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Miscellaneous [Kurihara Writings]

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July 20 1944

~~Kaitaku~~
~~Hitomi murder~~

It may seem rather unjust to those who are not posted with the affairs of the camp to blame the Administration for the present fear and unrest caused by terrorism, but however unjust it may seem, it is true. It is the product of the American Justice as practiced by the W.R.A. Administration at Tule Lake.

The beating of ^{Noma} Hitomi, ^{Angai} Morimoto, ^{Yokota} A. Takahashi, and the murder of ^{Y. Noma} ~~Y. Hitomi~~ can be placed at the very door steps of the Administration. Ever since my arrival here at Tule Lake, I have heard constant resentments being voiced by the residents against the Cooperative Enterprise.

The basic reasons of constant grumbling that which finally had culminated in a murder are:

1. The Co-operative Enterprise was arrogantly selling articles such as buckets, brooms, and even coal hand shovels, which the W.R.A. was under obligation to supply to the residents. The residents have again and again voiced their objection but the management, instead of heeding the voice of the people, kept right on selling with a take-it-or-leave-it attitude and at a handsome price.

2. The Administration, well aware of the facts deliberately withheld the distribution of the buckets and brooms when these articles of household necessities were piled high in the warehouses.

3. The Co-operative was selling many items of luxury. Opposition to such practice was heard everywhere. Block representatives attending and discussing such matters have vigorously voiced the opinion of the people but the management instead of heeding it, have boldly spited them.

4. Any person who unflinchingly attacked the Co-operative was immediately reported to the Administration through the Civic

Center. Without question, that person was then apprehended and thrown into the stockade and confined there indefinitely without even a semblance of a trial. 1/

5. It is the belief of the residents that the Co-operative was solely responsible for the defeat of the Status quo. They've urged the people to return to work. The Co-ordinating Committees in function at the time of strike were men who were directly connected with the Co-operative. They, instead of helping the residents, became the tool of the Administration. Those who openly defies them or voice any opinion condemning the Administration was reported and thrown into the stockade. The committee thereafter were branded as Administration Spies. Drunk with the power vested in them, they became unbearably haughty. Daily arrests were a common thing. Scores were isolated and kept within a narrow confinement without a trial for months. Such is American Justice here at Tule Lake.

6. The Committees believing themselves immune have openly challenged the residents after receiving threats through mail. At the same time they weren't so brave. Fearing attack, they employed body-guards at the expense of the people, paying out of the Co-operative fund. Some were even paid by the Administration, I heard. It may only be a rumor, but the employment of body-guards are true. Even under such circumstances, they refused to listen to the voice of the people, because they firmly believed that they were immune under the protection and power vested in them by the Administration.

7. All these facts were undoubtedly known to the Administration, but not-a-thing was done to alter or better the situation. The Co-operative was the sores spot in the camp. The heads of Co-operative

1/ This remark was heard on every hand one to two weeks before ^{Numa} Hitomi's death. *R.H.*

7. All these facts were undoubtedly known to the Administration, but not a thing was done to alter or better the situation. The cooperative was the sorest spot in the camp. The head of Cooperative were under constant threats which they were laughing away. Hence the murder took place which brought them to realization.

Today those people, scoundrels in the eyes of the Japanese people are under protective custody, sleeping in one of the nurses' Quarters in the Base hospital. They are not wanted there. They are fed in the Caucasian Mess Hall, where they are likewise despised. Director Best has a problem on his hand, trying to take care of unassimilable oriental dogs.

This problem can be easily solved. My suggestion is - release all those in the stockade and place those dogs within its confinement. It is the best place for them. They will be well protected with high fences around them. Lately the north side was plaster-boarded so none can look in or out. It is just the place for them. They can meditate undisturbed and at leisure.

The killing of Y. ^{Noma} Hitomi was a blessing to the residents. I have yet to see who really feels sorry for him, other than those of his immediate family. Never have I seen such pleasant reaction to a murder in all my life.

Several others are said to be in line for the grave. Had they not been given protective custody, they too may be dead by now; and their death, violent as it may be will be openly rejoiced by the residents.

