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Chapter III

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### Chapter III

#### PERIOD OF ADJUSTMENT (1937 - Sept. 1941)

Each National Convention of the Japanese American Citizens League <sup>has been</sup> followed by a pronounced increase in J.A.C.L. interest and activities. <sup>and the Nisei movement</sup> The 1936 conclave in Seattle ~~was~~ was significant not only in the further development of the movement but in the instigation of a determined bid for Japanese community leadership along the entire Pacific Coast.

The claims of the J.A.C.L. upon ~~the Nisei~~ what its leaders ~~regard~~ <sup>assert</sup> to their right ~~to~~ a position of pre-eminence in the Japanese community are intensified during the four year period 1937 to September, 1941.

Now for the first time, ~~the Nisei movement~~ especially in the urban areas of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle, there is evidence of ~~Nisei organization~~ the Nisei organization's ~~desire to be~~ tendency to regard itself as the "most important civic body among the Japanese in the United States." Modesty of claims of this nature has never been a part of J.A.C.L. public relations technique within the Japanese community; on the contrary, it has been openly, frankly direct.

The individual personality of James Y. ~~Sakamoto~~ Sakamoto, blind Nisei publisher of the Seattle Japanese American Courier, and the program which was publicized as the "Second Generation Development Plan" dominate the J.A.C.L. movement for the two year period, 1937-38.

Sakamoto assumes the aggressive role of ~~a~~ interpreter of Americanism ideals and embarks upon what ~~is~~ stands out in J.A.C.L. history as the most intensive ~~newspaper~~ newspaper campaign for Nisei patriotic activity before outbreak of war. Sakamoto edited two publications during these years, his own weekly Courier and the tabloid monthly Pacific Citizen. Through them, he channelled his indoctrination into the coast daily English sections. His editorials were widely quoted, both by Nisei editors and J.A.C.L. orators. The emphasis upon complete identity, "single loyalty", "undivided allegiance", and "faithfulness" to the United States of America, "our glorious land of freedom and liberty" becomes a ~~Sakamoto and J.A.C.L. trademark.~~ Sakamoto and J.A.C.L. trademark.

The Second Generation Development Program emerged out of the Seattle Convention of 1936. It ~~completely~~ reflects J.A.C.L. consciousness of its future inheritance--complete leadership of the entire Japanese population in the United States. It was the joint brainchild of Sakamoto and Masao Satow, assistant National Secretary of the J.A.C.L., who served as the Japanese Y.M.C.A. secretary in Los Angeles.

Chief objectives of the Second Generation Development Program were: (1) to develop a competent research group which would furnish the basis of a study of discriminatory practises faced by Japanese in America ~~and~~ and systematically analyze them; (2) then to develop a public relations program in the Caucasian community whereby these problems could be attacked and eliminated; and (3) build up the National Japanese American Citizens League by promoting new



chapters and building up old ones.

The Program, in one sense, is a re-statement of the ~~as~~ fundamental objectives of the J.A.C.L. movement of 1930 and, interestingly enough, places the ~~object-~~ structural development of the J.A.C.L. in a ~~secondary role to~~ position second to that of attacking discriminatory practises.

~~Throughout the National J.A.C.L. movement, and in the history of the chapters, there has been a constant weaving between emphasis upon these two aspects of the activity~~

Hand-in-hand with the Second Generation Development Program as a ~~major~~ major project, the National J.A.C.L. at this time undertakes the creation of a \$100,000 Endowment Fund. The idea was to save up, through donations, \$100,000. From the interest accruing to such a savings, the J.A.C.L. could derive a permanent source of revenue to ~~conduct~~ help maintain a paid national staff. Other ambitious plans were visualized. At outbreak of war, the total contributed to this fund was slightly in excess of \$3,000.

marked

The ~~sudden~~ increase in the number of eligible Nisei voters, accompanying the approach to majority of the average second generation Japanese Americans, contributed greatly to the J.A.C.L.'s sense of self-importance in 1937-38.

Anticipating the Fifth Biennial National Convention scheduled to be held in Los Angeles in 1938, Sakamoto wrote:

"~~2~~... A recent survey conducted by the Fresno JACL chapter reveals the fact that some 23,500 second generation have attained voting age. Of this number, approximately 6,000 are now JACL members. Every day more are becoming affiliated with the JACL, and everyday more are becoming eligible for membership..."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Pacific Citizen v 9 no 108 May 1937 p 2 col 1  
Editorial "More than Numbers"

This is a period of ~~444444~~ branching J.A.C.L. interests and claims. In Seattle, the organization attributed to itself ~~great~~ a high degree of credit for maintaining the low juvenile delinquency rate among the Japanese population.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Source same as <sup>1</sup> Editorial "Studying Delinquency"

~~that city's~~  
In Los Angeles, it launched into political campaigning and elections and advertised itself in the vernacular press as the fountainhead of citizenship education; in Centerville it sponsored oratorical contests for Nisei and sponsored social events; in Terminal Island and San Gabriel it organized speakers' bureau to conduct public relations among Caucasian organizations.

The Sacramento chapter instituted lecture series on such topics as "Vocational Future for Nisei" and "Second Generation Marriage" ~~the~~

The Sonoma County JACL in California and the Thomas, Washington, chapter went in for oratorical contests and socials; the San Mat



Mateo chapter ~~we~~ reported periodic successful picnics, while in Orange County, members debated the topic of "Unionization"; at Watsonville and Fresno, "talent revues", dramatic and musical presentations, were highlights of a year's activities, and at Yakima, Washington, Nisei orators talked on such subjects as "Builders" of Good Will", "The Conflict of the Ages", "Makers of the Flag," "We Can't Fail", "Government of, by, and for The People", "A Citizen's National Ideals", and "Duties and Responsibilities of the Niseis as American Citizens."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> From newspaper article headed "Seven Northwest Orators Selected" in the Pacific Citizen v 9 no 109 June, 1937 p 4 col 4

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The ~~interesting~~ roles of the smaller JACL chapters, especially in rural areas, differ somewhat from the large metropolitan chapters of Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle.

