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Betrayal and Survival ...

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6. SHOOTING, BEATINGS, MURDER *lower case*

On the evening of 24 May, a staff member knocked on my door and told me that a Japanese had been shot at close range by an armed sentry. Early the next morning I was able to speak with Mr. Robertson. He told me that one of his construction workers Shoichi Okamoto had been shot in the abdomen by a sentry - apparently at a range of less than three feet. He also told me that the Japanese construction crews had not come to work and that many other workers were not showing up.

After lunch I called on Mr. Kurihara. I did not feel comfortable about doing this, but I hoped that Kurihara would advise me whether or not it was proper or decent for me to visit people at this time. Kurihara was unusually gentle and serene, and I did not realize that he was in a state of shock. He said, "The people are very calm. . . Let's be cool and know more about it before we take any action. . . We must be fair. Mr. Best is not responsible. . . The Japanese could take it. They'll take it more than any other race."

I then inquired how the man was doing. Kurihara said that he was dead. His eyes filled with tears and he began to cry, repeating over and over again: "I wonder if there is a God."

I could think of nothing to say, so I expressed my sympathy and left.

I think I might have stopped visiting people had I not had an appointment with my secretary, a Nisei girl who lived in the same block as Kurihara. This young woman seemed so relieved to see me and so eager to tell me what people were saying that I concluded that she found my visit reassuring. Thereupon I called

on several other friends and was also well received. What I found was that my friends were not only shocked and angry, but afraid -- afraid that there might be another demonstration, that the soldiers might shoot them as they had shot Mr. Okamoto. Though they did not express it explicitly, the administrators shared this fear. If there was another demonstration, there would be more outrageous publicity about the "Jap riots", and the jurisdiction of the camp might again be given to the military.

On the next day I tried to talk to Mr. Tsuruda, but found only his wife at home. She said:

The people are angry about it. But we heard over the radio that Secretary Ickes said it was the soldier's fault. . . That made the people feel better. They were all angry around here but nobody knew what it was all about.

I then went to the Civic Organizations office where Miss Kuratomi was employed. She was shaking with rage and told me that she thought Mr. Best was trying to avoid responsibility. "It was Mr. Best's fault for bringing in the Military in the first place," she said. I called on Mr. Robertson and he told me that the Japanese had agreed to return to work if they could be assured of protection. He felt that Mr. Best had acted wisely, making announcements in the messhall, visiting Mr. Okamoto's family, and giving the workers all they asked for in the way of protection.

On May 27 I walked to Mr. Higashi's apartment but found him leaving for a block managers' meeting. I suggested that in the present situation it might be wise if I did not visit him. He looked very relieved and suggested we meet at some other place. I then went to Dr. Opler's office, where I met a young Japanese who, I knew, was on very good terms with Mr. Robertson. This young man told me that every time the Japanese see a soldier in

camp it makes their blood boil. He had interviewed the men who had witnessed the shooting and had written a report.

When Okamoto approached the gate, driving the truck the sentry waved at him. Okamoto interpreted this as a signal to stop. The soldier then approached him, cursed at him and ordered him to get out of the truck. Okamoto got out of the truck reluctantly. The soldier then ordered him to walk outside of the fence. Okamoto did so hesitantly and the soldier made as if to strike him with the butt of his rifle.

Okamoto raised his arms and the soldier shot him in the stomach at a range of three feet.

Okamoto screamed and fell to the ground writhing and clutching his stomach. The soldier reloaded his rifle and lighted a cigarette. The other Japanese looked on amazed. Then the soldier said, "Get the hell out of here or I'll shoot you too."

The young man assured me that if the soldier was not punished promptly and justly the results "will be terrible".

I dropped into Mr. Robertson's office to see if there was any news. He asked me in a quiet voice: "What do you think would happen if the Army whitewashed the whole thing and did not release the verdict for months?" I was by this time very upset. "If they do," I said, "or if the soldier is set free, November first and fourth will look like a picnic."

Later that afternoon I called on Mr. Tsuruda. He was very cordial but also very nervous. His fluent comments were interspersed with black humor, at which he himself laughed loudly.

Best has called a center-wide holiday on the day of the funeral (day not decided yet). They are also going to have a wake at the highschool. That's a darn good idea. It would be more or less ironical to give the fellow a military burial - being as he's a repatriate and a No-No. (laughter)

If WRA can prove to the people that the man who was shot was of no fault, and that they did their best to get justice, then things might quiet down. But if they exonerate the man completely, there's going to be a blow-off. They'll have to build a double fence around the administration section. . .

The smartest thing to do would be to give the man (the soldier) twenty years and send him to jail. Then pardon him after three or four years.

If the man is exonerated that will give the M.P.'s the impression that the lives of the Japs in here are not worth a hell of a lot. . . Heck, I might walk through that gate next morning and the guy will take a shot at me. I'm dead. That's not going to help me any. (laughter)

As I left, Mr. ^{Tsurumida} Takeuchi told me that lid might blow off the camp in two hours and if that happened Mr. Robertson, Mr. Hayward (Bob's boss) and myself should come to his barrack. That would be the safest place for us.

That evening I talked briefly with Dr. Opler. He told me that the WRA office is "trying like hell to keep the Army from whitewashing this shooting."

On the morning of ^{Mon} March 28 I called on Mr. and Mrs. Wakida. Mr. Wakida talked freely about the shooting and stressed that the WRA's attempts to avoid responsibility were having a very bad effect on the people. "They think, 'If WRA's not responsible, that's bad. Who is responsible?'" He said he had a good deal of business to transact outside the fence but he wasn't going out. His wife remarked on the soldiers patrolling the camp with machine guns. "That didn't look good." Neither George nor his wife thought there was going to be any trouble. What could they do? They were only Japs. All they could do was take it.

I then visited Mr. Kurihara but he was so upset he did not wish to talk about the shooting. His only comment was: "It is a great shame to the Army of the United States."

When, however, I called on the Iida family in the afternoon I was well received. All the men of the family were at home, since it was Sunday and all the baseball games had been cancelled out of respect for Mr. Okamoto. The men interrupted their bridge

game to talk with me. Mr. Iida told me that everybody knew that his block (21) was full of "small citizens". But he didn't care. I could come to see him and they could call him an inu if they wanted to.

Another man said that the soldiers should stay out of camp. Every time one of them is seen in camp the people feel worse. "Everything depends on the verdict." Another asked if the soldier were given a heavy sentence and sent away to serve a light one, would the soldiers here know of this?

"If the verdict is for acquittal," said Mr. Iida, "the best thing the WRA could do to avoid trouble would be to remove the soldiers completely and tear down the fence." Another man was concerned because Mr. Best had seemed so eager to escape responsibility. If he had said that he safety of the people was his responsibility, the people would feel better.

Later that afternoon while I was writing up my notes, Mr. Robertson came to my room and told me that Mr. Best was wondering whether I should be asked to leave the project during this crisis. He explained that Mr. Best was under great stress and that some of the pressure to ask me to leave was coming from the Internal Security. He also warned me that his (Robertson's) mail was frequently opened when he received it and marked "Opened by Mistake".

At eight o'clock the next morning I went to see Mr. Best in his office and managed to impress him with my common sense and good will. I also told him that I did not plan to go into the colony for the next few days. At this he looked very relieved and said that would be a good idea. (Being young and reckless, I did not at this time appreciate the fact that Mr. Best was genuinely concerned with my welfare.)

After my talk with Mr. Best I stayed in my room for two days. But this solitude was very hard on me and I decided to see what I could learn in the administrative section. I talked briefly with two Nisei who were employed as secretaries. They had been very impressed by Mr. Okamoto's funeral. "At least 5,000 people were there," said one. Then the other young lady said worriedly, "It's going to be bad though if the soldier is acquitted. The people are just waiting to hear."

On June 4 I visited the Tsurudas. Bob was taking a nap when I arrived so I talked for about a half hour with his wife and her sister. To my surprise the women talked excitedly about the inu.

They had thought that when they came to Tule Lake they would be through with inus, but had found that there were more of them than ever. "Every place you look you can see one." Bob's sister-in-law said that you couldn't even have a small meeting anywhere but what some inu would go and report it to the Administration.

When Bob awoke, he talked at first about the stupidity of some of the Caucasian staff in the mess division. Then he spoke approvingly of the speech Mr. Best had made at Mr. Okamoto's funeral.

I will have to give the man credit. He really has done his best. He didn't lay it on too thick. Regardless of why he did it, the fact stands that he did do it. That's what you have to give the man credit for. It couldn't all have been prompted by selfishness.

Since my block manager friend, Mr. Kurusu, lived in a "tough block" I wrote him asking him if I might safely visit him. I had also asked him to write me a letter if he did not wish me to call. On June 6 I received a letter in which he said in part:

Thank you for your letter and sincere courtesy. I deeply regret that the tragic occurrence had to stop your visiting which I was expecting with great interest.

As far as I can observe the present existing public sentiment, I hope that probably there will be no public disturbance or see the slightest tendency of trouble or pressure group. However, it appears to me that the colonists have received considerable shock and a tendency of great anger toward thoughtless cruel barbaric in-human being attitude of the military police.

Other day we held the regular ward meeting and a block manager brought up the sincere hope of request by the people, concerning inhuman attitude of the military police toward the recent tragic incident that hereafter, the W.R.A. would guarantee and take proper measurement and caution for our safety and security especially employees of the center . . . Also I have confidence that the colony is eagerly waiting with great expectation for the official announcement of the truth.

✓ On June 6 two Caucasian teachers told me about "wild-cat" Japanese schools which are springing up in the camp. These schools, ✓ I was told, stress Japanese training of the most severe sort and refuse to come under the authority of the Japanese schools established with the consent of the WRA. The organizers are said to be Kibei of very pro-Japanese leanings. The curricula included + elaborate physical exercises. . . Another teacher told me that many ✓ of her students are dropping out of her classes. Their parents believe they should not attend the English school.

✓ On June 8 I visited by friend George Wakida and found him m talking with one of his friends, Mr. Abo. Mr. Wakida soon began to talk about the inu.

What he couldn't understand, said he, was what these inu thought they were getting out of it. True, they might end up with three or four thousand dollars, but after the war nobody would have them; neither the Caucasians, nor the Japanese would associate with them. I said I doubted if inu were making that much money. "No", agreed Wakida, "They're probably doing it just for 16 a month." "Yes," added Mr. Abo, "they have an office now in 701." (This was the office of

Dr. Opler, the Community Analyst.) "How's that?" I asked. "It's run by a fellow named Popler," explained Mr. Abo. "He's a good guy but the fellows working for him are inu. Popler asked me to work for him, but I wouldn't do it for nothing. Not with those guys around."

On the shooting of Mr. Okamoto, Wakida ^{opinioned} that if the verdict was for acquittal it would be better to announce it at once, rather than let the people remain in this jumpy state of mind. He also gave me his version of the trouble in block 54. It seems as if Mr. Anzai, the warden who had protested about the Japanese morning exercises, was now being called an inu.¹ The evacuee head of the Internal Security Force, who had refused the block petition to dismiss Anzai and his friend, was also being called an inu.

On June 8, Mr. Kurihara told me that people's feelings about the shooting were quieting down. He was happy about a rumor that people in the camp might be permitted to take excursions to the nearby hills. But he also told me that some Japanese had questioned him because he was being visited by Mr. Robertson and by myself. He had told these questioners that his conscience was clear. "Having inu around," he explained, "keeps everybody on edge. Everybody suspects everybody else

and it leads to a great deal of hard feelings. It keeps the people in a constant state of tension."

On June 10 I called on my friend, Bob Tsuruda, and found him relaxed and sleepy. He was pleased that his boss, Mr. Hayward, had started a policy of having the Caucasian mess stewards "go in and have on^e meal a day in the colony mess halls... They have to eat lunch in the colony every day except Saturday and Sunday."²

"One Caucasian steward," said Bob, "had tried to skin out of this by claiming that his stomach was bothering him." Bob made no mention of the shooting or the inu.

On the night of June 12, Masato Noma, the brother of Takeo Noma, the general manager of the Cooperative Enterprises was assaulted and beaten so severely that he had concussion of the brain. It was said that he might lose his eyesight. On the night of June 13, Mr. Anzai, the Issei police warden who had tried to stop the militaristic morning exercises in block 54, was beaten severely. It was said that his skull had been fractured.

On June 14 I called on Mr. and Mrs. Yamashita. (Yamashita was a well educated ex-internee, who, I knew, was an undercover advisor to the Resegregationists.) He began the interview by complimenting the administration for the "very marvelous way of . . . trying to calm the feelings of the residents. . . Mr. Best was wise in making the funeral so big. It made the people feel good - at the expense of the residents." Mr. Yamashita felt that the Administration should have paid for the funeral expenses.

I remarked that I had heard that Mr. Anzai had been beaten up. "He wasn't killed though," remarked Mrs. Yamashita in a disappointed tone. I then bluntly asked Mr. Yamashita what he thought of such beatings. Were persons not guilty of being inu being threatened and assaulted? He responded diffidently:

Knowing the Japanese as a race, knowing them for their courtesy and good behavior, I say that if anyone is beaten there should be a certain fundamental reason for it. I think the general opinion of the people was that these men were stealing goods supposed to be given to the colonists.

On June 14th or 15th the chief eyewitness of the Okamoto shooting was threatened but escaped a beating. Some people said that he must have been an inu, the theory being that he had given testimony unfavorable to Okamoto at the coroner's inquest.

On the evening of June 16 four staff members, three of whom were high-school teachers, called on me. They were very excited and distressed. They told me that Mr. Black had delivered the commencement address at the highschool and had said: "You perhaps have your own opinions and without doubt your parents have definite confictions. But I am an American and as an American I can see the outcome of the war only as a complete military victory for the Allied Cause."

My informants said that from Black's initial statement that he was an American, there was a continuous heckling from the young men in the back of the room. At the end of Black's speech there was mixed applaude and booing, applause from the parents in the middle section and booing from the young fellows in the back of the room. ✓ S

When I visited him on June 17, Mr. Kurihara said:

The beatings can be justified from various angles. The Japanese have grievances against the administration, but they know as a fact that they're helpless. Naturally, the only thing they can think of doing is how to get back at those who spy on them. I think these beatings will keep going on for quite a while. I think there will be at least half a dozen more. The Administration listens to the inu and not to the others. So such things happen.

This is one point you no doubt have noticed. These certain persons here beaten up, you'll find the majority of the people are enjoying it.

On the evening of June 17, a high school teacher told me that a number of young fellows had crashed the high school graduates' reception. The principal asked them to leave. They left, but later, it was found that:

they had gone into the boys' latrine, taken off all the moveable fixtures, and flushed them down the toilets. Some three inches of water had flooded the floor before this was discovered.

9 On June 21 a mentally deranged Issei attacked his roommate and another elderly man with a hammer, almost killing one of them. On June 23 a Nisei girl assured me that this was not an inu beating. The attacker "must have been crazy", she said, "or he would not have gone to the hospital and told them what he had done." But on July 2, Mrs. Iida told me that people were saying that the man who had been assaulted was an inu. "The old man had found out that his friend was acting like an inu."

