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Hara, John

Interviews

1981-1982

(Joseph Kikuchi)

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I explain my study - Mr. Kikuchi is somewhat reluctant, but agrees to be interviewed, if, should I wish to publish anything, I show him the material first.

Joseph Kikuchi: To a certain degree it was that the setup - that they could always look back and this should never happen to any minority. Just recently, when the Iranian crisis was going on - you see how the Iranian minority - they didn't know what to do. Threatened! Well, you know, I've found, it brings back memory of what happened to us right after Pearl Harbor.

Rosalie Wax: I think it was Senator Hayakawa that suggested that. . .

Joseph Kikuchi: (interrupts) - (laughs) With Senator Hayakawa I just wonder that sometimes that by opposing and taking the opposite side he gets what he really wants. You know - and I sometimes give him that benefit of doubt. That's how I kind of look at it.

Rosalie Wax: (laughs)

Joseph Kikuchi: He has a certain way of approaching it. You know, it's his personality. He doesn't care too much for immediate gratification. He's looking way ahead. He says right now everyone's going to denounce me, but years from now - when they really look back - it may be the correct one.

Rosalie Wax: Well, you know, what you've told me has made me feel that I shouldn't publish anything without first getting the approval of the people on the Committee for Redress and Reparation.

Joseph Kikuchi: Well, I think if you're approaching this, the only thing that concerns us is that once we give the information, then we don't have any control over how it's used. If it's given with some kind of (?) to look at the final thing before it's published, and then we could make a correction and then - that type of thing - if you would be willing. . .

Rosalie Wax: OK. I will give you my word that before I publish anything, I'll send you a copy of it.

Joseph Kikuchi: Yes. Because, if you remember, several months ago, the newspaper published the interview with some of our leaders of the people who had this experience. Naturally in the newspaper thing, they're working for space, so they have to cut everything out. When they take something out of the context, and abbreviate it, they may. . . you know, like the president was interviewed and what she wrote came out that - Oh! We're going to sue the government and we're going to get the money back. That's not what she really said. And she said, God, that appears in the paper - it makes it appear like all of us is after money, you know?

Rosalie Wax: Well, this has happened to me, and I consulted a lawyer about it, and he advised me that I should talk to no reporters, about this Japanese matter. I'll give you my word - giri - that I won't publish - it's OK to give it to historians, who'll keep it quiet, I guess, but I won't publish anything.

Joseph Kikuchi: Yes.

Rosalie Wax: without. . .

Joseph Kikuchi: (interrupts) I agree - but that wasn't the only thing, you know, kind of, that with these interviews, that the material is taken out of context and highlighted. . .



RW: This happened to me, when I wrote up that I got this grant from Rockefeller, they didn't get it straight.

JK: That kind of scares you. . . Well, are you doing this all by yourself, or do you have people aiding you?

RW: No. It's just a small grant. And since I was there at Tule Lake so long, and I have my fieldnotes, which were not given to the library, you know. . .

JK: When were you there at Tule Lake?

RW: I was there from February. . . I began to visit in February 1944 - that was after they had the vote and gave up the strike. . .

JK: Yes.

RW: And then I lived there until May of 1945. And I talked to a great many people and took it all down verbatim.

JK: That's when I was there. I was there from 1943 to November of forty-five. We were first at Rohwer, in Arkansas. See, we were one of the so-called disloyal ones, and when they segregated that group - I guess - I was only about nine or ten, but evidently my parents answered No-No on one of those loyalty questions.

RW: And so you went with your parents?

JK: Right, right.

RW: Could I ask when you were born, and where?

JK: I was born in 1932, in Penryn, California.

RW: You must have been about nine or ten, when Pearl Harbor came and. . .

JK: I was nine.

RW: Do you remember anything about how you felt when you heard that you and your parents were going to be evacuated?

JK: What I think now, is the, how would you say. . . of not knowing what's in the future. . . How would you say, there's a word for it. . . the insecurity of not knowing. Because, even though you're poor, there's a certain amount of security, because. . . neighbors. . . everyone knows you. And then, I still remember, when we were given notice to evacuate, since we didn't know where we were going to be sent. We knew we were going to be sent to Stockton Assembly Center, but from there, we didn't know where we were going to be sent.

RW: You were sent to Stockton?

JK: Yes. That was a racetrack there. . . and they assembled everyone there.

RW: How did your father earn his living?

JK: Well, my parents, you know, we're all farmers - grape growers.

RW: And did your brothers and sisters go in with you?

JK: Yes, the whole family had to go.

RW: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

JK: Seven brothers and one sister.

RW: And then, I was going to ask, do you have any memories of the Assembly Center?

JK: Well, this is very interesting, because - about a year ago I went back to my home town, you know, . . .



RW: In Penryn?

JK: No this was in Lodi, I was born in Penryn, but we were living in Lodi. But anyway, I went back - this is after almost forty years, and God, my old shack is still up, you know, and, you know how your memory is when you're small, and everything looks so gigantic? And God, it was so small there. And then I went to visit all my ? that I used to go to. It was a really interesting thing. But the haunting part was the house was almost exactly like we just stepped out. The house is there. Our work clothes and everything is still kind of hanging. No one has every been there. They're using that as a storage house now. You kind of got to peek in there. But, it kind of brings memories back. . . of childhood.

RW: Do you remember anything that happened to you in the Assembly Center, does anything come to your mind?

JK: Well, the Assembly Center, at that age. . . once we were in the Assembly Center, then you have lots of kids of your age that you had to run around and play with, and so, in that sense, for my age group, it was kind of good, because we had playmates, and you didn't have to work on the farm, you know. So we got to play a lot. But the only disadvantage is, you can't go anywhere, around. My older brothers were at a disadvantage because they were older.

RW: I've talked to a man who was eleven at the time, and he felt sad, and he did sense the rejection even at that age. Did you have any feeling like that?

JK: It's not. . . It's like you had a close friend, and all of a sudden the friend says, 'I don't want to see you anymore,' you know. It's that type of feeling. Rejection, I guess, you call it.

RW: Did you experience any of that?

JK: 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, where I really felt I had better control.

RW: Are you saying that this bothered you so much that you didn't want to think about it until after you left college?

JK: Yes, 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. Once you get out of college, where you know you're more trained than other people, then you get rid of that inferiority complex. So in that sense, I would say that it psychologically, it does, even though you didn't go out of your way to feel it. I've always felt that. I really think that once I got out of college, I went to professional school, I felt I was more up. The high school, however, you feel like you really weren't up to that standard, or whatever there was in my mind.

RW: You didn't resent this, or was it just a kind of timidity?

JK: No - It isn't this. I think it was - I never spent any time resenting - because you can't go back and do anything about it. Even to this day - I never really resented, you know, like, my family - we all went back to Japan, you know. And then, I spent one year in Japan, and then I came back on my own, you know, I was fourteen or so. And I made my way since then, by myself.

RW: You mean, from Tule Lake you went to Japan for a couple of years, and then you came back on your own?

JK: Yes. You see, I think we went back in 1945, about December. And I came back in November of 1946.

RW: And then you went to highschool here?

JK: Yes. You see, I lived with a Jewish family and went to high school - I was a school



- JK: boy in exchange for room and board - and that's how I went through high school. And, from there, I volunteered for the United States Army, during the Korean war... It's really ironic, you know, you figure, up from 1941 to forty-five or forty-six, we're what they call security risks, and everything. And then by 1949 we're all in military intelligence, with the highest security clearance. And so I get the clearance and everything. On that I get the highest clearance. So I look back on it today, you know, and I think, boy, that is really ironic, where, from a suspected disloyal person, all of a sudden you get the highest security clearance. So it's kind of ironic, when you really look at it, how the country uses you to their convenience.
- RW: Well, on the other hand, I have to respect you for volunteering for the Army.
- JK: The reason, I think, is that we were still trying to prove, our loyalty, you know. We missed - most of us were too young for World War II. And then the Korean War came, quite a few of us volunteered. . . to continue to prove that we were loyal. My brothers also volunteered, and they were all in military intelligence, one was in Air Force Intelligence and the other one was in the CIC, which is Counter Intelligence. And so our whole family, which were considered disloyal, which is real ironic. So today when they say that we were put in camp because of disloyalty, it doesn't really hold water, because - as soon as the war's over we're considered the loyalest kids and given high military classification. It doesn't really make sense.
- RW: After the war, what profession did you enter?
- JK: I'm a dentist.
- RW: And I guess, after the war you must have gone to college and begun professional training?
- JK: Yes, I went to UCLA for four years - and then four years at Wash. U. (Washington University at St. Louis). The profession of my other brother, he went into podiatry. So, our family, well, I tell you, really looking back, we had drive and determination. We kind of starved when we were going to school, but. . . We didn't have the typical family. We all made it on our own.
- RW: You didn't have the GI bill, after. . . ?
- JK: Yes. I went to college with it.
- RW: But in high school you kind of starved?
- JK: Yes - in high school we just worked in a Jewish family. That is what's really nice, you know, because the only ethnic group that really helped the Japanese Americans when they got out of camp, was the Jewish community.
- RW: They did do that. Well, I would say not only the. . . I had a friend at Tule Lake, Mr. Kunitani, who was helped by a religious group. You know there are a few religious groups that helped them, but I can understand the Jews helping.
- JK: Yes. You see I went to high school in San Francisco, you know, and there were quite a few of us that were living with families, most of them were living with the Jewish families, and their. . . B'Nai. . . or whatever that is.
- RW: B'Nai B'Rith.
- JK: They really got together, and I think each family that belonged to that, made a commitment of taking in one student, you know.
- RW: That's wonderful.
- JK: And quite a few of us were able to go through school, because there's no other way that we could have made it through high school without that kind of support. They were really good to us.



RW: That's nice to know.

JK: I think part of it, I think, they or their relatives went through the same thing in Germany, so I think there was a certain amount of sympathy.

RW: I was going to ask about your memories - when you went to Rohwer, did you go to the WRA school there?

JK: Yes.

RW: Do you have a special memories of that time?

JK: I thought it was real good, the school, well, I guess you couldn't compare it to today's standards, I guess, you know, it's below poverty type of education, because they didn't have any facilities except home made desks and a couple of books. But I still remember the teachers were real dedicated type. I think quite a few were Quakers and Christian.

RW: Yes. There were many good people in. . .

JK: Yes. I think we didn't have material facilities, but the type of encouragement and everything that they gave to us was really good, I think. Because, you figure, during World War II, when the popular thing is to hate the Japanese, those people committed themselves, and (?)

RW: Would you agree with me, I've noticed with other Japanese Americans I've talked with, I sensed that they felt that not everybody thought that they were criminals or bad.

JK: Yes.

RW: And perhaps that was one reason people talked to me. I was the only person who went in and saw them and. . .

JK: Why did you go?

RW: I was a member of the Evacuation and Resettlement Study,

JK: Was that supported by the school?

RW: Supported by the University of California and again - by The Rockefeller Foundation. And we were supposed to study the evacuation. And I was the only one who could go to Tule Lake, because things were so rough there, that any Japanese who would go visiting and asking questions would be sure to be called inu.

JK: Yes. That's right.

RW: But I was a big, strapping, hakujin, and I was 31 or 32 at the time, and I just got along beautifully with lots of. . .

JK: Oh. You know that now, some people are accusing the study group. You know that, don't you?

RW: That I hadn't heard.

JK: Well, they're inclined that the group that went and got the information, that they gave the information to the security people and they used that information to find out who were the trouble makers.

RW: Oh! Is this the paper by Mr. Suzuki?

JK: Yes.

RW: I've read that, and he does talk about the WRA Community Analysts and accuses them of this.

JK: Yes. Working, you know.

RW: And I think he even accuses me, and I had to laugh, because. . .

JK: Well, see, the thing was for information, instead of using it for academic use.