In the ~~rural~~ farm districts, the J.A.C.L. unit frequently appears to be ~~not only~~ ~~primarily~~ not only civic and in one sense political, but the nature of its activities is largely social. The rural JACL attains a position of status and general participation greater in ~~per~~ proportion to ~~his~~ its potential following than was the case in the larger cities.

The conspicuous stress upon Americanism education, ~~apparent~~ ~~quickly~~ ~~in the~~ of the younger Nisei who identified themselves with the J.A.C.L. movement may be interpreted in the light of the comparatively isolated character of the Japanese community on the west coast.

Especially was this true in California where the framework of economic ~~self-sufficiency~~ ~~segregation~~ as well as social segregation had ~~been~~ developed by the thirties.

There is an

~~It seems-~~

An overweening consciousness of the so-called "Japanizing" influences within the community. ~~on~~ J.A.C.L. leaders of the period make frequent references to ~~to~~ these influences; they are aware of the Japanese language schools, the problems of the Kibei, the dual citizenship status, Issei economic control and Issei sympathies for Japan in the China situation. And one means of adjusting themselves to this situation, perhaps, was for them to find a counterbalancing over-emphasis upon the "Nisei's Place in America."

Here again, however, there is considerable care exercised not to disparage the cultural values of Japan, nor to antagonize Issei feelings ~~of~~ in the latter's ~~sympathies~~ for Japan. By processes of rationalization, perhaps, J.A.C.L. leadership found justification for their exceedingly ~~vigorous~~ vigorous Americanism program in their own interpretation of Japanese culture.

For instance, "In having a better understanding of Bushido, we can become better American citizens," the Seattle J.A.C.L. founder Clarence T. Arai declared at an organization banquet honoring his appointment to the board of trustees of the Seattle Public Library. ~~Arai~~ "Arai stressed the fact that Bushido taught the principle of single loyalty, and he said that second generation Japanese owed their loyalty to the United States."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The Pacific Citizen v 9 no 107 April 1937 p 4 col 1 "Arai Honored"



Again, in the case of the Japanese language school, J.A.C.L. leadership demonstrates its ambivalent attitudes. Sensitive to the repeated attacks against the ~~gakuens~~ gakuens from Caucasian sources, yet aware of the entrenched support of the schools as an institution of the Japanese community, the J.A.C.L. during ~~this period passed frequent resolutions~~ the early part of this period passed frequent real- resolutions which at the same time affirmed the value of Japanese language education in "making better American citizens" and urged the gakuens to be "more ~~and~~ vigorously American" in their curriculum.

The concept of loyalty is repeatedly talked about at organization meetings. There is a certain fervor and intensity ~~in J.A.C.L. meetings which appear to border on fanaticism~~ on the subject of loyalty not found in other J.A.C.L. ~~topics~~ discussions.

~~The extent to which~~

An effort to analyze the J.A.C.L. definition of American loyalty ~~which depends~~ leads to an examination of the public speeches of the National presidents, the ~~see~~ minutes on meetings where the subject of dual citizenship was discussed, and press statements during these years. For it is in this period of adjustment that the build-up ~~on the theme~~ of previous years on the theme "Nisei, Be Loyal to America" gets widest attention within the Japanese Community.

In no ~~single~~ other J.A.C.L. leader is there the consistency of purpose nor persistence of effort in employing the term "loyalty" in the entire movement than Thomas T. Yatabe, the first National President under the constitution of the organization. Yatabe was one of the early 1918 founders; he was first chairman of the statewide California American Loyalty League. In 1934 he was elected first National J.A.C.L. President. In 1936, when he retired to pass the helm of leadership to James Y. Sakamoto, he defined for assembled convention delegates, his ~~own~~ concept of loyalty:

"... Loyalty means that we should be ready to sacrifice every interest that you have and our lives itself, if our country calls upon us, and that is the loyalty which should be inculcated; that we are ~~not~~ not to be loyal so long as we are pleased or not; and that loyalty which is only pleasing is only self-indulgence and selfishness..."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> keynote  
From J.A.C.L. records; copy of/speech delivered by Dr. T. T. Yatabe, retiring National President, Friday, Sept 4, 1936, at the Seattle Chamber of Commerce auditorium and broadcast over the local NBC station. Files of Salt Lake City hqtrs read 12/1/44 by Togo Tanaka

A pre-requisite of proving one's American loyalty, in the view advanced by Yatabe, was the shedding of dual citizenship. Commenting ~~on this~~ favorably on this view, James Y. Sakamoto, the succeeding president and editor of the Pacific Citizen declared that "there is no room for hyphenated citizenship" ~~in America~~ 5 in America.

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<sup>5</sup> The Pacific Citizen v 8 no 103 December, 1936, p 2 col 1 Editorial "Now in Retrospect"

It may be recalled at this point that hyper-sensitivity to the "hyphenated citizen" label ~~among~~ among J.A.C.L. leaders originated at the 1930 Seattle National Convention in debates over the name to be adopted for the organization. One school of thought, epitomized by Yt



Yatabe, stoutly ~~ought to keep~~ maintained that the presence of a hyphen between the words Japanese and American would ~~imply the movement as imply~~ have unfavorable and unsavory implications. As a matter of fact, Yatabe belonged to the minority which ~~ought~~ would have preferred to name the ~~organ-~~ national organization "American Loyalty League", which title the Fresno chapter of the J.A.C.L. ~~retained through the evacuation period~~ which he founded, retained through the evacuation period.

The generalizations defining "loyalty" according to the J.A.C.L. ~~are~~ interpretation are repeated a hundredfold at ~~general~~ local meetings, district council gatherings, national conventions, in oratorical contests, in the Pacific Citizen, in the daily language press. ~~James Y. Sakamoto, Clarence T.~~ There is, for example, a close similarity ~~and~~ and parallel in the utterances of Clarence T. Arai, ~~James Y. Sakamoto~~ and James Y. Sakamoto in Seattle, Saburo Kido in San Francisco, Walter Tsukamoto in Sacramento, Kay Sugahara in Los Angeles, and Lyle Kurisaki in Brawley on the definition of "loyalty". ~~These~~

The terminology of these expressions, moreover, bear strong resemblance to the Americanism education of the day sponsored by the such organizations as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Daughters of the American Revolution.