11 On June 24 I called on my Resegregationist respondents, the Tsuchikawas. Mr. Tsuchikawa told me that Mr. Noma, the general manager of the Co-op had tried to bribe ^{a certain} Mr. Kira with a large sum of money in the hope that Kira would influence the segregants from Manzanar to join the Co-op. I found this statement interesting because I had heard rumors that Mr. Kira was the leader of a terrorist gang called "The Black Tigers".

I then went to the Tsurudas' apartment but found that Bob was not home. His wife suggested that I call on the next day. She appeared so anxious and upset that I asked her if anything was wrong. Looking from right to left she whispered, "I think everybody is nervous in here. This place gives me the willies." 13

When I called on Bob (June 25) he began the conversation by denouncing the Co-op.

I'm getting sick of the attitude of the people. They are always cutting each others throats. Take the "well-organized Co-op" for instance. Heretofore there had been a rumor that quite a few of the boys high up in the Co-op very nicely relocated with a big wad of dough. That's a nice thing to do to the poor Japs in here.

Noriko said:

I was in the Co-op yesterday when Sasaki came in. You know, we all turned the back to him. Every one of us. You could see how it was - Public Inu Number One.

Bob then astonished me by complaining about the "radicals" and the "pressure gang" and telling me that he was considering relocation:

When I came here I expected to find quite a different atmosphere. When the people realized they were here for the same reason, I expected that they would be willing to help a guy when he needed it. Instead, now if you've got five dollars they'll think of how they can get it away from you.

Some of the smartest people I know are getting disgusted. These are real intelligent people. They came here and expected to find a co-operative atmosphere and they're pretty well disgusted. Their remarks add up to something like this: "It's not a case now of whether I want to go back to the old country. It's a case of whether I can stay here long enough to go back to the old country and still retain my self-respect.

The trouble is they expect you to act like a damn radical and go out and kill every hakujin on the other side of the fence and when you don't act like that you are an inu. . . . It seems to me that Germany is going to pull a flopperoo. I wouldn't want to be here when that happens. I don't care if Japan has 17 kind of Yamato Damashii she isn't going to be able to buck fighting three big nations. . . . Believe it or not a fellow told me the other day that Japan was going to have a decisive victory and that the war would be over in seven days! A girl told me the other day, 'You're so thoroughly Americanized, I don't believe you belong here'. . . . A lot of the old men are getting goofier and goofier. They stand around in the latrines and mutter to themselves. I think they're losing their minds.

On the evening of June 25 I was present when two school teachers and a young statistician began a discussion of their problems. ^{Miss Hobby} ~~One teacher~~, who was in charge of the Japanese teachers who taught in the WRA day schools, told how she had met with them and had started a discussion of the Co-op. The young people had immediately begun to criticize the Co-op. The teacher suggested that they invite Mr. Runcorn, the new Co-op manager, to speak with them and answer these complaints.

After some consultation the evacuee teachers refused absolutely to do this. Miss Hobby pointed out that it was their duty as "leaders of the community" to take this action. But the young people remained unmoved. "We start that," said one of them, "and it'll be a two-by-fours for us."

When, on June 26, I called on Mr. Kurihara, he appeared nervous and ill at ease. I asked him what he thought about the proposed election of Ward Police Commissioners scheduled for the next day. He said he had not even heard of it. But he was of the opinion that it would be a resounding failure. Nobody with any self-respect would take the position because they would invariably be labeled as inu. When I asked him about the news of American advances in the Pacific, he said:

Those persons who will change their minds now are no good to either country. You'll find there are many of that kind. You know, only half the people here are registered to go to Japan. They just want to wait and see how it turns out. If Japan wins they want to go to Japan and if the United States wins they want to stay here. It's disgraceful. It makes me ashamed of the Japanese race. 4

He then abruptly shifted the conversation to Mr. Anzai, the police warden who was beaten on June 13. He told me that Mr. Anzai's children had not been able to get along with the other children in block 54. Then Anzai wanted to send his children to school in the next ward. But the teacher there found out about the children and refused. So in order to get back against the block Anzai commenced to point out people who should be sent to the stockade. I asked if the eleven men had been put in the stockade were denounced by Anzai. Mr. Kurihara said they were.

He tried to scare the people by telling them that he was going to send whoever wasn't behaving right to the stockade. He asked for it and he got it.

He then said desperately:

If the agitators and the spies get out of here we'll be united. But it wouldn't matter if we didn't have unity, so long as we have peace.

On the morning of June 27 a staff member told me that 19 of the Issei confined in the stockade were to be sent to the Santa Fe Internment Camp on the following morning. I called on Mr. Itabashi, a gentle and benevolent Issei who had written a long paper for me describing his first impressions of Tule Lake. He opened our conversation by talking about the Co-op:

The information I get from all over say that there are a few of the managers of the Co-op who have a close relationship with the WRA officials. They are getting graft out of the Co-op. The first thing I heard when I came to this camp was, "If you say anything against the Co-op here you'll be arrested." As long as the Co-op is carried on this way, some day another big trouble will happen.

He then told me how he had told Mr. Provinse, the WRA Chief of Community Services that the Japanese should be given fair treatment.

The Japanese, when they are treated right, they are always so grateful. They are inspired by fairness, especially at a time like this.

But then he added:

Of course, there are a handful of incorrigible people. I myself am for it that they be sent away. But if I said so in camp I would be killed.

I concluded my notes for June 27 with the following remark:

Have heard an increasing number of remarks from Caucasians about Japanese quitting their jobs without giving a reason. This morning at the motor pool, I could not go into Klamath Falls because two drivers had quit without notice. Also I hear rumors from both Caucasians and Japanese that there are many beatings in camp which do not come to the attention of the authorities.

On June 28, nineteen Issei from Tule Lake were sent to the Santa Fe Internment Camp operated by the Department of Justice. Fifteen were taken from the stockade and four from the evacuee area.

On June 30, my Japanese secretary told me that she had heard that another man had been assaulted. Nobody knew exactly why he had been beaten up. I then called on my friends, the Wakidas, and found only Mrs. Wakida at home. She immediately began to tell me about the latest beating.

People are telling George that the man who was beaten didn't know why he was beaten. But some say there was a good reason for it. Both George and I think there's going to be a lot of trouble here since these men were sent to Santa Fe. Mr. _____ in this block was sent. . It's very mysterious. The people are very upset about the people being sent to Santa Fe.

There is a certain man working in the shoestore, an Old Tulean. He told me that the man who worked before him had taken so many thousands of dollars of the profits. We don't profit anything here.

On July 2 I called on Mrs. Iida. About the beating of Mr. Noma, she told me that some people were saying that they really had wanted to beat Noma's brother, the manager of the Co-op. But they thought that the brother should be beaten up too. She also remarked that the Co-op was getting more and more unpopular. She has been told several times, "If you say anything against the Co-op, you're going to be put in the stockade." I remarked that so far no one has been arrested for the assaults. She said, "They're too smart to get caught. The man who did turn himself over (the hammer assault) was crazy. That's why he gave himself up. And some people were saying that even the hammer assault was an inu beating. The old man had found out that his friend was acting like an inu."

I then called on Mr. Kurihara, I asked him why only third rate inu were being beaten. "You should know," he replied, "the big ones are too well guarded. But the guard will slip up some time." At this moment, one of Mr. Kurihara's friends who lived in the Manzanar section came into the room. Kurihara asked him, "How was it in Manzanar? Were there enough inus there to hold an election?"¹⁵ The friend said that he didn't think anybody had been nominated in his block. "Who wants to be a legal inu?" he added.

By this time I had become very anxious. It seemed to me that the situation in camp was ^{pathological} and potentially very dangerous. That evening, in a state of desperation, I called on Mr. Robertson.

1. This was the proposed election of Ward Police Commissioners.

Had a talk with Mr. Robertson in which I re-stressed the seriousness of public sentiment against the Co-op. Robertson said that he had talked to Runcorn (the WRA manager) and that Runcorn had recommended the immediate issuing of a dividend. Runcorn insisted the books were all right and that they are gone over every month by an outside accountant. Robertson said he had then recommended that the account be written up and published in an understandable form. Runcorn said he had not thought of that.

Robertson also told me that last night some members of the Resegregation group had approached him and told me that the removal of the Issei to Santa Fe was the last straw. They no longer could restrain their boys. Future attacks might not be restricted to beatings. There might be murder.

On the morning of July 4 I heard that the body of Mr. Noma, the General Manager of the Co-operative Enterprises, had been found on his doorstep with a knife pushed through his larynx to the base of his brain.⁶

On July 6 the results of the court-martial on the shooting of Mr. Okamoto were announced in the Newell Star. The sentry was acquitted.

PART THREE EVENTS AT TULE LAKE, JULY 1944 TO MAY 1945

7. Aftermath of Noma Murder

The news of the murder produced a state of panic. The people rushed to the Co-op to buy food. Many members of the Japanese American police force resigned. By mid-June the ^{force} staff had dwindled from 117 to 73 men. The key officials of the Co-op resigned. Some were taken from their barracks by members of the Caucasian Internal Security and lodged in the administrative area. On July 24 several staff members told me that there had been a number of attempts at rape in the colony. I asked my friend Mr. Wakida about this and was told: "They say a girl was attacked in Block 69. She ran away screaming. The girls can't go to school (Japanese Night School). But now the boys (of the night school) are getting together and are leaving school with the girls."

Many of the Nisei were also deeply disturbed by the news of the American advances in the Pacific. On June 19, Mrs. Wakida, who taught in one of the Japanese schools, told me:

My students are asking me, "Sensei (teacher)", they say, "What would you think if I got leave clearance and got out of here?" They believe all they read in the papers. They say: "Saipan was taken, this place and that place was taken. Gee Whiz, what's going to happen to us?"
I really don't blame them.

The pervasive sense of anxiety and insecurity were increased by events pertaining to the stockade. The Saiban-iin (Lawsuit Committee) had approached Ernest Besig, Director of the Northern California Branch of the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of the imprisoned men. Besig arrived at Tule Lake on July 11, but

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he was not permitted to speak to the detainees except in the presence of a member of the WRA Internal Security. Nor was he allowed to complete his interviews, for, on July 13, he was told to leave the camp. A Caucasian informant told me:

The project attorney and I went into the colony the night of July 12. We met 48 people, .. almost all of them were related to the men in the stockade. Yoshino presided. He asked the project attorney to explain the "kicking out" of Besig. The project attorney said he hadn't been kicked out but had been requested to leave. The Administration could not allow anyone to interfere with the murder investigation.¹

On July 19, the men in the stockade, most of ^{whom} ~~them~~ had been imprisoned for more than eight months, went on another hunger strike. On July 25, a Nisei girl told me, "One of the boys fainted in there today, about 6:30 p.m. and was taken to the hospital. That evening, about 7:30 p.m. I myself passed by the stockade,

One of the Caucasian police left the small station next to the stockade and walking to the gate shouted, "Mr. Kai, Mr. Kai, your wife is here to see you." After a while the door of one of the barracks opened and Mr. Kai staggered out the door being held open by another detainee. Kai walked slowly to the station where I saw his wife, his little son, and a baby.²

1. ~~Fieldnotes, July 14.~~

2. ~~Fieldnotes, July 25, 1944~~

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Meanwhile the administration was desperately trying to recruit another police force. Finally they prevailed upon the block managers to ask the people in each block to elect two men who would serve as policemen in their block. Many blocks refused. Some blocks remained unpoliced for six months. On June 24, Mr. Wakida told me: "People would like an Internal Security, but nobody wants to run. They don't want to be an inu." On the same day, Mr. Itabashi, an Issei, told me: "In this camp no really able man will show his face because so many narrow minded fanatics are in camp that you can't honestly cooperate with the fanatics. Even your safety cannot be guaranteed."

At the end of July the new policemen, who were now called "wardens" met with the administration to formulate new policies. They "adopted a series of changes designed to insure that they would not be involved in any affair which might incur the displeasure of the residents." Whenever any infringement of law occurred which might remotely be connected with politics, or might conceivably offend the residents if action were taken, the wardens refused to act." ^{x3} The murdered^R or murderers of Mr. Noma were never apprehended.

Meanwhile, the men detained in the stockade continued their hunger strike. On July 28, the Spanish vice-Consul came to the center on a routine inspection tour. When he was told of the strike, he pleaded with Mr. Best to free the detainees, but to no avail. On July 30 Ernest Besig of the ACLU returned to the project. He was not allowed to see the detainees, but he told their relatives that the contemplated habeas corpus proceedings would almost

x. Thomas and Nishimoto, "The Spoilage," p. 281. For a detailed account of this situation, see "The Spoilage," pp. 277-81.

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certainly result in the release of the imprisoned men. Between August 12 and August 24, all of the confined men were released.

Immediately after the murder of Mr. Noma, some respondents expressed approval and satisfaction. For example, on July 18, a young Nisei girl told me:

This might sound awfully heartless, but nobody has any sympathy for Noma. The whole camp feels that way. It had a lot to do with the Co-op and people felt he was really behind all the things going on with the administration and sending people to the stockade -- especially the more recent pickups.

But on August 30, this girl told me:

I never understood why Mr. Noma had to be killed. My parents knew him and feel sorry for him. I can't feel one bit of this hate that made someone stab him. Nobody seems to know why he was killed. In camp there were so many rumors at that time. People believed what they heard was true. To prove its credibility they always said, "My friends say it." It makes almost everybody believe the story.

On September 12, another Nisei girl told me that she wished they would catch the murderer of Mr. Noma. She had felt so sorry for Mrs. Noma and the children.

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On July 28 I visited Mr. Yamashita, who was probably the most influential of the "behind the scenes" advisors to the Resegregationists. I asked him how the people felt about the death of Mr. Noma. In a profound tone Mr. Yamashita replied:

I think as soon as the attacks which ended with the murder (here Mr. Yamashita interrupted himself and added, 'temporarily ended for the time being') the effect on the oppressed minds of the people was to a more or less optimistic viewpoint. Especially since the action was successful and the ^aAdministration was not able to find the attacker.

Mrs. Yamashita interrupted him, saying, "It was a perfect crime." Mr. Yamashita continued, "People were made very hopeful." After a pause, he added:

People were sorry for the victim, but the camp as a whole, if they did not rejoice for such a happening, when they thought that was the last resort or last step to be taken to let the public and the ^aAdministration know that wrong-doing cannot continue forever. Deep thinking people do not think the choosing of this barbarous action is wise and think that it would be more or less criticized' by the American public when it is known outside by the paper or radio. But the conditions of this camp were such that they were forced to use such a method. It was more or less in the atmosphere of the camp that they were forced to use such a method.

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8, RESEGREGATION AND RENUNCIATION OF CITIZENSHIP

During August, a rumor of an imminent resegregation swept the camp. This rumor was no doubt initiated by the resegregationists, who had written a letter to Dillon Myer in which they advocated the removal of themselves and other "disloyals" to another camp where they could wait for the exchange ship to Japan. There were many conflicting speculations about the probable destination of the "disloyal." On August 8, the cautious and conservative Mr. Kurusu told me: "For more than two weeks everybody is saying we might be segregated again. First they said we would be sent to Poston, then they said Alaska." His wife added:

They told me that they had heard it over the radio and seen it in the San Francisco Examiner that the people are going to be sent to Jerome. It is the disloyal people who are going to be moved.

On the same day an elderly Issei woman told me:

People heard it over the radio and the blocks were very upset. Children are crying. I have moved four times already and I don't want to move again. Jerome is bad, they say, too much rain.