- RW: I think he exaggerates, because I knew the Community Analysts, and most of them were really very decent people.
- JK: I'm kind of glad that I'm talking to you, you actually went in, you know, and served there, because within our group there are some bitter persons, you know, that are around, and they're shooting in every direction. Do you know Mike Matsuoka?
- RW: No.
- JK: He used to be the head of the JACL, during wartime, and there are some of them that are accusing him, that he sold out, and that if he hadn't sold out, why we wouldn't have had to go into camp. The thing is that when someone makes that type of. . . accuses people, without any information, it kind of bothers me when people start doing that, because it's really throwing mud all over the place.
- RW: Well fortunately, as far as I can see, only a very few people are doing it.
- JK: Yes.
- RW: Almost all the Japanese I talk to are very sane and level headed.
- JK: Yes. The people in this area, in the St. Louis area are a little different than the ones on the West Coast.
- RW: In what way?
- JK: Well, the thing is, most of us, in this area, are professionals, you know. And so, nationwide, we're a little bit more. . . before we jump to conclusions, we're willing to analyze lots of things, without getting emotionally involved in the thing. Whereas, on the West Coast, some of us would pick up any slur and believe it, without analyzing anything. So, when we meet with the West Coast group, it kind of bothers me, because, when you sit down and (?) you make this kind of accusation, you know, this. . . It really isn't based on fact, it's based more on repetition. Where someone said it and said it and said it, and eventually they accepted it as fact. I know that there are some real angry people out there that. . .
- RW: Well, I guess in the Redress and Reparation, the level heads will have to do their best to take charge.
- JK: That's the thing.
- RW: I talked to a Japanese friend about this, Prof. \_\_\_\_\_, in San Francisco, and I asked him how serious this was, and he told me that most people didn't pay much attention to this, to these accusations. That made me feel better.
- JK: Yes.
- RW: I'd like to ask, how did it happen that your family did decide to go to Tule Lake?
- JK: Well, I think, my father, I think back now that I'm older. . .
- RW: May I interrupt and ask, were you the oldest in the family?
- JK: No, I was the youngest. But, you probably know, the Japanese family - that they don't communicate. The father hardly ever communicates to their children, you know. And so, I really didn't. . . I look back, you know, I guess I was only about 13 or 14 when I left my parents. But even then, it's a one-way type of communication, where the father tells you what to do and you accept it. You never talk back or even suggest what you believe in. So, I've talked with my older brothers over the years, and what I've found out was my father was a real pacifist during the war, and so he came to this country during the Japanese Russian war. I think, you could say that today (?) I think of him as a draft dodger. He knew that if he stayed in Japan he was going to get drafted. And when I went back to Japan, oh I guess '74 or '75, and I was talking with some of the relatives, you trace back the family history, you find out that the whole family, for generations back, never believed in fighting. That was one of the things they carried over here, and so, during the war, when we were in Rohwer, it



JK: wasn't disloyalty that made them go to Tule Lake, it was more, that at that time, by going to Tule Lake, their sons won't be drafted. I think that was his motive. . . Because I remember that when I volunteered for the draft and I went into service (during the Korean War) and I was stationed in (?) for a couple of months. When I visited my father, he was still alive at that time. By then, he didn't have too much control over my life, because I'd been away for many years. When I went home, he said, "Get out of that uniform!" Because I had the Army uniform on.

What I was saying was that he didn't believe in fighting, or, you know, even being in service. So, when I was in uniform, you know, the American Army uniform, the first thing he said was, "Get out of that uniform," because that, to him, implied the worst.

RW: This was not a religious feeling?

JK: No. It was not a religious feeling. I think he was what you call a pure Pacifist. He just didn't believe in killing or fighting, and I think it really bothered him. Although he never really said it out loud. But he never pounded that into our heads, so from our point of view, it didn't disturb us to serve.

RW: Can I ask, with your views there, and you being the youngest, did you also go to the Project WRA school?

JK: Yes.

RW: That's interesting. Your father didn't make you go to Japanese school?

JK: Oh, we went to Japanese school too.

✓ RW: Which one did you go to?

JK: I don't. . . know about it. . . now.

RW: Now let's see, there was the Dai Towa and then there was one. . .

JK: Oh the one that was radical. We didn't join that one. My father kind of thought that that was militaristic.

RW: Of course he would! That's interesting.

JK: Because that group, they shaved off their head, they had the rising sun on their sweat shirts, all of them was completely to Japan.

RW: I imagine your father didn't take any action against them. He just left them alone.

JK: Yes. He didn't like any kind of fighting, so he just said, that's not the way I'm going to go. We went to the regular Japanese school, where they just taught us the language. It wasn't any brain-washing.

RW: (Tells story of what she did for teacher in Japanese language school during Department of Justice pickups.)

JK: Well, I tell you, that period was really traumatic, I can remember that there was a pretty big uprising.

RW: Would you like to tell me more about it?

JK: Yes. That period really disturbed the people of the camp. Up to that point the people obeyed what the Administration told us to do. And the line of communication and the block and all the way down to the residents was very strong. But when this force came, it really destructed the whole Administration and the line of communication, because it split the camp in two. The one was, you had to be a super-patriot to Japan and the other was, you were just an internee, because you wrote No-No on your loyalty questionnaire.



RW: Yes, they said 'Your not Japanese,' the Hōkoku, . . .

JK: Yes.

RW: Unless you join us.

JK: Yes. Unless you committed yourself. And so, they really split the camp apart and - well, naturally, you could identify them, because they shaved off their hair. And they were very militaristic.

RW: Did you, as an 11 or 12 year old boy, did you have any experiences with these people at all?

JK: Well, we were kind of fortunate, because our block, I think we maybe had only two to three families (of Hōshi-dan). But if you were in a block where the majority were that type, then they could of really made your life miserable.

RW: Yes. I have it in my notes, they forced people to sign.

JK: Right, and they beat you up. And so, I still remember, that we boys went in groups wherever we went, because, if you weren't on their side, you know, they would try to pick a fight and everything, you know.

RW: I'm so glad you told<sup>me</sup> That I didn't know.

JK: Yes. One of my father's best friends got stabbed during that period.

RW: Well, the stabbings were mostly in May and June of 1944.

JK: Yes, somewhere around there. Because I remember my father came home and he said, 'Oh,' he said, . . .

RW: Did they stab him because they said he was an inu?

JK: Yes. I don't know if anyone told you. His name was Noma.

RW: Oh, Mr. Noma!

JK: You remember him.

RW: He got murdered!

JK: Did he get murdered? I remember that he got stabbed, I didn't know he got murdered. You see, he was from the same prefecture as my father, so they were close friends. That man (Noma) was well educated, and I think my father took lot of his advise. My father really wasn't that well educated. He had three years of education, but he learned to read and everything by himself. So he read a lot, but he didn't have a formal type of education.

I remember, Mr. Noma used to visit us a lot of time. He was very logical in explaining what's happening. And I think he might of, I don't know for sure, but I think he might of stood up in the block meeting or something, and he might of expressed his point of view and it didn't go over.

RW: Well, I've always felt that there were some of these Resegregationists, a few, who were really gangsters, and they were set on scaring people at that time, and that some of them were a little crazy.

JK: Yes. They were kind of crazy. The fanatic type, you know.

RW: But nobody would ever, but nobody ever dared say a word because. . .

JK: Right. Because if you stood up and said something, then they would beat you up.

RW: You'd be beat up or your family would be killed.

JK: Yes. And so, evidently, he must have said, my father said, you know, he got involved in some things that he said things he shouldn't have said to some people. I remember my father saying he (Noma) stood up at a block meeting and expressed his point of view,



JK: and I think it kind of embarrassed the fanatics. And I think to a certain degree they lost their face and I think that's how they got after him.

That period was very traumatic, but, you know, I don't really think that those fanatics were really crazy, except that they got carried away with their power. They had no opposition. Some of them didn't go back to Japan. Most of them went back to Japan, but some of them, at the last minute, they changed their minds. [ ? ] They changed their tune right away.

RW: I think you are right, that this was a kind of, how should one say, a fanatical movement. I got carried away myself, so I can understand it.

JK: Because there's no opposition. Those who desired power. . .

RW: And then when all the police resigned, why there was no police in the camp, so there was no safety.

JK: Yes. We were fortunate in living in a block that the majority were more peaceful than the fanatics. But I know that a fellow, my friend, lived in a block that had nothing but fanatics. I know they shaved their head off, because they didn't belong to the group for identification.

RW: You mean they shaved without being members?

JK: Yes.

RW: I know a lot of people joined just to be safe, but. . .you know, much as I've studied and worked, I keep learning new things. I'm so glad I talked to you.

JK: There's a lot of things - that really, today I think back, and now, I can see it more logically, than I saw then.

My brother testified in L.A. during the recent hearing, you know, and he asked me also to testify in Chicago. But I really can't do that because, God, it is really emotional. Even to this day, I think it's still buried within me that I really don't face it as completely. . .I find myself every so often, segments would come out. When you see something. . .But the Iranian crisis really made me kind of mad. . .being ganged up on by toughs. That's when I felt that we really had to bring the story out. So that in a period of hysteria, people could look back to our studies which was done during a peaceful moment. The point to say: 'Now look, before you turn into mob hysteria, look what happened here.' So that we could be more of a guidepost. And that's how I'd like to do it. I tell you, when things were being thrown at the Iranian students, when I read that, when I read that I said, 'God, what could you do?' Because they must have really been frightened. To be in a strange country, and the public being against them.

RW: It's very moving for you to tell me this.



Joseph Kikuchi

February 24, 1982



Joseph Kikuchi - February 24, 1982

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Joseph Kikuchi: Hello?

Rosalie Wax: Hello. I was hearing Bach in the background.

Joseph Kikuchi: Yeah, my daughter has a piano lesson this afternoon, so she's doing the last minute cramming. She always does that.

Rosalie Wax: I recognize it from my childhood. I wondered if you have a little time and would like. I would like to ask you a few questions on some things that have come up.

Joseph Kikuchi: Yeah.

Rosalie Wax: And do you mind if I tape it and then you can correct it or change it?

Joseph Kikuchi: That's okay.

Rosalie Wax: One thing I did want to report to you that your suggestion of making a second interview has begun to work out very well.

Joseph Kikuchi: Yeah, I notice there is a little more detail and I think that the people are talking the second time are used to you now and letting out a little bit more than they would initially. I think the first interview that you make, a lot of them are kind of guarded kind of response; the second one seem a little bit more detailed. Although that one lady had a long one.

Rosalie Wax: (both laugh) I really felt that she had a lot of anxieties about. somehow she was expressing her tension about her life in camp - talking so much, perhaps.

Joseph Kikuchi: Yeah. I've noticed the one part that really interested me was on hers was the. her parents. and I think my parents went through a very similar experience, except my parents we didn't call them back, because they kind of liked Japan and didn't want to come back. But I was reading that and I said, 'It's almost similar to ours.'

Rosalie Wax: It was really kind of moving there of her being all on her own.

Joseph Kikuchi: Right. But I noticed that her family did have mental problems, a lot of nervous breakdowns. I just wonder. I don't think you can really say it's all due to camp, but some of it I guess might have been - the initiating factor. It was a sad story.

Rosalie Wax: I would agree. There was such stress and such insecurity in camp, that even. like I said frankly in my book: I went "crazy" sometimes.

Joseph Kikuchi: That is really a hard thing not to get so emotionally involved. Trying to be, what do you call it, a professional observer, but I guess it is kind of hard without getting emotionally involved.

Rosalie Wax: You do get emotionally involved come what may.



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JK: I find that in my practice too. A lot of time when you are treating your best friends or your relatives or someone, nothing goes right. (laughs)

RW: (laughs)

JK: I just wonder sometime if we just try too hard to please. And I think in your work you have the same experience sometimes.

RW: That's a wonderful observation. I've never heard that before, but I think it is right.

JK: I think that's why we don't like to treat relatives.

RW: Well, on the other hand, there is some difference in that. When my husband gets ill, I take very good care of him and I may get anxious for him, but I should say, this is a little bit different than if I were treating relatives professionally.

JK: Yeah, I think it's different because your judgement isn't as objective when you are more emotionally involved.

RW: Yes, that's true.

JK: It seems we function better when we don't get too emotionally involved.

RW: Yes, that's correct. As I have emphasized: the thing to keep doing is to take accurate notes from all the people whether you like what you hear or you don't.

JK: And then after you have that, then away from there you can kind of analyze it a little better.

RW: When anxiety or whatever it is, when it's over you've got the notes. Well, I have myself been anxious. I was even going to call you last week because I talked to your sister and she suggested I send her the interview so she can answer it in writing.

