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LONGITUDINAL ORAL HISTORY OF MRS. MITZI AIDA

TULE LAKE -- 1944-45

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GALLOWS

SEPTEMBER 14, 1944

TALK WITH FOUR NISEI - MRS. MITZI AIDA, LILLIAN ISHIDA, MISS B. AND MISS S.

Lillian Ishida, one of Bob Tsuruda's friends had promised to arrange a meeting for me with Mrs. Aida, who had been a councilwoman at the Topaz Relocation Center before coming to Tule Lake with her Kibei husband. Mrs. Aida was the only Japanese American career woman with whom I talked at Tule Lake. She was very intelligent, determined, and courageous. I had been told that she thoroughly disapproved of the Resegregationists.<sup>1</sup> (The woman pictured speaking at the Topaz council -- on page 11 of "Impounded People," Spicer, et. al., is probably Mrs. Aida.)

When Lillian and I arrived at Mrs. Aida's home, we found that a tea party had been arranged and that two other Nisei girls were present. This worked out very well because in a group the girls spoke very frankly about their sentiments, contradicting each other and arguing on certain points. Lillian and another girl whom I shall call B. were Old Tuleans. Mrs. Aida and another girl, whom I shall call S., were from Topaz. Lillian and Miss B. are in their middle twenties, Mrs. Aida is in her early thirties and Miss S. is 18.

Mrs. Aida asked me to explain my work, which I did. She then said that she felt that the future was very dark for the Japanese in this country, but that she, personally, had no desire to go back to Japan. She knew she wouldn't get along there. However, the matter of relocation was not too hopeful either. She would not like to go back to California even though she still had good friends there, because she feared the treatment she might receive. The girls then lowered their voices and whispered about the rumors of the indictment, with which they were well acquainted.<sup>2</sup> (Mrs. Aida lives in block 6, Mrs. Tsuchikawa's block.) The girls whispered that Mrs. Tsuchikawa and Mr. Tsuchikawa were going to be arrested. *"You better lower your voices,"* warned Mrs. Aida, *"because they say that Mrs. Tsuchikawa comes around and listens to what people say. Especially at night she listens under peoples' windows."*

Mrs. Aida then asked me what I *"frankly"* thought about Mrs. Tsuchikawa. This was a tough spot, because if I said anything uncomplimentary about Mrs. Tsuchikawa it might get back to her and her enmity is to be avoided at all costs. If on the other hand I praised the gengyo-iji (status-quo) bunch to these anti-gengyo-iji girls, I would certainly inhibit the statements I hoped they would give me. I therefore said that I knew there were intelligent, sincere people in the status-quo group, but I could not answer her question since it would be a breach of confidence. Just as I would talk to no Japanese about her or about what she would tell me, I would not discuss Mrs. Tsuchikawa with her. This impressed her. She said: *"You know, they call her Madame Chiang Kai Shek here."*

Since we were on the subject I asked her for her analysis of the strength of the two groups.

<sup>1</sup> Though I had six rather long conversations with Mrs. Aida, she never told me that her husband had joined the Sokoku, nor that he resigned from that organization after the internment of February 11, 1945. I learned that from Mrs. Wakida on February 14, 1945.

<sup>2</sup> During the first week in September, the matter of complicity in the Noma murder was raised again. An investigator from the office of the District Attorney of Modoc County came to the project and undertook intensive questioning of Abe, Kunitani, and Tada, as well as such Resegregationist leaders as Mrs. Tsuchikawa and Mr. Kira. See Fieldnotes, September 7 through September 18.

Mrs. Aida: "I think our group is losing out. We have a certain class of people here who are easily swayed. All they're looking out for is their own benefit. I'm going to stick to my own way of thinking. But, well, though it doesn't sound nice, there are many uneducated people here who can't think for themselves."

"The other group /Resegregationists/ brings out the fact that these people have to go back to Japan."

