

General Bureau of Investigation

United States Department of Justice

San Francisco, California

June 2, 1942

Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

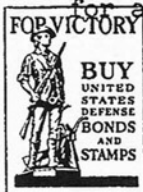
Please be advised that Mr. EDWARD ENNIS of the Department of Justice, in San Francisco today did not call upon me personally but called me by telephone about five o'clock this evening, advising that he had just heard from his office that there was to be a declaration of war against Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary and that he would have to immediately fly back to Washington.

He stated that he was sorry that he had been unable to see me personally, but that he and Mr. JAMES ROWE, the Assistant to the Attorney General would be out in San Francisco in about a month when the U. S. Attorneys have their conference, and that he and Mr. ROWE would look me up at that time. He extended the personal greetings of Mr. ROWE to me.

Mr. ENNIS stated that he wanted to tell me what he had done here today. He stated that he had talked to General John L. DeWitt who had explained the military situation. Mr. ENNIS said that the General felt that all persons picked up here should be held.

He stated that he had called to the General's attention the first three cases of Italians who had been picked up for curfew violation. He did not mention names nor where they had been picked up, but stated that two had been women who were wives of men in the service. He stated that he had pointed out to General DeWitt that the Department wanted to go along, but in cases like this where they were trivial, they wanted to reserve the discretion in someone who could pass on whether that type of individual should be held. He stated that the discretion was going to be left with the U. S. Attorney who would call the Army and clear with them. They were going to call Colonel KARL BENDETSON'S office before they release an individual if they felt that he should be released, in order that the Army might make its objections if it so desired. He stated that while the present military situation existed, there would be strict enforcement of curfew, but that it was his view that discretion should be used in the picking up of women. I of course, made no comments during this whole dissertation by Mr. ENNIS.

He then brought up the problem of individuals being apprehended at some distance from the U. S. Attorney, and the problem of bringing them in for a hearing before the U. S. Attorney. He stated that the Immigration authorities claim that they have no personnel to handle it, and that we were too busy to handle it. I pointed out to Mr. ENNIS that it had not



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been the practice of this Bureau to transport prisoners except in exceptional cases. He stated that he was going to take the matter up when he got back to Washington, and undoubtedly would work something out so that Immigration would have personnel sufficient to handle the transportation of these persons held for them.

He stated that Mr. I. F. WIXON in Charge of Immigration and Naturalization at San Francisco had stated that one [redacted] an alien had been arrested last night for drunken driving, and that an agent of this office had had the drunken driving changed to curfew violation. I stated that if he was a curfew violator, we would book him as a curfew violator. I have checked up on this matter, and the facts are these: [redacted], an alien was arrested at 2:40 AM, 6/1/42 by the California Highway Patrol and placed in the Monterey County Jail at Salinas, California on a drunken driving charge. Inasmuch as he was also in violation of curfew regulations, Special Agent [redacted] who was informed of the arrest, talked to Assistant U. S. Attorney HAMMACK by telephone, and Mr. HAMMACK authorized the booking of subject to Immigration and Naturalization Service as a curfew violator. As a result of this authorization, the booking was changed at the Jail at 10 AM on 6/1/42. Subsequently, Special Agent [redacted] was in telephonic communication with [redacted] of Immigration and Naturalization Service, who expressed the belief that subject might be released after being brought to San Francisco for a hearing before the U. S. Attorney, but agreed to transport him to San Francisco for the hearing.

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It is quite apparent to me that the Immigration authorities in this case were seeking to avoid bringing the subject from Salinas which is over 100 miles to San Francisco, even though he had been booked enroute to Immigration by instruction of the U. S. Attorney. They undoubtedly were trying to build up a story for Mr. ENNIS so that they could duck the handling of this type of case.

Mr. ENNIS used this case to raise the point that the Federal authorities are too busy to handle local crimes on the basis of curfew violations. I pointed out to Mr. ENNIS that my understanding was that a curfew violation was Federal and not local, and that the State or local authorities could not handle it. Mr. ENNIS pointed out that what he had in mind was that when an individual had committed an offense which could be handled under the State, where the State could prosecute for some type of violation or other, that they should do so; that he didn't feel that the Federal Government should be handling petty local stuff through the use of curfew, that the Federal Government had too much to do. I mentioned that local officers undoubtedly were following the General's request, that any alien found out after hours should be held as a curfew violator. He stated that he would take this up with the General when he gets back to Washington, as he does not want to go too far on these curfew matters. He reiterated that he did not feel that every offense of an alien was to be handled as a curfew violation even though he was a curfew violator.

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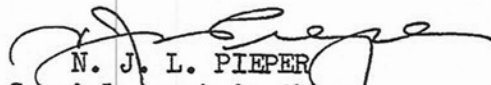
I had occasion to talk to General DeWitt a few minutes after I talked to Mr. ENNIS, and General DeWitt mentioned that Mr. ENNIS had been out to see him, and that Mr. ENNIS had said that he had made a mistake in not coming out before, in order to realize what the situation was.

General DeWitt stated that he had settled the whole thing with him and had put it all in black and white. He said that a copy would be made available to me, and I shall furnish the Bureau a copy immediately upon receipt of same.

The General said that he had had a discussion with Mr. ENNIS about the holding of aliens for any type of violation and that Mr. ENNIS asked if the General meant for the duration, and the General said that was just what he meant. The General said that Mr. ENNIS squirmed quite a bit, and Mr. ENNIS admitted that the President had told the Attorney General that the General was to have what he wanted, and the General said that he was going to have what he wanted. He told me in his own inimitable, emphatic way that he intended to have what he wanted on this thing, and that ENNIS had not only put it down in writing that he could have it, but that ENNIS better see that he got it because the President was giving the orders.

The General was obviously not concerned about the intimation that Mr. ENNIS had given me that he was going to try to hedge on the present instructions.

Very truly yours,

  
N. J. L. PIEPER  
Special Agent in Charge

NJLP:FL  
AMSD  
CC: Mr. Gurnea  
Los Angeles