~~It is a fact~~

Evidence exists as to the correlation between the political leanings of J.A.C.L. leaders and the influences which swept ~~into the~~ into J.A.C.L. midst such expressions as "the Good Old U.S.A.", and "Our Grand Republic", and "Great Land of Opportunity and Freedom", and other patriotic verbiage which, figuratively, "sat down with a flourish."

~~Indicates~~

~~The Anti-Communism of the late thirties~~

Illustrative of this is the resolution passed ~~on~~ on Labor Day of 1937 by the Northwest District Convention of the J.A.C.L. meeting at Yakima, Washington, commending the Legion, the V.F.W. and the D.A.R. "in their splendid fight to preserve our American institutions" against Communism<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> The Pacific Citizen v 9 no. 112 September 1937 p. 1 cols 4 & 5  
 -- Article "Yakima Convention Scores Alien Agitators; Asks for Americanism."

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Drawing as they did upon such "Americanism" influences as the Legion, V.F.W., and .D.A.R., and this applied with equal force in the Southern chapters as it did in the Northern, it becomes evident in the latter part of this period that J.A.C.L. leadership develops a division and differences ~~of interpretation~~ over the concept of loyalty to America.

While leaders such as Yatabe could define the <sup>1</sup>term in generalizations and ~~find~~ agreement, ~~the meaning~~ they could not reach ~~unanimous~~ unanimity among themselves in defining ~~at~~ loyalty in relation to specific persons, situations, and circumstances.

The first break develops in 1937, and over the issue of sympathies and leanings in the Sino-Japanese controversy. H Up to this



time, almost without exception, National J.A.C.L. leadership supports the Issei position of identity with Japan's cause. Where-  
~~ever there~~ ver there had been any criticism of Japan, it had been not against her invasion of Chinese soil nor against her employment of military force in attempting to solve her problems, but against her lack of good propagandists.

The opinion expressed in an early Pacific Citizen issue reflected with accuracy the ~~Nisei leader~~ organization--and generally Nisei--attitude on the Far Eastern situation:

"... We believe that the Japanese government still has a great deal to learn in the art of publicity and propaganda. Japan could have built up a perfect case in Manchuria, and the world with a burning desire for peace and stability would have applauded her acts. Japan, however, remained silent, and grieved over ~~her acts~~ the wrongs heaped upon her by the Chinese bandits, civilians and officials. She waited until she could not bear further humiliation, insults, and abrogation and violation of the rights of her citizens as well as of the government obtained through treaties. Even after she launched her expedition, she did not take the trouble to inform the world of the real reasons and causes. She finally began to advertise her grievances when the world began to look upon her with suspicion... In contrast to what the home government has been doing, we believe that the Japanese consulate in this city deserves a world of credit for the work in trying to make the general public understand Japan's viewpoint..." 7

7 The Pacific Citizen, v 4 no 46 Tuesday 2/15/32 p 2 col 1 Editorial column

Loyalty to America in this early stage, then, in no wise excluded identity ~~of~~ or sympathy with Japan's cause in the Far East. This was during the period when the J.A.C.L. emerges as a national organization. In this latter period of adjustment, however, the first break ~~develops~~ develops in the concept of American loyalty which included sympathy with Japan.

~~and the Japanese with some exceptions to~~  
In an apologetic, defensively bolstered presentation of its case, National J.A.C.L. leadership thinking veers away, slightly at first and more completely in 1940-41, away from the notion that the Nisei could be wholeheartedly loyal to America and still have sympathies with Japan in the China situation.

In effect, the National J.A.C.L. from 1937 on undertakes to straddle the fence on the Sino-Japanese issue. The position is not a comfortable one. The stand of neutrality, which it takes apparently under pressure from Caucasian influences, is not altogether popular within the Japanese community.

Here one detects the first significant break of the J.A.C.L. away from the Issei leadership of the Japanese community, and the central issue underlying the surface differences is a J.A.C.L. re-definition of its most frequently used expression "loyalty" in terms of a specific situation.

The break at first is small, almost unnoticeable. There



are attempts to make allowances for "sympathies for Japan's cause" with the admonition that ~~this-mu--~~ such sympathies must not be allowed to become in any way related to their "allegiance." 8

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8 Writing in a by-lined article in the Pacific Citizen, Walter Tsukamoto, National Executive Secretary, observes: "By reason of the the hostilities in the Far East certain groups of agitators and yellow journalists are taking advantage of the situation to harass the Japanese residents in this country. We must stand together and organize ourselves more strongly than ever to combat such pernicious activities. It is true that our sympathies are with the Japanese in Japan, but sympathy must not be confused with allegiance. Our allegiance, no matter what the issues, remains with the United States." -- From the Pacific Citizen v. X no 116, January, 1938 p 1 col 1 "Fealties Must Rise Above Sympathies Tsukamoto Feels."

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There are similarly efforts to interpret this amended J.A.C.L. concept of loyalty by drawing upon Japanese concepts. Thus, the emphasis upon ~~Bush-~~ Bushido and the principle of single loyalty.

The position of the loyal American Nisei who maintains wholehearted allegiance to the United States and keeps from getting "too involved" in the China-Japan situation is the proper and most desirable one, the J.A.C.L. implies at this pe time.

"American citizens of Japanese ancestry must remain loyal to the United States and strive to uphold the ideals for which they she stands in the face of the Far Eastern Crisis. They must remember at all times that the privileges that they have thus far enjoyed, and no doubt will continue to enjoy as American citizens are ~~fruits-of-~~ but the fruits of the efforts and sacrifices of the people who came to this continent from all partsof the world to escape from the unpleasant traditions and heart-rending international entanglements and to establish a new nation free from the strife and htared of the older world." 9

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9 ~~What-~~ The Pacific Citizen v 9 no 112 September 1937 p 2 col 2 Article "What Must Japanese Americans Do in the Far of the Far Eastern Crisis?"

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While one detects this slight fissure in ~~the~~ wall of solidarity maintained in Issei-Nisei relationships as exemplified by Japanese Association-J.A.C.L. contacts, ~~up to this period~~ the whole picture itself, however, remains confused.