Lillian disagreed with this statement and said:

Lillian: "I thought we were growing more and more."

Miss B: "But they make themselves more conspicuous and show themselves in public."

Lillian: "But they do show themselves as a minority group."

Mrs. Aida: "But the anti-gengyo-iji people say that if we took a vote now we'd lose by two-thirds."

I then asked the girls to think back to the time when the transferees entered the camp and tell me if they recalled any significant changes after their entrance.

Mrs. Aida: "The Jerome group just wanted to make the whole camp over here. They even went to the Planning Board, telling them they wanted to run this place."

Lillian: "They said we Tuleans were soft and good-for-nothing."

Mrs. Aida: "That group turned out to be the Abe group. They might have had their good points, but we felt they were being very unreasonable and were doing more harm than good."

"They had everything written down and would put it in front of your face and say, 'You sign it.' If you didn't sign it the next thing you'd know you'd be beaten to a pulp. It nearly broke my heart when I had to sign it. (As near as I could make out this was the petition put out in mid-November.) They said, 'Don't anyone walk out that door.' I wanted to walk out but my husband wouldn't let me." (This forced signing took place in the mess hall.)

Miss S: "I fooled them. I said I was under age (under 18) and walked out."

(Here the conversation digressed to the Noma investigation.)

Mrs. Aida: "Rumor has it that the man who killed Noma is 43 years old and has three kids."

"Another thing - they went about it in dictatorship style. They (Daihyo Sha Kai) used threats. They said, you do what we tell you or else."

Lillian and Miss B. (also Old Tulean) remarked that before the transferees came in, while Mr. Keel was running the mess, the food had been "terrible." After segregation the food improved considerably.

Mrs. Aida: "When we first came here the food was OK. After all, this is war and we can't expect luxury."

Miss B: "The first thing that struck me funny, the people from the other centers came in here and expected luxury. They said the latrines were bad, the food was bad, the housing was bad, everything was bad."

(There was a note of injured community pride in this statement - i.e., the Tuleans resented being told their camp was so rotten.)

Mrs. Aida: "Fundamentally, they say they are loyal (to Japan) and want to go back to Japan. Then they should be willing to go through hell to get there. We were told what the camp was like before we came here. I feel that Washington is trying to do the right thing by us but that often we're not getting what we should be from there (the local Administration). I felt that from the beginning, even the first camp I went into. Even if they get only five cents a day (in graft) from each of us, why, they'll be millionaires."

Farm Accident, October, 1943

Mrs. Aida: "I don't think they should have stopped work. I felt the accident was no fault of the WRA."

Miss S: "But I heard that the roads to the farm weren't so good."

Miss B: "We can't expect good roads."

Mrs. Aida: "And the driver was only 16 years old (not true).<sup>1</sup> He was too young."

Lillian: "But whose fault was that? The fault of the Japanese who hired him!"

Mrs. Aida: "It was a good excuse for the gengyo-iji group to start trouble. I myself felt it was the fault of the head Japanese."

Election of Representatives (Daihyo Sha Kai)

Mrs. Aida: "Come to think of it, they did have a lot of nerve representing us. But I realize they did call for representatives from the block. The people weren't interested and only those went who were interested and they put in their own men."

Miss S: "Still, they would have gotten them in anyway. Before you go to a meeting here, you know who's going to be elected."

Mrs. Aida: "The Tuleans here were the oldtimers. The strangers who came in didn't consult the oldtimers. They were going to control the camp."

Lillian: "They didn't like the idea of the Old Tuleans having all the key jobs, either."

November 1, 1943

Miss B: "All I know is that we were told, 'Everybody go up there.' If they can't get what they want, they said they were going to do something drastic."

Miss S: "They told me if I didn't go they were going to kick me out of our block. We had roll call in our block. My mother said I was sick."

Miss B: "The other group just stood up in the mess hall and told us to go. When we went up there and then wanted to go home, they wouldn't let us."

Miss S: "They had guys guarding the gates."