An additional cause of anxiety and ambivalence was the issue of the renunciation of American citizenship. In July of 1944, Congress passed the Denationalization Bill. On July 13, the Newell Star reported that:

A new law dealing with relinquishment of their citizenship by American citizens has been passed by the Congress of the United States and signed by the President...

The new law provides that an American citizen may expatriate by "making in the United States a formal written renunciation of nationality in such form as may be prescribed by, and before such officer as may be designated by, the Attorney General, whenever the United States shall be in a state of war and the Attorney General shall approve such renunciation as not contrary to the interests of national defense."¹

On July 28, when evacuee representatives met with the Spanish Vice-Consul, resegregationist leaders asked him many questions about the renunciation, but the Vice-Consul told them that he had not received official interpretation of the bill and therefore could not answer their questions.

Meanwhile, Mr. Yamashita, Mr. Kira, and other resegregationist leaders were delivering "educational lectures" at small block meetings. They assured their listeners that Japan was winning the war and interpreted the reverses as a strategic trap into which the American forces were being drawn. They also informed their listeners that they were, with the assistance of the WRA, in the process of forming organizations which would provide the education and discipline needed by young people who intended to go or return to Japan. A young Buddhist priest, who was being used as a cat's-paw, approached the administration and received permission to use the high school auditorium for a series of lectures on Japanese history and culture. The first meeting was held on the evening of August 12. The priest and other speakers announced that the purpose of the meeting was to

1. Cited from "The Spoilage," p. 310.

form a centerwide Young Men's Association for the Study of the Mother Country (the Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen - dan). The expressed aims of this organization were to prepare the members to be useful citizens of Japan after their expatriation through a series of classes on the Japanese language, history, and political ideology. The formal aims were expressed in a written manifesto, distributed on August 12:

Since the outbreak of war between Japan and America, citizens of Japanese ancestry have moved along two separate paths: (1) for the defense of their civil rights on legal principles, and (2) for the renunciation of their citizenship on moral principles. Each group has constantly expended its efforts for the fulfillment of its own aims.

After we were segregated to this center, we have, on moral principles, stood for renunciation, and have awakened the consciousness of racial heritage. Fortunately, the government, whose national policies are based on democracy, humanity and liberty, has now proclaimed by legislation that it officially approves our inclination. We are, indeed, delighted with this recognition. With the three principles listed below, we hereby organized the Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan and resolve to devote ourselves for the achievement of our original aims.

1. To increase the appreciation of our racial heritage by a study of the incomparable culture of our mother country.

2. To abide by the project regulations and to refrain from any involvement in center politics. To be interested only in improving our moral life and in building our character.

3. To participate in physical exercises in order to keep ourselves in good health.¹²

When I discussed the newly organized Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan with my respondents, none of them referred to the group's "stand for renunciation of citizenship." Many appeared to be reassured by the assertion that the organization would "refrain from any involvement in center politics." My conservative and cautious friend, Mr. Kurusu, assured me:

The Sokoku Kenkyu is not a pressure group. They just want to study Japanese culture. I know because I'm a member. That's why I joined. They're not going into politics. I guarantee they will not start any trouble in here. If I see any trouble I will resign. That three or four months trouble really gave us a good experience.²³

Morning outdoor exercises were initiated and these gradually became increasingly militaristic. Bugles³⁴, grey sweat shirts, and headbands bearing the emblem of the rising sun were purchased.

~~2 1. Thomas and Nishimoto, "The Spoilage," pp. 311-12.~~

Each morning, before six o'clock, the young men would march through the firebreaks, shouting "Wash sho! Wash ^SSho!" (Hip! Hip!) Some people approved of the Sokoku because it gave the many otherwise unoccupied young men something to do. Others disapproved. For example, on September 14 I was chatting with some women friends. A young woman remarked: "I say this new Seinen-dan is far away from me. They're far away from me." An older Nisei woman differed. She said:

But now they (the Sokoku men) have reasoned things out more.. They've worked out some good things. Like these zoot-suiters, for instance. They (the Sokoku leaders) 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. (Mr. Wakida, my shrewd Kibei friend, remarked:

They're not very well trained yet. If they get too much power and can't control it, they might do anything. A lot of people are against it, but they don't say anything. When they have those exercises a lot of the people say, "Crimeny! If you have a little baby or a sick person, it wakes them up." Also the secret way they do things makes people suspect. ⁵

During the first part of September, the rumor of a coming resegregation continued to create anxiety.

On September 5, I had my hair washed at the Co-op "Beauty Parlor." When I returned to my room I made the following notes: Mary Okita, who is from Topaz, cannot understand why "some people" want to be resegregated so much. After all, "We all came here because we wanted to go to Japan." She expects that these "people" will try to start some trouble if resegregation is denied them.

A young man, one of the barbers, then came into the beauty shop and began to gossip with the girls in Japanese. Even to my inexpert ear it was obvious that he was sneering at the news of American victories in the Pacific. Then he began to sing the Japanese National Anthem. The girls were very embarrassed. One said, "I wish he wouldn't do that." Then Miss Okita said, "Well, Miss Hankey understands, He's always rude."

That evening, Mr. Currie, the new Causcasian head of the Co-op, told me that the day before, at a meeting of Japanese American supervisors, a man had closed the meeting by looking him in the eye and asking, "Is there going to be any resegregation?" Currie said he did not know. The Board then explained that they were asking so that they could order more wisely in case a part of the population was removed from camp.

The next day, a Caucasian high school teacher told me that "she was being asked repeatedly by her students if there were any truth in the resegregation rumors." I thereupon proceded to visit Mr. Yamashita, the Resegregation Group "advisor." He, however, made no mention of a resegregation. Instead, he spoke of the renunciation of citizenship:

I don't know how far this will go. But certainly those who wish for immediate repatriation to Japan, and at the same time don't wish to be inducted into service or re-located, wish to renounce their citizenships. We don't know how many will renounce their citizenship.

His wife then asked me if I knew if the renunciation of citizenship would apply to the other centers. ~~xx~~ I said I thought so. ¹⁶

Four days later, my friend, Mr. Wakida, told me:

People are still talking a lot about resegregation. We don't know what will happen to us the next day.

During the second and third weeks of September rumors of and anxiety about a coming resegregation subsided. On September 14, two Nisei girls, who were covertly hoping to relocate, told me that the rumors were dying down. On September 15, Mr. Kurusu, my conservative block manager friend, told me happily, "Everything is quiet and peaceful now... I'm very happy nowadays. I don't have to worry very much... Everybody was happy when the stockade boys were left out." He also again assured me that the Sokoku Kenkyu was not a pressure group. "That's why I joined."

Only two persons mentioned the renunciation of citizenship. One was Mr. Kurihara, an intelligent and concerned man in his late forties. On September 8, he remarked: "I don't want to predict,

but as long as things go on in this way... and the Sokoku Kenkyu people do not get their wish, trouble will continue to brew." On September 19 he told me: "We are anxiously awaiting that questionnaire to decide our citizenship." On September 21, Mr. Kira, an underground Resegregationist leader, told me: The only thing the people are interested in now is the denunciation (sic.) of citizenship. Some people have sent a petition to Washington to request forms."

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9. THE SECOND RESEGREGATION PETITION

After my talk with Mr. Kira I called on Mr. Yamashita, the most influential and respected of the underground leaders. He appeared anxious and distracted. Instead of lecturing me or responding to my questions, he asked me questions so obtuse and complex that I was unable to answer them. Finally, his wife, who was sitting quietly and knitting, spoke up sharply: "Why don't you tell her the truth? You know you can trust her." Mr. Yamashita looked nonplussed for a moment, but then said solemnly:

Resegregation is going to be something eventually. The philosophy of the majority of the residents here and hereafter will be changed....

This petition will tell the Administration exactly what we are, and what we should be under the circumstances. We are certain that the Administration and WRA cannot distinguish between the loyal and the disloyal people congregated in this camp. Even though it is for disloyals, it is different from other centers. This is the reason for so much restlessness and unfortunate disturbance in camp.

We residents, the wiser people, cannot wait further anymore for the Administration to have the camp like this. The time has come whereby the Japanese residents wish to formulate and determine their belief of themselves.

Mr. Tachibana then asked me for my honest opinion of the petition and whether I thought presenting it now would be followed by the apprehension and incarceration of those who sponsored it. This was a stumper. However, the petition was sensibly worded and in no way arrogant. It was, moreover, very clear. I read it twice carefully, and said that I saw nothing which could give offense to a just Administration. However, I added, Mr. Tachibana knew, as I did, that Mr. Best was easily terrified and that the action would threaten the calm condition of the camp for which he takes so much credit. If he became too excited about it, no one could predict what he would do. Mr. Tachibana seemed satisfied with my remarks and continued:

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You know that the people behind this have been working underground for a long time. Anyone who would have come out openly would have been put in the stockade. We have been working on this since April, awaiting the moment, but we had to keep it a secret. Now the time has come.

We are of the opinion that we cannot be loyal to two countries. As long as we are living here, why not make up our minds to be real Japanese or not? As long as this is fully impressed on the residents, this camp will

become more peaceful than ever.

If the Administration recognizes this movement, we will have a good mutual understanding. Besides Mr. Myer sent us a letter and recognized this movement through Mr. Black.

If this proceeds successfully the time will come when the others (the fence-sitters) will go out and proceed according to WRA policy. Therefore, the time will come when we can accomplish our resegregation purpose by such a procedure. It will not be direct resegregation (but a process of resegregation by loyal persons leaving camp).

Those who refuse to sign this will have people asking them, "Are you loyal to Japan or not? If you are not loyal to Japan why don't you go out?" Naturally, those loyal to Japan will stay here until the war ends.

This way - the people will have to realize this - because as long as their appearance is Japanese, they will have to sign this. Being loyal to Japan is a very serious matter.

If they don't sign this they will be known to be not loyal to Japan and will be told in public, "You are not Japanese. Why don't you go out?"

Indirect Of course, many people who don't want to go back to Japan will sign this, but then they will go in a corner and keep quiet.¹

On the night of September 24, the Resegregationists distributed an explanatory pamphlet entitled, "What is Resegregation and What Does It Mean." On the day following, Mrs. Wakida, a young Kibei, asked me what the administration was thinking about resegregation.

1. Fieldnotes, September 21, 1944.

I said that their attitude had not changed. Then she told me that on the night before a "document" had been handed around from barrack to barrack.

They give you what resegregation is about and why they want to be resegregated. There are four or five statements there that you have to do and obey. The people who will live up to ~~to~~ this can be resegregated.

We haven't even heard what it's about. There are so many people here of different opinions... I really don't know myself.

Some people are very much for it, but I believe there are more against it than for it. What the outcome of this will be I don't know. On the whole, most of the people are very doubtful about it.

I really don't see why we should resegregate. We're already repatriates. We've already signed for repatriation. The WRA and the people as a whole know that we're loyal to Japan. And a lot of the people think as we do. (I asked for details and was told that the people were not asked to sign the statement. It was passed from door to door by the block people themselves with the understanding that they were to sign later.)

On September 26, Mrs. Tsuruda told me that she and her family had been "asked to read a paper."

It was written in such awful English...I couldn't make head or tail out of it, I thought, "It couldn't be WRA.

Not with that English....You're just supposed to pass it on to somebody else. It's to separate the people who are here from the "real Japanese." I read it but I don't know what it's all about.

I called on another Nisei woman, who told me that her father had not even bothered to read the paper, but had passed it along to the next apartment. Her friends, she told me, were saying that you couldn't find out the real truth about it. "Everything you heard was rumors and you couldn't get any real dope."

On the afternoon of the same day, September 26, I called on my Issei friend, Mr. Itabashi. He obliquely referred to the petition by telling me:

I asked one man, "Why did you sign the paper? He said, "So-and-so said so-and-so and so I signed it. They do not have any judgement.

He openly disapproved of the Resegregationists' emphasis on the renunciation of citizenship.

My common sense opinion is this: from the Japanese part, the right of American citizenship is already denied. So it is not necessary for them to make formal declaration of it.

On September 27, an elderly Issei woman, an Old Tulean, visited me in my room in order to express her disapproval of the Resegregationists. The trouble in camp, she told me was:

..all made by a few people. If the Old Tuleans say anything, the others say they are "ikujinashi" (spineless). So they don't say anything. They don't want trouble. The way these few trouble makers behave is not true

Yamato damashii. The person who really acts according to Yamato damashii makes himself low and does not talk....

The people in Tule Lake think they will stay in Tule Lake and maybe go back to Japan after the war. Maybe they will stay in this country. But some of the people who came in, they want to go back right away. All they do is talk, talk, talk."

I said: "Yes, and now they are starting this paper around from house to house." "Yes," said the lady. They want us to sign to go back to Japan, but very few people are signing. We don't want to pack up and move out of here. Too much trouble."¹²

On September 29, I visited Mr. Kurihara. He vehemently disapproved of the petition, and of Mr. Kira, a Resegregationist "advisor" who, I had been told, was the covert leader of a group of "strong arm boys."

A pamphlet was left at each house. This block had more than enough.

With regard to signing the petition - it hasn't come around. In this block we haven't seen a thing. But we know just where to go to sign.

There's no name on it. "Who's trying to put this thing over?" That's the objection I've heard in many blocks.

We want to know who is responsible for it. We cannot be lead like a bunch of sheep without knowing the leader.

I could say definitely that he (Kira) is the one who originated it. But who's carrying it through, I just know some of their names.

In many blocks I've heard this - the people are against it. They are saying, "they're a bunch of troublemakers." I think they are right.

One point I really oppose -- they threaten to use force - and if they use that force, I'm not going to stay quiet.

Between ourselves, I have always told them that if to go too far with it I'll expose them myself. Whether they call me an inu or ~~xxxxxx~~ not, it doesn't matter. ~~xxxxxx~~ If I came out with the facts, I think I'll get most of the people to side with me.

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Many people today are wondering whether they should sign or not. They're afraid. They're being led into it.

So far I didn't want to be an informer. I didn't want to be called a dog. But if anybody is seriously hurt or killed - why should I hesitate? My conscience tells me as long as I shield him (Kira) I'm responsible to the public. As long as he's at large he'll continue. But as long as he doesn't do it, I won't say a thing.

I've visited many people. The majority are considering. They're afraid something will happen. Those who have a mind of their own, they won't sign.

On September 27, an Assistant Project Director, Mr. Black, warned the block managers that the petition had no administrative sanction. On September 30, Black issued a memorandum emphasizing "that there will be no further segregation at Tule Lake or elsewhere, ...that resegregation is receiving no consideration from WRA either here or in Washington." He condemned the activities of the

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leaders, which, he said, were detrimental to the residents and tended to "incite unrest, produce confusion, upset peace of mind, and contribute to tension and nervousness."³

On the afternoon of the day Black's memorandum was issued I visited Mr. and Mrs. Tsuchikawa, who were among the most active of the Resegregationist leaders. They had read the memorandum and were furious. Mr. Tsuchikawa, asked me indignantly, "How can you get authority for a petition like this. The next time we put out something I'm going to take the paper to the block manager beforehand. And he better not say anything!"

His wife said: "We are going on as we were, even if the people squawk."