JK: It really kind of surprises me. I wonder why. She's very talkative and out-going. I just wonder if she's getting some advice from the JACL, because she works there at JACL. Because that really surprised me that she's not as free. Evidently she must be getting some advice from JACL.

RW: Well, that would be all right. It happens my secretary is ill and can't type up the questions right now, but I'll send it to her and see how she feels.

JK: Did she say why she would rather answer it that way.

RW: Well, after I had asked her this, then I asked if she would mind asking your older brothers and she was very hesitant and she kind of indicated that perhaps she could, but she wasn't sure. And then I suggested that if they don't wish to talk to me, would you ask them why? Just as you asked now. And then she said to me, 'Well, but you should know.' Then I was taken aback because I felt, well I have a lot of hypotheses as to why, but I really need people's statements and so I have been asking people.

JK: Because you can't assume. Your assumption may be wrong.



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- RW: I can't assume it in my own mind. So I thought I might even, if you don't mind, I might ask you what your guesses would be as to why people who have gone to Japan and been there some years and then came back, would be somewhat reluctant to talk to me.
- JK: I think the ones who went back to Japan, I feel that they are the ones who suffered the most physically and mentally, than the ones that just went through the camp experience. And so I think that group that went to Japan, I think they're suffering, I think it brings it back and I think some of the memories are very personal, and I think the hurt they feel - it hurts to even talk about it. That might be one of the things and they might be carrying a certain amount of bitterness below the surface and they may not wish to express it. I was there one year, but I don't think I suffered as much as say my older brothers who were there several years.
- RW: How long were they there?
- JK: My older brothers must have been there at least five-six years.
- RW: This is what I would first guess that it just brings back too much pain.
- JK: Yeah, because I stayed with my parents at home, so that I was more or less protected and I didn't have to face the cruel world. But they went out, they had to earn their own living, they were working for the Armed Services, and I think they may have suffered somewhat there. . .the insecurity that they had to go through, because every time the division would get transferred or pulled out, then they would have to hustle to get another job. . .constant hustling, because if they didn't get the job, they would be unemployed. . .starve. . .And so I think my sisters and brothers might have gone through quite a few more things that they might not want to talk about. Although when I was with them, we hardly ever talked about that period. .what they talk about is just the good parts, but I'm pretty sure that they went through some periods where they went hungry and cold and insecurity.
- RW: This is another hypothesis I had which, would you please criticize frankly because my aim here is to learn - Some did not have citizenship, you know for many years until the law was passed that took away this renunciation business. And I just wonder if any. . if they might have this insecurity that this might happen again or that they might be deported?
- JK: No, I don't think that. Because that case has been settled and you can't take it away again. Unless they renounce voluntarily. So I don't think that would be. But now that you brought up the point, it was a very insecure period for them, because they didn't have Japanese citizenship, and they didn't have American citizenship. So that they are a person without a country. And I think to live four-five years under that type of cloud is a very insecure feeling. So I think, that's another point that is a big hurt that they don't want to talk about.
- RW: After all the troubles and anxieties of Tule Lake. .those terrible things to have this more terrible six or seven years. Oh God!
- JK: So when you figure the number of years that they lost, say four years in camp, and then five years in Japan, that's nine years out of their lives. .not getting into any career or something like that. So to them I think the years in camp through war and Japan is a big chunk out of their lives.
- RW: This would be for some of them as much as nine years.



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- JK: Yeah, that's what I'm saying. So I think that is one of things that my older brothers may not wish to talk about. I think to a certain degree, when they look back and see the younger ones in our family, succeeding with education and everything and they didn't succeed as much. I think they look back and say 'Well, I've lost nine years, when I could have trained or got educated.' So to them they may hold certain amount of betterness, although I think it has been pretty repressed. So if someone asks, 'Did the war hurt you any?' you know, they want to slug the person, who asked that kind of question. . . Because they suffered so much and they say, 'Well if someone can't see that, it's an insult to be asked that.' And I just wonder if my sister is responding in that way.
- RW: She didn't say it accusingly, but in a rather gentle way, you know, but well, I think I sensed a kind of. . . I replayed the tape which I now wiped out because I know she wouldn't want me to keep it. . . but I got very distressed before I had replayed it, and then I replayed it and it didn't sound particularly accusing, but on the other hand, I think deep down in a sense it was an expression of. . . how should one say?. . . 'You're pushing in where you're not wanted', kind of. . .
- JK: Yeah, yeah. I think they want to keep it very private. All these years that I've corresponded with them, she was the only one in our family that always looked back. My brother Arthur and I would always laugh about it, because she is always living in the past. And so I was thinking if you spoke to her, you would get a lot of the past history and it kind of surprised me that she's very hesitant about talking about her past. Because she's always lived in the past.
- RW: If it troubles her so much, it would perhaps do her good to express it.
- JK: She's real happy-go-lucky and very chatty actually and it really surprised me that she won't talk to you.
- RW: Well, when my secretary gets better, I'll send her this material and then I may call her again.
- JK: I tell you what. . . I'll call her and then I won't say that I talked to you or anything, but I'll just feel her out and I'll just ask her if she got in touch with you and then ask why. . . because I'm kind of curious to see why she won't. . . the only thing that I could really feel is the reason why she is very closed mouth about this thing. . . I think she may be getting advice from the JACL. . . someone there. She might have asked. . . that you were going to ask questions and what should she do, because she does seek advice and and someone might have advised her not to say anything. That might be the thing. She herself may want to say it, but since she works for JACL, I think. . .
- RW: It would be very valuable to know in any case. I would be obliged, but I don't want to put any strain on you. You've done so much for me.
- JK: No, I don't think because I'm fairly. . . she doesn't. . . I ask lots of things, very personal, right out, so she's not. . . she says I'm very blunt about a lot of things. She's not going to be any more surprised when I ask certain things. I was thinking that a lot of the interviews that you are getting, they are still holding back. . . they're loosening up bit more, but they are holding back. But I was. . . well, N asked me, because there are lots of things that I haven't said to her and then when she was doing these tapes, she asked me certain things. . . how did I feel about some. . . because some of the answers she was getting, she was kind of surprised. One of the things. . . why I would feel or anyone who went through camp experience would feel is that the people who were



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- JK: responsible for putting us into camp have never been brought to dock more or less. What I mean by that is most of them have already died, the people who were responsible, so you can't question them. So there is no resolution of what happened to us. Normally, if someone is hurt with something, then you bring the person to court and you resolve it that way one way or another. Then the problem is solved. But in our case, it has never been solved as such because the years have gone by and the principals are all dead and so we're left hanging. Whereas the Jewish population, where they went through the concentration camps in Germany, the people who were responsible were brought to court, and they had to stand trial, like Goebbels and all those people who were responsible for putting people in camp. And they were tried as war criminals, and so to a certain degree, I don't know if you can call it satisfaction, but at least their case was resolved, but in our case it has never been resolved as such. I think that is one of the reasons why, lot of the people are kind of frustrated. the monetary thing I don't think would really solve the past satisfaction and so I think we are going to just die with an unsolved resolution. We only hope that in the next world, they might be brought to justice or whatever.
- RW: This is very touching explanation you gave and what I kept thinking as you told me was of the words of Job: 'For I know that my vindicator lives, and that he will speak for me at last even God Himself.'
- JK: Yes, and I think. . .When I talk with my friends at lunch time or something, when we talk about war - the losers are always brought to court. . .the war trials and everything are all brought to justice more or less; but the winners are showered with flowers as heroes. But the thing is when you really look down on it, some of the things that the winners have done, are just as bad as the losers. That's one of the things that society has never solved. .to look at the winners and losers and see. .because even in the short time that I served in Korea, some of the things that the armies do during the height of war, are. .if you lost the war, you would be brought up as a war criminal; but those things are never brought up when you win the war. .as long as you don't lose, whatever you do goes. And I think that's what happened here in our case, where. .what we went through will never be brought up. .because nobody is going to be around. .they're all dead and the ones that are around are so old now that the feelings are gone. I think that's one of the frustrations that I kind of see in some of the interviews that you are getting; they can't pin it down why they feel this way, but they still have. .
- RW: I think you are very perceptive and quite correct, because I have in my own life experienced things like this that happened and I never forget. I remember Mr. Kurihara saying to me once that the Japanese never forget.
- JK: That's true. My friends laugh at me when they say that in today's world, Japan and U.S. are almost like friends, but I always tell them, don't take that at face value, because the samurai spirit is: there is always the revenge. And so if somewhere along in history where the tables are turned, World War II is going to be retried and they as the victors are going to rewrite the history. Because there is the revenge factor in the Japanese culture, I think they would live. . .
- RW: Yes, I appreciate that and in old days it was in mine.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I was referring to Old Scandinavian law, but Mr. Kikuchi, apparently, thought I was referring to the German defeat in World War I.



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JK: Yeah, I think Hitler did the same thing. He revenged World War I loss, because when he took over France he had them surrender in the same train - remember he went through that little thing and he showed France the humility that German suffered on it. So there is that factor.

RW: Well, I think I will have to start to cook dinner.

JK: You know one person I was thinking that you might talk to, do you know Dr. \_\_\_\_\_? He's a psychiatrist.

RW: I've heard of him.

JK: He works for. .he's the director of the Missouri Mental Hospital right on Arsenal and I was going to talk to him someday, if I see him again that why people you are talking to do not let out all of their feelings. Is it because they can't verbalize it or is it that they are repressing it or have they forgotten it.

RW: I feel it is their place to decide how much they want to tell me, you know. I proceed with this, because insofar as to what they want to tell me, I think it makes them feel somewhat better. It's a release even to express it. . . .I guess basically I have no desire to have anyone tell me anything they don't wish to tell me.



Dr. John Hara DDS  
home: 904 Penny Lane  
St. Louis, CMEC MO.  
227-6851

PSEUDONYM - Sam Nakano

September 27, 1981.

I explain my study - Mr. Hara is reluctant - finally agrees to participate if ,  
~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ should I wish to publish anything, I show him the ~~xx~~  
~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ material first.

hostages  
symptoms -  
not happen again



after return  
to  
Briggs  
Bath

JOSEPH KIKUCHI

14 cm disc from Japan  
P. 2 & 3.

September 27, 1981

Joseph Kikuchi was nine years old at the time of the evacuation. He was born in a small town in California and his father was a grape farmer. With his parents and seven siblings he was evacuated to the Stockton Assembly Center and, subsequently to the Rowher Relocation Center in Arkansas.

I asked him: "Do you remember anything about how you felt when you heard that you and your parents were going to be evacuated?" He replied:

What I think now ... of not knowing what's in the future ... Because even though you're poor, there's a certain amount of security, because, ... neighbors, ... everyone knows you. When we were given notice to evacuate we didn't know where we were going to be sent. We knew we were going to be sent to the Stockton Assembly Center, but from there, we didn't know where we were going to be sent.

RW: Did you have a feeling of rejection?

JK: It's not ... It's like you had a close friend, and all of a sudden the friend says, 'I don't want to see you anymore,' you know. It's that type of feeling. Rejection, I guess you call it.

RW: Did you experience any of that?

JK: 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, where I really felt I had better control.

RW: Are you saying that this bothered you so much that you didn't want to think about it until after you left college?

JK: Yes. 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. Once you get out of college, where you know you're more trained than other people, then you get rid of that inferiority complex. So in that sense, I would say that it psychologically, it does, even though you didn't go out of your way to feel it. I've always felt that. I really think that once I got out of college and went to professional school, I felt I was more up. The high school, however, you feel like you really weren't up to that standard, or whatever that was in my mind.

RW: Was it just a kind of timidity?

JK: No. - I think it was - I never spent any time resenting - because you can't go back and do anything about it. Even to this day - I never really resented, you know. Like my family - we all went back to Japan. And then, I spent one year in Japan, and then I came back on my own. I was fourteen or so. And I made my way since then, by myself.



RW: You mean, from Tule Lake you went to Japan for a couple of years, and then you came back on your own?

JK: Yes. You see, I think we went back in 1945, about December. And I came back in November of 1946.

RW: And then you went to high school here?

