UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FILE NO.

Memorandum for Regional Director:

NOTES AND FACTORS RELATIVE TO

PROPOSED ARMY MANEUVER ROAD AT

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT

IMPORTANT

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ARNO B. GAMMERS, Director.

Ernest A. Davidson
Regional Chief of Planning
Feb. 28, 1945.
Memorandum for Regional Director:

The following notes and pictures will serve as a record of our investigation of that portion of Joshua Tree National Monument through which the Army requested permission to construct a road for maneuver purposes and which was investigated during the period Feb. 12th to Feb. 16th, 1945. The writer, Superintendent Jacobs and Ranger Ketchum assisted you in this reconnaissance.

On Feb. 12th, after contact with General Walker which you have covered in your report to Director, we went to the southeastern portion of the Monument and drove to the aqueduct via Desert Center and old aqueduct approach road.

The first picture, opposite page, shows the aqueduct as the white streak indicating excavation. This is at the extreme southeastern corner of the Monument. In the farthest distance indicated by red arrow is the pass through which it was proposed to build the road from a point not far distant from where the picture was snapped. To the right is the Colorado Range of mountains and to the left are foothills at extreme eastern limit of the Eagle Mountains.

The second picture is taken from the aqueduct which is the Monument boundary at this point and shows by means of dotted red line, the approximate location of road requested.
On Feb. 12th we also drove along the oil-paved road east of the Coxcomb Range, which connects Desert Center and Rice. Just to the east and at the base of the Coxcomb is located the army camp called "Camp Coxcomb". The first panorama, opposite, shows the eastern face of this mountain range and in the left section where dust is visible is the location of the rather large camp which is laid out with streets in a gridiron pattern indicative of much larger expansion than at present. The foreground furnishes a slight indication of the extensive damage done to the normal desert floor by off-the-road maneuvers of all types of mobile army equipment. This portion of the desert has not yet experienced a full year of army use, and practically every foot of the expensive terrain shown in this picture is torn up similarly to the foreground. What will be the condition of this "desert" after a few years' use can well be imagined.

The second panorama shows the view we obtained on Feb. 12th when we drove over the "impassible" trail extending east from Twentynine Palms and eastward from the Dale road, roughly parallel to the north boundary of the Monument which is at the point the picture was taken, about two or three miles inside the Monument. The dotted line in foreground is the approximate location of the main "trail" which will be seen to have innumerable paralleling tracks, cross tracks, and circles caused by maneuvering of army equipment.

The dotted line in distance is the approximate location for the army maneuver road requested, and which we found, on this date, to have been partially constructed by pioneer bulldozer or power grader some ten to twelve feet wide. All the area visible in this picture is within the National Monument. The Coxcomb range is seen in the distance of the right-hand section.
On Feb. 13th, Superintendent Jacobs and the writer walked through the eastern portion of the Monument to ascertain to what extent pioneer construction work had been done by the army. You and Ranger Ketchup meanwhile drove around the eastern end of the Monument, posting boundary signs at strategic points, and met us in the evening at the aqueduct, southeast corner of Monument.

The two upper snaps, opposite, show the western (Monument) face of the Coxcomb Range. Center snap shows a small section of the pioneer blading ("road") which we found to extend entirely across the Monument.

The lowest section shows the eastern portion of Pinto Basin across which pioneer blading has been done. The dotted line shows approximate location of the work and a section of the "road" is visible as a faint white line at one point. To the left are foothills of the Coxcombs and to right is the eastern terminus of the Eagle Mountains. Aqueduct is approximately at distant termination of dotted line, and the snap was taken at a point about one-third of the way across the Monument from the north, looking south.
The panorama, opposite, furnishes a typical view showing the character of the Pinto Basin at its eastern extremity. In view of the very rapid injury to vast sections of "the desert" in this portion of the southern California landscape, by army training maneuvers, added emphasis is given to the importance of keeping at least one large and typical section of desert in its natural condition. It seems that about the only hope of thus preserving original desert scenery is within the Joshua Tree National Monument. Even the large Anza Desert State Park has been definitely damaged by army use including artillery firing and traffic of heavy mobile equipment.

In the panoramas shown, there is nothing to indicate human presence or use with the exception of the recently bladed "track". It is true that individual tracks of autos driven by prospectors and others (when recent rains have made the sands firm enough for driving) wind around the sagebrush even in this remote part of the Monument, yet these tracks have caused but very minor intrusion and are not to be compared with the evidences of the "modern age" caused by machine blading of an engineered road line. Prospectors tracks do not invite tourist use. If it be at all possible, this eastern portion of the Monument and of Pinto Basin should be left without mechanised access— one place in the desert where pedestrians or horsebackers can see, in generations to come, a bit of the natural desert scene.
The four snaps on this and opposite sheet, show the character of pioneer work which the army has done across the Monument. In the picture immediately above, there are two paralleling blade tracks in one of which Supt. Jacobs is standing. The two "roads" are about 40 feet, center to center, leaving the strip of sage between. This type of parallel construction extends about half way across the Monument, or approximately 7 to 8 miles. It is now possible to drive an automobile entirely across the Monument except in dry season, without excessive difficulty, along the newly bladed line.
The page appears to be a continuation of a text that discusses the importance of the political party in general and the role of the people in democratic processes. The text seems to be discussing the need for cooperation and unity among political parties and the importance of the participation of all citizens in the decision-making process.

The text also mentions the need for the people to stand together and work towards a common goal. It emphasizes the importance of unity and cooperation in achieving the common good.

The text further highlights the need for the people to stand up against any form of division, discrimination, or hatred. It stresses the importance of the people coming together and working towards a common goal.

The text concludes by emphasizing the importance of the people standing together and working towards a common goal, regardless of their political differences.

In summary, the text discusses the importance of cooperation, unity, and the participation of all citizens in the decision-making process. It highlights the need for the people to stand together and work towards a common goal, regardless of their political differences.
Presenting an entirely different aspect of the interesting Joshua Tree National Monument, are the pictures on opposite page. These were snapped in Fortynine Palms Canyon, only three or four miles from the village of Twentynine Palms.

While very near the center of public concentration, this canyon still retains much of its natural beauty perhaps owing to the fact that a hike of a mile and a half must be made over a considerable hill, to reach the oasis.

Every effort should be made to keep the area in a natural condition and to prevent vandalism. Rather extensive carving of initials has recently occurred on trunks of the large palm trees, and the Superintendent is taking steps to obliterate the carving and which will, it is hoped, help to prevent such further misuse. It is not possible with the small monument personnel, to police the area and an appeal to the public sense of fairness is to be made by signs, and perhaps supplemented by a registration book.

A permanent spring fills a small pool at the base of the palms, and a small creek flows a short distance before being absorbed into the sands.

There are more than forty large palms, and a number of small ones.
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ARNO B. CAMMERER,
Director.