In the large Los Angeles chapter, for instance, there is the record of the J.A.C.L. president speaking to the Caucasian public via a radio broadcast. In his speech he declares that the Nisei are American citizens/ who, with the aid "of such organizations as the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars"/ have come to "understand and appreciate American insitutions. They have no part in the Oriental conflict and owe no allegiance save to the Stars and Stripes." And in the same speech, on the same broadcast, he urged his Caucasian listeners to oppose the proposed ~~Chinese inspired~~ boycott of Japan-made goods because "boycotts fail to attain the end of stopping war.... harm the innocent merchants and American labor." 10



There are comparable variations in the rural chapters of the JACL where domination by Issei leadership was ~~still more frequent~~ than in the cities. *generally greater*

~~Development~~

From this avowed position of neutrality on the Sino-Japanese conflict, because of fear that any other stand ~~might~~ might be misconstrued by the Caucasian public as disloyalty to America, the J.A.C.L. concept of loyalty crystallizes in still another form by 1940. The Sino-Japanese conflict had shifted steadily into the Pacific and now threatened to develop into an American-Japanese conflict.

The pressures of American public opinion, almost wholly sympathetic with China in 1937, had now grown in intensity, ~~and volume~~ *Neutrality on the China issue and were distinctly anti-Japanese.*

Out of the habit of defining loyalty, ~~and~~ talking about loyalty, interpreting it for both the Japanese and Caucasian communities, a ~~as~~ segment of J.A.C.L. leadership in 1939 and 1940 began to ~~develop~~ ~~assume~~ arrogate to itself the ~~extended~~ authority to judge and evaluate the loyalty of members of the Japanese community.

The defining of American loyalty in terms of specific persons in these latter years became a practise encouraged by Caucasian officials with whom J.A.C.L. leaders came into contact.

Especially was this true after outbreak of war. More than any ~~any~~ other single organization of the Japanese community, the J.A.C.L. ~~came~~ ~~became~~ ~~1933~~ to be associated ~~with~~ in the popular mind with the "inu" ~~concept~~ *1* that reaches its climax within the relocation centers.

An analysis of correspondence between National J.A.C.L. officers during this period ~~is particularly revealing~~ is particularly revealing. In references to individuals and acts within the Japanese community ~~which these leaders~~ over which these leaders were admittedly disturbed and concerned, one discovers differences among them on how far a man should go in setting himself up as the judge of the "loyalty" of his fellow Nisei and Issei. There are considerable differences ~~as to how loyal the~~ of opinion as to how loyal to America the Issei should be as American-Japanese tensions mounted. To some J.A.C.L. individual leaders, the concept of loyalty was confined to the requirements of being a law-abiding person, Issei or Nisei. ~~There seems to be more general agreement on this point than~~ kind of definition than on any other.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

apparent

This point of view typifies the ~~thinking~~ ~~app~~ revealed in the correspondence of the National President Saburo Kido, whose long history of contacts within the Japanese community of San Francisco had ~~given~~ seemingly equipped him with an understanding of Issei feelings, sympathies, leanings, and ~~also~~ their dilemma in the growing conflict situation on the Pacific. There is, from this approach to the avowed J.A.C.L. responsibility of defining loyalty in the Japanese community, an emphasis upon identifying the League ~~with the Japanese people~~ as the representative of the that community, a position that made for a degree of tolerance in interpreting overt expressions of sympathy for Japan; furthermore, this viewpoint took considerable comfort in the fact that there was no war between America and Japan, and it depended mightily upon an avoid-







the grounds that "it was too Jap-like.". He had similarly resigned from a seat on the editorial board of The Rafu Shimpo English section on the same ground. A close personal friendship with Matsumoto during the two year period preceding war apparently becomes the bridge over which Slocum returns to open leadership and affluence in the J.A.C.L. of Southern California after Pearl Harbor.

In the ~~broader~~ role of moulding Japanese community opinion, the J.A.C.L. during this period plays a part which- far less conducive to latter day frictions and attacks.

As the result of ~~With reference to~~ its aggressive Americanism education campaign of earlier years, the J.A.C.L. organization by 1937 had gained undisputed recognition as both in the Japanese and Caucasian communities as the chief medium of patriotic expression and activity among Japanese Americans.

~~More than the~~ By 1938 these ~~ear preceding~~ previous activities seem to have crystallized in what may properly be termed a J.A.C.L. outlook ~~for the future~~ on the future life of the Nisei in America. This outlook, ~~embraces a whole philosophy the belief that~~ however, is characterized by a defensive complex peculiar to the whole history of J.A.C.L. Americanism activity:

"We are American citizens of Japanese ancestry. We are racially Japanese, but Americans in nationality. Our physical characteristics are Japanese, but our aims and ideals are distinctly American...

"In view of our source of origin, our history, and the prevailing suspicion, the task of conducting ourselves, or the task of leading our group as American citizens seems like a difficult and dangerous one...

"The fundamental conception we should always bear in mind is the fact that we are Americans and that our allegiance and loyalty is with America and with Americans alone.

"With this basic idea fixed firmly in our minds, we should be neither shy nor cowed. We should speak out fearlessly on all issues affecting ourselves or our country, as any American has the right to and should."<sup>8</sup>

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The Pacific Citizen, v 10 no 116 Jan 1938 p 1 col 3, article entitled "Kitazumi States Integration Rule", quoting Edward M. Kitazumi, supervisor of the J.A.C.L. Second Generation Development Program Research Commission for the Northern California District of Sacramento.

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The inspiration for the hundreds of public loyalty pledges which spread with ~~plague-like~~ epidemic-like rapidity throughout the west coast in 1940-41 by not only J.A.C.L. chapters but all types of Nisei organizations, may be traced for ~~th~~ its origins to such J.A.C.L. pronouncements and Americanism campaigning of the thirties.

A direct correlation exists between the intensity of America-Japan friction and the increasing frequency of Nisei and even



Issei loyalty pledges to America during the same period.

While it seems likely that the over-all international situation and the circumstances of it moved the Japanese community in general in the direction of ~~public loyalty pledges for the enlightenment of the~~ trying to ~~reassure~~ reassure the Caucasian world, there is strong evidence that the J.A.C.L. influenced the type and nature of the resulting activities. Public loyalty pledges had been characteristic of the J.A.C.L. movement of the thirties, even in the absence of ~~the~~ compelling circumstances of the forties.