JK: Yes. You see, I lived with a Jewish family and went to high school - I was a school boy in exchange for room and board - and that's how I went through high school. And, from there, I volunteered for the United States Army, during the Korean war ... It's really ironic, you know, you figure, up from 1941 to forty-five or forty-six, we're what they call security risks, and everything. And then by 1949 we're all in military intelligence, with the highest security clearance. And so I get the clearance and everything. On that I get the highest clearance. So I look back on it today, you know, and I think, boy, that is really ironic. Where, from a suspected disloyal person, all of a sudden you get the highest security clearance. So it's kind of ironic, when you really look at it, how the country uses you to their convenience.

RW: Well, on the other hand, I have to respect you for volunteering for the Army.

JK: The reason I think, it that we were still trying to prove, our loyalty, you know. We missed- most of us were too young for World War II. And then the Korean War came, quite a few of us volunteered ... to continue to prove that we were loyal. My brothers also volunteered, and they were all in military intelligence. One was in Air Force Intelligence and the other one was in the CIC, which is Counter Intelligence. So today when they say that we were put in camp because of disloyalty, it doesn't really hold water, because - as soon as the war's over we're considered the loyalest kids and given high military classification. It doesn't really make sense.

RW: After the war, what profession did you enter?

JK: I'm a dentist.

RW: And I guess, after the war you must have gone to college and begun professional training?

JK: Yes, I went to UCLA for four years - and then four years at Wash. U. (Washington University at St. Louis). The profession of my other brother, he went into podiatry. So, our family, well, I tell you, really looking back, we had drive and determination. We kind of starved when we were going to school, but ... We all made it on our own.

RW: You didn't have the GI bill, after ...?

JK: Yes. I went to college with it.

RW: But in high school you kind of starved?

JK: Yes - in high school we just worked in a Jewish family. That is what's really nice, you know, because the only ethnic group that really helped the Japanese Americans when they got out of camp, was the Jewish community.

RW: They did do that.

JK: Yes. You see I went to high school in San Francisco, you know, and there were quite a few of us that were living with families, most of them were living with the Jewish families, and their, ... B'Nai .. or whatever that is.



RW: B'Nai B'Rith.

JK: They really got together, and I think each family that belonged to that, made a commitment of taking in one student, you know.

RW: That's wonderful.

JK: And quite a few of us were able to go through school, because there's no other way that we could have made it through high school without that kind of support. They were really good to us.

At the end of this interview, Mr. Kikuchi told me:

My brother testified in L.A. (Los Angeles) during the recent hearings and he asked me also to testify in Chicago. But I really can't do that because - God - it is really emotional ... I find myself, every so often ... segments would come out when you see something...

But the Iranian crisis really made me kind of mad, being ganged up on by toughs. That's when I felt that we really had to bring the story out. So that in a period of hysteria, people could look back to our studies which were done during a peaceful moment. To point to and say: "Now look. Before you turn into mob hysteria, look what happened here."

So that we could be more of a guidepost. And that's how I'd like to do it. I tell you, when things were being thrown at the Iranian students, when I read that, I said: "God, what could you do?" Because they must have really been frightened. To be in a strange country, and the public being against them.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ten days after this interview, Mr. Kikuchi and I had lunch together. He told me that on the boat that took him and his repatriating family to Japan, there was a man who kept insisting that Japan had won the war - that the newspapers were lying, and that they were being repatriated because Japan had been victorious.

He also told me that life in Japan had been extremely difficult. "We starved." "Sometimes we had nothing to eat but mush made from weed." One of his older brothers, who returned to the United States, always keeps a closet full of canned food.

The native Japanese, he said, viewed the repatriates and expatriates as "outsiders". He and his family were told, "You are outsiders." "We never could feel at home in Japan."

Young people who were 15 to twenty years old who went to Japan with their parents and then, after 5 or 6 years, returned to the United States had the most difficult time finding a place for themselves. At age 20-25 they were unable to start getting a professional education.



✶:

Joseph Kikuchi:

SN. To a certain degree was that the setup - that they could always look back and this should never happen to any minority. Just recently, when the Iranian crisis was going on - you ~~xxx~~ see how the Iranian minority<sup>^</sup> they didn't know what to do. Threatened, well, ~~xxx~~ you know, I've found, it brings back memory of what happened to us right after ~~Pearl Harbor~~ Pearl Harbor.

RM. I think it was Senator Hayakawa that suggested that .....

[illegible]

That's how I kind of look at it.

RH . (laughs)

SN. He has a certain way of approaching it. You know, ~~the way he takes~~, you know, /it's his personality.

He doesn't care too much for ~~an~~ immediate gratification. He's looking way  
~~he's says~~ *He says* going to denounce/ me,  
 ahead - ~~right~~ *right* now everyone's ~~stammering~~, but years from now - when  
 really  
 they/look back - it may be the correct one.

EW Well, you know, what you've told me has made me feel that I shouldn't

publish anything without ~~gk~~ first getting the approval of the people on the C Committee for Redress and Reparation.

SN: Well, I think if you're approaching this, the only thing that concerns us is that once we give the information, then we don't have any control over how it's used. If ~~it's then given~~ ~~it's given~~ it's given with some ~~kind~~ kind of (?) to look at the final thing before it's published, and then we could make a correction and then - that type of thing - if you ~~would~~ would be willing ...

RW. OK. I will give you my word that ~~not~~ before I publish anything, I'll send you a copy of it.

SN: Yeah - because, if you remember, several months ago, the newspaper, *published*



the interview with some of our leaders <sup>in</sup> of the people who had this experience, and. Naturally, the newspaper thing, they're working for ~~space~~ space, so they ~~have~~ have to cut everything out. When they take something out of the context, and abbreviate it, they may...you know, like the president was interviewed and what she wrote came out <sup>that</sup> /.- Oh! We're going to sue the government and we're going to get the money back. That's not what ~~he~~ she really said. And ~~he~~ ~~he~~ he said, God, that appears in the paper - it makes it appear like all of us is after money, you know?

RW/ Well, this has happened to me, and I consulted a lawyer ~~and~~ about it, <sup>that</sup> and I should talk to no reporters, <sup>and</sup> he ~~advised~~ advised me, about this ~~Japanese~~ Japanese matter, ~~and~~ and I'll give you my word - girl that I won't publish -- it's OK to give it to historians, who'll keep it quiet, I guess, but I won't publish anything ...

SN: Yeah. *Yes*

RW. without ...

SN. (interrupts) I agree - but that <sup>wasn't</sup> ~~was~~ the only thing, you know, ~~kind~~ kind of, that with these interviews, that the material is taken out of context <sup>and</sup> and highlighted...

I  
RW. This happened to ~~me~~ me, when ~~they~~ wrote up that I got this grant from Rockefeller, they didn't get it straight.

SN: That kind of scares you. . . . Well, are you ~~doing~~ doing this all by yourself, or do you have people aiding you.

RW. No. It's just a small grant. And since I was there at Tule Lake so long, and I have my fieldnotes, which were not given to the library, you know. . . .

SN. When were you there at Tule Lake?

RW. I was there from February, ..I began to visit in February 1944 - that was after they had the vote and gave up the strike ..

SN. Yes.

RW. And then I lived there until May of 1945, ~~and~~ and ~~it~~ I talked to a great many people and took it all down verbatim.



SN: That's when I was there. I was there from 1943 to November of forty-five. We were first at Rehwer, in Arkansas. X See, we were one of the so-called disloyal ones, and when they segregated the <sup>x</sup> group - I guess - I was only about nine or ten, but evidently my parents answered No-No on one of those ~~loyalty~~ loyalty questions.

RW. And so you went with you r parents?

SN: Right, right.

RW: Could I ask when you were born, and where?

SN: I was born in 1932, in Penryn, California.

RW: You must have been about ~~ix~~ nine or ten, when Pearl Harbor came ~~and~~ and..

SN: I was nine.

RW: Do you remember anything about how you felt when you heard that you and your parents were going to be evacuated?

SN. What I think now, is the, how ~~xxxx~~ would you say .. of not knowing what's

in the future. . . How would you say, there's a word for it... the insecurity of not knowing . Because, even though you're poor, there's ~~a~~

a certain amount of security, because.. neighbors..everyone knows you.

And then, I still rem~~me~~ber, when we were ~~xxxxxx~~ given notice to evacuate, since we didn't know where we were going to be sent. We knew we were going to be sent to Stockton Assembly Center, but from there, we didn't know where we were going to be sent.

RW: You were ~~xxx~~ sent to Stockton?

SN: Yes. That was a racetrack there. .. ~~xxx~~ and they assembled everyone there.

RW. How did your father earn his living?

SN. Well, my parents, you know, we're all farmers - grape growers.

RW. And did your ~~xxxxxx~~ brothers and sisters go in with you?

SN: Yes, the whole family had to go.

RW. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

SN: Seven brothers and one sister.

RW: And then, I was going to ask, do you have any memories of the Assembly Center?



SN: Well, this is very interesting, because - about a year ago I went back to my home town, you know, . . .

RW. In Penryn?

SN: No this was in Lodi, I was born <sup>but</sup> in Penryn, we were living in Lodi. But anyway, I ~~went~~ ~~back~~ back - this is after almost forty ~~years~~ years, and ~~the~~ God, my old shack is still up, you know, and, you know how your memory is when you're small, and everything looks so gigantic? And God, it was so small there. And then I went to visit all my        ? that I used to go to . It was a really <sup>S</sup> interesting thing. But the haunting part ~~was~~ ~~was~~ the house was almost exactly like we just stepped out. The house is there. Our work clothes and everything is still kind of hanging. No one has ever been there. They're using that as a storage house now. <sup>You</sup> ~~That~~ kind of got to peek in there. But, it kind of brings memories back...of childhood.

RW: Do you ~~remember~~ remember anything that happened to you in the Assembly Center, does anything come to your mind?

SN: Well, the Assembly Center, at that age... once we were in the Assembly Center, then you have lots of kids of your age that you had to run around and play with, and so ,in that ~~sense~~ sense , for my age group, it ~~was~~ was kind of good, because we had playmates, and you didn't have to work on the farm, you know. So we got to play a lot. But the only disadvantage <sup>is</sup>, you can't go anywhere, around. My elder brothers were at a disadvantage because they were older.

RW I've talked to a man who was eleven at time time, and he felt sad, and he did sense the rejection even at that age. Did you have any feeling like that?

SH: It's not...It ~~like~~ like you had a close friend, and all of a sudden the friend says, "I don't want to see you anymore," you know. It's that type of feeling. Rejection, I guess, you call it.

RW: Did you experience any of that?

SN: Thinking ~~back~~ back, it took ~~xx~~ years, actually, to get to the point where ~~you~~ . . . you would feel secure with a Caucasian group. It took me roughly till I was out of college, where I really felt I had better



~~control~~ control .

RW: Are you saying that this bothered you so much that you didn't want to think about it until after you left college?

SN - Yes, you get that inferiority feeling, because you feel rejected and then you ~~frustrate~~ don't ~~get~~ feel like ~~putting~~ yourself in that position again, ~~So~~ that you never make close friendship with Caucasian group. Once you get out of college, where you know you're more trained than other people, then you get rid of that inferiority complex. So in that sense, I would say that it psychologically, it does, even though you didn't go out of your way to feel ~~it~~ it. I've always felt that. I really think that once I got out of college, I went to professional school, I felt I was more up. The high school, however, you feel like you really weren't up to that standard, or whatever there was in my mind.

RW. You didn't resent this, or was it just a kind of timidity?

SN. No - It ~~isn't~~ isn't this. I think it was - I ~~never~~ never spent any time resenting - because you can't go back and do anything about ~~it~~ it.

Even to this day - I never really resented, you know, like, my family - we all went back to Japan, you know. ~~And~~ And then, I spent one ~~year~~ year in Japan, and then I came back on my own, you know, I was fourteen or so. And I made my way since then, by myself.

RW. You mean, from Tule Lake you went to Japan for a couple of years, and then you came back on your own?

SN: Yes. . You see, I think we ~~were~~ went back in 1945, about December.

And I came back in November of 1946.

RW. And then you ~~went~~ went to highschool here?

SN: Yes. You see, I lived with a Jewish family and went to high school -

I was a school boy ~~in~~ in exchange for room and board - and that 's how I went through high school. And, from there, I volunteered for the United States Army, during the Korean war. ~~It's~~ . . . It's really ironic, you know, you figure, up from 1941 to forty-five or forty-six, we're what



"I went to the farm myself (in Tule Lake). I found that the hens were laying 6,000 to 7,000 eggs a day. There were 290,000 pounds of meat in preservation. We asked the former Tuleans and they said that they never received any portion of it. When we met Mr. Best, he said, 'I've been here only since the first of August. What transpired prior to my arrival does not concern me.'"

