

21 April 1942

Mr. Asher B. Wilson  
Twin Falls, Idaho

Dear Mr. Wilson:

Over the week-end I met with a committee of University representatives and government officials in Denver to consider possible plans for federal aid to our "accelerated" program of studies and on returning learned that you had telephoned to inquire about the University's stand on admitting out-of-state students of Japanese extraction. I understand that you were assured that we had not in any way changed the only policy we have ever announced, that of excluding them.

I am told there was quite a bit of concern locally over the fact that the army through the Wartime Civil Control Administration sent six University of Washington students to Moscow. They did this despite the fact that President Sieg of the University of Washington had duly notified the authorities that the University of Idaho would not admit them! However, having satisfied themselves as to the character and loyalty of these students (three boys and three girls) they sent them anyway, but gave assurances, so the newspaper says, that no additional ones would be sent here. The army has already sent groups of carefully selected boys and girls to Colorado where both the state university and the agricultural college admitted them, to Montana where a few were taken, to Utah and to several other states where limited numbers of these students have been accepted by various colleges and universities. No doubt the Commission sent the six to Moscow in the hope that the University would relax its regulations and admit them, but a decision on that point, as you suggested earlier, would have to await formal consideration by the Board of Regents.

I am annoyed at the way the government handled this for they did not give us the slightest hint that they even contemplated sending any of these Japanese-American students here. Moreover we had been careful to notify those concerned that the University would not admit them. In fact the first I heard of their coming was when the editor of our local paper telephoned to say they had arrived the night before! The next mail brought a letter from President Sieg of the University of Washington explaining that he had previously informed the Army of our non-admission policy. It certainly seems as if the government might have notified us of their intentions so that we could have at least lodged a protest.

I feel the authorities would not have transferred them at all if places had not been found locally for these boys and girls where they could work for their board and room. One of the younger members of our faculty, Dr. Hatt, formerly of the University of Washington,

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and one of the local ministers were chiefly responsible for finding these locations. Hatt was asked to undertake this task by the President of the University of Washington and was assured that he would be working in support of the Army's policies and the announced intention of the government in dealing with this problem. Hatt had mentioned the request some time ago quite casually while we were riding home on the bus, but never spoke of it again. I assumed he had not started on it or had abandoned his activities. Although I regret to say it, I feel that he was at fault in not keeping me informed as to what he was doing. On the other hand he naturally resents the implication that there was anything sinister or disloyal in what he did. As a matter of fact he acted not only in good faith but on the definite assurance from military headquarters that he was helping the army and the government.

The temporary furor over the situation seems to have pretty much subsided. As so often seems to happen the fire-works came while I was out of town. I am not sure that I could have quenched it had I been there, but at least I could have explained the circumstances and perhaps taken some of the criticism off the University and put it on the government authorities in Seattle, where it seems to me it properly belongs. You will be glad to know that steps have already been taken for their removal and they are expected to be out of this community by Thursday, day after tomorrow.

Very sincerely yours,

Harrison C. Dale  
President

cc: Members of the Board  
Governor Clark