~~4~~ Records for the summer of 1940 are literally overflowing with ~~cases to substantiate the assertion such~~ reports of such actions as that taken by the sorely-beset Issei and Nisei fishermen of Terminal Island. In ~~June of that year~~ April of that year, ~~Kinzo Wakayama~~ Elmer Kinzo Wakayama, Hawaiian Nisei secretary of the Issei ~~Seine and Line Fishermen's Union of San Pedro~~ dominated Seine and Line Fishermen's Union of San Pedro, had instigated the formation of the Nisei Fishermen's Club, restricted to American citizens.

~~In June~~  
Two months later, with a weather eye cocked to the ~~rumor Pacific~~ American-Japanese ~~situation~~ international situation, Wakayama took a leaf from the J.A.C.L. notebook and ~~instructed~~ encouraged the newly organized Nisei group to engage in a public relations move described ~~as follows~~ which the Pacific Citizens described as follows:

"...The Nisei Fishermen's Club of the Pacific.... through its president Ted Sugimoto, publicly declared that its membership was entirely of American citizens of Japanese extraction by birth.

"That in event of emergency of our beloved country, the United States of America, we will stand in rank and file to defend this country and furthermore will cooperate to uphold the policy of the government as faithful and loyal citizens, the members so declared.

"The statement also said that fishing vessels which are chartered for fishing purposes would be surrendered to the government upon immediate request.

"In event of emergency for national defense, the citizen and alien members of the Seine and Line Fishermen's Union of San Pedro declared their loyalty to the United States would be first." 9

<sup>9</sup> The Pacific Citizen, v 12 no 142 June 1940 p 3 col 1 "Fishermen Vote Pledge of Loyalty"; in the ~~following~~ issue there is an account of the the acknowledgment of the public pledge as it was received by Congressman Lee E. Geyer of Gardena, California, who addressed a letter to Wakayama. Geyer is quoted as writing to Wakayama in reference to the loyalty pledge that "I think this will help some people to see the light more clearly."

The repercussions of the Pacific situation ~~and the effect~~ upon the English section editors of the all the vernacular dailies, from the Great Northern and Seattle Times in the northeast to the Rafu Shimpō and Kashi Mainichi in the far south paralleled ~~that~~ those



reflected in this action by the fishermen. In

Where the J.A.C.L. influence was strongest, the emphasis upon public declarations of loyalty was likewise most vociferous. or ideology

In Los Angeles, for instance, J.A.C.L. ties were known to be particularly ~~strong~~ in the publication of the daily Rafu Shimpō English section<sup>9</sup> and the newly-founded weekly all-English tabloid, "Japanese American Mirror".<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Pacific Citizen v 12 no 142 June 1940 p 3 "Quotations"

"There never was a more urgent need for demonstrations and true expressions of Nisei loyalty to the United States than today..."--The Rafu Shimpō

"We are all Americans and proud of this heritage. This is our land of the free and home of the brave, truly worthy of defending even if it means giving our last ounce of life blood. We join the joyful chorus in singing 'God bless America' and face with courageous heart whatever may befall this America that we love and call our own."--The Japanese American Mirror.

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~~Some~~  
~~There are some~~

The Issei and Nisei leaders in the California fishing industry were close to the J.A.C.L. during the latter thirties.

The National headquarters of the ~~citizens~~ citizens organization served as one of the instruments whereby the fishing interests secured protection from ~~exterminating~~ pressures bent upon their ~~extermination~~ exclusion.

Activities of the ~~central~~ J.A.C.L. national organization during the years 1937 ~~1938~~ and 1939 especially, during the sessions of the California legislature, ~~are~~ were highlighted by representation at Sacramento to defeat the several proposals for limiting commercial fishing licenses to ~~"eligible persons"~~ persons "eligible to American citizenship."

The initiation into this sphere of activity at the California capital had taken place in 1935 when the J.A.C.L. had expended \$3 50 for the purpose. In 1937 the organization raised \$1200, and in 1939 it raised \$2000 to oppose passage of the bills.

~~Evidence indicates~~  
~~It should be remembered~~ that J.A.C.L. participation, in terms of financial expenditures, was a minor role in the lobbying which went on at Sacramento against the bills. The ~~wealthy fish~~ prosperous Caucasian cannery interests of the coast which bought the catch of the Japanese ~~fishing~~ fishermen, as well as the latter's organizations carried the major burden of defeating the ~~pro~~ proposals.

Among political circles in Los Angeles, as well as in the Japanese community, the periodic and recurring appearance of the commercial fishing bills at Sacramento earned for the proposals the reputation that they were "cinch bills". It was ~~re~~ asserted that they were introduced by their sponsors primarily to invite expensive lobbying opposition, in the course of which operations, unnamed and ~~unknown~~ publicly unknown profits might accrue to individuals aware of



of the inflated nuisance value of the measures.

The commercial fishing bills never passed the State Legislature in the pre-war period.

In opposing them, the national J.A.C.L. incurred the wrath and opposition of American Legion posts throughout California as well as such organizations as the California Joint Immigration Committee and the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West.

The personality of Walter Tsukamoto, national president/ from 1938-1940, ~~dominates these~~ dominates the lobbying activities of the J.A.C.L. during this period. It is not exactly clear where Tsukamoto's role as J.A.C.L. representative and attorney ends and his ~~role~~ role as attorney and representative of the fishing industry begins, for he takes on both responsibilities concurrently in the years before outbreak of war.