"The attitude of the Administrative officials toward our group was very cool. They had the conviction that the less they had to do with the Japanese, the better it would be for them. I often heard the remark, 'I know how to handle the Japanese. Just leave it up to me.'"

#### Motives for Action of November 1

We had met Mr. Best on October 27. We went in there as a committee. There was no mass demonstration. I still had a vain hope at that time that he would listen to reason.

Ever since the farm accident the farm group was not working. The hogs, chicken and packing, being a different section, kept on working. Some representatives demanded that they all quit, but I myself didn't think that wise. I quashed that and the motion did not carry. I'm glad of it.

Going back to the October 27 meeting - realizing that so many people were on the verge of termination because of the strike, we stressed (to Mr. Best) that termination would not be good.

The farm incident had become so entangled that it had become a center-wide topic. The farm group realized that their task would be too great for them to handle and they felt it should be the concern for the center residents. The cry was coming from various other sections too, that unless they were safeguarded they would not go out of the center.



~~xxxxxx~~ what they call security risks, and everuthing/. And then by 1949 we're all in military intelligence, with the highest security clearance. And so I get the clearance and everything, ~~On~~ that I get the highest clearance ~~o~~ — So I look back on it today, you know, and I think, boy, that is really ~~xxx~~ ironic, where , from a suspected disloyal person, all of a sudden you get the highest security clearance. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ So it's kind of ironic, when you really look at it ~~xxxx~~ , how the country uses you to their ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ convenience.

RW. Well, on the other hand, I have to respect you for volunteering for the Army.

SN: The reason, I think, is that we were still trying to ~~xxxxxx~~ prove, our loyalty, you know. We missed -- most of us were too young for World War II. And when the Korean War came, quite a few of us volunteered. . . to continue to prove that we were loyal. My brothers also volunteered, and they were all in military intelligence, one was in Air Force Intelligence and the other ~~xxxxxx~~ one was in the CIC, which is Counter Intelligence . And so our whole family, which were considered disloyal, which is real ironic. So today when they say that we were put in camp because of disloyalty, it doesn't really hold water, because - as soon as the war's over we're considered the loyalest kids and given high military classification. It doesn't really make sense.

RW. After the war, what profession did you enter?

SN. I'm a dentist.

RW. And I guess, after the war you must have gone to college and begun professional training?

SN. Yes, I went to UCLA for four years - and then four years at Wash. U. (Washington University at St. Louis). The Profession of my other brother, he went into podiatry. ~~xx~~ So, our family, well, I ~~xx~~ tell you, really looking back, we had drive and determination. We kind of starved when we were going to school, but , ,

~~/xx~~ . . We didn't have the typical family. We all made it on our own.

RW ~~SN~~. You didn't have the GI ~~xx~~ bill, after... ?

SN: Yes. I went to college with it.

RW. But in high school you ~~xx~~ kind of starved?



K-d - 6.  
"It is possible that some other group had gone in to demand something of him. But certainly we wouldn't do that, especially with Dr. Melton there.

I got rather sarcastic. I said, 'I'm still listening,' after he started up. After that he was more reasonable."

Contrast with Facilities at Jerome

As far as Jerome was concerned, the facilities were very good. Each latrine and urinal basin was individual and the interiors of the shower are very much better.

Food too was much better. This was especially strange, since Jerome raised so little. However, food there in comparison to this center was twice as good.

About six months before segregation took place, I was pretty well informed about the activity in centers through the Center papers. I thought I knew pretty clearly what this center was raising in the way of agriculture. It was only natural for me to take it for granted that there would be an ample supply of vegetables, chickens, and hogs.

I also knew the regulation of the WRA in providing 45¢ per day for food for the people. Of this, 14¢ was provided by project undertaking. When that problem came up in Jerome (It used to be 50¢ to 55¢ and was cut to 45¢), 35¢ was bought through government channels and 14¢ was raised on the project.

The question was put to Mr. Taylor at that time: how he expected to raise 14¢ at a place at Jerome. He said he'd do his best to raise 14¢ and in the event that he could not do it he would secure it through other channels.

✓ When Kogawa investigated the mess here, his figures checked with the FBI accountants.

There was a great suspicion on the part of the evacuees as to what became of the goods being produced in the centers. There were 3,800 to 3,900 acres in cultivation at that time.



SN. Yes - in high school we just worked in a Jewish family, That is what's really nice, you know, because the only ethnic group that really helped the Japanese Americans when they got out of camp, was the Jewish community.

RW. They did do that. Well, I would say ~~the~~ not only the ... I had a ~~friend~~ <sup>Kunitani</sup> friend at Tule Lake, Mr. ~~He~~, who was helped by a religious group, you know there were a few religious groups that helped them, but I can understand the Jews helping.

SN. SN. Yes. You see I went to high school in San Francisco, you know, and there were quite a few of us that were living with families, most of them were living with the Jewish ~~families~~ families, and their, ... ~~xxxx~~ ~~B'nai~~ B'nai .... or whatever that is.

RW. ~~B'nai B'Rith~~ B'nai B'Rith.

SN; They really got together, and I think each family that belonged to that, made a commitment of taking in one student, you know.

RW. That's wonderful.

SN: And quite a few of us were able to go ~~in~~ through school, because there's no other way that we could have made it ~~through~~ through high school without that kind of support. They ~~were~~ were really good to us.

RW. That's nice to know.

SN: I think part of it, ~~in~~ I think, they ~~or~~ or their relatives went through the same thing in Germany, so I think there was a certain amount of sympathy.

RW. I was going to ask about ~~your~~ your memories - <sup>when</sup> ~~if you went to Rohwer, did you go to the WRA school there?~~

SN: Yes.

RW: Do you have a special memories of that time?

SN. I thought it was real good, the school, well, I guess you couldn't compare it to today's standards, I guess, you know, it's ~~low~~ below poverty type of education, because they didn't have any facilities except home made desks and a couple of books. But ~~the~~



Minutina Sept. 18, 1944

4

there were reasons.

I have lived only seven years in Japan and twenty-two in the U.S.

I strongly believe that my way of thinking might be different from other people's. I appreciate the idea of democracy and have a clear picture of what democracy stands for.

Mr. McVoy, the Community Analyst at Jerome, knew quite clearly why I took my step to come to this center.

The immediate impression I received after coming here was the unpreparedness on the part of the Administration, especially in the field of housing and reception.

I arrived here at 5:00 p.m. on the 30th of September. That day the Army was good enough to give us a lunch. After we were through with the processing, it was well towards evening.

Eventually, we were thrown into an unpartitioned Recreation Hall. No mattresses were available. I got the block manager to find me a mattress. Even the stove wasn't ready for operation. The block manager had to get wood for us. I don't believe the block manager was even notified we were to be there. There were ten boys and they told us that between 20 and 30 would come, but they didn't know. They had no plan at all.

Before we left Jerome we had a talk with the Project Director and also with various high officials of the WRA. I can say that they were sympathetic and at least understanding.

We talked to Mr. Taylor and I believe Mr. Taylor realized that we cooperated with him in order to make the movement a smooth affair.

At that time, the people leaving the (Relocation) projects had the feeling they would like to be housed closely together, but realizing the conditions at Tule Lake, they didn't expect too much. But it was Mr. Taylor's feeling that the families should be close together. Not that we felt our treatment would be the same.



~~He~~ I still ~~remember~~ remember the teachers were real dedicated type. I think quite a few were Quakers and Christian.

RW. Yes. There were many good people in . . .

SN. Yes. I think we didn't have material facilities, but the type of ~~en-~~  
~~couragement~~ courage and everything that they gave to us was really good,  
I think. Because you figure, during World War II, when the popular thing  
is to hate the Japanese, these people committed themselves, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> (?)

RW. Would you ~~ga~~ agree with me, I've noticed with other Japanese Americans  
I've talked with, I sensed that they felt that not everybody <sup>thought that they were</sup> ~~thinks we're~~  
criminals or bad.

SN/ Yes.

RW. And ~~that~~ <sup>perhaps</sup> that was one reason people talked to me. I was the only  
person who went in and saw them ~~xxxx~~ and. . . .

SN. Why did you go?

RW. I was a member of the Evacuation and Resettlement Study,

SN. Was that supported by the school?

RW. Supported by the University <sup>of California</sup> and again - by ~~Rockefeller~~ ~~xxxx~~

The Rockefeller Foundation. And we were supposed to study the evacuation.

And I was the only one who could go to ~~Tule~~ Tule Lake, because things  
were so rough there, that any Japanese who would go visiting and asking  
questions would be sure to be called inu.

SN. Yes. That's right.

RW. But I was a big, ~~big~~ strapping, hakuji, and I was 31 or 32 at the time,  
and I ~~just~~ just got along beautifully with ~~xxxx~~ lots of . . .

SN; Oh. You know that now, some people are accusing the study group. You  
knew that, don't you?

RW. That I hadn't heard.

SN; Well, they're inclined that the group that went and got the information,  
that they gave the information to the security people and they used ~~it~~  
that information to find out who were the trouble makers,

RW. Oh! Is this the paper by Mr. Suzuki?



SN Yes.

RW. ~~He~~ I've read that, and he does talk about the WRA <sup>Community</sup> ~~the~~ Analysts and accuses them of this.

SN : Yes. Working, you know.

RW. And I think he even accused <sup>me</sup> me, and I had to laugh, because, , , ,

SN: Well, See, the thing ~~which~~ was for information, instead of using it for academic use.

RW. I think he exaggerates, because I knew the Community Analysts, and most of them were really very decent people.

SN: I'm kind of glad that I'm talking to you, who actually went in, you know, and served there, because ~~within~~ within our group there are some bitter persons, ~~which~~ you know, that are around, and they're shooting in every ~~direction~~ direction. Do you know Mike ~~Matsue~~ Matsueka?

RW. No.

SN.. He used to be the head of the JACL, during wartime, and there are some of them that are accusing him, that he sold out, and ~~that~~ that if he hadn't sold out, why we ~~we~~ wouldn't have had to go into camp. The thing<sup>is</sup> is that when someone makes that type of.. accuse <sup>3</sup> ~~the~~ people, without any information, it kind of bothers me when people start doing that, because it's really throwing mud all over the place.

RW. Well fortunately, as far as I can see, only a very few people are doing it.

SN. Yes.

RW. Almost all the Japanese I talk to are very sane and level headed.

SN. Yes. The people in this <sup>1</sup> area, in the St. Louis area are a little different than the ones on the West<sup>2</sup> Coast,

RW. In what way?

SN. Well, the thing is, most of us, in this area, are professionals, you know. And so, ~~nationwide~~ nationwide, we're a little bit more. . before we jump to conclusions, we're willing to analyse lots of things, without getting emotionally involved in the thing. Whereas, on the West Coast,



some of us would pick up any slur and believe it, without analyzing anything.

So, ~~now~~ when we meet with the West Coast group, it kind of bothers me, because, when you sit down and ( ? ) you make this kind of accusation, you know, this ~~isn't~~ <sup>isn't</sup> It really isn't based on fact, it's based more on ~~repetition~~ repetition. Where some one said it and said it and said it, and eventually they accepted it as fact. ~~mmmmmm~~ I know that there are some real angry people out there that. . .

RW: Well, I guess in the Redress and R<sup>e</sup>paration, the level heads will have to do their best to take charge.

SN: That's the thing.

RW. I talked to a Japanese friend about this, Prof. \_\_\_\_\_ in San Francisco, and I asked him how serious this was, and he told me that most people didn't pay much attention to this, to ~~these~~ <sup>these</sup> ~~bitter things~~ <sup>accusations</sup>. That made me feel better.

SN. Yes.

RW. I'd like to ask, how did it happen that your family did decide to go to ~~to~~ Tule Lake?

SN: Well, I think, my father, I ~~think~~ think back now that I'm older, . .

RN : May I interrupt and ask, were you the oldest in the family?