/1. The driver was 19 years old. But among the workers injured at the time of the farm accident were two boys, one eleven and one twelve./

Miss B: "They pushed me up to the front line. It just burned me up. We didn't know what was going on."

Miss S: "They announced it at the messhall, and said, 'If you're Japanese, you'll go.'"

Mrs. Aida: "They read a lot of requests they wanted. I thought it was too much; that wasn't the way to negotiate. That's not diplomatic."

November 4, 1943

Miss B: "There were people running around here saying they were murdering people up there and that we should rescue them. They were trying to get a bunch of people to go up and fight them."

Mrs. Aida: "I'll say this: I think they went too far in sticking those people in the stockade. My husband almost even got pulled in. He's as much against it (Daihyo Sha) as I am. A neighbor came and told us that the Internal Security had come and that he should hide. I said, 'He can't hide.' I even got his suitcase packed, with pajamas, toothbrush and a deck of cards. But they didn't come."

"They pulled in many innocent people."

(Here the conversation shifted to Mr. Dolts. Since these girls are on his staff, and Dolts seems to have constant trouble with his staff, I encouraged the digression.)

Mrs. Aida: "Dolts was listening to the radio one day and he came dashing in to our office and said, 'I'm telling you these Japs are going to get beaten. They're going to get wiped out.'"

"I don't want stuff like that thrown in my face, as delicate as the situation is, it's not good. The supervisor (Japanese) just turned green."

"He (Mr. Dolts) is always giving you the air that 'I have the power to throw you into the stockade any time.'"

Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan

(I thought the girls' reaction to the pro-Japanese Seinen-dan would be interesting. It was.)

Miss B: "I say this new Seinen-dan is far away from me. They're far away from me."

Mrs. Aida: "But now they have reasoned things out more. At first they were very unreasonable. But now they've worked out some good things. Like these zoot-suiters, for instance. They (the Sokoku) say they're going to have a heck of a time when they go back to Japan. They say we must train them and I think that's right. That's all you can do with those boys."

Coordinating Committee

(I now asked Mrs. Aida for her analysis of the gradual growth of popular hostility to the Coordinating Committee. I particularly wanted to see if she would deny that this hostility existed, as Mr. S, an Old Tulean, had done.)

Mrs. Aida: "To the eyes of the people they looked like they were working with the Administration. It's looked just like they were working with them."

Lillian: "They were kitsu ne (two faced)."

Opinions on the Administration

Mrs. Aida: "The Administration has been giving us the impression that they're afraid to come here."<sup>1</sup>

Status quo Vote of January 11

"Those who were against the Daihyo Sha felt it was through them (the Daihyo Sha) that we were suffering. I knew that the Administration was going to stick it out as long as we were."

"They (Daihyo Sha) should have left a lot of those demands out. But they put in so many things."

Miss S: "It burns me up - I think they were so unreasonable."

Mrs. Aida: "Lots of people didn't have the money for brooms and mops and soap. I think those should have been furnished by the Administration."

Miss S: "I think so too."

Present Feeling Toward Co-op

(I thought I would see how these girls felt toward the "luxury issue.")

Mrs. Aida: "I don't see that it makes any difference. Those people who want it will buy it and the others won't."

"When I came here I got the impression that the Co-op sold so much fruit here. And we didn't get any fruit in the mess. At Topaz we got so much fruit in the mess we always had extra fruit in the house."

Miss B: "They say that the Co-op was buying WRA staff and selling it in the canteens."

Miss S: "We hardly get fruit in the mess at all and I had to buy it in the Co-op."

Mrs. Aida: "Here I have to ask for my brother in Topaz to send me some fruit. In Topaz they didn't sell fruit in the canteens but they gave it to us in the mess. Since we came here we spend much more money on food."

Miss B: "We've had chicken here only once."

Miss S: "And at Topaz we got duck or chicken once a week."

Mrs. Aida: "And ice cream every Sunday."

