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Resistance to Terrorism...

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RESISTANCE TO TERRORISM AT THE TULE LAKE SEGREGATION CENTER:

AN EXAMPLE OF FIELDWORK IN AN EXTREME SITUATION¹

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This paper consists of four sections which reflect my increasing involvement in an extreme fieldwork situation at the Tule Lake Segregation Center during World War II.² In the first section I present a brief account of the evacuation of the Japanese Americans and the subsequent segregation of those who had been stigmatized as "disloyal" to the United States. In the second I give a brief account of the development of the Resegregation Group and the assaults on those Japanese Americans who were stigmatized as inu (informers). The third section is devoted to a more detailed description of how I, as a fieldworker, began to become involved in events, and the fourth section is a description of how I became involved as a partisan and as a human being.

Evacuation and Segregation

In the spring of 1942, five months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, some 115,000 Japanese Americans, citizens and nationals, were incarcerated by order of the U.S. government. They had not committed any acts of treason or espionage, and indeed there was never evidence that any of them contemplated such activities. But they had been the object of venomous propaganda from political organizations, politicians, and newspaper columnists. The Department of Justice and the U.S. Navy had opposed a mass evacuation but Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, commander of the Western Defense Command, had been persistent and uncompromising. In April 1942, he was quoted in many West Coast newspapers as saying: "A Jap's a Jap...It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen or not...I don't want any of them...They are a dangerous element...There is no way to determine their loyalty." And in his final recommendations to the Secretary of War (February 14, 1942), he stated:

The Japanese race is an enemy race and while many second and third generation Japanese born on United States soil, possessed of United States citizenship, have become "Americanized,"

the racial strains are undiluted...The very fact that no sabotage has taken place to date is a disturbing and confirming indication that such action will be taken.

Unhappily for the Japanese Americans, DeWitt's attitudes were shared by many other persons in power on the West Coast, and their conjoint pressures resulted in the issuance of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Dated February 19, the order authorized:

the Secretary of War, and the Military Commanders whom he may from time to time designate...to prescribe military areas... from which any or all persons may be excluded, and with respect to which, the right of any person to enter, remain in, or leave shall be subject to whatever restriction the Secretary of War or the appropriate Military Commander may impose in his discretion (U.S. Army, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army 1942:34).

In late March the War Relocation Authority (WRA), a civilian authority, was established to administer the relocation centers to which the "evacuated" Japanese Americans were sent. But despite the efforts of the War Relocation Authority, life within the centers was, for the most part, uncomfortable and humiliating. The barrack "apartments" to which the "evacuees" were assigned contained only one army cot per person and an unshaded electric drop light. The public latrines had no partitions between the stools. The food served in the mess halls was often poor. Insofar as center life developed a pattern, it was one of constriction, monotony, and exasperating, petty discomforts, broken at intervals by a humiliating experience with a "Caucasian" supervisor or by some new bureaucratic foulup.

As the months passed the Japanese Americans and the WRA administrators learned to cooperate and both strove to make the center life as tolerable and interesting as was possible under the circumstances. While life became far from good, it was not all bad. Many Japanese Americans came to conclude that it might be wise to remain in the centers--at least for the duration of the war--rather than risk an uncertain and possibly dangerous existence "on the outside."

The WRA, however, had, from its inception, been dedicated to the idea of getting the Japanese Americans out of the centers as soon as this could safely be done, and to "release" or "relocate" them into areas of the United States where they would be welcomed and could find employment. By January 1943, the War Department officials were convinced that loyal Nisel³ should be permitted to serve in the Army. As Spicer et al. (1969:142) relate:

A plan was formulated to call for volunteers for the Army from the relocation centers and at the same time to register all male citizens of draft age. The response to this program was to serve as a basis for determining whether or not to reopen Selective Service to all Nisel. Once the plan was settled, the WRA policy makers decided to take advantage of it by simultaneously conducting in the centers a registration of all adults. This would provide a basis for leave clearance for all those evacuees determined not to be dangerous to resettle outside the centers east of the excluded zone.

Two questionnaires were prepared in Washington. The one for male citizens and Issei of both sexes was headed "War Relocation Authority Application for Leave Clearance." The questionnaires were long and complicated, but the crucial questions were those in which male citizens were asked whether they would be willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, and whether they would forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor. Female citizens and Issei (non-citizens) of both sexes were asked whether they would be willing to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corps or the Women's Army Air Corps (WAAC) and whether they would forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor. Apparently the authorities assumed that almost all the evacuees would answer these questions in the affirmative and that this display of loyalty would make a positive impression on the American public. The young male evacuees could then be drafted into the U.S. Army and their families moved out of the camps.

But, as Spicer et al. (1969:147) point out, the plans and preparations of the War Department and the WRA had not:

taken fully into account the already deep emotional effects of evacuation and incarceration in the centers. They were not presenting a program to a people who could act as though such things had not happened. They had happened, and they had effected profoundly the attitudes of almost every adult evacuee concerning the Government and all its agencies.