The memorandum also had a significant effect on the general residents. People who had been undecided felt that they could refuse to sign and still be "true Japanese." People who had been suspicious and critical ^{of the Resegregationists} became more open in their statements. When, on October 2, I called on Mr. Wakida, he burst out with the statement: "I say, 'Leave me alone and I'll leave you alone! If I feel like it, I'll sign. I haven't signed yet. I'm Japanese - no matter what they (Resegregationists) say. If we swear to be Japanese, we are Japanese!"

Mr. Wakida also told me that he had visited Reverend Aramaki, the nominal head of the Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen Dan and that they had argued for many hours without coming to an agreement. He had then visited Reverend Abe and Mr. Kunitani (who had been the leaders of the Daihyo Sha Kai) "but we were both being so careful what we said,

that I couldn't get any clear picture."

In some wards the Resegregationists set up morning exercises for the children and refused to let the children of non-resegregants participate, which, some people told me, made the children feel ashamed.

On October 6, the formidable Mrs. Tsuchikawa told me that her cousin had asked for leave clearance and hoped to return to the Manzanar Center to care for her aged foster parents. Mrs. Tsuchikawa disapproved most strongly:

Insistent { She feels more giri to her foster parents than she does to her country (Japan.) I tell her that she was foolish and wrong and then she cries.

~~Rumor of Department~~

~~RUMOR OF DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ASSUMING JURISDICTION OVER TULE LAKE~~

On September 25, Dr. Opler, the WRA Community Analyst, told me that there was a rumor in camp that Tule Lake was "to go under" the Department of Justice within six weeks.

On October 4, Mr. Robertson told me that Mr. Best had met with the committee which was trying to bring about the return to Tule Lake of the Issei stockade detainees who had been sent to the Santa Fe Internment Camp.

"Best told the group he had every reason to believe that the Justice Department would soon take over and that they might as well not kick up so much fuss."

Resegregationist leaders actively used this rumor to obtain signatures to their petition, pointing out when the Department of Justice assumed jurisdiction over Tule Lake, only aliens who were "true Japanese" and citizens who had renounced their citizenship would be permitted to remain.

Rumor of Opening the West Coast

On September 27, Mr. Black announced at a Community Management Staff Meeting that the West Coast was soon to be opened to relocation and that Tule Lake would then be closed to relocation. Many of the staff members were concerned and distressed ~~xxx~~ at this news. On October 1, one of them told me:

I said, "What concerns me is just how we can use this among the people if it is just a probability." Mr. Black said, "If you know anybody intending to leave you can tell them this." . . .

Cc Then some teachers asked what to do about the sixteen year old kids. Mr. Huy⁵ke answered that after the servicemen return, maybe things aren't going to be so rosy. Maybe we shouldn't pressure them.

I tried to get back to the subject and asked, "Why can't reasonable notice be given?" Then Mr. Gunderson and Mr. Black said simultaneously, "That's all Hearst would need!"

I said: "Are we running this camp for Mr. Hearst or for the people?"

THREATS AND VIOLENCE

During the first week in October there were many reports that the Resegregationists, in soliciting signatures, were threatening or even attacking people who were not willing to sign. Dr. Opler, the Community Analyst reported:

Feeling ran so high in ward VII, that vocal anti-resegregationists or residents of "tough" blocks who had refused to sign were definitely on the spot. In block 73, the block manager was forced by public opinion to move quietly out of his block and later resign; his secretary did likewise. In block 74, adjoining, in ward VII, we learned that one aged anti-resegregationist was hit over the back of the head and knocked unconscious (October 7.)⁴

On October 6, I called on Mr. Kurihara. He had just returned from what he called a "spying-out" trip, that is, he had visited many people in order to learn what was going on. He told me that he was sure that Mr. Kira and his "strong-arm" boys were responsible for much of the violence. That evening, Mr. Currie, the Caucasian Co-op head of the Co-op told me:

✓ "that he had written a letter thanking the Internal Security for their assistance in putting ~~a~~ stop to the vandalism and thieving" in the Co-ops. John Matsumura (manager of the Co-op), said Currie, "had seen the letter and had nearly had a stroke. We can't thank Internal

Security for anything, said he. Do you want us all to get our throats cut?" Currie told me that he did not send the letter.

When I visited George Wakida on October 12, he said:

I don't like the way the Sokoku threatens people. They say, 'If you don't sign, you're going to be drafted.' So a lot of dumb people signed. But I think those who signed were wise. I'm too stubborn to sign and that makes me enemies. It's better to be like the proverb: Nagai mono ni wa makarero; Okii mono ni wa nomareru,⁴⁵

If I were Project Director I would segregate them. I'd give each person a pink paper and a white paper and an envelope. Then those who wanted to be segregated could sign the pink paper and those who didn't could sign the white one. Then they could mail it to the WRA and nobody sees it. No block manager, nobody to see. Then I'd like to see how many would sign!⁴⁶

As I walked back to the administrative section I noticed that a seagull flying overhead had a red circle painted on each of its wings and had thus become a flying Japanese flag. Previously I had seen children trying to catch them.

On October 10, I visited Mr. Itabashi, a gentle, soft-spoken Issei, who worked in the Social Welfare office. He was also a good friend of Mr. Kurihara. I was concerned and anxious about the frightening things Mr. Kurihara had told me about the Resegregationist

1. ~~Let the long thing wind about you; let the great thing swallow you.~~

2. ~~Fieldnotes, October 12, 1944.~~

leaders and I opened the conversation by wondering aloud whether Mr. Kurihara was not putting himself in dan⁷ger by trying to get information about the Resegregationist leaders. But Mr. Itabashi reassured me, saying, "I was going to tell Mr. Kurihara, 'Don't worry about it. It's not so serious as you think.'" He then told me that the majority of the people who had signed the petition had "signed under intimidation or¹ignorance." He added that "the majority of people are sick of all this trouble" and that he had been telling the Resegregationists "The Japanese government is not so narrow-minded as you..It wishes for the people in camp just to live in peace and keep their health."

He did not tell me that in September, he and several other elders of the Seich~~y~~-No-Ie¹ religious movement had addressed a meeting of their group and had exhorted them to follow the higher ideals of Japan which, he said, were not compatible with agitation and violence.

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"I said that this camp is no place for young men to make trouble. They should study. I said, "Young men, behave yourselves."¹⁸

On the night of October 15, Mr. Itabashi and two other elderly men returning from a church meeting were attacked and brutally beaten by a gang of young men.

I was coming home from a religious meeting at block 52 - I heard noisy footsteps. One of my friends was at my side and the other was 15 feet ahead. I turned around and saw that big stick. I can still see the club like a frozen picture but I don't know anything after that.²⁹

... The very first word I uttered right after the attack was "baka." (Fool) I rather feel sorry for those who attacked me because they do not know what they were doing.³¹⁰

The Japanese American police refused to handle the case¹¹ and the men who had been assaulted refused to name or describe their assailants.

Mr. Kurihara told me, "Mr. Itabashi requested me to let the thing die out. They fear that neither they nor their families will be safe if I carry out my intentions."⁵¹²

On October 21, Mr. Kira spoke to the young men at a Sokoku meeting and told them that he would take care of them if they got into trouble. He quoted a Japanese proverb: Dai no mushi wo tasu-keru niwa, shō no mushi wo korosanakereba naranu, which some people translated as, "To save the big shots we have to kill the small guys." (It may also be translated as, "To help the great cause we must destroy those who stand in its way.")

On October 23, I visited Mr. Kira, who was now calling himself an "advisor" to the Resegregationists"

I found him in a spacious office, the walls of which were covered with Japanese flags and scrolls in Japanese script. Two brawny and solemn-faced young men stood on either side of him and another young man stood at the door ... He himself sat behind a handsome desk.¹³

He gave me a long account of how he, "his boys", and "his residents" had had a confrontation with the Project Director about whether or not one of Mr. Kira's residents should be punished for illegally building himself an extra room.

At first Mr. Best threatened these people. "Do you want me to call the Army like last year and teach you folks a lesson?"

They said: "Do you think you can teach the people a lesson or are you going to be put in an embarrassing position?"

They said, "Go ahead and do it. We'd rather have the Army control the center than the WRA."

As soon as they said that, Mr. Best changed his tone.

Mr. Kira then commented on the renunciation of citizenship:

The people are anxiously waiting for the denouncement of it. When Mr. Best made the statement that within 60 days the camp would be under Justice, the people were delighted. We more or less expect it.

On October 30, Shinkichi Iwamoto, who was known as Mr. Kira's "hit-man," knifed and seriously wounded a young man. Mr. Itabashi told me that the young man's father had openly criticized Mr. Kira.

EFFLORESCENCE OF THE RESEGREGATIONISTS

During late October and November the Resegregationists increased their activities and practiced them overtly. They were given a staff office in Block 54 and they proceeded to cover^{ed} the walls with Japanese paper flags and patriotic mottoes. Among these was a sign stating that anyone speaking English would be fined at the rate of one cent a word. They published a mimeographed weekly and a monthly newssheet. The predawn exercises for the young men now included drills, judo practice, and marches to the shout of "Wash sho!"

"Group exercise of a more highly nationalistic character were initiated, including an early morning ceremony on the eighth of the month, at which prayers for Japanese victory were offered."¹⁴

More and more of the young men began wearing the grey sweat shirt and head band bearing the emblem of the rising sun. In mid-November, the young^{men} began to shave their heads, in imitation, they said, of the Japanese Army. By mid-December, even elders like Mr. Yamashita and Mr. Tsuchikawa had shaved their heads. The adult Resegregationists formally adopted the name, Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi Dan (Organization to Return Immediately to the Homeland to Serve). The Sokoku or young men's group formally adopted the name Hokoku Seinen Dan, that is, instead of devoting themselves to the study of the language and culture of the homeland, they would now devote themselves to the service of the homeland.

As Mr. Yamashita told me, the young men are "preparing themselves physically and mentally" so that they could be utilized by the Japanese government "if they go on the exchange boat."

By getting up early in the morning, by exercise and training after worshipping, and praying for victory and eternal life for our Japanese soldiers, the young people can be deeply impressed . . . If we were training in open daylight, it will not impress people much . . . But getting up early in the morning is to feel that we . . . are not taking for granted that we can sleep long and at any time. We cannot live here luxuriously. We must do parallel to what our brothers in Japan are doing.¹⁵

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THE LEADERS OF THE NOVEMBER STRIKE CHALLENGE THE RESEGREGATIONISTS

From the beginning of their underground activity in January of 1944, the Resegregationist leaders had striven to give the impression that they were on the best terms with the prestigious leaders of the November strike, Indeed, they announced that obtaining the release of the detained leaders was their prime objective.¹⁶

But when Abe, Kunitani, and Tada appealed to the American Civil Liberties Union, the Resegregationist leaders refused to help them.

And when the ACLU did bring about the release of the strike leaders, the relationship between them and the resegregationists remained polite but guarded. Though the Reverend Abe, George Kunitani and many of their friends were nominally members of the resegregationist organization, they did not participate actively and they declined the positions offered them.

In mid-November of 1944, with the imminence of the renunciation of citizenship and the "take-over" by the Department of Justice, the Resegregation group leaders decided to institute a membership purge. They posted statements in the latrines and laundry rooms which, in effect, said the following: True Japanese life was austere and full of sacrifice; people who could not do without American luxuries such as rich food, liquor, or cosmetics, and people who were addicted to degenerate vices such as gambling and sake drinking, had no place in

postwar Japan or in the membership rolls of the Resegregation group. Having defined the "true Japanese" and the "not Japanese" in this manner, the leaders sent curt notices of expulsion to some of their more moderate charter members and to a number of the friends of Abe, Kunitani, and Tada.

Though the expelled members had not approved of many of the policies and activities of the Resegregation group, they resented being cast off in this rude manner and being derogated as "not Japanese." Some also feared that their removal from the membership list might make them ineligible for repatriation. There now emerged the potential of a confrontation between the two groups, and, as usual, the warrior champions were the initiators. When a crowd of several hundred people had gathered on the evening of 19 November to bid farewell to a number of families who were on their way to join interned members in the Department of Justice camp at Crystal City, Tetsuo Kodama, a noted judo champion and a close friend of Kunitani and Tada, approached Mr. Yamada (also a judo champion and leader of the Hōkoku) and accused Yamada of having called him an inu. This was a challenge to fight, which Yamada ignored.

✓ This open and aggressive defiance thoroughly upset the Resegregationists, Mrs. Tsuchikawa told me that
✓ young men of the Hōkoku were guarding the apartments of the Resegregationist leaders night and day. On the other hand, many of the residents (those who disapproved of the

resegregationists) were intrigued by the prospect of a feud between the "superpatriots" and the members of the Abe-Tada faction. Mr. Kurihara voiced the hope that in the event of a violent fight or a gang war the administration would be forced to imprison the Resegregationist leaders, "and then the people could get rid of the gambling group." (many of the members expelled were young men who spent a great deal of their time playing cards. According to rumor, they also drank bootleg sake provided by the enterprising Mr. Tada. People called them "the gamblers," and it is my suspicion that they constituted a kind of young men's peer society.) ~~and~~ Since all the male members of the Resegregation group had shaved their heads to an egg-like smoothness, the friends of Kunitani, Kodama, and Tada now let their hair flourish luxuriously. People began to refer to the former as "shavedheads" or, more derogatorily, "baldheads," and to the latter as "longhairs."

On 15 December, the anticipated fight broke out. A certain Mr. Imachi went to the Resegregationist headquarters in block 54, discreetly accompanied or followed by fellow members of the long-haired faction. Imachi accosted the president of the Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan, demanding the reasons for his expulsion, and the Sokuji official gave him a rude reply. Imachi then seized a long piece of wood from a nearby woodpile, the official grabbed a mop, and the two men had at it in what must have

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been a strange parody of a samurai sword duel. Meanwhile, Mr. Kodama, the judo champion, and several other longhairs also armed themselves from the woodpile and guarded the combatants, to see, as they later put it, that there would be fair play. Many strong-arm boys of the Hokoku and several hundred other spectators came running to the scene; but no one, apparently, dared to challenge the longhairs. After the fight, which lasted only a few minutes, Mr. Imachi addressed the assembled crowd, denouncing the Hokoku for gangster tactics and for the degradation of the true spirit of Japan.

This attack put the Resegregationists into a very awkward situation. If they ignored the attack they would lose face. If they responded with open violence they might be arrested, and all their elaborate plans for impressing the Department of Justice and achieving a re-segregation and repatriation might go astray. So they draw up a legal complaint against Imachi and ten other men and presented it to the project attorney. Forthwith, eleven longhairs were arrested by the Caucasian police and taken to the jail at Klamath Falls. Then the Resegregationists plastered latrines and laundry rooms with mimeographed statements to the effect that their peaceful organization had been attacked by gangsters. To me they voiced vicious threats of what they would do if they were not given justice.

The trial, which took place four days later, was a peculiar event. Kunitani and Tada had asked for and received permission to act as quasi attorneys for the defendants. The project attorney carried on the case for

the plaintiffs. Mr. Yamashita attended every session and interrupted frequently. The eleven defendants were all neatly dressed in what appeared to be their best suits. Their hair was noticeably long, and they bore themselves with something of the air of college boys about to be reprimanded for a prank. The Resegregationist plaintiffs and witnesses were dressed in the Hōkoku uniform, a grey sweat shirt imprinted with the emblem of the rising sun. Their heads were newly shaved and they glared at the longhairs with baleful eyes. Whether of one side or the other, the witnesses seemed to suffer from some optical defect. When the man for whom they were testifying had been struck, they had seen it. But when he had struck someone, they had momentarily glanced away, gone to the latrine, or just not noticed.