"Also all the other relocation centers got linoleum, but this place has none."

Miss S: "Have you seen the personnel quarters here? They're positively extravagant. I went into the personnel rec /recreation/ hall the other day and I thought, 'Gosh.'"

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1. Very few staff members visited or attended meetings in the center. A number of respondents commented critically on this fact.

DECEMBER 15, 1944

TALK WITH MRS. AIDA

/At this time the hostility between the Resegregationists and the supporters of the Abe-Kunitani-Tada groups had become extreme. I called on as many people of different backgrounds and political sympathies as I could. I considered Mrs. Aida an intelligent, moderate, and relatively outspoken person./

/I asked Mrs. Aida how she felt about the Sokoku (the young men's group) and the Hoshi-dan (the adult group). She began by talking about their recently initiated policy of expelling members who were not "true" Japanese./

"The Sokoku should be open to everybody because after all we're the same race. I know that many folks think that through studying and preparing for Japan we'll be much better off because we must prepare for the hard life in Japan."

"I also heard that their leaders were being pulled in. But we don't discuss those things openly. It isn't healthy. In other words, they say, 'You're not Japanese.'"

"My husband refused to join. He said, 'It's all right. There'll be all kinds of different groups in the organization and soon they'll be fighting each other.' He said that's the characteristic of Japanese groups."

(Mrs. Aida has been made head of an attempt to establish a YWCA organization in camp. She was extremely enthusiastic and told me she had worked very hard on her plans which she outlined to me.)

"I want to have clubs all over the camp. And I want to have a string on each one. We are going to be given a special club house. I'm going to go around and recruit members for this club. That is, if the super-patriots (Resegregationists) don't crack down on me. I'm going to send out personal invitations. The Friends organization is behind us too. I'm going to have inter-camp meetings so that our ideas will come together. I'm going to start with a rummage sale which I think will interest the girls."

"I took the job because the young kids are going to pieces. If more than two girls get together these days they are always talking about something, tearing somebody down. Their feelings are just something inside."

"When I said to them (the young girls in the Japanese class Mrs. Aida is attending) 'Party?', they say, 'Phooey.'"

"I heard that the Sokoku was going to organize the girls. But my idea is going to be dramatic. My assistants are being paid by WRA. Mr. Dimon (Dolts' successor) is a go-getter. But he has to fight for his requests. The people say he doesn't keep his promises. I say, 'Give him a chance.'"

"I'm going to have a club in each block, or if there aren't enough girls, a club for each two or three blocks. I want a strong, large active organization and also have a feeling of block competition."

(Mrs. Aida said that the Caucasian YWCA advisor did not take too kindly to her large plans. She thinks she ought to start more modestly.)

"I'm going to Japanese class. The girls there are 15 years and up. They were kind of leery. They said their parents didn't think much of it. I said, 'I'm not here to impress you by giving a party.'"

Renunciation of Citizenship

"They say it's so hard for you to renounce your citizenship because they want to see that you are not evading the draft. There's a rumor going around camp that those who do not renounce citizenship are going to be drafted. Why are they making it so hard for you to renounce your citizenship? A lot of people feel that if you don't renounce your

Aida - December 15, 1944,  
January 3, 1945

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*citizenship you will be drafted. Why are they (the authorities) refusing?*

(Mrs. Aida was so incensed and excited over this question that I wonder if she and her husband came to Tule Lake to keep him out of the Army. She is certainly not a pro-Japanese. She shows no interest in going to Japan. Does she fear that her husband will be drafted? She herself seems very American in speech, thought, and attitude.)

*"I heard a person say yesterday - a Nisei, 'You know, I denounced my citizenship and I hated to go to the hearing.' 'Why?' I asked. He said, 'I have to say awful things about America or they won't give me my renunciation and I don't want to do it (say awful things about America.)'"*

While we were talking a woman friend came to call on Mrs. Aida. She did not stay long but Mrs. Aida did not explain my presence honestly, saying I had come to discuss the club with her. She apologized later, saying that you don't dare say a thing before anybody.