In consequence, in many centers the unanticipated and unexplained demand for total commitment--to the United States or to Japan--resulted in an uproar. Spontaneous mass meetings were held at which some of the younger people argued that the only sensible policy was to express loyalty to the United States. Other young citizens argued that the intent of the questionnaire was "to draft us from behind the barbed wire." Issei pointed out that if they renounced their allegiance to the emperor they would be people without a country, for the United States had not permitted them to apply for American citizenship. Some persons held that the evacuees ought to refuse to express loyalty to the U.S. until the U.S. gave some indication that it would make amends. Tension and hostility rose so high in some centers that a few men who expressed strong "pro-American" views were waylaid at night and beaten. About 28 percent of the male citizens and about nine percent of the male "aliens" gave negative answers to the crucial questions or refused to register. These persons came to be called "disloyal" as opposed to "loyal" or "No-No" as opposed to "Yes-Yes."

In July 1943 the Tule Lake Relocation Center was selected for the segregation of "those persons of Japanese ancestry residing in relocation centers who by their acts have indicated that their loyalties lie with Japan during the present hostilities." A double "manproof" fence, eight feet high, was erected around the center and the external guard of military police was increased from a couple of hundred soldiers to full battalion strength. Half a dozen obsolete tanks were lined up in full view of the residents (Thomas and Nishimoto 1946:106). In September and October of 1943, some 9,000 persons, classified as disloyal, were sent to what was now called the Tule Lake Segregation Center. Their sit-

uation was complicated (and was to become more complicated) by the fact that some 6,000 of the original Japanese-American residents of Tule Lake had remained there. Of these, "4,000 were 'unauthorized'; they had decided to remain at Tule Lake not because they had any particular sentiments of loyalty one way or the other but because they did not like to be pushed around, or they did not want to leave California, or they did not want to be sent too far away from home, or because they did not want to move again" (Spicer et al. 1969:177). Thus in November 1943, 42 percent of the segregant population at Tule Lake was composed of "Old Tuleans." Segregants from nine other centers made up the remaining 58 percent (Thomas and Nishimoto 1946:103-7).

In mid-October, a Japanese farm worker was killed in a farm-truck accident and the farm workers went on strike. The people thereupon held block meetings and elected representatives to a body called the Daihyōsha Kai (Representative Body). A Negotiating Committee of seven men was selected and met with the project director and, on November 1, with Dillon S. Myer, the national director, who promised he would investigate the complaints and take justifiable action. It is possible that a viable, working relationship between the segregants and the administration might have been worked out. But late on the night of November 4, a fight broke out between a group of Japanese youths and a few WRA employees, who, the youths thought, were transporting food from the project warehouses to the strikebreakers. The project director turned the jurisdiction of the center over to the Army. Most of the residents did not know this had happened and the next morning about 1,000 Japanese employed in the administrative section began their usual walk to work. They were stopped by a cordon of soldiers who apparently assumed they were demonstrators or rioters and threw tear gas at them.

For the residents, martial law meant unemployment, impoverishment for many, and, as the weeks dragged on, boredom and depression. As for the authorities, the Army wanted to get rid of its responsibilities and the WRA wanted them back. The WRA made advances to those segregants who were inclined to take a collaborating attitude--influential Old Tulean block managers and officers of the Co-op (the successful and profitable general stores). With the help of these few men, the Army and WRA arranged a popular referendum (on January 11) in which the residents voted whether they would maintain the strike or return to work. By the barest majority-- a plurality of 473 out of 8713--the residents voted to abandon the strike. On January 15, the Army and the WRA officially recognized the seven Japanese Americans who had advised and helped them as the Coordinating Committee; while the Army announced the lifting of martial law, withdrew most of the soldiers from the center, and returned the management of Tule Lake, except for the stockade, to the WRA.

Many people were now permitted to go back to work and many were relieved that the strike had ended. On the other hand, almost half of the residents had voted to continue the strike. Many believed that the men in the stockade ought to be released and many (even those who had voted to abandon the strike) believed that the members of the Coordinating Committee were "a bunch of inu," stool-pigeons or betrayers. For its part, the Coordinating Committee tried very hard to get the WRA to support its publicly proclaimed policy of "full employment and justifiable release of stockade detainees," but their desperate requests were met only with promises. Among many residents hostility toward Caucasians and hatred of the inu was all pervading. A Caucasian who entered "the Japanese section" of the camp without a legitimate reason was commonly thought to have only one motive--to spy; a Japanese American who received a Caucasian in his barrack was very likely to be called inu. This was the state of affairs when I

first visited the Tule Lake Center in February 1944.

In the spring of 1943, I was employed as a field assistant by the Evacuation and Resettlement Study initiated at the University of California, Berkeley. I was sent to the Gila Relocation Center in Arizona and there I came to be on good terms with a number of Japanese Americans who had been classified as "disloyal." After their removal to the Tule Lake Segregation Center, and during the period of military control, I continued to correspond with their friends. Then, in January 1944, when the center was returned to the control of the War Relocation Authority, Mr. Best, the Project Director at Tule Lake, wrote to the head of the Evacuation and Resettlement Study, inviting her to send a field observer for a short visit. I was the only possible candidate for this assignment, since all the other field assistants of the study were "loyal" Japanese Americans who would have been unable to work in the center for "disloyals." I made a rewarding visit to Tule Lake from February to April, and took up permanent residence there in May. We field assistants to the study were instructed that under no circumstances were we to give any information to any member of the WRA administration. Even so, several of the Japanese American field assistants were obliged to leave the centers because they had come to be stigmatized as inu (informers) by the residents.