Ten days later the verdict was announced: Imachi was given a light sentence; two other defendants were given suspended sentences; the rest were acquitted.

The Resegregation group leaders were enraged. They denounced American justice and made terrible threats of reprisals. "Bombs and tanks won't stop our boys now if we give them the word," said Mrs. Yamashita.¹⁷

The fight and its aftermath significantly weakened the position of the Resegregationists. Many of my respondents began to criticize

~~1. Ibid. pp. 163-166.~~

them and some people told me that they were resigning from the organization. On December 19, 1944, Mr. Kurusu said:

They (Sokoku) stated in their regulations that their organization is not political. But gradually they stepped into politics. I didn't like it and the people don't like it either. After I see this incident I feel it's better to stay out....I believe most of the members are really disgusted about the way the organization is running. They push people. Their idea is wrong. They are forcing all these things. Everybody is criticizing the Sokuji now. This is a good time to jump off.

But it was at this time that the representatives of the Department of Justice, John Burling, arrived at the center, to open the hearings for renunciation of citizenship.

AD THE RENUNCIATION OF CITIZENSHIP

Despite the Resegregationist leaders' enthusiastic sponsorship of the renunciation of citizenship, only 107 valid applications were received by the Department of Justice during November of 1944. V But when ^{John} Burling arrived at Tule Lake on December 6 to begin hearings, the Resegregationsists!

intensified their demonstrative activities, holding their noisy predawn militaristic exercises as close to the fence as possible and blowing their bugles louder than ever. Clearly, they hoped to impress the representative of the Department of Justice with their true Japanese character and their passionate desire for an immediate renunciation of citizenship, resegregation, and expatriation. Burling was impressed, but in a way that neither the Resegregationist leaders nor the WRA administration had anticipated. He told the Resegregation group leaders and their followers (and also announced to all the residents) that such Japanese militaristic activities were subversive and that if they did not abandon them at once they would be interned in a Department of Justice camp for potentially dangerous enemy aliens. He also took a very critical attitude toward the WRA for permitting young men living under their charge to drill themselves for service in the Japanese army.¹

1. ~~Ibid.~~ p. 166.

By the middle of December the number of applications for renunciation of citizenship had risen to about 600.

The Resegregationists ignored Burling's warnings and drilled more ostentatiously than ever. On December 27, the Department of Justice interned seventy of the leaders and officers.

This act of official recognition seemed to encourage the membership. They gave their leaders a spectacular demonstration of farewell, sang Japanese patriotic songs, and shouted "Banzai!" They also immediately elected a new slate of officers to replace those interned. Under this new leadership and activities of the Resegregationists became fantastic. They stepped up their bugling, goose-stepping, morning drills, and Washo-sho chants. Elderly people and little children stood in rigid and motionless prayer in the bitter cold and sometimes marched with the boys so that, as a friend of mine put it, "even the old ladies are running around in slacks yelling "Wash-sho!"²

They taunted non-members as follows:

"They say they are glad to be picked up. They say we, who are left behind in camp, are going to be kicked around, while they will be safe and sound in an internment camp."²

omit

1. Ibid. p. 167

2. Statement by a mature Nisei woman, Fieldnotes, January 3, 1945.

omit

My field notes for January 1945 are filled with statements expressing anxiety, indecision, and desperation. On January 2, Mr. Kunitani, who had been a leader of the Daihyo Sha Kai, told me:

I think that the Hoshi-dan undoubtedly has started the rumor that by renouncing citizenship, the people will be allowed to stay here in Tule . . . If they keep on making more pickups it's going to excite the people.

On the same day, my Nisei secretary told me:

We wouldn't mind going back to San Francisco if we had everything as when we left. We'd jump right out. But we've lost everything.

On January 3, I called on an older Nisei woman friend and found her in a state of great distress.

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.

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 can't say: 'Get out by a certain time. We'll give you twenty five dollars and car fare.' In the first place, why do they want to kick us out? It was their business we came here.

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.

Can people be thrown out even if they renounce their citizenship? Could they put you in the Army then.?

On 5 January, the WRA released and distributed to all the residents an official pamphlet in which Dillon Myer reaffirmed that it was the WRA's intention to close all of the relocation centers by returning all of the evacuees to "private life in normal communities." The WRA had announced this policy once before, in mid-December, but at that time most of the evacuees to whom I talked told me that they were sure that it did not apply to them. Now, however, many people who had been dubious about the wisdom of renouncing their citizenship--or urging their Nisei children to renounce--began to fear that if they or their children did not renounce they would shortly be expelled into hostile and, by now, very unfamiliar American communities. Newspaper reports in which relocated Japanese Americans or Nisei soldiers were threatened, attacked, shot at or had their houses burned were quoted to me.¹²³

As Bob Tsuruda's sister remarked, "What do they want us to do -- go back to California and get filled full of lead?"²

On January 5, Mr. Itabashi told me:

WRA's plan to close the centers will fail. When we entered camp at the beginning of the war I heard that the German

3. Doing Fieldwork, p. 167.

2. Fieldnotes, January 14, 1945.

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people who were interned during the First World War were paid \$1,000.00 each when they were allowed to leave camp.

They have nothing to depend on. A job can't be depended on. I feel the WRA plans for closing camp will be a total failure . . . I don't know one person who wants to go out. Of course, those who do, say nothing about it.

On the same day, Mr. Kurihara told me:

I have noticed that people are stiffening in their attitude. Last week some were saying, 'If they make us get out, we'll go.' Now they are determined not to leave.

If they use force, undoubtedly they will succeed in kicking them out, but undoubtedly, there will be trouble too. It might be possible to get out at least 50% of the people if they would pay them a part of the damages they have suffered. But the majority of people I have talked to recently say they're not going out.

On January 8, I spoke with Sam Niiyama, a Nisei, age 37, who had been Head of the Block Managers in November 1943. He had supported the Coordinating Committee and had been called an inu. He impressed me as a very intelligent and sensible man.

My impression is that the people are very much at a loss, due to the fact that they can't make a decision. The representatives of the government - they admit they're in the dark themselves. They don't know what to do or what it's all about

When they came out to ask us to make this decision, I told the Army colonel (at his hearing), 'If you set a deadline I will renounce my citizenship due to the fact that I have no place to go! . . .

I don't care who it is -- Nobody who can't see their way to their own living, nobody's going to start walking out in the dark. If they compel me - I'll stay here. At least by staying here I'll have a roof over my children and enough to eat, although I don't like the food . . .

The parents of people taken to Santa Fe are saying, 'My child became a Japanese today.'

If there was some one way that they were really trying to help me, I'll go out. But if they just show me, 'There's the gate - Go.' NO SIR!

After speaking with Mr. Niiyama, I went to the "beauty parlor" to get my hair washed.

My operator had nothing on her mind today except her worry about being forced out of camp. She asked me if they really would be forced out. She complained bitterly that her family had lost everything and they don't see how they are going to make out. She said everybody is saying they won't go out.²⁴

On January 9 I called on Mr. Oseta, the evacuee aide in the Legal Department of the Project. He told me that resistance to the idea of going out of camp was growing but he was going to have no part of it. "What's the use?"

omit

His carefully considered apathy was somehow more depressing than the hopeless stubbornness of the less educated people in camp. I left feeling very depressed.

do not insert

He told me that in his opinion the compulsory closing of the camps would be taken by the people just as they had taken the evacuation. There would be passive resistance but it would be useless.

"They've got you going and coming. It doesn't pay to raise hell. It's easy for a person without a family to raise hell, but with a wife and children it's another matter to think about.

Repeat

Under the Geneva Conference, they can't kick the aliens out.

(I asked if fear of being forced out was the reason why so many people were renouncing their citizenship.) Sure, why not? If they were sincere about restoring our rights of citizenship, why didn't they call the women for hearings. They just want to get you in the Army. The trouble is, minority races suffer one way or another."

(Mr. Obata's carefully considered apathy was somehow more depressing than the hopeless stubbornness of the less educated people in camp. I left feeling very low in mind.) 15

On January 10 I called on Mr. Kunitani. He commented briefly:

I think it's a silly idea on the part of the WRA or the Army to get us out of here. . I think it's crazy. The Army can try, but the results will not be complimentary . . . Anything that will be forced on the Japanese people - they won't take it.

On January 11, I encountered John Burling and a concerned woman staff member having lunch in the mess hall.

Burling told us in confidence that as far as he has been able to determine, Tule Lake is not open. Civilian Restrictive Order No. 26 has never been rescinded. The WRA announcement that the people in Tule Lake are practically in the same status as those in the relocation centers in not so . . . He remarked that the longer he stays here the more he is impressed with the enormity of the confusion. Neither WRA, the Army, nor the Department of Justice seem to know what the other is doing, or even just what they themselves are doing.⁴⁶

On January 10 I had a talk with my conservative friend, Mr. Kurusu. He told me:

People are really minded to stay in camp, where they think it's safe . . . There is so much to upset the people: the men picked up, the renunciation of citizenship, they all come at the same time . . . If this becomes a relocation center, they'll draft us. In that case, they say, we must get busy and send in our renunciation of citizenship.

9/ On January 14, I called on the sisters of my friend, Bob Tsuruda. Tsuruda had relocated in September and I knew that his sisters also intended to relocate at some time in the future. Indeed, the elder sister's husband had been offered a job by his former employer in California. The sisters told me that they had been interviewed by the leave officer, who, they felt, had, had pressured them to leave immediately. Noriko, the younger sister said: "She sure wants us to go out. She says even those who renounce their citizenship will still get sent outside. Mrs. Sato, the elder sister said that she had told the leave officer:

What do you want us to do, go back to California and get filled full of lead?

She then told me:

I'm going to sit here and watch. How can a person make up their mind when they don't know anything? We can't depend on the WRA.

Noriko added:

We want to get out. But we can't with \$25. We have to buy a bed, blankets, and we've got to eat. It looks as if you ^{eat you} can't sleep.

The two women spoke scornfully of the "bald-heads." Noriko said she had been in the canteen with a boy friend who had not shaved his head. A Hokoku friend came up to them and said: "I'm not going to have anything more to do with you if you keep looking like that. Are you a Japanese or aren't you?" "That's how they keep talking all the time," said Noriko.

On January 15, I visited Mr. Kurihara. He was depressed.

People with large families are worrying themselves to death. After all the wrongs they have done to the Japanese, nothing they do now will do any good . . . Right now the Japanese are most afraid of the hardships they are going to face. Also, a rumor is being circulated that five Japanese were killed in Fresno or Stockton.

On the renunciation of citizenship, he said:

I've seen a lot of young boys very anxious to renounce it. They are talking a great deal about it now. They aren't talking much about relocation.

8 On the 15th I also visited Mrs. Kawai, an ardent Resegregationist. She asked me to get special application blanks for renunciation of citizenship for her two daughters. She asked me repeatedly if the Department of Justice was going to take over Tule Lake on January 21. I made the following comment in my fieldnotes:

(There was a widespread rumor that the Department of Justice was going to take over Tule Lake on January 9. Now it's the 21st. Tule Lake is coming to resemble millenarian Europe as 1000 A.D. approached. The rumor about the Department of Justice has some of the appointed personnel worried also.)

9 On January 18 I called on my secretary, Mary Komura. For the first time in all of my visits, her father, a member of the Hōshi-dan, entered into conversation with me.

He remarked that in his opinion only 1% of the people in Tule Lake would relocate. The policy of the government in this relocation policy wasn't fooling anybody. The newspapers were showing that the war was going badly for the Allies, and the U.S. attempt to increase man power by releasing the Japanese was well understood by the camp residents.

Mr. Komura also told me that he had just heard over the radio that a certain town in California had announced that they would resist the return of any Japanese. He and his daughter agreed that "Almost all of the people would like the camp under Justice. They'd feel much safer."¹⁷

On January 18 I called on Sally Wakida. Sally, who intended to expatriate with her husband, George, was relatively relaxed. She opened the conversation by telling me about the Hōshi-dan activities.

Since Mr. Burling is here, they blasted their bugles louder than ever. Even the old ladies are running around yelling, "Wash sho", with slacks on. I don't think that's very nice for old ladies 50 years old. The young women do it too.

She then told me about her husband's hearing on his application for renunciation of citizenship.

(1. Fieldnotes, January 18, 1945.)

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When George went for his interview, the lady asked him if he were a member of any organization. He said he was a member of the Seinen-dan.¹⁸ She said, "The Hōkoku Seinen-dan?" George pulled his hair and said, "No, can't you see?"

She laughed and said she was sorry.

Sally then told me: "Most people would like the camp to go under Justice."

...The food is getting worse. We've had wieners day after day...I guess the only people having fun in camp now are the Hōshi-dan people. They have something to do every day and meetings every night.

On January 19 I visited Mr. Kunitani. He told me there was a widespread rumor that all persons who have not renounced their citizenship by January 20 would be "kicked out of camp." He implied that this rumor was being spread by the Hōshi-dan. "Some people are also being told to answer in a radical way so that their citizenship will not be taken away."¹⁹

On January 19, Mr. Burding told me that the Department of Justice had received almost 6,000 applications for renunciation.³¹⁰ He also told me that he had asked Dillon Myer to make Tule Lake a refuge center from which no one would be forced to relocate for the duration of the war. Dillon Myer refused.

On January 22, Mr. Kurihara told me:

The majority of people in Tule Lake believe they don't have to go out. They will not change their minds. Why should we come here in the first place if we didn't want to renounce our citizenship?..... The true motive behind the renunciation of citizenship is that they don't want to get out. They want to remain in camp for the remainder of the war. When WRA comes to realize their mistake, it will be too late.

On the same day, Miss Komura, my secretary, told me:

Quite a few of my girl friends are renouncing. I guess it's because they're repatriates and had a purpose for coming here. Most of my friends I meet at Japanese school: we all have the same feeling.

She then said with a smile: "You know why the boys are renouncing." I asked about the Resegregationists. She said that she thought that the Hōkoku and the Hōshi-dan had been very influential in causing people to renounce.

On January 24, Mrs. Aida, my older Nisei friend told me:

They feel if they don't renounce their citizenship they can't go back to Japan. You might have to get out of camp. Frankly, that's how everybody feels . . . If the American people were all like you, I'd go out tomorrow.

Meanwhile, the Resegregationists, with exultant fanaticism, spread rumors that the families of the men sent to

Santa Fe would soon be sent to join them. Members of the Hokoku who received notices from Washington approving their applications for denationalization waved them in front of nonrenunciants and urged them to make their own applications without delay. Renunciation became a mass movement. During January, 3,400 young persons (40 percent of the citizen population) applied for denationalization. The Department of Justice became alarmed. Burling tried to stem the flood by asking the national officials of the WRA to declare Tule Lake a "refuge center" from which no one would be forced to relocate for the duration of the war, and by trying to stamp out the Resegregationist organizations. But the WRA refused to yield in the matter of forced resettlement, and the only concession made was that "those who do not wish to leave the Tule Lake center at this time are not required to do so and may continue to live here or at some similar center until January 1, 1946" (Thomas and Nishimoto 1946; 356, italics theirs). The Department of Justice continued ~~its interments of~~ ^{to intern the} Resegregationists. On 26 January, 171 men were interned, on 11 February, 650, on 4 March, 125.¹⁾

1. "Doing Fieldwork," pp. 167-8.