/On December 27, 71 members of the Resegregationist Group were interned by the Department of Justice./

JANUARY 3, 1945

TALK WITH MRS. AIDA

On the Internment of Hōkoku and Hōshi-dan members (December 27)

*"The people were excited. Nobody knows why it was done. The way I understand, they were all interviewed by the FBI and they had all the inside information so they said they had a spy in the cabinet."*

*"The people picked up say they're glad. They say we (people left in camp) are going to be kicked around while they will be safe and sound."*

*"The membership itself was huge. But they couldn't trust anybody. They said that when they were interviewed they were shocked. The Administration knew everything."*

*"One thing I liked about them, they left us alone. When Abe had his group - they dictated to us. We had to sign this or that. They (Hōshi-dan) left us alone and didn't tell us that we had to join the organization."*

*"We feel this way about it. Why should we whoop everything up and stir everybody up. The calmer we stay the better for all of us."*

*"This place is getting too much mob psychology - the youngsters fight all the time - you've heard about the basketball games?"*

On Leaving Camp

The somewhat disjointed statements Mrs. Aida made on the matter of leaving camp are the most numerous I've yet received from any one person. She was much more willing to talk about it today than when I visited her last.

*"I don't know what's going to happen to us! It's very confusing. I think everybody feels that. They don't know what's what yet. They don't like to listen to rumors. I personally would like to know what's what myself."*

*"I think this is going to be a slow process. They can't say: 'Get out by a certain time. We'll give you 25 dollars and carfare.' In the first place, why do they want to kick us out? It was their business we came here."*

*"Since the people have been in camp three years their funds are exhausted. Frankly, it's all right for people who can afford it."*

Aida - January 3, 1945,  
January 24, 1945

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"To tell you frankly, I'm in such a confused mind. Everybody is like that. California is the last place I'd want to go back to, with all I've been reading. We all feel, if somebody is going to go back, let's watch and see what happens to them."

"They say the Army will back us up (in California). But that's only against mob violence, not what an individual might do. If some person beats us up we can't do anything about it."

"I just dread it to leave here. I just can't understand why they want to kick us out when they feel we're disloyal."

"After kicking me around they can't kick me out with 25 dollars and train fare, and say, 'Find yourself a job.'"

"Can people be thrown out even if they renounce their citizenship? Could they put you in the Army then (if you renounced citizenship)?"

"The people here aren't supposed to be trusted. What will the people on the outside think if they let us loose to run around?"

"They say they're going to find them a job and a place to live. Nobody will go out if they don't. This (Tule Lake) should be the last place to start. The other people (in relocation centers) are supposed to be loyal."

#### On the YWCA group Mrs. Aida Planned to Start

"Now that things are like this, I thought I had better start with a small group."

#### Return to Leaving Camp

"Some people feel this way, 'If we have to go out, let's go right away and take full advantage of the opportunities.' Well let them go out! They don't know what side of the fence they're sitting on anyway."

#### Rumor on Abe

"The people say that Abe is going with the WRA. The people don't have faith in him anymore and he can't make them follow him."

JANUARY 24, 1945

#### TALK WITH MRS. AIDA

Mrs. Aida said she has been so busy organizing her clubs that **she** had not been worrying much about anything. She remarked:

"We hear they (the Japanese) are having so much trouble on the outside. That's certainly going to slow down relocation. I've heard they can't even buy food but have to get other people to buy it for them. If they kick me out of this camp, California is the last place I'll go!"

#### Caucasian Recreation Club and Japanese Orchestra

"The Recreation Club wanted us (Mrs. Aida is business manager for the Japanese orchestra) to play for nothing for the January 30th dance."

(Miss Sally Storer appears to be the chairman of the program and her attitude offended Mrs. Aida very much. The orchestra is entirely Japanese, many Hawaiian, and has performed at many of the appointed personnel dances here.)

