

2/21/42

Governor Arthur B. Langlie today proclaimed the entire State of Washington as a Protective Defense Area and ordered all Japanese to immediately surrender to the Washington State Patrol all firearms, ammunition, explosives or other materials or instruments which might be used to injure property or life.

The Governor's proclamation was issued after conferences with officers of the Army and Navy, at which it was stressed the necessity of immediate action for adequate steps to keep firearms or explosives out of the hands of persons who might use them in a campaign of sabotage conducted at a given time or timed simultaneously with an aerial bombing or possible attempted invasion.

The proclamation gives the Washington State Patrol the authority to regulate the sale, storage and use of explosives and firearms in the hands of everyone in the state, including white American citizens. It was explained, however, that there would be no interference with ordinary firearm sales to sportsmen or their use in hunting. The explosive regulations will be drafted with a view to disrupting industrial operations as little as possible while still affording the safeguards felt necessary by the Army and Navy.

But all Japanese must immediately surrender their firearms and explosives to the State Patrol. Next Thursday, February 26, was set as the deadline for turning them in. Violation of the Proclamation is punishable by fine and imprisonment. Memorandum receipts will be issued by the Patrol and the firearms will be returned to the holder of the receipt within six months after the end of the war. There will be no objection to Japanese selling their explosives back to the dealers if that can be accomplished.

The Governor issued a statement as follows:

"In issuing the proclamation prohibiting Japanese from possessing explosives or firearms and setting up regulations covering those in possession of other American citizens, we are taking precautionary measures felt necessary by the state government, the Army and the Navy, whose responsibility it is for the safety of our state and nation against insurrection from within and invasion from without. I am certain that all loyal Japanese will understand the necessity of this action which takes from them their property which might be used innocently or otherwise to injure life or damage property. The regulations covering the storage of firearms by other Americans are necessary, in the considered opinion

of the Army and Navy, to prevent their forcible seizure at a time of insurrection or invasion.*

The regulations covering firearms and explosives are being worked out now in conferences with manufactures, dealers and industrial users and will be issued within a few days.