The Resegregationists and Assaults on Informers

In January 1944, a number of small, isolated groups, relatives, friends, or supporters of individuals confined in the stockade had begun a cautious underground agitation for the release of the detainees. Some of these groups coalesced into a body of extremists or zealots. They were convinced that Japan was winning the war and that Japan was their only source of protection; they made a number of fruitless appeals to the administration; and they did everything in their power to discredit and embarrass the Coordinating Committee.

They branded as inu anyone who made a statement that could be termed proadministration, or critical of themselves or their group. And since most persons tended to believe any rumor they heard, a man's reputation could be ruined by a few whispered words or a "smear" campaign (Thomas and Nishimoto 1946:221-223). Early in March, the underground pressure group distributed a pamphlet in which they denounced the members of the Coordinating Committee and the executives as participants in a "dark stream of sinister plot" to deceive the segregants and called them gamblers, bootleggers and "betrayers of the Fatherland (Japan)." In early April, members of the underground circulated a petition asking for the signatures of persons who wished to go to Japan as soon as possible and who, meanwhile, wished to be "resegregated" in Tule Lake from those not so inclined. (An assistant project director had given them permission to make a survey, but they disregarded that qualification and mistranslated his text.) Most of the residents did not want to go to Japan immediately, nor did they wish to be moved again. Nonetheless, some 6,500 persons signed the petition, some because they desired to repatriate, others because they believed the signatures were not binding. It is likely that in some blocks people signed rather than risk being stigmatized as an inu or a "fence-sitter". (Among the names were those of many children, appended by their parents.) The harassed and overburdened Coordinating Committee, who had not been consulted about the petition, took this opportunity to resign. At this time some members of the underground began to deal openly with the authorities, claiming to represent a group which called itself Saikakuri Seigan (appeal of resegregation). These persons soon became known as the Resegregationists, Resegregation Group, or, to their critics, as the "super-patriots." Hereafter, I shall refer to them as the Resegregationists.

For about six weeks the camp enjoyed a relatively tranquil, if apathetic period. By May 18, 264 of the men in the stockade had been released and only

55 were still "detained." But on May 24, a Japanese construction worker returning to the project was shot by a sentry and died the next day. The people were at first shocked, then very angry and afraid. Then almost everyone began to complain and denounce the inu. The rumors became increasingly unreal and fantastic: "Every place you look you can see one!" On June 12, the brother of the general manager of the Co-op was waylaid and beaten severely. In rapid succession, five more men were violently assaulted. Four of the six men who were beaten were known to have criticized the Resegregationists.

On June 26, Mr. Joe Kurihara, a strong-minded Hawaiian-born Nisei, who had helped me since my arrival at Tule Lake, was very depressed and told me almost desperately: "If the agitators and spies get out of here we'll be united. But it wouldn't matter if we didn't have unity, so long as we have peace."

He also recommended that I call on a man who might help me in my work, Kazuhiko Itabashi. Mr. Itabashi proved to be a gentle, scholarly man in his early 60s. He told me that when he was repatriated to Japan he planned to go on a lecture tour and speak about all the good things that America had done for the Japanese people in the past. Today, he said, the Japanese think only of the bad things the United States had done and this, he felt, was neither fair nor correct.

He had just completed a long letter to the Project Director, which contained such headings as: Give Us Segregees Fair Treatment, Give All of Us Jobs, Why Does the Project Director Hide Himself?, and Open the Hospital to Visitors. "The Japanese, when they are treated right, they are always so grateful. They are inspired by fairness." When I commented on his last statement he shrugged and said, "Of course, there are a handful of incorrigible people. I myself am for it that they be sent away. But if I said so in camp, I would be killed." On the night of July 2, five days later, the manager of the Co-op--a Number One Inu--was found on his brother's doorstep with his throat cut.

The news of the murder produced a state of panic. The key officials of the Co-op and the entire Japanese police force resigned, and the camp was filled with rumors of rape and violence. After a time, 60 blocks elected "wardens" who, however, refused to act on any matter which might offend the residents or which might be remotely connected with politics (i.e., the activities of the Resegregation group). Twenty-four blocks elected no wardens at all. The murderer or murderers were never apprehended.

I left the center immediately after the murder. While I was in Berkeley I received a letter from Mr. Kurihara advising me to stay out of the center and not to visit him for a while. Later, when I returned, he told me that it was not his life he was concerned about. Immediately after the killing, he told me, some fanatics had spread the rumor that "a Caucasian would be next."