"Sally Storer said after all she didn't need us. She said she would just as soon use a phonograph." (Evidently this statement was made after Mrs. Aida said the orchestra was not willing to play for nothing.)

"She said she didn't know anything about it and she's the chairman!" "Why can't you volunteer?" she said. "The boys are leery about coming to play where there are soldiers," I said. We're taking a chance of criticism by coming up here and playing. After all, this is a disloyal camp. We can't go out and play voluntarily, even if it is for the March of Dimes to get money to fight infantile paralysis which is a good cause. After all it is the President's ball."

"We haven't decided yet what we're going to do."

"Sally didn't even want us to get the kitty money. Wilson (also on the committee) spoke up. He said to her (Sally), 'That's none of your business if somebody wants to give the orchestra money.'"

Mrs. Aida's Girls' Organization and the Hōkoku Woman's Organization

"I launched my organization the other day. They (the Hōkoku) launched their girls' organization on the same day. It just happened that way by accident. Here I had real competition. But they (Hōkoku) seemed to be afraid of me too. They just bar other people. They're only for their own group."

"One family in this block is very much for the Hōkoku and I hear that they have seven daughters. I sent an invitation to everybody in my own block."

"The daughters came to me and said, 'We're sorry, but we can't join your organization.' I said, 'It's not political, I'm not forcing anybody to join my club.'"

"The next day the old lady (mother of the daughters) came. She said to me, 'Don't you dare force my daughters to come into your organization. We're (Hōkoku) going to stick together till we die.'"

"I said, 'You are the most selfish people I've ever seen. You're not Japanese at all. You don't help anybody, but just go around saying that everybody who doesn't join your organization is an inu.'"

(This is very strong and courageous language, even though the Hōkoku and Hōshi-dan are tottering under general public disapprobation. Mrs. Aida is a very spunky woman. Nevertheless, I doubt that she would have dared to talk like this to a Hōkoku member a month ago. This is, of course, granting that she didn't exaggerate her defiance to me.)

"They are a very strong and big organization. I said, 'We're going to prepare ourselves so that no matter what part of the world we go to we can adjust ourselves.'"

(Mrs. Aida intends to teach western etiquette in her clubs, providing resistance is not too strong.)

"My husband says that if you want to go back to Japan and get respect there you have to go back during wartime. We in camp haven't done anything for Yamato damashii. Do we think we can go back to Japan when they are all dead or crippled and that they're going to say, 'Welcome back.'"

"I hear that the Hōkoku are collecting money every month for all the members so when they get back to Japan they're going to buy an island for themselves. That certainly is crazy. In the first place, they are allowed to take back only \$300, and they certainly can't buy any island for that."

"Their women's organization goes out at five in the morning and kneels in the snow praying for victory. The young girls are really getting fanatical."

/Mrs. Aida said she had been told by Mr. Wilson that Mr. Norden planned to issue an announcement condemning the activities of the Hōkoku and Hōshi-dan. / She asked me:

"Don't you think there may be trouble when the announcement comes out? There may be some kind of riot by the Hōkoku."

"In some blocks we can't organize our clubs at all because they have the Hokoku girls' clubs right in the block."

Renunciation of Citizenship

"Since renunciation came along I heard their (Hokoku) membership increased 100%."<sup>1</sup>

I asked if Mrs. Aida meant since December and she said, "yes".

"They feel if they don't renounce their citizenship they can't go back to Japan. You might have to get out of the camp. Frankly, that's how everybody feels."

"If the American people were all like you, I'd go out tomorrow."

Arrival of Relocation Team

(Mrs. Aida could scarcely believe that the WRA could be so optimistic as to send a Relocation Team to Tule Lake.)

"If the relocation team comes, whoever comes here should receive a medal."

More on Girls' Club

"The girls in this block are afraid to come to my club - they're afraid they'll be called inu."

