

# Christmas Spirit Backfires; Citizens Seek Camp Removal

By Roy Finch  
Special to The C.O.

COLEVILLE, Calif.—Christmas caroling in front of the home of the local draft board chairman by men from CPS Camp 31 has resulted in requests for the camp's removal by the chairman who called the caroling the "unwarranted intrusion of the inmates of this camp."

The camp's attempt to spread Christmas good cheer further backfired when a package of toys addressed to the Japanese Relocation Center at Poston, Ariz., was held up on the station platform because the sheriff and district attorney were being swamped with telephone calls charging that the box contained dynamite, guns or other contraband for the Japanese.

In the presence of the director, assistant director, business manager of

the camp, district forest supervisor, sheriff and district attorney, the box was opened on the platform. This precipitated the real blowoff.

### 'Yellow-bellies'

"It may be all right to make toys, but I can't see why you fellows should want to send them to those dirty yellow-bellies when there are lots of needy white children around here," declared the sheriff.

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## THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

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The assistant director explained that he had contacted the local Red Cross and welfare offices and had been told that all needy children were being taken care of. When the sheriff and district attorney still insisted that the toys should have been sent to white children elsewhere, Paul Kermier, one of the campers, replied:

"Perhaps there are needy white children hereabouts, but I have definite information that tens of thousands of Japanese children in concentration centers have far greater need, and I can make no distinction as to color, for the Christian religion does not sanction color discrimination, but says we are all brothers. Furthermore to me the Japanese-Americans are as much American citizens as our white children."

After further harangue from the officials about the "damned sneaky, disloyal Japs" when it was apparent that the toys would be sent in any case, the episode was terminated. The district attorney's half-joking parting remark was: "I only wish it had been dynamite instead of toys and that it had blown up on reaching its destination."

### Protest to Hershey

In the mind of L. J. Anderson, a local real estate agent and the chairman of the draft board, however, the matter was far from closed.

Mr. Anderson's letter to Maj. Gen. Lewis H. Hershey, director of Selective Service, asking removal of the camp, said that the COs "are not needed here for forest protection as we have plenty of loyal Americans working for the lumber companies who have always furnished adequate fire protection."

He further complained at "the use of private automobiles by the inmates, taking of furloughs during the Xmas holidays when the trains and busses were supposed to be reserved for our armed force, and the use of ten gallons of fresh milk daily."

### 'UnAmerican and Subversive'

An accompanying letter to the editor of the local paper, also sent to Maj. General Hershey, stated.

"When this camp was first established I warned the people of this community that these people were un-American and subversive and would infiltrate into the social life of our communities as soon as convenient for them. This has been done. They are in our churches and have tried to use our schools. They are now working on some of our ranches. Apparently there is not sufficient government work to keep them busy. Government trucks are used to transport them to meetings in Placerville.

"The Board of Directors of the Placerville Fruit Growers Association has decided to use these inmates in their pruning crews for those farmers

# OBJECTORS GIVEN RAISE

Aug. 5, 1943  
Iowa board of control officials Wednesday reported the pay of the 25 conscientious objectors working as attendants in the Mount Pleasant hospital for the insane has been increased from \$2.50 to \$15 a month.

The pay maximum is fixed by selective-service authorities, the officials said. The state provides meals, living quarters and uniforms for the group.

Upwards of half a dozen of the wives of the objectors also are working as attendants in the hospital. They are paid regular attendants' wages, which range from \$50 to \$75 a month.

Board officials praised the work

of the group. "We don't know what we would have done without them," said Board Member P. F. Hopkins. The objectors were assigned to the hospital last March from camps at Denison, Ia., and Weeping Water, Neb.



### One New Food Strike

Corbett Bishop, the conscientious objector who grew a beard and went on a 21-day fast in sympathy for Mahatma Ghandi last winter, has shaved off the beard and started another fast in protest against "forced labor." The West New York, N. J., bookseller, is at an objectors' camp near West Campton, N. H. 6/25/43