I Become Involved

I returned to Tule Lake on July 12. On July 20, Mr. Kurihara gave me the names of several Issei whom I might visit to discuss the situation in the center. He also suggested casually that I might find it instructive to call on a certain Mr. Kira, but advised me not to use his name as a recommendation. I did not tell Mr. Kurihara that I had already heard rumors that Mr. Kira was the leader of a terrorist gang who called themselves the Black Tigers. Having signed their names in blood, they would do anything Kira told them to do. Mr. Kira replied to my respectful letter with a curt note, telling me he would see me in his office on July 26 at 7:00 p.m. This was awkward, for the administration had forbidden unescorted women to enter the center at night and Kira's office was more than two miles from the gate. Nevertheless, I kept the appointment and found Kira to be a small, flabby man in his late 40s. Though night had fallen, he wore dark glasses. He sat stiffly behind his desk and seated me so that I faced a large Japanese flag fastened to the wall behind him. I smiled and set out to give him the impression that he was a great and important man. This

was not difficult because he had the same objective. He talked to me for over an hour but gave me very little helpful information. I did, however, learn that he was involved in the underground Resegregation group, though he did not openly say this. Walking back to my room, I decided to see him only occasionally lest I arouse his suspicions. If what people said of him were true, he was a dangerous man. He was, moreover, the only Japanese man to whom I had talked who treated me as if I were a kind of inferior being.

During August, Resegregationist leaders gave "educational lectures" at small block meetings, assuring their listeners that Japan was winning the war and interpreting Japanese reverses as a strategic trap into which the American forces were being drawn. They also emphasized that "for those who desire to return to Japan, the discipline and education of our children adapted to the system of wartime Motherland are absolutely necessary," and they proceeded openly to establish an organization devoted to the study of the Japanese language, culture, and political ideology. About 500 young men joined this organization which was called Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan (Young Men's Association for the Study of the Mother Country). Meanwhile, Resegregationist leaders tried and failed to join forces with the prestigious leaders of the November uprising, Shozo Abe (a Buddhist priest), George Kuratomi, and Mitsuge Tada. The latter, however, remained politely aloof.

By August 24, all of the men who had been "detained" in the stockade had been released.⁴ After Abe, Kuratomi, and Tada were released, I tried to obtain interviews with them but they were, at first, very diffident. But by September 11, I did manage to arrange a meeting with Bill Kato, the young man who had been secretary to the Kaihyōsha Kai. This meeting was a kind of revelation, for Mr. Kato, a very intelligent, rather good looking young man of 26, who had once attended San Francisco State College, talked to me without pause

for two hours, telling me of events about which the WRA knew nothing, explaining complex organizational details, and relating some of his experiences in the stockade. Finally he became hoarse and I suggested that we stop. "But I've only told you a little bit," said Mr. Kato. We thereupon made an appointment to meet four days later at the apartment of his future parents-in-law. At this next meeting Mr. Kato gave me an enormous number of extremely valuable documents among which were: the original copies of the petitions signed by the residents indicating their support of the farm strike representative body, the hunger strike pledge signed by men confined in the stockade, and the diary he had kept in the stockade. I spent many days and nights typing copies of these materials to send to Berkeley to Dr. Thomas, the head of the Evacuation and Resettlement Study. Indeed, I was so busy that I did not take time to wonder why Mr. Kato was so eager to give them to me. I did not reflect on what it must have been like to be imprisoned in the stockade for nine months, collecting materials and recollecting experiences, hoping that someone, someday, would take them seriously. I did realize that Kato wished to be regarded as a formidable and competent agitator, or what today would be called an activist, but that being young and not particularly level-headed, he had been overshadowed by the older and abler leaders of the November uprising.

I Become a Partisan

I had had my first talk with Bill Kato on September 11. Ten days later, I happened to call on Koshiro Yamashita, who was probably the most prestigious leader of the Resegregationists and with whom I had been on cordial terms for four months. Mr. Yamashita appeared very distraught and uncomfortable and asked me a number of questions that were so involved I was unable to understand him.

Finally, his wife who had been sitting quietly and knitting, spoke up sharply, "Why don't you tell her the truth? You know you can trust her."

Mr. Yamashita looked nonplussed but decided to follow his wife's advice. He struck an attitude and stated solemnly, "The philosophy of the majority of the residents here and hereafter will be changed."

He thereupon produced a copy of a new petition which the Resegregationists were planning to put before the residents. It was a long document in both English and Japanese, offering the signer the opportunity to express his willingness for an immediate return to Japan.

Yamashita went on to explain how the Resegregationists had worked underground since April and how he and his fellow Resegregationists intended to use pressure to obtain their ends:

Those who refuse to sign this will have people asking them, "Are you loyal to Japan or not? If you are not loyal why don't you go out (relocate)?"

They will have to sign this. . . . If they don't sign this they will be known to be not loyal to Japan and will be told in public, "You are not Japanese."

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

I suspected that most people in the center would not welcome this demand for immediate and irrevocable commitment to "leave on the next exchange boat," but I had not expected that the people I knew would express their disapproval so strongly. They told me that they wished the agitators and the superpatriots would leave them alone. Some assured me that those who signed the petition did so out of intimidation or ignorance. Mr. Kurihara said the Resegregationists were threatening to use force and that if they did so he would not "stay quiet" even if they called him an inu. Mr. Wakida, who was teaching in the Japanese language school, was very angry. "I'm Japanese--no matter what they say!" he insisted to me. "If we swear to be Japanese we are Japanese. We don't show it by signing petitions!"