Since I was obliged to leave Tule Lake in May of 1945,¹ I have no statements or reports after that date.² But in ~~xx~~ 1981 and 1982 some respondents spoke of ~~xxx~~ their experiences in the fall and winter of 1945 and a few described their attempts to regain American citizenship. I will therefore include here an account of ~~xxxx~~ this period as it has been described by Michi Weglyn in Years of Infamy and by Jacobus ten Broek et al. in Prejudice, War and the Constitution.

The following quotation is from ~~tenbroek~~ *ten Broek*.

ATTEMPTS TO REGAIN AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP

During the summer of 1945 many approved renunciants wrote to the Department of Justice and asked for permission to withdraw their renunciations; some also asked to leave Tule Lake. (The department sent form letters to all such persons explaining that it was not within the power of the Attorney General to restore citizenship once lost through the procedure followed). The number of applications for cancellation of renunciation increased sharply in the fall.

Although many were seeking to cancel their renunciation, the Department of Justice was moving to send them all to Japan. On July 14, 1945, under the authority of the Alien Enemy Act of 1798, President Truman issued Proclamation 2655 which provided that all interned alien enemies deemed by the Attorney General to be dangerous to peace and safety "because they have adhered to aforesaid enemy governments or to the principles of their government shall be subject ... to removal from the United States." Regulations governing their deportation were published by the Department of Justice on September 26, 1945. On October 8 the department began the registration of the renunciants, who were fingerprinted and photographed. They were informed that they were now classed as "native American aliens." On October 10 the department announced that on and after November 15 "all persons whose applications to renounce citizenship have been approved by the Attorney General of the United

States, will be repatriated to Japan, together with members of their families, whether citizens or aliens, who desire to accompany them."

The renunciants were startled by the announcement of their imminent removal to Japan, and many who did not wish to be sent there took action to prevent it. A group who had been in contact with Wayne Collins, a San Francisco attorney and a representative of the American Civil Liberties Union, formed a small committee which began to raise funds to finance court action. On November 5, Collins entered two suits in federal courts asking that certain named renunciant plaintiffs be set at liberty, that the deportation orders be cancelled, that the applications for renunciations be declared void, and the plaintiffs declared to be nationals of the United States. At the time of filing these suits there were 987 plaintiffs. Many more were added during the following weeks and the number rose to 4,322. The litigation thus initiated lasted many years.

On December 10, 1945, Department of Justice officials at Tule Lake announced that deportation, or so-called "mitigation," hearings (similar to those held in all cases of deportation of aliens to discover whether undue hardship would be occasioned by the move), would be held for all renunciants who did not wish to go to Japan, as well as for aliens who had been interned and who were now at Tule Lake under special-segregation or parole

orders. Aliens or renunciants who did not ask for a hearing, those who expressed a desire to be sent to Japan, and those aliens and citizens removed from Tule Lake during the winter of 1944-45, would not be given hearings and would be sent to Japan.

In the fall of 1945 a movement from Tule Lake began. With the cessation of hostilities with Japan, the WDC released all those it had been holding. After the Department of Justice took over on October 10 only renunciants and "segregated parolees" were detained, and resettlement of the eligible was speeded. The population of the center dropped from 17,341 on August 1, 1945, to 7,269 on January 1, 1946. On January 31, 1946, the center held 5,045 persons, consisting of only detainees and their families.

In January, 1946, there were approximately 3,200 renunciants at Tule Lake and a small number in the Department of Justice internment camps. After the announcements of the mitigation hearings, 3,161 at Tule Lake and 25 in the internment centers applied for a hearing; 107 at Tule Lake did not do so.

The mitigation hearings were held at Tule Lake and at the internment camps at Ft. Lincoln, North Dakota, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, between January 7 and April 1, 1946. Fifteen hearing officers, secretaries, and translators arrived at Tule Lake on New Year's Day with Rothstein in charge. At the hearing the applicant could present

evidence and witnesses in his behalf but was denied the right to counsel. On February 12, 1946, when 1,800 hearings had been completed at Tule Lake, the Department announced the names of 406 renunciants who had received unfavorable recommendations and against whom deportation orders were to be issued. The remainder of the applicants were unconditionally free. The 406 and their 43 family members were removed to camps at Crystal City, Texas, and Seabrook Farms, Bridgeton, New Jersey. Removal orders were issued "only where a renunciant was a dual national prior to his renunciation....A number of removal orders had to be ~~re~~^voked upon the discovery that renunciants were not Japanese citizens under the law of Japan."

The second group of individuals held at Tule Lake, the segregated parolees from Department of Justice centers, were also given hearings. In January, 1946, a special alien board, composed of the Dean of the Law School of the University of California, Edwin BeWitt Dickinson, and two attorneys, was set up by the Department of Justice to hold hearings for the 47 segregated parolees at Tule Lake. After hearings and review of the board's recommendations by the Attorney General, all of the groups were released unconditionally on March 18, 1946, and informed that they could remain in the United States; two preferred Japan. On March 20, 1946, the last inmate of Tule Lake departed.

During the fall of 1945 and the early months of 1946 over a thousand renunciants and many Japanese aliens sailed for Japan. Through February 23, 1946, a total of 4,406 residents of Tule Lake had also left. Of these 1,116 were renunciants who did not apply for a mitigation hearing, 1,523 were aliens, and 1,767 were American citizens; of the citizens, all ^u but 49 were the minor children of aliens or renunciants. By July, 4,724 persons had left for Japan from Tule Lake and other centers. By September 27, 1948, there were 1,444 renunciants who had not applied for hearings and had left for Japan, and 1,480 were residing there on April 26, 1949. Those leaving from Tule Lake or other WRA centers and the internment camps of the Department of Justice, were joined by over three thousand who had relocated or had been outside of the evacuation areas. All in all, some eight thousand persons of Japanese descent left for Japan between V-J Day and mid-1946.

Legal attempts to recover citizenship.-- The renunciants sought the restoration of their American citizenship and freedom from the threat of deportation in the courts. Two suits were entered in the federal district court for northern California on November 5, 1945--a petition for a writ of habeas corpus, Abo v. Williams, to free the petitioners from the deportation orders of the Department of Justice and to set them at liberty, and

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a plea in ~~equity~~, Abo v. Clark, that the renunciation applications be declared void and the plaintiffs be declared nationals of the United States. The briefs for the plaintiffs in the two suits made the same claim: that the signing of the renunciation applications was the result of duress and coercion and was not a free and voluntary act.

The renunciants won the first round in both suits in the district court. In the habeas corpus action Judge A. S. St. Sure issued a temporary injunction against the deportation in late 1945 and the case was heard during 1946. On June 20, 1947, Judge Louis E. Goodman (the two cases having been transferred to him when Judge St. Sure became ill) granted the application for a writ of habeas corpus, holding that the plaintiffs were not alien enemies and hence could not be detained for deportation from the country. On August 11, 1947, he issued the writ commanding the district director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service to release the plaintiffs from custody. Advised that the Department of Justice was intending to appeal the decision, on September 8, 1947 Judge Goodman placed all the renunciants held by the Department of Justice, including the 138 who were plaintiffs in the habeas corpus proceedings as well as the 164 who were not, in the custody of Wayne Collins, their attorney. The government agreed to bear the cost of

transporting the group from the internment camps in New Jersey and Texas to their former homes in California. The appeal from the district-court decision was finally filed by the government on February 28, 1949; the time for the filing was extended several times by the court at the request of the department.

Hearings on the suit in equity, Abo v. Clark, began in 1946. More than four thousand plaintiffs petitioned to be declared nationals of the United States and their renunciations set aside. In support of its contention that the renunciations were the free expressions of the renunciants, the government submitted among other items a lengthy affidavit by Burling describing his visit to Tule Lake in 1945-1946 and the conduct of the renunciation hearings. Four shorter affidavits by the other hearing officers were also introduced. On April 29, 1948, Judge Goodman issued an opinion cancelling the renunciations and declaring the plaintiffs to be United States citizens. However, admitting that it might be possible for the government to present evidence that some of the plaintiffs did act freely and voluntarily despite the weight of evidence that they did not, Judge Goodman gave the government ninety days in which to "file a designation of any of the plaintiffs concerning whom they desire to present further evidence."

After many extensions of time granted by the court, the Department of Justice, on February 25, 1949, filed a "Designation of Plaintiffs" which stated that the evidence which would be introduced "against each such designated plaintiff proves or tends to prove that each...renounced United States nationality and citizenship of his or her own free will, choice, desire and agency, and shows that such renunciation was not caused by duress, menace, coercion, and intimidation, fraud and undue influence." This evidence consisted in showing that of every one of the 4,322 plaintiffs one or more of the following statements was true: that he or she was a Kibei; had been a leader of a pro-Japanese organization at Tule Lake; had applied for repatriation or expatriation either before or after renunciation; had been segregated at Tule Lake because of a negative answer to question 28 or because of a denial by the WRA of leave clearance; had gone to Tule Lake Center voluntarily to be with his or her family; was now in Japan; was under alien-enemy removal orders. The court rejected the "Designation" on March 23, 1949. Judge Goodman found that it did not present evidence overcoming the presumption that the renunciations were the result of coercion and pressure. On April 12, 1949, he issued his opinion stating that the renunciations were void as they were the product of such influences. The government appealed.

On July 6, 1949, while the habeas corpus and equity actions were before the courts, a suit was entered by Andrew L. Wirin, a Los Angeles attorney, in behalf of three renunciants, Murakami, Sumi, and Shimizu, who had been refused passports by the State Department on the grounds that by virtue of their renunciations at Tule Lake they were no longer American citizens. On August 27, 1949, Judge William C. Mathes rendered a decision for the plaintiffs. The government appealed but lost. Judge William Denman of the court of appeals held that the findings of the lower court that the renunciations were the product of oppressive conditions at Tule Lake was fully supported by the evidence and that further findings by his court gave additional support to the judgment. Many of these points were documented by references to Thomas and Nishimoto's Spoilage, which had also been introduced as documentary evidence in Abo v. Clark. The government decided not to contest the decision and not to oppose suits by renunciants to affirm their citizenship unless its files "disclose evidence of loyalty to Japan or disloyalty to the United States."

However, the plaintiff Japanese lost both their habeas corpus and equity suits in the court of appeals. The judgments of the district courts were reversed and the cases sent back for further proceedings. In the habeas corpus suit, Barber v. Abo, the decision that the

renunciations were void was denied except for minors who were held to be legally incapable of renouncing. However, the threat of removal to Japan was dissipated when the Department of Justice cancelled the removal orders. On April 20, 1952, Acting Attorney General Philip B. Perlman cancelled the outstanding orders against the 302 renunciants in the Department of Justice camps. On May 6, 1952, Wayne Collins petitioned for a dismissal of the suit in the district court on the ground that the cancellation rendered the issues moot, and the motion was granted that day by Judge Goodman.

The renouncing Japanese no longer needed to fear deportation to Japan. However, their American citizenship was not affirmed, for the decision in the appeals court in the equity case also went against them. Judge Denman ruled that the renunciations were valid for all adult plaintiffs other than the fifty-eight who went to Tule Lake to be with family members and that in future proceedings they would have to demonstrate individually that they had been coerced into renouncing. The Supreme Court denied a writ of certiorari on October 8, 1951. Since the return of the case to the district court no action has yet (1954) been taken by the plaintiffs and their cases have yet to be heard. They remain "native American aliens."²³

The following account is from Years of Infamy by Michi Weglyn:

May 20, 1959. Fourteen years after the inception of the mass suits, much fanfare and publicity attended an unusual public ceremony in the office of Attorney General William P. Rogers. Assembled newmen and invited dignitaries were informed that the administrative review of the renunciation cases had been completed. Attorney General Rogers then made public the restoration of "precious rights of citizenship" to 4,978 Nisei, declaring: "Our country did make a mistake. We have publicly recognized it and as a free nation publicly make restoration."

Edward J. Ennis, one of the guests of honor and then general counsel to the national office of the American Civil Liberties Union (Chairman of the ACLU in 1969), stated in an address: "I think the Department of Justice has responded magnificently to the problems presented by taking practically all the 'divorced' citizens back into the family of our American country."

"I would like to believe that our liberal policy of citizenship restitution has conformed to the hope and promise of sound American ideals," responded Assistant Attorney General George C. Doub, who further expressed the hope that the Nisei would "have the charity to forgive their Government." Doub added:

It is a remarkable tribute to the fortitude of the Nisei that comparatively few surrendered their American citizenship under the prevailing hysteria conditions in the WRA camps. They were indeed so loyal that from them came the soldiers of the 442nd battalion whose casualty notices were delivered to parents behind the barbed wires of the camps.

Media reaction throughout the nation was eulogistic. The Christian Science Monitor of May 22, 1959, announced editorially that "the federal Justice Department deserve(s) gratitude from Americans for painstakingly righting a grave injustice ..." The Washington Post and Times Herald of May 28, 1959, followed with lavish praise:

Today all the Nisei who suffered in this wave of hysteria have been generously compensated for their property losses and all of the renunciants against whom no other evidence of willful disloyalty could be found have now been restored to full civil status. The great credit for the completion of this program of restitution belongs to Assistant Attorney General George Cochran Doub, who heads the Civil Division of the Department of Justice.

Mr. Doub's energy in pursuing the settlement of the Nisei claims proves . . . that although we have shown ourselves "as a Nation capable of wrongs," we have also shown ourselves capable "of confessing and of seeking to expiate them." Or

as a celebrated historian, describing a somewhat similar change of heart and reversal of judgment by the citizens of another democracy, put it: "The morrow brought repentance with it and reflection on the horrid cruelty of a decree which had condemned all to the fate merited only by a few."¹⁵

Probably the only person outraged by the whole proceeding was the fiery San Francisco attorney, for with all the self-congratulatory platitudes and rhetoric of expiation, this was no blanket amnesty, as had been demanded by him for over a decade as rightly due a group of citizens who had been abandoned so utterly. Seventeen years after they had been driven into peonage--some into insanity--and defrauded of their rights, mercy was still begrudgingly withheld from 350 renunciants. "We will vigorously defend our adverse determination of these comparatively few cases in the courts..."¹⁶ the Assistant Attorney General had thrown out the challenge, as though to Collins personally.

By this time, 2,031 renunciants had gone to Japan. Of the 3,735 who remained in the United States, all but eighty-four had regained their citizenship.

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1. Washington Post and Times Herald, May 28, 1959.
 2. Pacific Citizen, May 22, 1959.

The discredited ex-Americans again turned to Collins in their lonely Armageddon, although a number of them abandoned their fight; some decided to remain in Japan; a few passed away. Collins: "The maintenance of the stigma of wrongdoing was consistent with Justice's obsession with face-saving. Having inflicted the gravest type of injury upon these blameless people, then criminally soliciting and taking renunciations from tormented persons, the Justice Department sought to whitewash its own reputation by persisting in blackening those of young Americans who had courage enough to stand up and fight for their rights--Americans who would not brook insults forever. Practically all the young men denied their citizenship rights were Kibei. Their mistreatment is unprecedented in American history."