SN: No, I was the youngest. But, you probably know, the Japanese family - that they don't communicate, <sup>the</sup> father hardly ever communicates to their children, you know. And so, I really <sup>didn't, . . .</sup> I look ~~back~~ back, you know, I guess I was ~~am~~ only about 13 or 14 when I left my parents/. But even then, it's a one-way type of communication, where the father tells you what to do and you accept it. You never talk back or even suggest what you believe in. So, I've talked with my older brothers over the years, and what I've found out was my father was a real pacifist during the war, ~~for fighting~~, and so he came to this country during the Japanese Russian war. I think, you could say ~~that~~ that today ( ? ) I think of him as a draft dodger, He knew that if he stayed in Japan he was ~~going~~ going to get drafted. And // when I went back to Japan - oh I guess '74 or '75, and I was talking ~~with~~



with some of the relatives, you trace back the family history, you find out that the whole family, for generations back, never believed in fighting. That was one of the things they carried over here, and so, during the war. When we were in Rehwer, it wasn't disloyalty that ~~them~~ made them go to Tule Lake, it was more, that at that time, by going to Tule Lake, their sons won't be drafted. I think that was his motive. . . . I <sup>B</sup> because I remember, that when I volunteered for the draft and I went into service <sup>(during the Korean war)</sup> and I was stationed in ( ? ) for a couple of ~~some months~~ months. When I visited my father, he was still alive at that time, ~~and~~ By then, he didn't ~~have~~ have too much control over my life, because I'd been away for many years. When I went ~~home~~ home, he said, "Get out of that uniform!" Because I had the Army ~~uniform~~ uniform on.

~~But~~ What I was saying was that he didn't believe in fighting, or, you know, even being in service. So, when I was in uniform, you know, the American Army uniform, the first thing he said, was "Get out of that uniform," because that, to him, implied <sup>the</sup> ~~the worst~~ worst.

RW. This was not a religious feeling?

SN: No. It was not a religious feeling. I think he was what you call a ~~pure~~ pure Pacifist. He just didn't believe in killing <sup>or</sup> fighting, and I think it really bothered him. Although he never really said it out loud.

But it really bothered him, to see....you know, to see how it worked.

But he never pounded that into our heads, so from our point of view, it didn't disturb us to serve.

RW. Can I ask, with your views there, and you being the youngest, did you also go to the Project WRA school.?

~~Yes~~

SB. Yes.

RW: That's interesting. Your father didn't make you go to Japanese school?

SN. Oh, we went to Japanese school too.

RW: Which one did you go to?



JK: I don't ~~know~~ . . . ~~I don't~~ know about it ..now.

RW: Now let's see, there was the Dai Towa and then there was one. . .







SN, Well, we were kind of fortunate, because our ~~block~~ block, I think we maybe had only two or three families (of Hōshi-dan) . But if you were in a block where the majority were that ~~kind~~ type, then they could of really made your life miserable

RW. Yes. I have it in my notes, they forced people to sign.

SN : ~~Yamaguchi~~ Right, and they beat you up. And so, I still remember, that we boys went in groups wherever ~~we~~ we went, because, if you weren't on their side, you know, they would try to pick a fight and everything, you know.

RW. I'm so glad you told me. That I didn't know.

SN. Yes. One of my father's best friends got stabbed ~~it~~ during that period.

RW. Well, the stabbings were mostly in May and June of 1944.

SN. Yes, somewhere around there. Because I remember my father came home and he said, "Oh," he said, ~~it~~,..... .

RW: Did they stab him because they said he was an inu?

SN: Yes. I don't know if anyone told you. His name was ~~Hikami~~ Noma (pseudonym)

RW: Oh, Mr. ~~Hikami~~ <sup>Noma</sup>! ~~Hikami~~

SN: You remember him.

RW. He got murdered!

SN. ~~Did he~~ Did he get murdered? I remember that he got stabbed, I didn't know he got murdered. You see, ~~if~~ he was from the same prefecture ~~about~~ as my father , so they were ~~kind~~ close friends. That man (Noma) was well educated, and I think my father ~~my father~~ took lot of his advice. My father ~~if~~ really wasn't that well ~~if~~ educated. He had three years of education, but he learned to read and everything by himself. So he read a lot, but he didn't have a formal type of education.

(Noma)

I remember, Mr. ~~Hikami~~ used to visit us a lot of time. He was very logical in explaining what's happening. And I think he ~~my~~ might of , I don't know for sure, but I think he might of stood up in the ~~Hikami~~ block meeting or something, and he might of expressed his point of view.



~~My father said that it was a mistake~~  
and it didn't go over.

RW. Well, I've always felt that there were some of these Resegregationists, ~~at~~  
~~the time~~, a few, who were really gangsters, and they were set  
on scaring people at that time, and that some of them were a little crazy.

~~SN. Yes.~~

SN. Yes. They were kind of crazy. The fanatic type, you know.

RW. But nobody would ever, but nobody ever dared say a word because. . .

SN. Right. Because ~~you~~ if you stood up and said something, then they would  
beat you up.

RW. You'd be beat up or your family would be killed.

SN. Yes. And so, evidently, he must have said, my father said, you know,  
he got in involved some things that he said ~~some~~ things he shouldn't have  
said to some people. I remember my father saying he (Noma) stood up  
at a block meeting and expressed his point of view, and I think it  
~~kind of~~ kind of embarrassed the fanatics. And I think to a certain degree  
they lost their face and I think that's how they got after him.

That period was very traumatic, but, you know, I don't really think  
that those fanatics were really crazy, except that they got carried away  
with their power. They had no opposition. Some of them didn't go back to  
Japan. Most of them went back to Japan, but some of them, at the last  
~~last~~ minute, they changed their minds. ( ? ) They changed their tune  
right away.

RW. I think you are right, that this ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> a kind of, how should one say, a  
fanatical movement. I got carried away myself, so I can understand it.

SN: Because there's no opposition. Those who desired power. . .

RW. And then when ~~all~~ all the ~~police~~ police resigned, why there was no police  
in the camp, so there was no safety.

SN. Yes. We were fortunate in living in a block that the majority were more ~~peaceful~~  
~~peaceful~~ peaceful than ~~the~~ the fanatics. But I know that a fellow,  
my friend, lived in a block that had nothing but fanatics. I know they  
shaved their head off, because ~~they~~ they didn't belong to the group,



for identification.

RW. You mean they shaved without being members?

SN: Yes.

RW. I know ~~I~~ a lot of people joined just to be safe, but. ~~XXXXX~~ you know, much as I've ~~studied~~ <sup>studied</sup> and worked, I keep learning new things. I'm so glad I talked ~~to~~ to you.

SN. There's <sup>a</sup> lot of things - that really, today I think back, and now I can ~~see~~ <sup>see</sup> it <sup>more</sup> logically, than I saw then.

My brother testified in ~~XXXXXXX~~ L.A. during the recent hearing, you know, and he asked me also to testify in Chicago. But I really can't do that because, God, it is really emotional. Even to this day, I think it's still buried within me that I really don't ~~face~~ face it as completely. . . . I find myself every so often, segments would come out. When you see something, . . . . But the Iranian crisis really made me kind of mad. . . being ganged up on ~~by~~ <sup>by</sup> ~~the~~ toughs, That's when I felt that we really had to bring the story out. <sup>So that in</sup> ~~XXXXXX~~ <sup>in</sup> a period/hysteria, people ~~will~~ could look back <sup>of</sup> to our ~~studies~~ studies which was done during a peaceful moment.

The point to say: "Now look, before you turn into mob hysteria, ~~XXXXXX~~

look what happened here," ~~XXXXXX~~ So that we could be more of a guidepost. And that's how I'd like to do it. I tell you, when things were being thrown at the Iranian students, when I read that, when I read that I said, ~~XX~~ "God, what could you do?" Because they must have really been frightened. To be in a strange country, and the public being against them.

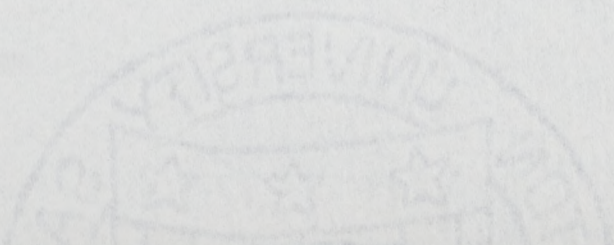
RW. It's very moving for you to tell me this.





TALK WITH MR. KIKUCHI

OCTOBER 7, 1981





On October 7, 1981, I invited Mr. Kikuchi to lunch. He told me much that I had not know before, and, when I returned home, I wrote down what I remembered.

In November of 1945, his parents took him, six of his brothers and his sister to Japan. One of the men who went with them on this trip still believed that Japan had won the war. He kept insisting that the newspapers were lying about the surrender.

He (Mr. Kikuchi) told me that all of the people who went to Japan had a very difficult time. His family and others were housed in barracks and went through periods of starvation. They had nothing to eat but mush, made from edibles they gathered from the ground around the barracks.

But he now feels that since he lived through this, he need not fear the future.

Life was very difficult. The Japanese considered the repatriates Americans - that is - outsiders. The Japanese family structure being what it is, the repatriates could find no acceptance, except for those few who had a family that would take them in. He said that he never could feel at home in Japan. (He had described his return in the interview.)

He emphasized that young people in Tule Lake who were 15 to 10 years old (that is 5 to 10 years older than he was), who went to Japan and then, after five or six years, returned to the U.S. and tried to re-establish themselves, had the most difficult time. At age twenty, they were unable to start getting a professional education. (I gathered that some of his older brothers returned, have not done well for themselves.) He said that his older brothers, who renounced their citizenship and then went to Japan simply will not talk about it. They have completely repressed it. He said that most of the young people who were at Tule Lake in their late teens and early twenties have repressed their experiences and refuse to talk about them.



Mr. Kikuchi

10/07/81

One of his older brothers who went to Japan and returned as a member of the Seicho No Ie sect. He always keeps a closet full of canned goods - because he cannot forget how he starved in Japan.

One of his brothers came under the influences of a WRA school teacher at Tule Lake, refused to renounce his citizenship, and refused to accompany his family to Japan.

Mr. Kikuchi feels that today, the third and fourth generation Japanese Americans are losing their feeling for family structure. They no longer hold to Japanese obligations. There is a great deal of intermarriage with Caucasians.



Dr. John Hara - October - 7, 1981

People who would talk to me -

Jane Wong works at JACL headquarters in San Francisco -  
15 to 19 while in camp - also went to Japan with family.

Dr. Ben Hara

lives in West Covina - near Los Angeles - a podiatrist -  
he refused to accompany rest of family to Tule Lake - had been  
influenced by a ~~high~~ high school teacher, who was a missionary -  
talked to him and advised him not to renounce his citizenship -  
so he did not renounce and stayed in U.S. alone -  
one member of siblings who ~~is~~ has done well --

~~Hara~~ - When I talk to Ben should ask him about Hitomi

Young people age 15 to ~~19~~ 20 who went to Japan with their parents had  
the most difficult time reestablishing their lives when they returned to  
the U. S. Had been in Japan 5 or 6 years - ~~hadn't been able to start~~ unable to start  
getting a professional education at age 20 - gathered that most of his  
~~older brothers who returned here~~ older brothers who returned here  
did not do so well for themselves --

Seicho No Ie

One older brother who returned is a member of the Seicho no Ie sect -  
keeps closet full of canned goods all the time - because he starved in  
Japan.

Tells me how all of them who went to Japan starved for a period - nothing but  
mush - gather what edibles they could from unplanted ground -

But now feels - that ~~he~~ since he lived through this -- need not be afraid  
for the future. (Does not store canned goods).

Life in Japan very very difficult - another thing - Japanese considered  
them "Americans" that is outsiders.

Japanese family structure being what it is - could not find acceptance -  
except for few who had a family in Japan to go to.

Never could feel at ~~home~~ home in Japan ---

Now feels, however, that third and fourth generation of J.A. in U. S. is  
losing this feeling for family structure -- no longer hold to  
Japanese obligations -- great deal of intermarriage --

Tells me about one man who went to Japan still believing that Japan ~~is~~ had  
won the war - that newspapers were lying about the surrender.

His older brothers - who renounced citizenship and went to Japan simply  
will not talk about it - have completely repressed it.

Most of the young men who were in Tule Lake in late teens and early  
twenties have completely repressed it - Refuse to talk about it.