The Resegregationists went ahead. They secured a staff office and covered the walls with Japanese flags and patriotic mottoes. Among these was one stating

that any person speaking English in the office would be fined at the rate of one cent a word. They published mimeographed weekly and monthly newssheets. The Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan (Young Men's Organization)--hereafter referred to as Sokoku--began a program of predawn exercises including judo practice, goose-stepping, and running to a rhythmic shout of Wassho-ssho! Wassho-ssho! (Hip hip! Hip hip!) Leaders and members spread the rumor that the center was soon to be taken over by the Department of Justice, at which time, they insisted, all those who had not signed the petition would be obliged to relocate. They further insisted that those young men who did not join the Sokoku would be drafted, and adults who did not sign the petition were not true Japanese. In some blocks they set up morning exercises for the children and refused to let the children of non-Resegregationists participate, which, as some parents told me, made the children feel ashamed. Some of the leaders (I was told) made speeches in which they threatened people who did not sign. For example, the Buddhist priest--the nominal head of the Sokoku and a fiery and exuberant orator--is supposed to have said, "We have killers in our organization."

In fairness to the Resegregationists it should be noted that their hopes were by no means based on thin air. Representatives of the Departments of Justice and the Interior had been working on a plan whereby the residents of Tule Lake would be given the opportunity (as U.S. citizens) to renounce their citizenship or (as Japanese nationals) to reaffirm their desire to be repatriated. Those who renounced or reaffirmed were to go under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice until they could be sent to Japan. But the details of the plans and procedures had not yet been worked out.

Despite widespread disapproval of the Resegregationist activities, very few people dared to speak openly against them. But among the few men who did voice their disapproval openly were the leaders of a faith-healing sect to which my

benevolent and reasonable respondent, Mr. Itabashi, belonged. On October 10 Itabashi told me that he had spoken up at a meeting and exhorted the young men to follow the higher ideals of Japan, which, he stated, were not compatible with agitation or violence. "I said that this camp is no place for young men to make trouble. They should study. I said, 'Young men, behave yourselves'." He also told me that he was telling the Resegregationist leaders, "The Japanese government is not so narrow-minded as you." Kira, he remarked, was a selfish and dangerous man who wished only to become a big shot. I was moved to caution Itabashi, for he was, after all, a frail little man and no match for Kira's gangsters. So I remarked that there were some dangerous men in camp. But Itabashi laughed and said I was not to worry about him. "These people are cowards ...When the Japanese talk big they don't bite." But five nights later when Mr. Itabashi and two other older men were leaving a church meeting, they were assaulted and badly beaten.

I heard about these beatings almost immediately (from the head of WRA Internal Security), but I was not told that one of the victims was my friend. So, like a dutiful fieldworker, I paid short visits to a great variety of my Japanese-American friends and acquaintances to see whether they had heard of the beatings and what they thought about them. But none of my friends seemed interested in discussing the assault, though Mrs. Yamashita told me that some stubborn and foolish people had been beaten up, adding, in a disappointed tone, "But they weren't killed."

And when I visited Mr. Kato, I was distracted and shaken by an entirely unforeseen development. Fixing me with a steady stare and blushing violently, Mr. Kato, who had only recently been married, told me that he did not love his wife. He added that he admired spirited and courageous women like me and not those who were meek and docile.

I did not know what to say. I was under a considerable obligation to Kato, for he had managed to preserve and give me all manner of valuable documents, and he and I had spent many hours enlarging and correcting my historical accounts of what had happened before and during the strike. Moreover, Kato was my best informant on the less edifying activities of the Resegregation group, he was on excellent terms with Mr. Kira (to whom he stood somewhat in the position of Lieutenant), and he told me how he and his gang had terrorized or planned to terrorize those center residents who opposed the leaders of the Resegregation group. He interspersed these confidences with remarks of how, when he returned to Japan, he planned to devote himself to the establishment of democratic principles, including the liberation of women. In short, he saw himself as a brave, idealistic, and attractive young man.

I thought very hard that evening and the next day and I decided that I would try to find some courteous way to say no to Mr. Kato, see him less frequently, and take my chances.

On October 21 (though I was not to learn of this until two days later), Mr. Kira, who had now openly assumed a high position in the Resegregationist Organization, told the young men at a Sokoku rally that if they engaged in violence he would see that they came to no harm. He quoted a Japanese proverb: Dai no mushi wo tasukeru niwa, shō no mushi wo korosanakereba naranu, which some people translated as: "To save the big shots we have to kill the small guys." It may also be translated as: "To help the great cause, we have to kill those who stand in its way." So far as the residents were concerned, the connotation seemed to be that the opponents of the Resegregationist would be liquidated.

Two days later, not knowing that Mr. Kira had made these threats, I called on him to see whether he would let anything slip--either about the beatings or about his connection with the Resegregation group. He had now covered the walls

of his office with Japanese flags and mottoes, and he sat in silence behind a handsome desk. Two brawny and solemn-faced young men stood on either side of him. Another well-muscled youth stood at the door. Making a mental note of the body guards, I opened the conversation with a question--far removed from what I really wanted to find out--about a recent squabble between a resident of his block and the WRA office of social welfare. Thereupon Kira gave me a long and boastful account of how he had threatened the project director, telling him, "Go ahead! Call in the army! We'd rather have the army control the center than the WRA!" He then told me that the Resegregationists' "group repatriation plan" was his idea, but that some foolish people were objecting to his proposal.