In 1935 ~~and~~ the J.A.C.L. had interested itself in the first commercial fishing bill introduced at Sacramento because it was felt that the measure, though aimed against Issei fishermen, would adversely affect Nisei J.A.C.L. members at San Pedro, Monterey, and San Diego whose parents and relatives would suffer if all Issei were driven ~~out of the industry~~ off the boats. ~~We also felt~~ The J.A.C.L. also felt "that the general interests of all Nisei would be adversely affected when opportunities ~~are~~ were denied on a discriminatory basis ~~to~~ to the Issei because there were many minor children who depended on their parents." <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Notes from personal interview with Saburo Kido 12/1/44 at Salt Lake City JACL hqtrs by Togo Tanaka

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As an organization the national J.A.C.L. ~~withdrew from the~~ <sup>in ~~the~~ early 1941</sup> ~~retrenched~~ retrenched itself from the extent of its 1939 participation in fighting the recurring fishing proposal. Walter Tsukamoto, who had been succeeded in the national presidency at the 1940 convention by Saburo Kido, was retained as an attorney to represent J.A.C.L. interests; his fee for 1941 was \$500. In the meantime, however, he had also been retained for more considerable fees by the fishing industry and continued his ~~1~~ lobbying activities against the measures.

From within the fishing industry itself, representing <sup>large parts of</sup> the Japanese communities of San Pedro, San Diego, and Monterey, there is a tendency to regard the J.A.C.L. ~~in a favorable light~~ as an instrument of protection. The vernacular newspaper accounts of that time report considerable Issei support and encouragement to the local J.A.C.L. chapters. Among the fishermen's organizational staffs, while there is an inclination to view much of the J.A.C.L. program as young and amateurish, there is evident a healthy respect for the lobbying capabilities of Walter Tsukamoto. <sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Two figures familiar to Sacramento legislatures as representatives of the Southern California Japanese fishing interests were Wakayama of the Purse Seine & Line Fishermen's Union and Yokoseki of the San Pedro Fishermen's Association; both men were known to have ~~consolidated~~ taken this attitude toward J.A.C.L. participation. --Files # of The Rafu Shimpo English section on



Despite the vigorous bid made by the National J.A.C.L. for recognition as the leading organization among Japanese Americans generally, through representation of the fishing industry in fighting discriminatory legislation, it is questionable whether the local chapters at Terminal Island (San Pedro), Monterey, and San Diego attained anything but secondary roles in their respective communities.

~~As the fishermen~~  
~~there is~~

In the fishing communities of California, the Americanism education of the J.A.C.L. apparently made less impact than in the cities. The segregation and isolation of Terminal Island, <sup>for instance,</sup> as a nearly 100% Japanese colony tended to produce make for ~~quicker~~ slower progress; and certainly the role of the American public school far exceeded that of any Nisei organization.

The situation in the fishing ~~industry~~ communities is somewhat analagous to that in the agricultural areas.

Throughout the thirties, the ~~fishermen~~ Japanese farmers of California in particular, and to some extent Washington and Oregon, cultivated their acreage and carried on operations under constant fear of competitive pressures implemented by discriminatory legislation.

~~As~~ In California, the periodic investigations of Issei farmer's activities with relation to violations of the Alien Land Law provisions which had been circumvented through usage of Nisei names <sup>apparently</sup> children's or friend's names, hung as a sword of Damocles over Issei heads.

The situation was conducive to Issei encouragement of Nisei political activity. As a matter of fact, ~~the~~ origins of the club ~~initiated~~ in 1927 of the club which later became the Brawley chapter of the J.A.C.L. may be found in sponsorship by the Issei farmers of that area. It started out as the American Citizens of Japanese Ancestry, composed ~~of~~ mostly of Nisei farmers and farm workers who had migrated from the Hawaiian Islands; and its chief function as a club was to "do all the contacting with the Hakuji hakuji guys while the Issei took care of the- everything among the Nihonjins (Japanese)".<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> ~~Notes from personal interview with~~ Quotation from Notes of personal interview with Lyle Kurisaki, formerly of Brawley and member of the original group; interview at Salt Lake City 12/7/44 by Togo Tanaka

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Similar situations <sup>may be found</sup> ~~existed~~ elsewhere in farming regions ~~where~~ Japanese communities existed. As a movement, the J.A.C.L. may be traced simulatenously and equally to the farming areas as to the city areas. Historically, it has developed, as records of most chapters ~~it~~ show, as an extension of Nihonjin Kai (Japanese Association) activities, motivated basically by self-protective aims.

By the latter thirties, the J.A.C.L. had more chapters in the agricultural districts of the west coast than in the urban.<sup>13</sup> Its national leadership, however, from the beginning has reposed in the cities. ~~Centered~~ 14



- 13 The largest district council within the National J.A.C.L.--in by 1939 was that which represented Northern California; a roll call of one ~~it~~ of its Council meetings in that year, together with the ~~chapters~~ areas represented and the agricultural pursuits of delegates illustrates the point:

(From the minutes of the Northern California District J.A.C.L. meeting in June, 1939, at San Francisco Y.M.C.A.)

<u>"Name</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Type of agricultural field</u>
Charles Machida	Sacramento	Strawberry & grapes
S. Nakano	Stockton	Celery
Henry Mitarai	Santa Clara	Beets, pease, cauliflower
Billy Ishida	Fresno	Tomatoes & beauty plums
Tom Shimasaki	Tulare	Berries & Peas
H. Inouye	San Mateo Cnty	Nursery (horticulture)
R. Oda	San Luis Obispo Growers Asn	Truck crops
Karl Taku	San Luis Obispo	Peas, beans, tomatoes
Hiroshi Watanabe	San Francisco	
Katherine Sasaki	Florin	Orchard & floriculture
Tad Miura	Sacramento	Truck gardening
Cosma Sakamoto	Placer	Tree fruits
James Sugioka	San Benito	Prunes & apricots
Bob Manabe	Watsonville	Lettuce
John Yamauchi	Watsonville	Berries
Tad Tomita	Stockton	Cooperative marketing
Mitsuteru Nakashima	San Leandro	Floriculture
H. Y. Itogawa	Delta	Salesman
James Takehara	Florin	Vineyard & berries
George Kido	Alameda	
John Fujiki	Stockton	Truck gardening
Shigeki Shiratsuka	Stockton (non-member)	Tomatoes
Harry Yamamoto	Salinas	Exporter
Jack Noda (Turlock)	Stockton chptr	Fruits & vegetables (grower-packer)
Noboru Honda	Yuba-Sutter- Butte-Contra- Costa	Peaches
Howard Hatayama	Fresno	Grapes & peaches
Mary Ishikawa	Florin	Grapes
H. Ajari	Contra Costa	Pears & Tomatos