Thus public sanction of Y. ^{Noma} Hitomi's murder will undoubtedly

The unfavorable verdict on Ukamoto's case will be a ground for further killing. The resentment will be great. It will know no bound, therefore it will be my advice that all should be careful. Slightest suspicion will be magnified manifold and the poor suspect will in course of time be beaten or killed. Therefore too intimate a friendship with any Caucasian will be dangerous. Explanation will not help. It will only tend to add greater resentment.

We must remember the Japanese in this camp, especially those who swore allegiance to Japan are fanatically sincere in their love of Japan. Many of them will give their lives readily and would undertake to execute with pleasure. Though killing is not a good thing, I admire their spirit.

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Why do I approve ^{it} is? Because there is no law here in this camp. If there is law, which the Administration would say that there is, then I would say, there is no Justice. Law without Justice is no law.

The Administration have so far listened to the Rats and upon the strength of their flimsy charges, it arrested and threw many into the stockade, isolating them for many months without a trial. It kept this up too long and too often. If this is not a Gestapo Method what else ^{is} it? Furthermore is this the practice of American Democracy? Why preach Democracy and practice brutalism? This is why I have lost my faith in America, the land of my birth. For half a century I have seen American Justice practiced contrary to their teachings.

The American laws are born out of Congressional incubator turned out by the thousands to suit the occasion/benefit themselves, which

I would rather live among the barbarians than among the hypocritical, selfish, everything-for-myself Americans. Their laws are mockery to civilization. They can shoot and kill an innocent man for no reason whatever and be acquitted, as pronounced by the court-martial, freeing Pvt. Bernard Goe who shot Shoichi Okamoto on May 24.

Americans have no conscience whatever and yet they profess to believe in Christianity. I am afraid Jesus must be shedding and sweating the tears of blood in shame at the behavior of His believers.

The resentment over this very unfavorable verdict is great. Why it shouldn't be? To kill a man just because he was afraid of him is no excuse, yet the officers have acquitted the sentry. A cowardly shooting and a shameless verdict. That is America, a hypocritical America.

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In the case with the Administration dealing with the spies had gone too far. It cannot wash its hands off so easily. The dogs it sponsored must be fed and cared. They are now being housed in the Warehouse section, furnished with ice-box and stove of their own so they can prepare a meal for themselves. The refusal of the crews employed in the Caucasian Mess Hall to care for them have necessitated it. What a sight to have them around the Administration Area.

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A second group of pups are now being raised by the Administration. These were those born in the stockade. They are now working hand in hand with the Administration.

From the informations which I have secured, the master minds are forming a gang of their own for protection. They are being

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~~I don't know just who these "pups" are. May be released internees who promised to support Co-ordinating Committee. Will find out.~~

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carefully watched. They are trying very hard to convince the residence by putting up a brave front, broadcasting aloud that what they are doing is for the good of the people, but their deception is so clear, they are being shunned. With every move they make, they are edging deeper and deeper into the Administrative quagmire from which they will not be able to extricate themselves.

It is my prediction the next person whose throat would be slashed will be out of this group of dogs, especially the one which wagged its tail the most. I feel that I could positively name the victim. When his throat is slashed, Mr. Best will have more hounds to care, the very reflection of his administrative ability. Must America continue to suffer by tolerating such a man to manage the affairs of this camp?

As long as the Administration continues to employ the services of the lowly dogs, this camp will never return to normal. And as long as the Administration uses them, there will be an execution or executions.

Those who escape execution under protective custody may someday be forced to return to Japan. Though he may sail across the great ocean, all the water in the seas will not be enough to wash the stigma he had earned. They are good as dead or probably worse by suffering a living hell.

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The present trend of war is not very encouraging to the Japanese. Those who cannot take it are grumbling. Those who are unable to think for themselves are worrying. But those who know are rejoicing over the fact that the climax is approaching fast in favor of their beloved country, Japan.

If their plan is discovered, then the war will either enter a stalemate or be fought for many years. How long will America be able to fight? My personal opinion is; America has reached the climax. Another year of war, two at the most is all she can fight. The country in the meantime will be torn with strikes and revolt.

Japan on the other hand will fight on indefinitely. Her greatest strength second only to the Will of the Soldiers to fight unto death.

Hence my faith in her remains unchanged whatever the reverses at present may be.

by Kurihara
706-C T.L.C.

