

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
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WAR DEPARTMENT

9679-13

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF:

Subject: Name for the camp of the selective draft from Porto Rico.

1. Herewith is a memorandum from the Acting Secretary of the General Staff, wherein the Chief of Staff directs a recommendation be made for the name of the camp to be used at San Juan, Porto Rico, for the training of the selective draft men in Porto Rico.

2. The name recommended is "Camp Las Casas". Named for Bartolome de Las Casas, 1474-1566. Bishop of Chiapa, "Protector of the Indians". Ardent advocate of the laws and regulations intended to not merely prevent abuse of the native population of the West Indies, but which provided for their education and training.

As the officers of the Army who held high commands in Porto Rico are still alive, their names are thus barred. Las Casas, if the laws of the Indies are remembered correctly, stood for education and training, for these laws were singularly humanitarian, especially for their time. That they were not enforced, does not affect that. It is believed this name will be favorably received by all classes of the population in Porto Rico. After all, the training in one of these camps is not merely military training; it is also training for a more efficient conduct of life.

3. The War College Division recommends action in accordance with memorandum for The Adjutant General of the Army herewith.

1 incl. added.
bwh

D W KITCHAM

Colonel, General Staff,
Acting Chief of War College Division.

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WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON

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OFFICE CHIEF OF STAFF
WAR COLLEGE

9699-13

WAR DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE ARMY:

Subject: Name for the camp of the selective draft
from Porto Rico.

I. The Secretary of War directs that the camp for the training of the selective draft men in Porto Rico, at San Juan, Porto Rico, be named "Camp de Casas", in honor of Bartolome de Las Casas, 1474--1566.

II. The Secretary of War further directs that the above information published to the service in the next general order issued, and that advance copies be furnished to the chiefs of all staff corps and departments, Adjutant General, Chairman on Training Camp Activities, the commanding general, Eastern Department, and the commanding officer, training camp, Porto Rico.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

Subject: Mailing of Army Contingents.

1. Herewith letters from Albert S. Robinson (WFO 7699-20) dated March 20, 1918, from Fort Thomas Post No. 30, C.A.A., Department of Missouri (WFO 7699-21) dated March 23, 1918, and from Gen. H. Thomas Post No. 14, Etawah, Kans. (WFO 7699-22) dated March 23, 1918, in which it is urged that the name of George H. Thomas be given to one of the army contingents.

2. The National Army contingents and National Guard mobilization camps were named after distinguished soldiers of the United States but in doing so other considerations than commemorating them were involved.

3. These names are the names of post offices. They should accordingly be short and easily written. It must be remembered that in these contingents there are many men whose families know little or no English. It is necessary that addresses written by this class of correspondents should be simple and short. Furthermore, a long name takes more time to write and there is necessarily an increased chance of it being written incorrectly. This eliminated such names as "George H. Thomas". Such a name would inevitably be written in two or three different ways. It was desired to avoid this in order to add in the case of distributing mail.

4. It was endeavored to assign names which would have some connection with the troops sent to the camps and which would not conflict with the names of established army posts which were clearly post office addresses. Camp Sheridan, Alabama, is the concentration camp of soldiers from Ohio and West Virginia and there is a Fort Sheridan near Chicago. The distance between these points enabled the name to be used twice.

5. The only camp which could appropriately have been named "Thomas" would have been one close to Fort Thomas, Kentucky, a permanent post, and to have created confusion in the mail.

6. The idea of commemorating distinguished officers was only secondary. These camps are temporary constructions. It is not known what will be done with them at the close of this war. General Thomas already has a permanent post of the U. S. Army named after him.

7. It is not considered expedient to change the name of any contingent. This will increase the difficulties of the mail service. The prompt receipt of communications through the mail is the main consideration. Nothing should be done which will complicate that. It is accordingly considered inadvisable to give the name of "George H. Thomas" to any of the existing contingents.

8. The War Plans Division therefore recommends action as indicated in memorandum to The Adjutant of the Army herewith.

3 incls. added
 D W KETONAN
 Col., Gen. Staff,
 Asst. Director, W.P.D., A.A.C. of S.

See 7925-27