14

President pro-tem of the Seattle- 1930 national convention was a city man, Clarence T. Atai, Seattle attorney; during the 1930-32 period, three Southern Californians shared national leadership, Dr. George Yamagata and attorney Karl Iwanaga, both of Los Angeles, and John Ando of Long Beach. In 1932-34, leadership shifted to San Francisco and Dr. Henry Takahashi, optometrist, and Dr. Tokutaro Hayashi, dentist. In 1934, with a change in J.A.C.L. by-laws providing for election of a national president by the national council, Dr. T. Yatabe of Fresno, assumed top responsibilities. In 1936, Seattle again became the center-of- seat of the presidency, with publisher James Sakamoto, as also a city man, as head; Walter Tsukamoto of Sacramento in 1939 1938, was followed by San Francisco's Saburo Kido in 1940; and through most of this period, Susumu Togasaki of the Bay City served as treasurer. From the standpoint of leadership, the J.A.C.L. has been predominantly urban in composition.



In the summer of 1939, proceedings of the Northern District Council meeting held at San Francisco, ~~offer-~~ stand out as indicative of the growing feeling of importance among J.A.C.L. farm chapters about their role in their communities.

The time had now come for Nisei in agriculture to organize themselves in protective, mutually-helpful groups. In both-a- northern, southern, and central California farming areas, the movement had caught hold. Here again, it was largely induced by older Issei farming leaders.

~~Addressing the need~~

Viewing this development, ~~J.A.C.L.~~ Nisei farmers within the J.A.C.L. movement initially favored ~~inclusion of~~ inclusion of any agricultural organization within the framework of the J.A.C.L. organization. ~~15~~

~~15~~ From the official minutes of the Northern California District Council meeting held at San Francisco July 1, 1939. "Thomas Yego of Placer County JACL reported on the newly organized Farmers League. Yego stated that the farmers were weighing the question ~~whether the~~ whether the farm body would should identify itself as part of the J.A.C.L. He implied there was some desire on the part of some of the farmers to remain an independent body. Official delegates from farm areas who commented on the matter were unanimously in favor of 'incorporating' the farmers into the J.A.C.L. They said as follows--Tom Shimzaki of Tulare: 'I'm very much in favor; I see no difficulty in Tulare County.'; Harry Shirachi, Salinas: 'All community problems here are taken care of by J. .A.C.L. I believe there is no danger of a separate division being formed by the Farmers.'; Henry Mitarai, Santa Clara: 'Separate Farmer's body would greatly affect the J.A.C.L. membership; we should do everything to incorporate them into the JACL'; Vernon Iachisaka, Washington Township: 'Washington Township is sponsoring night school classes for Nisei Farmers in the local high school; a program of lectures, demonstrations and such things has been carried on successfully; we won't have any difficulty bringing the farmers group into the JACL.'"

As a matter of fact, however, the Nisei Farmers League of California, with Tom Yego of the ~~J.A.C.L.~~ Placer County J.A.C.L. ultimately organized as a separate unit outside the framework of the citizens league organization. ~~It was felt that~~

In the proceedings which culminated in the decision by the national J.A.C.L. to keep the Farmers' ~~be-~~ body separate, there is evidence again that the J.A.C.L. leadership of the latter thirties had ~~veer~~ made Americanism education an end in itself and not a means toward the ~~attainment~~ attainment of the earlier objective of economic and political self-protection. It was stressed that the J.A.C.L. was a "non-partisan, patriotic, civic organization, and if we took in the farmers into our organization, we would next have to take in the business men, and the fishermen, and others according to their occupation."

The Nisei Farmers organized separately to protect themselves "against unfair competition and unjust legislation, and to unite the farmers ~~of this country~~ to protect their common interests..." ~~16~~

~~16~~ From the Preamble of the Constitution of the Nisei Farmers League, drawn up in 1939 with assistance from the San Francisco JACL



A recapitulation of the J.A.C.L. as a movement among Japanese Americans is recorded in the 1940 national convention keynote speech of retiring president Walter Tsukamoto. since 1930.

The movement had grown steadily. In membership participation ~~and number of chapters~~ it was nearly ten times as great as ~~it~~ when it was organized. In number of chapters, it had quadrupled. Tsukamoto reviewed J.A.C.L. structural development with the figures:

"In 1934 we had 21 chapters	
"In 1936 .....	30 chapters
"In 1938 .....	42 chapters
"In 1940 .....	50 chapters" 17

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<sup>17</sup> The Pacific Citizen v 12 no 145 September 1940 p3 col 1-2-3-4-5

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But in round numbers of participating members, despite its pre-eminence as a Nisei organization, the J.A.C.L. was still ~~the voice of~~ without the active support of the majority of American citizens of Japanese ~~necessary~~ ancestry on the Pacific coast.

It had always been an organized minority within the Japanese community seeking to make claims in the Caucasian community that it spoke in behalf of all Americans of Japanese ancestry. It had nearly always found dissenters within the Japanese community, and these had increased in proportion to J.A.C.L. growth by 1940.

~~The Americanism program of the J.A.C.L. made this organization unique within the Japanese community~~

J.A.C.L. leadership seems to have been aware of this situation in 1940. There is an emphasis, at council sessions, upon discussions favoring a full time staff worker to coordinate the national league and build up its support within the Japanese community, as well as carry on public relations with the American public at large. Stress is made upon the fact that the J.A.C.L. is "different from other Nisei organization."

In his keynote speech, Tsukamoto declares that he himself has been aware of the frequently expressed criticism among Japanese residents that there are too many Nisei organization. This criticism is not justified, he states, because "these reserve-groups serve a function, whether they are religious, sports, social or political. The J.A.C.L. falls into none of these categories because it is dedicated to all Americans, be they members or not, because its purpose is entirely unselfish and because it seeks to instill in the hearts and minds of all Americans of Japanese ancestry a deep love for and appreciation of this great country of which they are an inseparable and integral part."

At the 1940 national convention, the organization went on record, in a dizzy swirl of oratory replete with references to "Old Glory", to (1) support universal military conscription whereby "we call upon every American of Japanese ancestry to offer his life in the defense of his country" and (2) cooperate



with the government in the fingerprinting process of their Issei parents under the Alien Registration Act.