Contrary to the pronouncement of the Justice Department to all assembled that "this ceremony today concludes a colorful chapter of American history," the issue of citizenship restoration dragged on into the late sixties. And as aptly underscored by authors Girdner and Loftis in The Great Betrayal: "Wayne Collins was the agent for democracy in correcting this most di^sastrous of all evacuation mistakes." Not the Justice Department.

March 6, 1968. It was twenty-three years after he had brought the illegal, racially abetted deportation of the Nisei and Kibei to a screeching halt that Collins

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was finally able to write in the concluding renunciation proceedings (Abo v. 'Ramsay A.' Clark) with an air of justifiable triumph:

A majority of those who had been forcibly removed to Japan were restored to their home in this country. The fundamental rights, liberties, privileges and immunities of these citizens are now honored. The discrimination practiced against them by the government has ceased. The episode which constituted an infamous chapter in our history has come to a close.

Part Four: The Survivors Speak - 1981-1982

~~Section II'~~

msj H. Hoff

13. Introduction

Of the 27 respondents 16 were men and 11 were women, ranging in age from 44 to 77. At the time of the evacuation in 1942 their age range was 4 to 37. Sixteen of the respondents were subjected to the military questionnaire¹ and most of these persons commented on this experience. Four told me that they had refused to answer, arguing that as citizens, the questions should not have applied to them. Five men told me they said "No-no." One man that he said "Yes-No." Six persons did not refer to the questionnaire in their responses.

Eight of my respondents went or were taken to Japan at the end of World War II. Four of these were children who accompanied their repatriating parents. Two were young men who had renounced their citizenship. Two were "loyal" women who accompanied their expatriating husbands.²

The Questionnaire

I tried to keep the questionnaire and the interviewing procedure as open and relaxed as possible. I asked respondents questions about their life before the war, how their parents earned their living, and how they felt when they heard the government announcement that the Japanese American people were ordered to leave their homes and report to the Assembly Centers. I then proceeded chronologically, asking questions like:

"Which of your experiences in the Assembly Center do you recall most strongly?"

"Was there anything that happened in (the relocation) camp that made you feel especially angry? - or scared?"

"Thinking back about life in Tule Lake, what incidents come to your mind?"

"As you look back at your life at Tule Lake, which experience, would you say, has affected you most deeply?"

At the close of each chronological stage I asked:

"Could you tell me how you were able to cope with (or recover from) this experience (or experiences)?"

I found that most respondents enjoyed answering the question:

"Looking back, what was the most helpful thing you learned about your fellow human beings." ~~2~~

As the interview progressed, many respondents would recall and relate complex experiences which had little relation to the question I had asked. When they chose to do this I encouraged them by silence or by appropriate brief comments.

In chapters 13-19, the age given for respondents is their age at the time of the evacuation - early in 1942. I found that correlating ages with the passage of time became very confusing. Only in chapter 20 do I give the age of the respondent at the time of the experience I describe.

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~~13~~. Life and Hopes Before The Evacuation.

At the beginning of the interview I asked my respondents questions like, "Would you like to tell me anything about your life before the evacuation?" or, "First, I'd like to know a little bit about your life before Pearl Harbor?" Responses to this question varied in content and in length.

Boys and Men

Thomas Kikuchi, (11) wrote:

Born August 13, 1930, at Newcastle, California, a small farming community north of Sacramento, California. My parents were fruit farmers, raising peaches, prunes and grapes. I went to school before evacuation; working after school picking tomatoes and working in the orchards in the summer time. I would say life was hard during my early years, but as the boys in the family grew, we were able to purchase a gas stove, refrigerator, washing machines -- things people take for granted now, but then it was for our family luxuries. My family expected me to go to college, and there was no doubt in my mind that I would. At the risk of sounding conceited, I was a good student.

His brother, Arthur, age 15, told me:

We were living in a place called ____ and it's about 30 miles from Sacramento, and our family was, of course, in farming. When the war came we had just started to do quite well economically; the reason being that the times had changed for the better and we had gotten off of leasing and share-cropping, and we were doing quite well. Between four to six people were working from our family. Up until that time farm life was a very rugged life... and finally, washing machine, and refrigerator started to come in and things were looking really great.

At that time, age 15, I was in high school, a freshman. I was the first male in the family to be able to go through high school. My older brothers, unfortunately, because of economics, had to stop after the 8th grade. They continued to support us and I think that was a real deprivation for them to sacrifice.

Joseph Takeshita, age 15, was born in San Francisco. In 1926, when he was 2 years old he and two older brothers were sent to Japan "for their formal education." In Japan, they lived with their maternal grandparents. In 1931, when Joseph was 7, the brothers returned to the United States.

I started Emerson Grammar School. From Emerson, which is primarily upper-lower class, we moved to an upper-upper district of Pacific Heights, which meant that I was with all the children of the upper-upper income group. All of my class, other than two other boys, went on to Lowell High School. Lowell High School, you may or may not know, is the public school that's college preparatory and it's still considered college preparatory to 1982... As a matter of fact, I went to Lowell High School in a chauffeured limousine belonged to Art's (a classmate) grandmother..

That was real upper class and again, if I may be tangential here, the car never came to my door. I had to go two blocks away.. They could not send their chauffeured car to pick up a son of a ... you see, my parents were domestic servants.. But Art said, "Joseph, if you come to Presidio and Jackson, we will pick you up." Art and I in our own ways were very close. But not in the social circles.

Robert Oda, age 9, told me:

I lived near Sacramento in a rural area and was still in high school at that time. My parents were both Japanese language school teachers. I was

a junior in high school at the time of Pearl Harbor and I was very much interested in aeronautical engineering.

John Sawada, age 20, was also the son of a farmer living near Sacramento. He told me:

I was going to first year in college.. All my high school was my commercial studies. That is to say, bookkeeping, accounting, and this line. I loved accounting so much that I planned to go into higher accounting jobs, CPA, and this and that. This was my goal.

Ben Kodama, age 24, was born in Hawaii. When he was 3 years old, his father, who was a veteran of World War I, took him to Japan and he finished high school there. When he was 18, he returned to San Francisco where he attended junior high and high school.

After that, we didn't have any job, so I went to Sacramento, and, you know, farmer work. And I come back and go to barber school. And then I finished barber school here. And then I was barber.

I was drafted in 1941, so I say, "Why, I'm going to volunteer." So I volunteered, and at that time the Japanese community - they give us a medal for that, you know. (laughs)... And then I went before the war to Monterey.. First of all we went

into Presidio, Monterey for about a couple of months. And then we went into Fort Ord.. Then, I had the education in Japan so they discharged me - honorable discharge. Actually, I was in the Army for one year... It's really sad, but it's pretty hard to express.

Robert Kurusu, age 27, was born in Sacramento. His mother died when he was six years old and his father returned with him to Japan. In 1932, when he was 18, he returned alone to the United States, graduated from the Pasadena Junior College and spent one year at California Institute of Technology, studying engineering. "Though of course I'm troubling because of language problems.. I had hard time... I was supposed to go into the Army in 1942... One week prior to my induction, I got notice of "cancellation for your induction." So I had no choice."

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Peter Morimoto, age 34, was born in Japan and "finished grammar school, high school and college in Japan. "I came from Japan as an exchange student, and I studied in Colorado and I went to NYU. And then, in 1933-1940 I was teaching a Sakura Gakuen (Middle School) in Sacramento:

When I asked June Iwohara, age 16, about her life before the evacuation, she responded: "I was born and raised in Tacoma, Washington. I lived a very happy life there. I remember Tacoma very fondly and I was there until the war started. I remember 9th grade in Stadium High School."

RW: Did you have any plans for the future or were you just sort of enjoying yourself?

JI: I was just having a good time.. My father had a grocery store.

When I asked Jennifer Hara, age 15, about her life before the war, she responded. "It was normal and I was a student, a junior in high school."

RH: What kind of life did you hope to have?

JH: To get an education, a good job, get married and have a family.

Joyce Kunitani, age 19, responded to my first question by saying, "Oh, my goodness! I was just a schoolgirl."

RW: What grade were you in?

JK: Oh, I was out. I had just gone to Sacramento Junior College, but I had dropped out.

RW: What kind of life did you hope to have?

JK: (disparagingly) Ahh! What I did was apply for a Navy nursing job, but they wouldn't let me in...

Not in 1941! It discourage me because I was taking pre-med... to be a Navy nurse.

Unlike most of my respondents, Mrs. Kunitani did not respond to my question about the evacuation order with a statement about injustice. Instead, she laughed softly and said, "I was a Chinese for a while, and then I figured I was breaking the law, and so I thought, 'I might as well...'" She did not wish to complete the sentence.

Lillian Noma, age 20, told me:

I was right out of high school. I had gotten some jobs, and meanwhile, I had passed my state examination. I was hired by the State of California. I was working at the state capital. And I enjoyed it very much. And I hadn't been working there too long when war broke out... And I found out coming home from a movie. Someone told me, 'Did you know Pearl Harbor has been bombed?' Well, we thought maybe they were joking, amybe it was just a radio story. We didn't believe it. ✓

Well, I went to work and shortly thereafter I received a letter saying that my presence was very upsetting to my co-workers, because of my Japanese descent and that hereby they were terminating my employment.. I wanted to go to college, but my mother wanted me to work and thought the boys should

go first. I had a brother right behind me. So she wanted me to work for about a year and help enter him in college, which I was happy to do.

Mary Iida, age 21, was the only woman respondent who gave me a detailed account of her life before the evacuation. "I was born and raised in Stockton, California. I went to school there. And then, prior to the evacuation I was working at a theater, selling tickets. Box office."

RW: And how did your parents earn their living?

MI: Oh my father used to be.. well, my mother just.. There were so many of us. She was just a plain housewife.

RW: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

MI: Eight. And I'm the oldest of eight. Back in those days when nothing was automatic or electric, we used to do everything by hand. So I would always be the one to help. My parents are from the old country where being the oldest I had to set the example for the youngers. So I always had to be good, do well in school and everything else.

And because of the language difficulty, we went to the American school in the daytime and right after that, we had to go to private Japanese school. I went twelve years of that.

Right after American High School we had to hurry home.. We take the bus and go home and then, right away, turn right around and go to Japanese school. It started about 5:00.

RW: How long would it last?

MI: I'm not sure now because we had to take our turns and clean the blackboard and the floor.. The classes were fairly large, about 30 to a class. So when we got home it was 6:00 or 6:30...

Because of the private school I went to, I do read, write, in Japanese. I have been able to retain what I learned.. Read, write, speak.

Yuriko Kurusu, 27 years old, was born in Japan. Her parents came to the United States when she was a small child. After attending High School in the United States she returned to Japan. She did not tell me how or why she then returned to the United States. I met Mrs. Kurusu and her husband at the Gila Center and continued to call on them at Tule Lake. At these visits she rarely expressed her views. In 1981 she was still very reticent.

RW: Can you tell me a little about your life before Pearl Harbor? How would you describe your life?

IK: Pleasant.

RW: Were you in school?

YK: No, I was out.

RW: Oh, what were you teaching?

YK: Music. (At Tule Lake I once called on the Kurusus
and found her teaching a little girl how to play
the Japanese harp.)

RW: What kind of life did you hope to have?

YK: Oh, I don't think I ever even thought of that.

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14. Memories of the Evacuation and the Assembly Center

Probably the most severe trauma suffered by the Nisei was the sense that their Constitutional Rights had been abrogated.¹ When I asked my respondents how they felt when they were told that they were to be evacuated, they responded with passion and intensity.²

"I couldn't believe it."

"I was really surprised."

"We were stunned."

"I didn't think it was possible."

John Sawada, age 19, said "I told my brother, 'Ben, they'll never take us. We're citizens.' This was my honest belief."

Arthur Kikuchi, age 15, said, "It was very incredible news because we had tried to figure out what we were going to do on our own when our parents were sent to internment camps."

During my stay in the camps my Nisei respondents rarely spoke of their feelings at the time of the evacuation. I knew, of course, that they were angry and bitter. But it was not until they talked to me in 1981

and 1982 that I was able to accept the heartrending
and frightening truth expressed in the title of Morton
Grodzins' work, Americans Betrayed.³

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R. Wax

Racial Stigma, Insecurity, Injustice

For many of my younger respondents, the consciousness of an unjust and often incomprehensible stigma or rejection began shortly before the evacuation took place.

Thomas Kikuchi, age 11:

When we heard we were going to be evacuated, I didn't quite comprehend what it was all about. However, I do recall my mother hiding the kitchen knives because we didn't want the FBI to confiscate it and charge us with possession of deadly weapons. Probably the most traumatic experience was my associating with my buddies. I had mostly Caucasian friends, and one of my closest friends lived down the road and we usually went to school together on our bikes. With the declaration of war, his parents forbade him to associate with me. I'm sure it was just as hard on him as it was on me. I guess that was my first overt experience with racial discrimination. In school I was being left out of most activities. Even my teacher treated me at arms length.

George Okamoto, age 11:

My most vivid memory is leaving home with overloaded suitcases and what we could carry - and walking seven blocks with this load. When we left

our house all the neighbors stayed indoors - no one came out to say, "Good-bye." I felt this very strongly - as if we were being treated like traitors or a criminal.

Joseph Kikuchi, age 9:

It's like you had a close friend, and all of a sudden the friend says, "I don't want to see you any more".. Thinking back, it took years, actually to get to the point where you would feel secure with a Caucasian group. It took me roughly till I was out of college... You get that inferiority feeling, because you feel rejected and then you don't feel like putting yourself in that position again. So that you never make close friendship with Caucasian group.

Jennifer Hara, age 16: "The principal at ____ high school (in California) asked us not to come to school anymore because we were Japanese American."

Lillian Noma, age 20:

I noticed when the war started my classmates stopped talking to me. On the street they didn't even see me.. Even now, people.. just because of your Oriental features you're not considered American.

Memories of the Assembly Centers

Between March and June of 1942, most of the Japanese Americans residing on the West Coast were evacuated to hastily organized, so called assembly centers located outside of Military Area No. 1. Living condition in many of these Assembly Centers were appalling.⁴ As Joseph Kikuchi, age 9, told me in 1981, "It should be pointed out that the Assembly Centers were hastily constructed with minimal cost because they were meant to be a temporary quarters until they decided on what to do with us. Therefore, Assembly Centers were one of the worst place to be in our years of confinement."

In 1981 and 1982 some respondents described the unsanitary and overcrowded living quarters, stinking converted horse stalls and casually constructed barracks. Several mentioned the grass growing between the floorboards. Some of the men who had been "young bachelors" at the time, told me that they had enjoyed themselves because of the presence of so many girls. When, however, I asked them whether any experience at the Assembly Center had made them feel especially sad or angry, or which experience they recalled most strongly, they responded with statements indicating that they were most disturbed because they were being treated as criminals

or traitors, when, in fact, they were innocent.

When I asked John Sawada, age 20, which of his experiences in the Assembly Center he recalled most strongly, he said:

One thing that I never could get over was-how was it that a citizen like us, we were born here -- and a citizen could be behind barbed wire without -- I learned in history -- innocent until proven guilty. And we're behind barbed wire, soldiers watching us from the outside. This is something that I could not believe that this country would do. And I felt, "Gee, is this what they've been teaching us all this time?" It really comes down to that you study history, you study the Constitution, and is this what it all adds up to? They could just life^t you up, take you away, and throw you in the camp like this because of my ancestry? This really hit me hard..I thought, "Gee, now what am I to believe? Whom am I to believe?".. You're in an Assembly Center, military police are guarding you. Who wants to escape? We have no way of getting away.

