (Nisei).

2. Considerations

(a) In the event of Canadian commitments in the Far East being extended, Canadian-born Japanese form a potential pool of considerable value for use as interpreters and translators and in other spheres of operational activity.

(b) The training of such personnel would be carried out in a special centre segregated from other troops. Prior to assigning them to duties in the field, investigation would be conducted by the Army in collaboration with the civil authorities, to ensure their loyalty and integrity.

(c) The following requests have been received:

(i) From the War Office, on behalf of the South East Asia Command, for a maximum of 20 translator groups, consisting of a total of 40 (white) Officers and 200 (Nisei) Other Ranks, or a minimum of 8 translator groups consisting of 16 (white) Officers and 80 (Nisei) Other Ranks.

(ii) From the Australian Army for a maximum of 5 translator groups, consisting of 10 (white) Officers and 50 (Nisei) ORs, or a minimum of 2 translator groups, consisting of 4 (white) Officers and 20 (Nisei) ORs.

(iii) From the Military Attache, Washington, on behalf of Admiral Lord Mountbatten, GOC in C, SEAC, for an unspecified number of Nisei for special operations.

(d) The white officers could be provided from the Japanese Language School, Pacific Command.

(e) Assignments to either the SEAC or the Austr Army would be made subject to the recall of such personnel to the Canadian Army if required.

(b) The training of such personnel would be carried out in a special centre segregated from other troops. Prior to assigning them to duties in the field, investigation would be conducted by the Army in collaboration with the civil authorities, to ensure their loyalty and integrity.

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3. Costs

(a) Canada to pay all costs of training and ocean transport. After arrival in Theatre of Operations, borrower to pay all costs except pay and allowances, which would continue to be borne by Canada.

(b) The estimated cost to Canada, on a maximum basis for six months 1944-45 is \$353,058 of which \$78,309 is non-recurring. Funds are available in Army estimates.

4. Proposal has been

(a) Recommended by Minister of National Defence

(b) Recommended by the Chief of the General Staff

(c) Reviewed as to financial aspects and concurred in by Deputy Minister (Army).