Som ~~9051~~ Nakano -  
225-3533 -

Mitzi Nakano -

Sister Nakano =

Dr. John Hara - his - Tracy  
Loce

14 227-6851

~~next~~ 6640 Forsyth - 7:30

11:45



birds in black vent in groups 2 deep  
from being attacked by H. K. V. K. - p. ~~12~~ 13.



- ✓ 1. Do you think that a psychological damage persists through today from your internment experience?
- ✓ 2. Do you think you worked harder to make up for the lost years spent in camp?
3. Do you think that being known as "quiet" American has helped you or hurt you?
- ✓ 4. Has the camp experience helped you or hurt you in what you have achieved in your life time?
- ✓ 5. Did the camp experience break up your family?  
Do you think your parents ever regained their lost years?
- ? 6. If you had to do it (going into camp) over again, would you react differently than you did then?
- ✗ 7. If internment had not occurred, do you think your life would have been different today?
8. Has your faith in the U.S. government been affected by your internment?
9. What would you do if a similar political climate (as in 1941) should reoccur again against you or another minority?



## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

### In The Camp Period

Thinking back today, on what happened in the camps and on what you did when you were in the camps, how do you feel about the way you acted -- are you pleased with yourself or are you critical of yourself?

In what way would you change the way you behaved when you were in the camps?

### Effect Of The Camps

#### Family

For some people, the camp experience helped to strengthen their families; for other people, the camp experience helped to break up their families; what happened in your case?

#### Government

Most of the people I have talked with have swung back and forth in their attitudes toward the U.S. Government. How was your faith in the U.S. Government affected by your internment experience?

### Life and Career

As you think back over what you achieved in your life time, in what way did the camp experience help you and in what way did the camp experience hurt you?

Some people think of the years they spent in camp as "lost years".

Do you feel that way about those years?

Do you feel that you have had to work especially hard in your life in order to make up for the years spent in the camps?

As you think about yourself and your sense of stability and security, do you feel that the camp experience left you with a sense of insecurity and even damage?



CONVERSATION WITH JOSEPHY KIKUCHI

Joseph Kikuchi

Feb. 24, 1982

JK: Hello?

RW: Hello. I was hearing Bach in the background.

JK: Yeah, my daughter has a piano lesson this afternoon, so she's doing the last minute cramming. She always does that.

RW: I recognize it from my childhood. I wondered if you have a little time and would like..I would like to ask you a few questions on some things that have come up.

JK: Yeah.

RW: And do you mind if I tape it and then you can correct it or change it?

JK: That's okay.

RW: One thing I did want to report to you that your suggestion of making a second interview has ~~just~~ begun to work out very well.

JK: Yeah, I notice there is a little more detail and I think that the people are talking the second time are used to you now and letting out a little bit more than they would initially. I think the first interview that you make, a lot of them are kind of guarded kind of response; the second one seem a little bit more detailed.

Although that one lady had a long one.

<sup>both laugh</sup>  
RW: (Laughs) I really felt that she had a lot of anxieties about..somehow she was expressing her tension about her life in camp - talking so much, perhaps.

<sup>Yeah</sup>  
JK: I've noticed the one part that really interested me was on hers was the..her parents..and I think my parents went through a very similar experience, except my parents we didn't call them back, because they kind of liked Japan and didn't want to come back. But I was reading that and I said, "It's almost similar to ours."



RW: It was really kind of moving <sup>her</sup> ~~them~~ of her being all on her own.

JK: Right. But I noticed that her family did have mental problems, a lot of nervous breakdowns. I just wonder..I don't think you can really say it's all due to camp, but some of it I guess might have been - the initiating factor. It was a sad story.

RW: I would agree. There was such stress and such insecurity in camp, that even..like I said/<sup>frankly</sup>~~even~~ in my book 'I went "crazy" sometimes.

JK: That is really a hard thing not to get so emotionally involved. Trying to be, what do you call it, a professional observant<sup>er</sup>, but I guess it is kind of hard without getting emotinnally involved.

RW: You do get emotically involved come what may.

JK: I find that in my practice too. A lot of time when you are treating your best friends or your relatives or someone..nothing goes right. (laughs)

RW: (laughs)

JK: I just wonder sometime if we just try too hard to please. And I think in your work you have the same experience sometimes.

RW: That's a wonderful observation. I've never heard that before, but I think it is right.

JK: I think that's why we don't like to treat relatives.

RW: Well, on the other hand, there is some difference in that. When my husband gets ill, I take very good care of him and I may get anxious for him, but I should say..this is a little bit different than if I were treating relatives professionally.

JK: Yeah, I think it's different because your judgement isn't as objective when you are more emotionally involved.



RW: Yes, that's true.

JK: It seems we function better when we don't get too emotionally involve.

RW: Yes, <sup>that's</sup> ~~this is~~ correct. And as I have been complimented by many experts in field work, <sup>as that</sup> I have emphasized; ~~that~~ the thing to keep doing is to take accurate notes from all the people whether you like what you hear or you don't.

JK: And then after you have that, then away from there you can kind of analyze it a little better.

RW: When anxiety or whatever it is.. <sup>when it's over</sup> ~~(61)~~ you <sup>re</sup> got the notes. Well, I have been myself anxious. I was even going to call you last week because I talked to your sister and she suggested I send her the interview so she can answer it in writing.

JK: It really kind of surprises me. I wonder why..she's very talkative and out-going. I just wonder if she's getting some advice from the JACL, because she works there at JACL. Because that really surprised me that she's not as free. Evidently she must be getting some advice from JACL.

RW: Well, that would be all right. It happens my secretary is ill and can't type up the questions right now, but I'll send it to her and see how she feels.

JK: Did she say why she would rather answer it that way.

RW: Well, ~~this is so interesting that you ask because let me explain the complexities.~~ <sup>or</sup> After I had asked her this, then I <sup>asked</sup> spoke of if she would mind asking your older brothers and she was very hesitant and she kind of indicated that perhaps she could, but she wasn't sure. And then I, <sup>suggested that</sup> ~~popped into my head..~~ well, if they don't wish to talk to me, would you ask them why? Just as you asked now.



JK: ~~I might call her up and just ask her.~~

RW: ~~Excuse me, let me finish this story.~~ And then she said to me, "Well, but you should know." Then I was taken aback because I felt, <sup>well</sup> ~~why~~ I have a lot of hypotheses as to why, but I really need people's statements and so I have been asking people.

JK: Because you can't assume..your assumption may be wrong.

RW: I can't assume it in my own mind. So I thought I might even, if you don't mind, I might ask you what your guesses would be as to why people who have gone to Japan and been there some years and <sup>then came</sup> ~~come~~ back, would be somewhat reluctant to talk to me.

JK: I think the ones who went back to Japan, I feel that they are the ones who suffered the most physically and mentally, than the ones that just went through the camp experience. And so I think that group that went to Japan, I think they're suffering, I think it brings it back and I think some of the memories are very personal, and I think the hurt they feel - it hurts to even talk about it. That might be one of the things and they might be carrying a certain amount of bitterness below the surface and they may not wish to express it. I was there one year, but I don't think I suffered as much as say my older brothers who were there several years.

RW: How long were they there?

JK: My older brothers must have been there at least 5-6 years.

RW: This is what I would first guess that it just brings back too much pain.

JK: Yeah, because I stayed with my parents at home, so that I was more or less protected and I didn't have to face <sup>the</sup> cruel world. But they went out, they had to earn their own living, they were



working for the Armed Services ~~and thing~~, and I think they may have suffered somewhat there...the insecurity that they had to go through, because every time the division would get transferred or pulled out, <sup>when</sup> they would have to hustle to get another job.. constant hustling, because if they didn't get the job, they would be unemployed..starve, <sup>And</sup> and so I think my sisters and brothers might have gone through quite a few more things that they might not want to talk about. Although when I was with them, we hardly ever talked about that period..what they talk about is just the good parts, but I'm pretty sure <sup>that</sup> they went through some periods where they went hungry and cold and insecurity.

RW: ~~And you think that there isn't any..~~ This is another hypothesis I had which, would you please criticize frankly because my aim here is to learn - ~~and that is some~~ <sup>did not have</sup> ~~having been.. not had~~ citizenship, you know for many years until the law was passed that took away, ~~how should I put this~~, this <sup>an</sup>unciation business, and I just wonder if any.. <sup>if</sup> they might have this insecurity that this might happen again or that they might be deported?

JK: No, I don't think that, <sup>B</sup>Because that case <sup>has</sup> been settled and you can't take it away again. Unless they renounce voluntarily. So I don't think <sup>that</sup> that would be, <sup>But</sup> now that you bought up the point, it was a very insecure period for them, because they didn't have Japanese citizenship, <sup>and</sup> they didn't have American citizenship, <sup>so</sup> so that they are a person without a country, <sup>And</sup> and I think to live 4-5 years under that type of cloud is a very insecure feeling. So I think, that's another point that is a big hurt that they don't want to talk about.

RW: After all their troubles and anxieties of Tule Lake..those terrible things to have this, ~~are~~ <sup>six or seven</sup> more terrible ~~6-7~~ years. ~~on that~~



Oh God!

JK: So when you figure the number of years that they lost, say 4 years in camp, <sup>and</sup> then 5 years in Japan, that's 9 years out of their life..not getting into any career or something like that. So to them I think the years in camp through war and Japan is a big chunk out of their lives.

RW: This would be for some of them as much as 9 years.

JK: Yeah, that's what I'm saying. <sup>I think</sup> So that is one of the things that my older brothers may not wish to talk about. I think to a certain degree, <sup>when</sup> they look back and see the younger ones in our family .. succeeding with education and everything and they didn't succeed as much. I think they look back and say "Well, I've lost 9 years, when I could have trained or got educated." So to them they may hold certain amount of bitterness, although I think it has been pretty repressed. So if someone asks, "Did the war hurt you any?" you know, they want to slug the person, who asked that kind of question. ~~...answer~~ Because they suffered so much and they say, "Well if someone can't see that, it's an insult to be asked that." And I just wonder if my sister is responding in that way.

RW: She didn't say it accusingly, but in a rather gentle way, you know, but well, I think I sensed a kind of..I replayed the tape which I now wiped out because I know she wouldn't want me to keep it. <sup>but</sup> I got very distressed before I had replayed it, and then I replayed it and it didn't sound particularly ~~sort of kind of~~ accusing, but on the other hand, I think deep down in a sense it was an expression of ~~..sort of~~..how should one say?..you're pushing in where you're not wanted, kind of..

JK: Yeah, yeah. I think they want to keep it very private.

All these years that I've corresponded with them, she <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ the only one in our family that always looked back. My brother <sup>Arthur</sup> ~~Ben~~ and I



would always laugh about it, because <sup>she</sup>~~Jane~~ is always living in the past. And so I was thinking if you spoke to her, you would get a lots of the past history and it kind of surprised me that she's very hesitant about talking about her past. Because she's always lived in the past.

RW: If it troubles her so much, it would perhaps do her good to express it.

JK: She's real happy-go-lucky and very chatty actually and it really surprised me that she won't talk to you.

RW: Well, when my secretary gets better, I'll send her this material and then I may call her again.

JK: I tell you what.. I'll call her and then I won't say that I talk<sup>ed</sup> to you or anything, but I'll just feel her out and I'll just ask her if she got in touch with you and then ask why..because I'm kind of curious to see why she won't..the only thing that I could really feel is the reason why she is very closed mouth about this thing..I think she may be getting advice from the JACL..someone there. She might have asked..that you were going to ask questions and what should she do, because she does seek advice and someone might have advised her not to say anything. That might be the thing. She herself may want to say it, but since she works for JACL, I think..

RW: It would be very valuable to know in any case. I would be obliged, but I don't want to put any strain on you. You've done so much for me.

