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# Japanese May Purchase Land

## 1943 Act Is Ruled To Be Unconstitutional

Attorney General Guy E. Williams has held that under the constitution of the State of Arkansas, there can be no restriction on land or other property ownership or its use by Japanese, Chinese or Indians.

The opinion conflicts with an act recently signed by the governor that would prohibit Japanese from owning land or property in the state. The act was written by Sen. B. Frank Williams, Osceola.

J. B. Bunn, assistant attorney general, who prepared last week's opinion said he believed the Williams act could be voided because the state constitution can be amended only by a vote of the people.

In discussing the opinion, Mr. Bunn pointed to Article 2, Section 20 of the constitution which states that "no distinction shall ever be made by law between residents aliens and citizens in regard to the possession, enjoyment or descent of property."

He also called attention to a ruling by the Arkansas Supreme Court in which Justice Humphreys said in commenting on this part of the constitution, "This section is peculiar to our constitution. It seems that other constitutions do not contain such provision. The section contains a few words and is unambiguous.

"The manifest and only intent which can be extracted from the language is that all resident aliens in Arkansas, whether eligible to naturalization and citizenship under the laws of the United States, have the same right to acquire and enjoy the possession of property in this state, either by purchase or descent, that any natural citizen has."