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NOTE: Most of the attitudes expressed here are those of a large part of the camp population. ~~xxxxxxx~~ They are not the sentiments of a "small fanatic group." K is by and large a liberal as the colonists go. If attitudes appear incomprehensible, I can easily add others and make them clear. R. H.

Feb. 14, 1945

The almost incredible records the Nisei have made through unstinting sacrifice for this country on every battle-front of the war must have commanded the pride and thankfulness for their bravery of every thinking man and woman, as Mr. Ickes has said. But of how many? I seriously question, what portion of the Americans really do think? If they do, the percentage is very very small. They are like a bunch of sheep led by selfish politicians. It is so obvious, the Americans themselves would acquiesce if they do not admit.

These Nisei who are trustingly sacrificing themselves for the promised future are going to be terribly disappointed. I too believed in American Democracy during the First World War, gladly went to the front to fight for the good of the coming generations. Somehow, after going through hell for many months, I was spared by God to return to share in the freedom, happiness, and the justice of American Democracy. Very dishearteningly before I was even mustered out, I found out that American Democracy was only for the whites and not for me or for my kind.

Those Nisei who met their fate on the battlefields are very fortunate, having been spared of the bitter experiences in store for them if they should survive. I hope the shock won't be too great. Those boys were and are young. It was their first experience; therefore to judge them too severely would be unfair. They have to learn it the hard way too as I did.

Through my own experience I would fore-state that those who return with happy thoughts will soon be disappointed, discouraged, and dejected. They will be torn with hatred born of discrimination without a haven to seek for consolation as I did in the realm of my fatherland Nippon. Their future is going to be darker than the future of the colored people. They no longer have a sovereign to appeal to. They must endure it in silence, however bitter it may be. They then will find out that American democracy is for the whites only and not for them as the hero Sgt. Kuroki already did. What a pity that they did not die.

If the Japanese who remain here in the United States after the war believe that they will be accorded every right as Americans, they are in for a terrible disappointment. Wherever they go and whatever they do, they are Japs and as Japs they will be treated. They may yell themselves to death as protest if they wish, it will not be heard. Being a segment of minority whose feature is distinctively oriental, rebuffs will be as great as it was with the Negroes after the last war. The poor coloreds did not only enjoy in their promised rights, but also their hereditary rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution of the United States. As it was with the coloreds, the fruits of the Nisei loyalty will be very very bitter.

Just as we Japanese Veterans of the First World War have learned, the Japanese Veterans of this Second World War will learn likewise. Since their faces will be the deciding factor in every occasion, whatever credentials they may possess will have no bearing. American Legion button or any other visible emblem amounts to a mere personal ornamentation. If any of the Nisei try to secure a position on the strength of the credentials, he will find them of no value.

Should the Japanese veterans walk the streets in his uniform upon his return, he must be prepared for insults, or even bodily harm, possibly death as it happened to the poor coloreds in the South. The soldiers

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- Future of the Nisei - 2.

uniform he wears and the decorations if he has any, higher and more coveted the medals may be, he will be regarded with contempt. First through Jealousy, and secondly because it is being worn by a race other than the white. Here again, the face of the individual and not the uniform or his decoration predominantly stands in the way of justice and fairness.

The Nisei's unalterable face will be their curse as long as they live, transmitting it to his sons and daughters for generations to come. However they may try, there is no avenue of escape. Such will be the lot of those who abandoned their race.

The sources of their income will be limited to menial labor at starvation wages. However resourceful they may be, they will be kept to the ground. To ease their pride, they may pursue the only industry free of competition, "the back-breaking truck farming." The scale of their operation will be limited by constant supervision, thereby suppressed economically. Their rights as American citizens who fought for American Democracy will be curtailed to the minimum. Here again, I would say, to be a citizen in name only is better to be without.

Within the next fifty years, I am positive the world again will be in the throes of a barbarous war, definitely racial. The Japanese who preferred America will see the greatest of barbarism in the world has ever seen. The persecution of the Jews in Europe in comparison to what will happen to the Orientals in the United States, the difference will be so great, words will fail to describe. There will be a complete extermination of the Yellow Race throughout the Western Hemisphere, especially in the United States. Under the frenzied annihilation of the Yellow Race, even half-breeds will be subjected to the cruel fate. Such will be the reward in store for the Nisei who abandoned their own race to fight for American Democracy. They will have years to grieve over their choice in leisure, crowned with wanton murder approved and executed by the public in general.