JK: No, I don't think because I'm fairly..she doesn't..I ask lots of things, very personal, right out, so she's not..she says I'm very blunt about a lot of things. She's not going to be any more surprised when I ask certain things. I was thinking



that a lot of the interviews that you are getting, they are still holding back..they're loosening up bit more, but they are holding back. But I was..well, N<sup>my hi</sup>---- asked me, because there are lots of things that I haven't said to her and then when she was doing these tapes, she asked me certain things..how did I feel about some.. because some of the answers she was getting, she was kind of surprised. One of the things..why ~~we feel~~..or I would feel or anyone who went through camp experience would feel is that the people who were responsible for putting us into camp have never been <sup>R</sup>bought <sup>^</sup> to dock more or less. What I mean by that is most of them have already died, the people who were responsible, so you can't question them. So there is no resolution of what happened to us. Normally, if someone is hurt with something, then you bring the person to court and you resolve it that way one way or another. Then the problem is solved. But in our case, it has never been solved as such because the years have gone by and the principals are all dead and so <sup>we're</sup> ~~we are~~ left hanging. Whereas the Jewish population, where they went through the concentration camps in Germany, the people who were responsible were brought to court, and they had to stand trial, like Goebbels and all those people who were responsible for putting people in camp. And they were tried as war criminals, and so to a certain degree, I don't know if you can call it satisfaction, but at least their case ~~has~~ <sup>was</sup> ~~been~~ resolved, but in our case it has never been resolved as such. I think that is one of the reasons why, lot of the people are kind of frustrated..the monetary thing I don't think would really solve the past satisfaction and so I think we are going to just die with an unsolved resolution. We only hope that <sup>in</sup> the



next world, they might be bought to justice or whatever.

RW: This is very touching explanation you ~~we~~ gave and what I kept thinking as you told me was of the words of Job; ~~which are the thing he says, and now I'm translating from the newest translation:~~ "For I know that my vindicator lives, and that he will speak for me at last even God Himself."

*yes, and I think...*  
HK: <sup>W</sup>When I talk with my friends at lunch time or something, ~~we~~ don't talk camp per se, but when we talk about war - the losers are always bought to court..the war trials and everything ~~and~~ <sup>are</sup> all bought to justice more or less; but the winners are showered with flowers as heroes. But the thing is when you really look down on it, some of the things that the winners have done, are just as bad as the losers. That's one of the things that society has never solved..to look at the winners and losers and see..

because even in the short time that I served in Korea, some of the things that the armies do <sup>during</sup> ~~serving~~ the height of war, are .. if you lost the war, you would be <sup>R</sup>bought up as a war criminal; but those things are never <sup>R</sup>bought up when you win the war..as long as you don't lose, whatever you do goes. And I think that's what happened here in our case, where..what we went through will never be <sup>W</sup>bought, because nobody is going to be around..they're all dead and the ones that are around are so old now that the feelings are gone. I think that's one of the frustrations that I kind of see in some of the interviews that you are getting; they can't pin it down why they feel this way, but they still have..

RW: I think you are very perceptive and quite correct, because I have in my own life experienced things like this that happened and I never forget. I remember Mr. Kurihara saying to me once



1. [I was referring to Old Scandinavian law, but Mr. Kikuchi, apparently,  
thought I was ~~xxxxx~~ referring to the German defeat in World War I.]

p. 11. . . . I guess basically I have no desire to have anyone tell me  
anything they don't wish to tell me.



~~about these things~~ that <sup>the</sup> Japanese never forget.

JK: That's true. My friends laugh at me when they say that in today's world, Japan and U.S. are almost like friends, but I always tell them, ~~I say~~ don't take that <sup>at</sup> face value, because the <sup>there is</sup> samurai spirit is ~~always~~ the revenge. And so if somewhere along in history where the tables are turned, World War II is going to be retried and they as the victors are going to rewrite the history. Because there is the revenge factor in the Japanese culture, I think they would live...

RW: Yes, I appreciate that and in old days ~~as~~ it was in mine.<sup>1</sup>

JK: Yeah, I think Hitler did the same thing. He revenged World War I loss, because when he took over France he had them surrender in the same <sup>train</sup> - remember he went through that little thing and he showed France the humility that Germany suffered on it. So there is that factor.

RW: Well, I think I will have to start to cook dinner.

JK: You know one person I was thinking that you might talk to, do you know Dr. Fujita? He's a psychiatrist.

RW: I've heard of him.

JK: He works for..he's the director of <sup>the</sup> Missouri Mental Hospital right on Arsenal and I was going to talk to him someday, if I see him again that why ~~are~~ the people you are talking to do not let out all of their feelings. Is it because they can't verbalize it or is it that they are repressing it or have they forgotten it.

RW: ~~I know that they are not, you know, but I don't feel it is my place.~~ I feel it is their place to decide how much they want to tell me, you know. I proceed with this, <sup>because</sup> ~~is~~ so far as to what they want to tell me, I think it makes them feel somewhat better. It's a release even to express it.



TALK WITH MR. KIKUCHI \* January 27, 1902

Mr. Kikuchi told me that as a result of developments in Tule Lake his family had been ~~irretrievably~~ "irretrievably split!" He remains on good terms with ~~his brother and sister~~ his brother and sister who did not renounce their citizenships. But ~~with his six older brothers~~ he ~~remains~~ has been alienated from his six older brothers who renounced, ~~even~~ even though he went to ~~Japan~~ Japan with them and with his parents. He believes many Japanese American families suffer from this kind of ~~alienation~~ "split".

I  
It is because of this alienation that Mr. Kikuchi will not give me the names or telephone numbers of his brothers.

(Reminder: Must ask him when ~~this~~ and how this split manifested itself - and how he would explain it.)

He also told me several times that he was now convinced that the inu in Tule Lake did not inform for money. ~~(Many Japanese American families were making money during the spring and early summer of 1944, many of my respondents told me that the inu were making money.)~~ (During the spring and a number early summer of 1944, many of my respondents told me that the inu were making money. ~~But in the latter part of 1944, most people did not talk about the inu because they were allegedly trying to cooperate with the administration.~~)

But in the latter part of 1944, most people did not talk about the inu ~~because they were allegedly trying to cooperate with the administration.~~ The resegregationist leaders tried to stigmatize the Abe-Kunitani-Tada faction as inu because they were allegedly trying to cooperate with the administration. This propaganda was not particularly ~~successful~~ <sup>January</sup> successful. In/February of 1945, after the second internment of Hoshi dan and Hokoku members, many people were afraid of being called inu because they had had some association with Caucasians - myself or staff members.)

"American Japanese" and "Manly Honor"

I asked whether Japanese who had repatriated were considered "American" by the Japanese. He said this was so, but that this was not necessarily a disadvantage/ in the post war years.

He said that the Japanese concept of "manly honor" had been more important and had caused the segregants much anguish. Once the men had said "No" on the military questionnaire they could not change their minds.



"If once you give your word, you cannot break it." "A man does not break his word." ~~(A number of my friends and acquaintances in Tule Lake made similar statements to me in Tule Lake.)~~

(Mr. Kurusu and Mr. Kurihara made ~~similar~~ similar statements to me in Tule Lake.)

### Source of Extraordinary Zeal of the Hōkoku

After reading Robert E. Park's essays on the marginal man, I wondered whether the excessive and noisy zeal with which the Resegregationist young men (and subsequently even the women) persisted in demonstrating that they were "true ~~Japanese~~ Japanese, might not, in part, have ~~its source~~ had its source in the fact that they had been rejected ~~by the American government~~ by the American government. In consequence, ~~they were~~ they returned to their original "parent figure", the Japanese government, and strove, with increasing desperation, to demonstrate ~~that~~ that they were indeed truly Japanese.

Mr. ~~Kikuchi~~ Kikichi did not agree with this hypothesis. He told me that the ~~behavior of the~~ behavior of the "super-patriots" was, in large part, based on their unshakeable faith in an ultimate victory<sup>for</sup> for Japan. ~~Whenever an American victory~~ Whenever an American ~~victory~~ <sup>advance</sup> was ~~announced~~ <sup>announced</sup> in the press or radio, young zealots ~~presented~~ <sup>presented</sup> explanations would speak in the messhalls or at block meetings, and present marvelously complex interpretations ~~which demonstrated~~ demonstrating that the news was false propaganda or, in point of fact, ~~an integral part of Japanese military strategy~~ an integral part of Japanese military strategy. These speeches were very convincing, said Mr. Kikuchi.

Hearing this caused me to recall that I had, indeed, <sup>how</sup> often ~~been told~~ by, ~~friends~~ <sup>friends</sup> I had been told by Mr. Itabashi, Yamashita, and Kurihara, that Japan<sup>s</sup> was winning and that the American forces were being drawn into a trap ~~into~~ where they would be destroyed. Though I recorded these statements in my notes, I did not put them into my reports or my publications on Tule Lake. Clearly ~~they were~~ <sup>they were</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> ~~to be~~ <sup>to be</sup> ~~trusted~~ <sup>trusted</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~same~~ <sup>same</sup> ~~way~~ <sup>way</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>as</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~other~~ <sup>other</sup> ~~statements~~ <sup>statements</sup> ~~made~~ <sup>made</sup> ~~by~~ <sup>by</sup> ~~these~~ <sup>these</sup> ~~people~~ <sup>people</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~Tule~~ <sup>Tule</sup> ~~Lake~~ <sup>Lake</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~other~~ <sup>other</sup> ~~places~~ <sup>places</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~area~~ <sup>area</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~Tule~~ <sup>Tule</sup> ~~Lake~~ <sup>Lake</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~other~~ <sup>other</sup> ~~places~~ <sup>places</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~area~~ <sup>area</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~Tule~~ <sup>Tule</sup> ~~Lake~~ <sup>Lake</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~other~~ <sup>other</sup> ~~places~~ 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In Freudian terms, I repressed them. (Note - look up statement by Kiriwara -)

When, in October of 1943, the "disloyal" people were sent from Gila to Tule Lake, I ~~was~~ went to see the train leave. ~~and then went to the~~  
~~administration building~~ On my way back to my barrack room I met a couple of staff members and began to talk about the entrainment. ~~At the time~~  
~~A Nisei youth~~ A Nisei youth ~~ran out of a door and shouted~~ at us angrily: "You know ~~why~~ why they're doing it? They think Japan is going to win the war." I was shocked, but recorded his statement in my report. At dinner that night in the ~~staff mess hall~~ staff messhall, the Caucasian ~~chief~~ chief of police expressed the opinion that most of "the disloyal ~~and~~ Japs" were going to Tule Lake because they thought that Japan ~~was~~ was going to win the war. I put this statement in a report I sent to D. Thomas, with the comment that I thought it was nonsense. Shortly thereafter, when Mr. Nishimoto visited me ~~in~~ in Gila, he pointed to my ~~statement~~ comment and said that ~~this was~~ the policeman's statement was not nonsense. I nodded dutifully, but many years later when I wrote Doing Fieldwork I misquoted the policeman and ~~wrote that~~ ~~he said that~~ had him say, "They're going to Tule Lake to escape the draft." (p. 74).

~~Evidently, I was repressing the obvious~~

This particular repression endured a long time. But I myself never had any doubt that America would win the war even when, ~~early in the war~~, early in the war, I read of reverses in the Pacific.



FINE DEBATE SHOULD BE ADDED SOMEWHERE  
STATMENS of 15 to 17 year olds -

variety of views in Tule Lake - where  
all supposed to be "disloyal."

Female - 18 plus -  
Singer, p. 6 -



REMEMBRANCES OF LIFE AT TULE LAKE SEGREGATION CAMP

MM Most of people I interviewed spent more than two years at Tulee Lake and during that time were subjected to a long sequence of traumata - Not surprising that their memory of events -- ~~xxxxxx~~ which they are willing or able to relate ~~xxxxxx~~ would be highly individual.

Should remember that the 27 individuals interviewed probably represent a very biased sample -- consisting ~~xxxx~~ of those Japanese who were willing ~~xxxxxx~~ talk to me. Many JA approached by me ~~xxxx~~ or by JA friends or relatives refused to talk to me. And even those who talked to me were often reluctant - and would consent only after I had given them a lengthy explanation.

Fact is for two years or more in Tule Lake - would have to spend days interviewing - a ~~xxxx~~ respondent who was willing to express himself ~~xxxxxx~~ openly.

A succession of traumatic events ~~xxxxxx~~ of which for respondents to choose from - but no general consensus on one in which can picture themselves universally abused.

What these interviews do reflect - is the relative absence of social organization or general agreement --

Represent many different troubles - and ways of coping --

CAN'T ANSWER QUESTIONS \* WHAT DID MOST OF RESPONDENTS THINK MOST AWFUL -

this is same as picture one gets from longitudinal histories of mr respondents in camp -- every one extremely diff. from other with exception of young ~~xxx~~ women -