

To : Mr. Lloyd

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR FOR MUTUAL SECURITY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

June 21, 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Charles S. Murphy,  
The White House.

I am attaching a letter from Mr. Harriman to the President recommending veto of the McCarran-Walter bill.

The first draft of this letter was discussed by Mr. Harriman in detail with his staff before his departure from Washington, and this final draft was read to him in Des Moines, Iowa, this morning and approved by him. He requested that I sign his name to the letter and deliver it to you today, in order that it might be in the President's hands while he is considering his action on the bill.



*George M. Elsey*  
GEORGE M. ELSEY  
Assistant to the Director

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR FOR MUTUAL SECURITY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

June 21, 1952



Dear Mr. President:

Although the McCarran-Walter bill (H.R. 5678) will not materially affect our various mutual security programs, I personally feel very strongly that it does such violence to the traditions and heritage of this nation that I am compelled to urge you to veto it.

The bill represents the first major revision of our immigration laws since 1924. As such I think it should make a contribution to the solution of some of the problems we face in the world; it should be in harmony with the spirit which animates our foreign policy and our relations with other countries; and it should strengthen our claim to leadership of the free world. Measured by these standards, it is a thoroughly bad bill.

Except for two liberalizing provisions -- the naturalization of Japanese and other Asiatics and the establishment of quotas for certain Asiatic countries hitherto barred -- and some minor improvements, the bill retains most of the bad or outmoded features of our present laws, and then goes on to add a whole series of new provisions which in many ways will give us an even worse statute than what we now have. I particularly wish to point out that it reenacts provisions of the Internal Security Act of 1950, which you so vigorously denounced at the time you vetoed it.

The legislation looks upon immigrants and aliens with suspicion and hostility. It establishes unjustifiably restrictive principles of selection. It erects new and even more arbitrary barriers to entry. It transforms naturalized citizens into an inferior class and makes them subject to denaturalization on new grounds of uncertain effect. The bill retroactively subjects aliens to deportation for acts which were not grounds for deportation when committed. It curtails and, in some cases, removes the right of appeal and abolishes the statute of limitations. References in the bill to persons whose ancestry is one-half Asiatic is more in keeping with the Nuremberg laws than with American conceptions. It establishes grounds for exclusion, denaturalization and deportation which are unreasonable and unwarranted. It provides a basis for unreasonable search and interrogation of American citizens lawfully returning to this country.

It does nothing to give us a fairer and more up-to-date quota system that takes into account our new responsibilities in the world and the new relationship we are trying to develop with other countries.

This bill is another manifestation of that ugly trend among certain elements in our national life, which I can only characterize as mean, short-sighted, fearful and bigoted. I fervently hope that you can see your way to reject it in the most vigorous terms.



Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "W. A. Harriman".

W. A. Harriman  
Director for Mutual Security

The President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.