Having found out what I wanted to know--that the dangerous Mr. Kira was deeply involved with the Resegregationists--I made several other visits and then, since I had not seen him for 10 days, I called on Mr. Kurihara.⁵ Mr. Kurihara seemed absent-minded and did not respond to my remarks as cordinally as usual. Even when I told him about Kira's threats, he interrupted me rather curtly and said: "These things are going on because the administration lacks a strong hand. If the administration acts at the right moment, I think they could bring these people into line. They try to appease them too much."

I was taken aback, because by "superpatriot" standards, Mr. Kurihara was talking like an inu. But, without waiting for a reply, he continued in a shaking voice, telling me how three old men had been beaten with clubs and a hammer because they refused to sign the Resegregationist petition and, especially, because they had advised other people not to sign it. "It was the act of a bunch of cowards...One of them you know, Mr. Itabashi."

At this I felt my face grow cold, and, though I continued to hear Mr. Kurihara's voice, all I saw was a vision of myself running to the Manzanar section like a berserk and beating up Mr. Kira. Still, I continued to take down Mr. Kurihara's

words verbatim:

I went to see Mr. Itabashi on Tuesday. He requested me to let the thing die out. They (the beaten men) fear that neither they nor their families will be safe if I carry out my intentions. One of our friends, when he heard of it, was going right over to beat up Kira all alone, but we restrained him.

I confessed that I too had the urge to beat up Kira, and Mr. Kurihara laughed, opining that, strong as I was, I probably could. I then asked, rather stupidly, whether the old strike leaders, Abe and Kuratomi--who, everyone knew, were now on bad terms with the Resegregationist group leaders--might not denounce Kira to the authorities. But Kurihara said he did not think so:

The people of this camp must choose if they want such terrorism to exist or else cast that leader (Kira) out. They are just trying to beat the people into line. If those persons (Itabashi and his friends) had not asked me not to carry out my intentions, I would have done it. I'm afraid there's going to be serious trouble here.

During the next three days I visited six people. Five of them made open or oblique references to minor beatings or threats of beatings. One man had received a letter, asking: "Would you like to be another Hitomi?" Another man, who worked in the mess operations, had been threatened by Mr. Kira's Manzanar Gang because he would not give them sugar. I became very anxious and decided to risk calling on the amorous Mr. Kato to see whether he would tell me anything about the situation. I realized that this was reckless, dangerous, and from an objective scientific point of view, unscrupulous, but I had made my choice. I intended to do all that I could to stop the growing wave of terrorism, and I knew that any sensible and efficient action would have to be based on information. So on October 27, I called on Mr. Kato, and was relieved to see that his wife was hanging out the wash just outside the barrack door. I opened the conversation by stating that I was under great obligation to him for his assistance and his frankness. I told him that I had been reading a book on bushidō, the code of the samurai. I praised these stern moral precepts and I

expressed my admiration for the Japanese heroes who had maintained their honor even at the price of great personal sacrifice. Ambiguous as my remarks were, Kato got the point. He never again referred to his lack of affection for his wife.

Then saying, "I ought not tell you this," Mr. Kato told me that there was not going to be any big trouble in camp until after November 3, the anniversary of the beginning of the Meiji Dynasty, because if there were trouble, the administration might not permit the Resegregationists to use the outdoor stage for the Meiji Setsu ceremony, "and we might have a hard time explaining that when we get to Japan." But after November 3 he was going "to make a big trouble." "Naturally," he added, "I can't tell you just what I'm going to do, but I'm 99 percent sure that I'm going to do it. I'd like to tell you my plans..." Here I interrupted hastily and said that I did not want to know. (Knowing the plans might be dangerous for me, if someone else in the conspiracy reported them to the administration.) Mr. Kato also proudly told me that he was on excellent terms with Mr. Yamashita (the behind-the-scenes director of the Resegregationists) and with Mr. Kira (the notorious gang leader).

A few days later (October 30) I once again called on Mr. Kurihara and found him much upset over the war news. The newspapers were claiming great victories for the American forces in the Pacific. Diffidently, he showed me some poems which he had just composed. They were passionate expression of his confidence in an ultimate victory for Japan. But they contained many grammatical errors, and Mr. Kurihara's use of rhyme made them sound childish. I asked why he had used rhyme, and he explained that his schoolteacher in Hawaii had told him that a poem had to rhyme. I suggested that he try blank verse, and we experimented with some of the lines. The results delighted him so much that I left him hard at work composing a poem in the new style. It was titled "Smile, Japanese, Smile!"

That evening a young man was stabbed and seriously injured. Reliable respondents told me that the assailant was a member of the Manzanar gang and that the victim's father, though a Resegregationist, had been heard to criticize Mr. Kira.

When (on October 23) Mr. Kurihara had told me that Mr. Itabashi had been severely beaten, I immediately wrote Mr. Itabashi a letter, expressing my sympathy and my concern that my visits to him might have exposed him to suspicion. He responded immediately by mail, saying: "Rest assured that your calling (on) me was not the cause of the attack, and I welcome your coming at any time. However, it might be best for both of us to keep quiet for a while." Given this warning, I waited until November 9 to visit him. I found him chipper and talkative. The huge cut across his head was healing well. He told me about the assault but expressed no rancor toward the assailants. Of Kira, he said, "Give him plenty of rope and he'll hang himself up."