Sokoku

"My husband says the Sokoku Kenkyu is wobbly on the top but the bottom is strong. The people (in the organization) are united. If they (authorities) bring a threat to these people and do not carry it out, you'll strengthen them."

"There is great resentment in camp against the Hokoku."

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<sup>1</sup>. I asked because pressure to renounce citizenship began after the hearings and the first internment of December 27. In late January, most of my other respondents were assuring me that people were leaving the Resegregationist Groups. However, the persons who remained members became increasingly demonstrative./

FEBRUARY 19, 1945

TALK WITH MRS. AIDA

On February 11, the Department of Justice ordered the arrest of about 650 members of the Hokoku and the Hoshi-dan. On the evening of February 12, the WRA Internal Security raided the Hokoku headquarters, confiscating (I was told) all of the Hokoku records, the Hokoku scroll, their banners, a Japanese flag, a mimeographing and duplicating machine, and a large safe. (See Fieldnotes, February 12 and 13.) On February 15, the Newell Star published statements by the WRA and the Department of Justice, saying that the activities of the Hokoku and Hoshi-dan were unlawful. When I visited Mrs. Aida on February 19, she was disturbed, anxious, and angry. Though she had been very critical of the Resegregationists when I visited her on January 24, she now expressed compassion for at least some of them. Her distress is understandable, because her husband had been formerly a member of the Sokoku, though, like several of my respondents,<sup>1</sup> he had probably stopped attending meetings several months ago.

Effect of Announcements in the Newell Star

"The paper didn't do any good. It didn't state anything definite about the draft. I'm not believing the rumor<sup>2</sup> myself, but the people are not too convinced."

"I understand that from now on the Hokoku is going to be illegal. But they (Hokoku) are determined to stand on their own feet. They have a strong determination."

"People are joining the Hokoku. They're going into it even though they hate it."

Panic of Last Week (when the 650 persons were interned)

"A week ago, the people were in hysterics. Anyway, at the Community Activities office they were so excited. They said, 'The draft papers are right there. As soon as they clean out the Sokoku, they'll draft us all over camp.'"

"The people don't trust them (WRA) any more because they've made so many statements that were denied before and they came out to be true. But I think the excitement has died down. The people are not so concerned as they were."

"Sending people to jail will be much better /than interning them/. Otherwise, there will be no end to this. Now the people (Hokoku) want to go. They feel what they have been working for has come true. By pushing them out Justice is doing exactly what they want them to do."

"They feel this way: To them it isn't propaganda. The people in the Hokoku believe they're the only ones who are going to stay and that the rest of us will be kicked out of camp. They firmly believe that."

Reaction to the Raid on Hokoku Headquarters

"They raided that place, you know, and very few people know about it. I thought they (Hokoku) would make some demonstration. They think that by blowing the bugles they will get interned and re-united with their families."

"They won't even believe the boys were sent to North Dakota. They say they won't believe unless they hear from them."

"Mr. Norden ought to put out an official statement that the people who do not belong to the Hokoku can return to Japan."

/1. See, for example, Mr. Kurusu./

/2. The rumor that men who do not renounce their citizenship will be drafted./

Manzanar Hōkoku Rally

"On Monday they held a big organization meeting in Manzanar and 500 people joined. People who don't believe in the thing are roped into it, because it's the only way they can get back to Japan."

Unfairness of WRA Policy

"Another mistake was that this was supposed to be a segregation camp, and after we arrived here this wasn't a segregation camp at all. People who had no intention of going to Japan are still sitting here. I don't think that's fair. That's why the thing blew up /in October 1943/."

"Yet we feel that this is a segregation camp. If they start pushing the people out everybody will get together. If the other camps will do it, we have a much better reason than they have. The people are not going to get out of the other camps unless they offer them a good job and a place to stay."

"Some people are very calm because they have determined they're going to sit here and nothing's going to stop them. They feel they have the right."