Significantly enough, these actions, in the form of resolutions, took precedence in the ~~proceedings~~ proceedings over those which placed the organization on record to "unalterably oppose any form of discrimination against any group of citizens based on race or color" and to favor "legislation making it illegal for any labor organizations to discriminate against Nisei."

Here again one discovers, upon examination of the record, the essentially defensive character of J.A.C.L. public relations as it was conducted in the Caucasian world.

There appears to underly a deep sensitivity to the feeling that Japanese Americans, despite the brave assertions by J.A.C.L. leadership that they were not 'hyphenated', were not full Americans.

There is always pre-occupation with the fear that <sup>Caucasians</sup> ~~white Americans~~ would not recognize in the Nisei an American, but would rather see a Japanese.

In this defensive complex, the J.A.C.L. reflected the average state of mind of the Nisei population as a whole.

~~This may~~ The ~~protective~~ self-protective objectives of the J.A.C.L. movement, out of which the organization emerged in the thirties, again remain submerged beneath the flurry of American ~~flag~~ flag-waving at the 1940 convention.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> In his convention keynote speech, Tsukamoto quotes from the J.A.C.L. Constitution, to describe "the purposes to which we are dedicated"--"We, the American citizens of Japanese ancestry, in order to uphold the Constitution of the United States, to foster and spread the true spirit of Americanism, to build the character of our people morally and spiritually on American Ideals, and to promote the welfare and aid in the development of the Americans of Japanese ancestry as an integral part of the national life, do establish this Constitution for the Japanese American Citizens League of the United States of America."

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Paradoxically enough, despite this vigorous emphasis upon the importance of complete identity with America, in a period of growing crisis with Japan, the J.A.C.L. leadership's ~~efforts to induce~~ later divorce from association with Japanese consular contacts by 1940 had not even reached the stage of separation. As big as life on <sup>one of the</sup> ~~the front~~ pages of the Pacific Citizen, reporting on the Portland national convention in 1940, appears a photograph with the caption:

"Past national officers take time out for a bite to eat at a luncheon given at the residence of Consul S. Yuki during the recent convention. Reading from left to right are: Ken Utsunomiya, past national executive secretary; Walter T. Tsukamoto past national president; Ken Matsumoto, past national vice-pres-



ident; and Hito Okada, past national treasurer; Matsumoto and Okada were reelected to the new cabinet."19

<sup>19</sup> The Pacific Citizen, v 12 no 145 September 1940 p 3 col 4-5-

Even more ~~indicative~~ indicative of the ~~ambiguous~~ ambiguous position in which the organization found itself by the very nature of basic Issei-Nisei relationships is the account of the Southern California District J.A.C.L. Convention in Long Beach.

Into its midst, on August 31, came the Central Japanese Association of America, the dominant Issei organization of Southern California. Renting the ballroom of the Hilton Hotel in Long Beach, the Central Japanese Association, through its executive secretary who had been a former Los Angeles J.A.C.L. president, invited Convention delegates. It also invited ~~California Governor Culbert Olson~~ California Governor Culbert Olson to address the gathering. It also invited prominent members of the Japan-America Society of Los Angeles. It also invited Saburo Kido, national president of the J.A.C.L. and national officers. It also invited the Los Angeles Japanese Consul.

The banquet officially was not a part of the J.A.C.L. convention. ~~The~~ <sup>20</sup> The conclave had literally been intruded upon. Yet it was accepted and, in terms of newspaper space accorded the event, virtually ~~stole~~ stole the act.

~~In~~ In the light of later developments, Governor Olson's speech was prophetic. It was received that evening by his immediate listeners with mixed reactions. Articulate Caucasian friends, long identified with the Japan-America Society, waxed indignant over such statements by the Governor as "it looks as if ~~the~~ the Japanese government may follow through to its own destruction; perhaps to the very destruction of the Japanese people." <sup>20</sup> They apologized to their "Japanese friends" and encouraged them to discount what the Governor had said; they expressed the opinion that an ~~insult~~ insult of the first order had been committed against the Japanese Consul who had sat at the same table through the entire speech.

To the Issei present, the speech was unsettling and hard to believe. The basic assumption of the Governor had been, throughout his speech, a belief that a clash with Japan was imminent. Gongoro Nakamura, president of the Central Japanese Association, expressed doubt that "things were that bad". The picture had been overdrawn and sensationalized, he commented, but with some uncertainty on his own part. <sup>21</sup>

For a number of Nisei who attended the meeting, however, and among them the constituted J.A.C.L. national leadership, the event had both a sobering influence in their thinking and guided them, if anything, as far away from contacts with Issei organizations and the Japanese Consulate as they could possibly go. There is evidence that official National J.A.C.L. suspicion of the Central Japanese Association, ~~and a tacit disapproval of any connections with that organization, dates from~~ <sup>a short</sup> time after the Governor's speech.

<sup>20</sup> The Pacific Citizen vol 13 no. 157 September, 1941, p 4 col 5  
<sup>200</sup> It might be added here that most ~~members~~ members of the Japan-America Society were Republicans and found it easy to be critical of California's first Democratic governor in 50 years.  
<sup>21</sup> From notes of the meeting in files of Togo Tanaka



That national J.A.C.L. headquarters chose to interpret the Governor's speech as sounding the call for "taking a loyalty stand with America against Japan" is hinted in the issue of the Pacific Citizen which carried the complete text of the talk along with Olson's picture. The quotations from that text which are set off in bold type and ~~repeated~~ printed twice on the same page were:

"... This meeting, the very fact of your meeting here, therefore, ~~marks~~ 'marks' you from now on; sets you apart from Japanese non-citizens and especially from those Japanese who, whether openly or secretly, swear fealty to the Japanese government.

"Considered in this light, your meeting here tonight is more than an ordinary act of allegiance to democracy and to the government of the United States. It is an act of courage and of separation; because I take it that it means, quite definitely, that in event of war you stand ready to defend the United States against the government of your forefathers.

"For THIS, you are entitled, and I gladly extend to you the compliments and thanks of the people of California."