Cheered by Mr. Itabashi's recovery, I plucked up my courage and made another call on Mr. Kato. Kato opened the conversation by apologizing for the fact that he had not yet been able to show me any "real trouble" in camp. He said that he had gone to see Mr. Best, the Project Director, about his renunciation of citizenship, and implied that Mr. Best treated him rudely. Thereupon he had conceived a grand plan by which his "boys" would beat up 12 inu in one night. If this happened, "the people in Washington" would realize that Mr. Best was an incompetent, and when the center was taken over by the Department of Justice the Department would be certain to appoint a new director. But when Kato approached Yamashita with this plan, Yamashita demurred, pointing out that if the Resegregationists were involved in this kind of violence, he himself would be arrested and sent back to the Santa Fe internment center. Kato was disgusted with Yamashita's timidity and assured me that on the next day he was going to Mr. Kira with his plan. I said nothing

because I did not know what I could safely say.

Kato then told me that the people in his block were complaining about him and that some inu had met and talked of circulating a petition to get him out of the block. If they did this, Kato assured me, he "would bring his boys and beat up the whole block!" He had 200 boys (he said), and 10 of these had sworn to die for him. These 10 had even made and given him their wills--in case they died for him or were sent to the electric chair. "Only five other people in camp--and you--know about this," he added. Kato did not show me the wills, but he did show me a letter from an older Japanese still interned in Santa Fe, in which the older man sternly told Kato to quiet down and behave himself and also, interestingly, advised Kato not to renounce his American citizenship. Kato sneered at this letter and remarked once again that older Japanese were too cautious. He then obligingly spent more than an hour clearing up various obscurities in the minutes of the meetings of the Daihyōsha Kai.

While I suspected that Kato was exaggerating his power and prestige as a gang leader, I also suspected that he and his roughneck followers were on the verge of doing something very violent and dramatic. Moreover, Kira, who was much more dangerous and more clever than Kato, had talked to me in the same slightly crazy tone of arrogance. (I recalled that Kato had told me in one of our previous conversations that it was he who had led the young men who assaulted the WRA employees on the night of November 4, and thereby initiated the fracas which had ended by the military taking jurisdiction over the camp.) In any case, I felt so strongly that the gang leaders were about to start another series of beatings, that I went to call on Mr. Penn, an assistant project director, who had been particularly helpful to me and who was on good terms with some of the Resegregationist leaders.

I did not know what could be done, but I felt that he ought to be warned.

But Mr. Penn seemed sad and defeated. He told me that the Washington office was convinced that Tule Lake was now in an ideal state of peace and quiet. True, there was some squabbling between factions, but "nothing in the way of trouble is anticipated." He also told me that the project director had had a talk with Mr. Kato and that the director was convinced that Kato had settled down and would behave himself.

Feeling very desperate, I went to call on Mr. Kurihara. He said he was glad to see me, since, the situation being what it was, he was purposely staying at home. He also told me that he had taken the precaution of sending an account of Kira's misdeeds to some friends outside the center, with the instruction that if anything happened to him (Kurihara) his friends were to turn over the information to the proper authorities. I asked whether he was sure that his denunciation of Kira was in capable hands. If Kurihara were murdered, would his friends have the guts to turn Kira in? Kurihara said he thought they would. I then told Kurihara as much as I knew about Kato's plans, without, of course, mentioning Kato's name. Wouldn't it be better, I asked, to denounce Kira to the authorities before his gang beat or murdered any more people? "No." said Kurihara. He explained that he was laying a trap for Kira. He had let one of Kira's spies know that he went out two evenings a week to a class on old Japanese songs. If any of Kira's men ambushed him, they would die too. Then he opened a drawer of his desk and showed me a curious weapon, a stout club, about six inches long, to which a pipe joint was attached by a leather thong.

I left, still feeling very apprehensive, but, as it turned out, I had underestimated Kurihara. A few days later a rumor filtered through the center that Mr. Kira had resigned his office with the Resegregation group. I checked the rumor with the wife of a prominent Resegregationist who explained that Mr. Kira's health was poor and that he was obliged to give up some of his numerous duties.

I then visited Kato and found him very depressed. "I'm fed up with this camp," he told me in a disgusted tone. "There isn't going to be any trouble for a long time." The older leaders, he implied, had once again ordered him to wait and "play a gentlemen act." It took some time to discover what Mr. Kurihara had done. He himself would tell me very little, except that he had had a friend of his spread the truth to the people in the Manzanar section and that Mr. Kira was "shivering in his shoes." Indeed, it was not until December 9, that Mr. Wakida, a mutual friend and anti-Resegregationist, told me that Mr. Kurihara had visited him immediately after I had warned him that the situation looked very dangerous. According to Mr. Wakida, Kurihara had said: "Now I'm going to fight. You stay out of it, George, because you're married. I'm a bachelor and have no one to depend on me if I get killed." Kurihara had been very nervous and had tried to learn from Wakida and his wife who I had been seeing. But Mrs. Wakida said that I never told them the names of the people to whom I spoke.