"Really, it surprised me. The raid isn't being discussed much. The Hōkoku didn't make any rumpus about it."

Mrs. Aida's Opinion of Action Against the Hōkoku

"We still say that we do not know who is right - us or the Hōkoku. We can only talk about it though among our family. The Hōkoku might get the best of this. We don't know. The future is very dark. They might get their wish and get back to Japan, and they might not."

"I will say this about those in the Hōkoku. Many of them really believe and they are really patriotic and sincere. But some of them are hypocrites. They feel if they belong to the Sokoku they will stay here for the duration and then they can go anywhere. They can stay out of the Army (U.S.) and still go to Japan if they wish. I know a lot of boys in the Hōkoku who would have gone out (relocated) before they came here."

"There are sensible boys in the Hōkoku too, who are in it for patriotic reasons. They feel their chances in America is no more."

"Some of my friends went to Bismark. We always had a very good feeling, because I wouldn't discuss politics with them."

Mrs. Aida's own Girls' Club

"The membership is going pretty good. I'm very encouraged because after every meeting we get new members. The girls are so enthusiastic."

Mrs. Aida's Treatment by Joshi-dan (ladies' group)

The Joshi-dan (women's branch of Hōkoku) people bow to me and talk to me. They've found out they can't kick me around too much. I kick back. I'm not afraid of them at all."

Mr. Sales - CAS head /Community Activities Section/

"Mr. Sales makes lots of promises he can't live up to."

"They could do so much for the camp by bringing people in who understand the Japanese. Some of the people here (Caucasians) have a definite prejudice and we see it in their faces. They are doing more harm for the Administration and Washington than anything else. If anybody is friendly to the Japanese here, they (Administration) kicks them out."

APRIL 25, 1945

TALK WITH MRS. AIDA

/Dillon S. Myer, National Director of the WRA had visited Tule Lake on April 16 and 17. In a talk to the block managers, he told them that he was not planning to close Tule Lake and that the center would be taken over by the Department of Justice at the end of the year. Evidently this statement reassured Mrs. Aida, for she was much more relaxed than at my last visit. She did not, however approve of the fact that Mr. Kira, a notorious Resegregationist leader, had managed to get himself and his family transferred to Crystal City./

Mrs. Aida brought up the subject of Mrs. Kira leaving camp herself. She thought the business of Kira going to Crystal City was pretty bad. Evidently, the Kira's good fortune is annoying other people besides Hokoku families. ✓

Reaction to Myer's Visit

*"From Mr. Myer's visit it doesn't look as if we're going to be pushed out of here by January 1. It seems as if he doesn't intend to put on the pressure."*

*"People are also saying that they heard a broadcast over the radio that nobody from Tule Lake will be drafted, if they go out. But the people don't believe it, they say it's propaganda to get us to go out."*

Confirmation of Renunciation

Mrs. Aida then asked me when people were going to hear from the Department of Justice that their renunciations were accepted. She said:

*"I don't think anybody has gotten an acceptance of their renunciation yet (except the Hokoku)."*

Relocation

*"I think there are going to be a lot going out. Aren't they going out already? They know the war is going to last a long time now."*

*"We heard a broadcast from Japan. It says that the people are to prepare for a 20 years' war. So the people here say, 'That's the best part of your life!' The broadcast also said that the chances of an exchange boat is going to be very small. As for we here - we're convinced - we feel that we couldn't do very much for our country if we did go back. We're not very important."*

*"The broadcast was made about a month ago."*

*"Besides the people are getting tired of this place."*

*"Japan says she'll move to Manchuria and continue to fight."*

*"If Germany ever falls, it's going to be a terrific fight. I'd hate to see Germany go down."*

Mrs. Aida's Girls' Club

*"We're going on a hike to Castle Rock." Mrs. Aida said the Joshi-dan wasn't bothering her anymore. A friend present added, "But they certainly talk about you, behind your back." Mrs. Aida shrugged.*