Feb. 18, 1945

It deplored me to see so many young boys are being misled by those vociferous, glory seeking, selfish leaders. Nippon Danshi has been blatantly used to glorify their purpose and the organization into which the youngsters were coaxed to join. To me as I see it, the future of these boys are being ruined. Unfortunately the time is in the favor of these petty politicians at present.

The majority of the youngsters who have joined, are dancing to the radical tune of the agitators without the slightest knowledge of what the consequences would be. Most of them are acting according to the impulse of the moment. The time will come when they will regret in leisure, heaped with disgrace. The decision which they will make after reaching their destination (Internment Camp) will reflect on their parents, brothers and sisters. Whatever the result may be, the parents must not complain, since it is partly their fault for not having guided their sons on the right path, and in nearly every case, they too have taken an active part in the ruination of their beloved sons.

It is a foregone conclusion that many as fifty percent or more will break within six months and will seek freedom regardless of the vow to which they have sworn. The loathsome, uneventful life of an Internment Camp is more than what an ordinary youngster can withstand. It takes tremendous will power to bear the loathsomeness, day after day, week after week, and month after month. I have seen many who sold their soul to get out, amongst them the loud mouths who used to wave the flag most vigorously. They have forgotten the heroic words they uttered. It has faded in thin air.

Many of the boys who are now being interned are too young. They, in fact, had no definite mind of their own and their will is flexible. Since they either were coaxed by their parents and friends, or having seen their pals join the organization, they too have joined without thought, to relish the thrill which they felt at the time when others were sent away by the residents with thrilling "Banzais!" Their decision having been made either through persuasion or through the chivalrous impulse of the moment, their sense of responsibility to uphold the honor of the Nippon Danshi and their self respect would be a matter of trivialities. The Hokoku Dan have cheapened "Nippon Danshi", the nationally sanctified title applied to the flowers of the Yamato Race. My heart wreaths with wrath to see so many barking patriots defiling the honor and glory of these red-blooded Nippon Danshi who unselfishly gave their lives to our fatherland Nippon. It is a sacrilege! A sacrilege of the most grievous nature. Oh! what a shame! What a shame! I blame not the heroes if they should turn in their graves.

We who have obeyed and are obeying implicitly the wishes of the Emperor requested through the premiers were branded as Non-Japanese because we refused to join the Hokoku Dan and parade the compound with our hairs cut short. If to cut our hairs short and do a bit of exercises in the morning and while the rest of the day in various games of ^{relaxation} ~~relaxation~~ is Nippon Danshi, then let me borb my hair as I see fit and disturb me not in my studies.

The myopic leaders who are responsible for the corruption of the youngsters, one of these days will have to account for the crimes they have committed. To what extent will they be able to convince the officials of the Japanese Government that their undertakings to Japanize the Nisei were legitimate and honorary? They will have to have unlimited proofs to justify their claim before they can convince the officials after a good 50 per cent, if not more, of the Nisei fail to weather the boring life of the Internment Camps.

When the Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen Dan was brought into life in this camp I

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sincerely rejoiced over it, but my joy was shortlived. It was nurtured into an organization of gangsters by the leaders. The leaders, instead of keeping the youngsters at heart, they were really organizing the youngsters into a formidable organization mainly for the purpose of using it as a club to further their selfish motives. This they succeeded. Thereafter they became unbearable both to the officials and to the majority of the obedient segregationists. They have kept the residents under constant fear and unrest.

I unequivocally condemn the leaders as the most selfish and shameless traitors who ever lived. They were blatantly using Nippon Danshi and Nippon as weapons with which to accomplish their ambition. Nearly all of them are in the neighborhood of 50, who should have known better. They have peddled Nippon Danshi so freely, it now seems meaningless to us. What will they have to say when the majority of those who were interned with them under their leadership turned out to be scums? Heavens! I tremble with fear to be in their shoes today.

Those damnable traitors must not be forgiven. They must be made to pay for every soul they have led astray and for the shame they have inflicted on the Yamato Race.