On December 14, I visited Mr. Itabashi and after we had conversed for some time he asked me if I had heard how Mr. Kurihara had squelched Mr. Kira. I replied that I had heard some of the details but not all. "Well," said Mr. Itabashi, "maybe I shouldn't tell you if Kurihara didn't." "But," said I, "Kurihara is such a modest man that he won't tell me because it would seem like boasting." Itabashi agreed, and told me the following story:

Kira worked in Terminal Island before the war and so did Mr. Kurihara. So they knew each other for a long time and Kurihara knows the personality of Kira--that he is always for himself only.

He (Kurihara) knew everything that Kira did in Manzanar. He knew Kira was a coward. And still he bragged himself. But Kurihara kept quiet as long as Kira didn't do any big wrong. But when Kira's followers attacked me that night, Kurihara was mad as a bulldog. He came to me immediately the next day and said he's going to kill Kira or have him arrested, because he knows everything that he did in the past. I told him to be quiet and see what will happen in a month or two.

Then a young boy was slashed (October 30). And the fellow who attacked him was one of the men who had attacked me.

And then Kira tried to attack Kurihara. He planned it and Kurihara found out. And then Kurihara was kind of alarmed. And one of the Sokoku (Resegregationist) men, a mean fellow, he and one other went to see Kurihara early in the morning. They stayed there talking until two o'clock in the afternoon. And Kurihara said to them: "I might be attacked and killed but in the meantime I might kill one of you. I dedicate myself to the justice and welfare of the camp. That's the only way we can keep the peace in the camp."

Then these two men said: "As long as we let you alone you shouldn't mind what happens in camp." Then Kurihara was madder than ever. "What!!!" he said.

Then he told these two men, who were representatives of Mr. Kira, all that he knew about Kira and his movements. He said, "You are having as leader such a man as Kira. Do you know about this?" The two men were surprised.

Then next morning Mr. Kira resigned from his office in the Resegregation group.

But while Kurihara did not wish to talk about what he had done, he did want to know how I had found out that a series of beatings was in the wind. I hesitated to tell him, for while I had squared my betrayal of Kato with myself, I was afraid that the stern-principled Kurihara would think I had behaved like a sneak. But, when I told him, he said, "Do you think I will scold you when you saved my life?" The he smiled and added, "Young men are certainly foolish."

There are and always will be gaps in this account of how a major terrorist impulse was controlled. But one important fact about this attempt should be emphasized: there were no more terroristic assaults in the Tule Lake Center.

At the end of November, the leaders of the farm-strike uprising, Shozo Abe, George Kuratomi, and Mitsuge Tada, began openly to oppose the Resegregationists. They did this so ably that some members began to submit their resignations.

But at this crucial time, John Burling, the representative of the Department of Justice, arrived at the center to open hearings for persons who wished to renounce their citizenship. The Resegregationists intensified their demonstrations, conducting their noisy predawn militaristic exercises as close to the administration section as possible. Burling warned them that if they did not

stop their Japanese militaristic activities, they would be interned. They drilled more ostentatiously than ever and on December 27, 70 of their leaders and officers were interned. And when, on December 5, 1945, the WRA released and distributed an official pamphlet in which Dillon Myer reaffirmed that it was the WRA's intention to close all of the centers and return the evacuees "to private life in normal communities," many of the non- or anti-resegregants fell into a state of great anxiety, fearing that if they did not renounce their citizenship, they would shortly be forced to relocate. As the panic intensified, renunciation became a mass movement. During January, 3400 young persons (40 percent of the citizen population) renounced their citizenship. By March, 70 percent had renounced.

Mr. Kurihara was among those who renounced their American citizenship and were sent to Japan. Just before he left for Japan, he wrote me:

It is my sincere desire to get over there as soon as possible to help rebuild Japan politically and economically. The American Democracy with which I was infused in my childhood is still unshaken. My life is dedicated to Japan with Democracy as my goal.

And the day he left, he wrote me a postcard in blank verse, bidding farewell to a friend.

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was delivered as the lecture, "Terrorism and Resistance," in the University of Kansas Department of Anthropology Distinguished Lecture Series on "Social Science in Non-Academic Settings," Lawrence, Kansas, March 26, 1980.
2. With the exception of Joseph Yoshisuke Kurihara and George Toshio Kuratomi, who gave me permission to use their names, I have used pseudonyms for all of the Japanese Americans mentioned in this manuscript.
3. Japanese born in Japan were known as Issei, first generation immigrants. Their children, born in the U.S., were known as Nisei, second generation. The third generation is called Sansei.
4. See Thomas and Nishimoto (pp. 283-302) for a detailed account of "the stockade issue."
5. The reader may wonder why I waited ten days to call on one of my most reliable respondents. If I called on anyone too frequently, he or she might be expected of being an inu. This, of course, did not apply to the Resegregationists.

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Suggested Reading

The most detailed account of events at Tule Lake appears in The Spoilage (Thomas and Nishimoto), although this work makes no mention of the role Mr. Kurihara played as an antiterrorist. A shorter account based primarily on the problems of doing fieldwork in the Gila Relocation Center and in the Tule Lake Segregation Center appears in my book, Doing Fieldwork. Impounded People, edited by Edward H. Spicer, contains much material of general interest and an excellent bibliography. For those interested in the legal aspects of the evacuation and detention, I recommend Prejudice, War, and the Constitution, by Jacobus tenBroek, Edward B. Barnhart, and Floyd W. Matson.