When I asked Mrs. Kurusu (age 27) whether any experience at the Assembly Center had made her feel especially sad, she said: "Well, I tell you what, one of my school teachers came to visit us..and it was like a

prison type of thing in which you can't even shake hands -- with them sitting on one side and we were sitting on the other side."

I asked, "You mean there were bars between you?"

She replied: "No a table - a long, long table..that we couldn't reach across."

When I asked Jennifer Hara (age 17) whether anything that happened at the Assembly Center had made her feel angry, she replied: "To be locked up without a hearing and losing your freedom. On Visitors Day the guards were there with rifles standing next to you. We felt like criminals."

I asked Arthur Kikuchi (age 15) which of his experiences in the Assembly Center he recalled most strongly.

We didn't know whether .. how we were going to be treated in terms of..were we to be hostages? That was always in the front of our minds. We had thought that we would be exchanged, number for number, with the war prisoners who might be held over there. And so we had braced ourselves for deportation. After we were evacuated and all, citizenship no longer meant anything. So we no longer to be surprised with any move that the government would make.

^A
The moving statement was made by June Iwihara, who ✓
was 16 at the time:

The one thing I vividly remember is that I had a very good girl friend, and I think she had a nervous breakdown. And because they didn't have facilities to treat her..apparently they tied her down to a messhall table and I could hear her screaming all through the night and that really bothered me..she was separated from her family and she was about my age,...We were crowded together like flies. I remember thinking, 'I can't stand it....'

When I asked Robert Kurusu, age 29, whether there was any experience in the Assembly Center that he recalled strongly, he responded: "No, I don't recall anything...everybody was so upset, and I was so upset, we just didn't know what to do. They wonder where they sent to next. They have all kind of rumor, another place, but we don't know when, exact, and how..."

In contrast, Mr. Morimoto, a 34 year old Issei, responded to this question by telling me that the toilets in the Assembly Center were bad and that his wife was unable to go to the toilet for three days. He laughed heartily and I asked him what had finally happened. He responded: "She couldn't go, but after a while..you gotta go!"

16. Memories of the Relocation Centers and the Military Registration

In the summer and fall of 1942 the Japanese Americans were moved from the Assembly Centers to ten large Relocation Centers located in isolated areas of California, Arizona, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. During the first five or six months in the Relocation Centers there were many difficulties and some crises. But on the whole the Japanese Americans and the administrative staff began to make progress in the development of a sense of community.¹ In February of 1943, this progress was, in many centers, sharply interrupted by the presentation of the Military Questionnaire.²

In 1981-82 only four of my respondents spoke of the initial period of their residence in the Relocation Centers. My interview schedule may be at fault here, for I began my ~~XXXX~~ questions on the relocation by asking, "Which of your experiences in the Relocation Centers do you recall most strongly?" Almost all of ~~them~~ ^{my respondents} began to talk about the Military Questionnaire. Subsequently, we both found it difficult to return to their earlier experiences.

Early Experiences in the Relocation Centers

Jack Tsuruda, age 26, enjoyed telling me how he managed to obtain wood to make furniture for his barrack room. On their arrival at the Gila center, ~~there was~~ ^{they found} nothing in their room except a couple of beds and some blankets, "No Tables, no chairs, nothing!" Getting wood to make furniture was the problem. But one day when there was a terrible sandstorm - "The sand was so thick you could not see more than a yard ahead" - he decided to steal some wood from the WRA woodpile. "It was very fine wood - redwood." He crept up carefully, groping his way, and suddenly, a yard ahead of him, he saw a soldier with a gun. He crept back very carefully and made his way to the *other side*

[1. See Spicer et al., pp. 61 to 139 for a detailed description of this period of camp life.]

of the woodpile. The wood was tied in very large, heavy bundles, but he managed to get one on his back and made away with it. Then, as he was staggering along, he dimly saw another figure through the blowing sand. But this was his friend, "who ^{and} had the same idea." (Mr. Tsuruda was to answer the military questionnaire in the negative. He also, I was told, ^{was to} renounced his American citizenship.)

Mr. Kodama, age ^A28, told me how he and his wife, while at Tule Lake, had worked as volunteer farm workers. He told me how the "really nice sheriff" who owned the land used to take the Japanese American workers pheasant hunting. The sheriff told them that if they saw anyone else approaching they should "just throw them in the grass." (Here Mr. Kodama laughed heartily.) He added:

"It was a really nice sheriff. And they took us to movie. But people looking at you like they know we are Japanese."

(Mr. Kodama answered the military questionnaire in the affirmative, and did not renounce his citizenship.)

Thomas ~~George~~ Kikuchi, age 12, wrote:

Our family was sent to Rohwer, Arkansas, Relocation Camp. I didn't particularly feel any anxiety in learning that I would be sent there. By now I had pretty much adjusted to the camp life: the lack of privacy, the knowlege that we were going to be here for a long time.

I think the Christmas of 1942 stands out in my memory. There was a Christmas party for the kids and I received a present donated by the people on the outside. Just when I thought everybody out there hated us, I get this present and it restored my faith in mankind again.

I was still a pretty good student. I remember a science project where I spent nearly a year collecting and cataloging plants and leaves from

trees indigenous to the area. I was seriously considering a career as a botanist or a horticulturalist. (^{Thomas}George Hara wa^{to be} staken to Japan by his parents.)

June Iwohara, like Mr. Kodmama, had been sent to Tule Lake when it was still a Relocation Center. She was ⁶17 at the time.

I hated being there. I just didn't like it and then I began to hate Japanese people and mainly because we as human beings weren't meant to be incarcerated like that, like cattle. Sometimes I felt I was going to lose my mind, . . . There were four of us, my father, my mother, my brother and I in this little tiny room. Of course my mother and dad couldn't sleep together because they didn't want my brother and I to sleep together. So dad and my brother slept on one side of the room with a sheet tied in between us and then mother and I slept on the other side of the room. And that's the way we were for four years.

The Military Registration Viewed in 1981-1982

In the following section I shall quote my respondents at length, because, as Jennifer Hara ^{page 15,} told me in 1982, the people who said "No-No" or refused to answer "were classified as disloyal Americans."

* * * * *

When, in 1981-2 I asked my respondents, "Was there anything in the relocation camps that made you feel especially angry?" many of them responded "The military registration" or "The No-No business." Mr. Oda, who was 20 at the time and was confined in the Tule Lake Relocation center:³(1)

I guess the first thing was the so-called registration. . . I felt angered. In the beginning I didn't think much of it, actually they said you only have to register, so I thought, "No big deal." And then we started hearing about this so-called loyalty questions...even that...I didn't give much thought to, because I was a kid and you know, you didn't think about those things anyway. But more and more when the question started to come up, people started to ask, "What does this actually mean? Do these have a double meaning? . . And then the director was asked to clarify the meaning. He just flatly refused and (said) anybody who won't come to register would be put into isolation camp. . . That sort of angered me. It was under a threat. . to have to answer something like that without even trying to clarify the question. So that angered

~~2. For a detailed account of the turmoil at the Tule Lake Center, see Thomas and Nishimoto, Ibid., pp. 73-82.~~

~~1. Events varied from center to center during the Military Registration. See Thomas and Nishimoto, "The Spoilage," pp. 53-83; Spicer, et al, "Impounded People, pp. 142-61.~~

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me. And in fact quite a few just absolutely refused to answer the question and were taken into isolation camp. . . But I waited till the last minute, so to speak, just held out. I didn't want to go to isolation camp, of course. So I guess out of resentment I said, "No-No." I thought that was the only answer I could give at the time. Just to let them know how I felt. So that's how I became a No-No.

(4)
Koshiro Furakawa, 20 years old, confined at Tule Lake:

Our loyalty was questioned and this is what I resented and this is the cause of my trouble at Tule Lake. Because I didn't comply with the registration order, and I was placed there and kept there and labeled a disloyal citizen of America. And I've had to live with that for all these years. . . The fact is that we were very loyal; we were extremely loyal. . . they questioned us and that is the thing that really hurts, because we were taught, we were brought up to be Americans, and then, suddenly to be betrayed like that.

18
When I asked Thomas Sawada, age 22, which of the things that happened in the Tule Lake relocation center had affected him most deeply, he responded:

The one thing that really got us is that signing that loyalty and disloyalty forms. . . They tried to qualify you whether you're loyal or disloyal. . . Actually, we walked out on the sergeant because he said it was voluntary and not required. We said, "Nothing doing!" So we didn't pay any attention to it. I mean our block did, anyway. I could have said, "Yes-yes", and got out and, you know, if I wanted to sabotage something I could do that. But I mean, that's not the way I felt. So I mean we didn't sign up at all. Primarily, I didn't want the government to push us around anymore. . . Our feeling was we didn't want to sign because

d. Mr. Furakawa did not tell me when he was born.

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it wasn't required. It was not commanded that we do it, so we didn't do it. . . One block really got subversive about that. They didn't want to sign either, and they threw the policeman out or something like that.

9 They rounded up some of the boys and took them in the CCC camp. We were all prepared. My brother and I had our suitcases packed and if they came. . . They said they were going to round up all the non-signers, you know, we were prepared to be taken out. But nobody came.

9 Mr. Morimoto, an Issei, ⁵36 years old, ^{was} confined at Tule Lake. When I asked ^{him} ~~me~~ Morimoto which experiences at Tule Lake he recalled most strongly, he first told me how he had been criticized by pro-Japanese Issei friends because he was advising the young people to relocate and go to school. Then, however, he told me that he had served as an interpreter at the "registration time" and added:

But I just said Yes and No answer. Not No-No. ⁵(1)

When I asked: "How did you feel about the military questionnaire, he responded:

Well, they shouldn't ask that question in the first place. That is wrong. They shouldn't ask that question. We were in camp. I think the question is wrong but I answered; everyone had to answer.

9 Mr. Tokunaga, age 42, was born in Hawaii. He was a block manager at Tule Lake at the time of registration. His lengthy account is difficult to follow but I will quote a few sentences:

The military registration. . . that one is very strange thing. . .
Everybody got mixed up you know. Nobody wanted to register and the administration sent a message - they started to threaten us. . .
But actually most people is loyal to United States, but we didn't

have no voice, Whatever you do, they put us in stockade. . .a lot of people, they get confused about it.

9 ^{age 24} Mr. Kodama ~~who was born in Hawaii in 1918~~ was taken to Japan by his father when he was three years old. He came to the United States when he was 17. He told me that he had volunteered for Army service in 1941, but after a year he was given an honorable discharge because "I had the education in Japan". He was sent directly to the Tule Lake Relocation Center.

When I asked him how he felt about the military questionnaire, he replied:

chusei 7 I was choosing United States. . .I wrote Yes to everything. I mean chusei ⁶ for living not in Japan but in United States. . .

Naturally, raised in Japan,...I thought Japan going to win, that's what I felt. But I'm in the United States and you can't do anything. So I thought I might as well chusei ⁶ in the United States. ~~10~~

He then told me how he had felt when he had been discharged from the army prior to the evacuation:

✓ When I discharged from the army I really. . .I tell you, it's something I never forget. Rest of them stayed and then they took off. I was willing to fight for this country and if they were going to send me to Italy or something. But when I was in the army, they bring the Japanese paper, they ask me if I can read the headlines. Then I think that was an examination ² of something. Then we had to translate just common words and they were going to send me to Okinawa. But I told them, I sure hate the people there, so would you mind sending me to another country, you know, like Italy. I'm willing to fight for this country, I told them.

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22.

In response to the question, "Which of your experiences at Tule Lake do you recall most strongly?" ^{John} ~~Mr.~~ Sawada, ²⁰ ~~then~~ age ~~21~~ responded:

John
§ When this registration came out about loyalty and this and that, I said, "Gee," you know, they put us behind bars, barbed wires, and would force this kind of question on you. This bothered me. After giving a lot of thought about it, I said, "No, I'm not even going to register." The loyalty question that was put on us, I thought it was unfair. It never came to my mind how I'm going to sabotage anything.

age 30
Mr. Kurusu, ~~who was in his late twenties~~, volunteered for military service in 1941 but his induction papers were cancelled. In 1981 he still found it difficult to talk about the military registration.

I was upset by what it (the registration) did to the camp...I didn't know what to do myself...I was supposed to go in the army but they cancelled my induction orders, so I just decided to give a negative answer and went to Tule Lake. . .I don't see why they don't take me in the army. Then all problems is solved. . .But I was come into camp - and here comes the military registration.

his wife, Yuriko
I asked Mrs. Kurusu, an Issei, age ²⁸ ~~28~~: "Was there anything that really made you angry there?" (at the Gila Relocation Center). She responded:

You know the questionnaire the government sent out? I thought that putting the Nisei into camp and then asking them questions like that.

I thought that was stupid.

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Mrs. Kunitani, age ~~20~~, told me:

← I certainly didn't want to answer it. I wanted to ignore it. I figured I was safe because I was a citizen (laughs). I figured that it didn't pertain to me at all. But it did. I refused to answer.

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8

When I asked Noriko Tsuruda, age 23, whether she remembered the military registration in Gila, she responded:

I think I was really for the Japanese Army. . . I guess I had a feeling toward America because they put us in this center. I thought we were king of kicked in the mouth. So for this reason, we. . . I didn't, I didn't. . . being a woman I don't register for the army, . . . Okay, we had a choice, sign loyal to the Americans or loyal to Japan. So I went with the family. I went loyal to Japan and then therefore we were sent to Tule Lake.

When I asked Mrs. Iida, age 23, whether she remembered the military registration, she responded:

Oh, vaguely. By that time I was married. My husband was a "No-No" so I thought "What could I do?" So I just went along. I don't think I ever said "No-No." I don't know.

Some of the most eloquent statements about the military questionnaire were made by teenagers who came to be stigmatized as "disloyal" because their parents or their elder brother had said: "No-No". George Kikuchi, age 12 told me:

Shomon

When I learned that we were going to leave Rohwer and go to Tule Lake and eventually to Japan, that was the lowest point in my life. I dreaded going to Tule Lake, knowing that eventually I would have to accompany my parents to Japan. . . My father, I think, just wanted to go back to Japan where he owned land and would be able to live out his remaining years in relative tranquility. He knew he was too old to start over again in the U.S. He was in his sixties then.

His brother, ^{Arthur} age 16, told me:

We went to Tule Lake Center because, I think our parents were not what you call a die-hard, a pro-Japanese. They were caught in the situation of how to support a family started from scratch, and they could not see their way financially. And I remember many a night when we discussed the possibility of relocating. But they would say, "Where? With such a large family?"⁷(1). . . We had absolutely no resources. I would have liked to relocate myself, but my mother just would not even entertain the idea. I thought of jumping the train (taking the family to Tule Lake).

George Okamoto, age 12, told me:

My oldest brother had a lot of influence in our family because he was around 18 or 19. And in Topaz he was very involved in the YES-YES NO-NO activities. And my father was a very quiet kind of person. So my older brother kind of took over the family in making decisions. I have a feeling that he also influences by second oldest brother. But I think through my oldest brother's influence, he answered the questions, "No, No." And therefore my father and mother also did, because they didn't want to split up the family.