

Roy Teshima who is coordinator in the recreation department and also has worked closely with the Issei recreational group gave me the following information concerning his recollections of the Issei entertainment problems.

"The difficulties in the recreation department among the Issei entertainers started before the 4th of July program. I got in rather late, and so I don't know the whole background. Just before the 4th program, Waller and Ray Muramoto had a disagreement. It happened over the question of performers. The Issei had arranged a program for two places, as you'll remember, but the Nisei wanted a program on the outdoor stage and took some of the Issei performers. Ray and Waller had quite a bit of disagreement over that."

"After the 4th of July program, the whole question of setting up a separate Issei recreation dept. again came up and it all came to a head about the 8th of July. There were two reasons for the disagreement: one was a personal disagreement between Ray and Waller, because Ray didn't like the latter and didn't want to work with him; and the other was the feeling among the Issei ~~and~~ that it was impossible for them to work together with the Nisei because of a complete separation of interests. That was when Jim Nishida, the sumo man, quit. Waller wouldn't back down because he said the organization wouldn't look right to the people on the outside if it were known that the Issei and Nisei had separate departments. Ray is a pretty hard person to get along with in some ways because he wants to do things his own way, so it was a pretty bad affair for a while. But because Waller kept insisting that the organization had to be one unit, you'll remember the Issei finally gave in though their giving in didn't solve any of the basic differences."

"Things didn't go so well between the Issei and the recreation dept. For instance, there was the big explosion about the office space. When the Issei got put away in an inside room, they blew up. (Many of the Nisei expressed the view that they'd have soon taken the inside room, and nobody was necessarily the loser for each room had its advantage. The set-up was: a long barrack divided up so that there was a small room at the north end for the wardens, a long middle room that was partitioned off into small offices by walls that extend up to about one's chest, and which room was the one the Issei wanted to be in with the rest of the Nisei staff quartered there, and an inside room with a connecting door to the long room for the Issei and the Athletic dept. This inside room had the advantage of being quiet and out of the traffic of things, but the Issei apparently wanted to be in the outer room. The small room at the south end was then occupied by the social welfare dept., but was later given up and the Issei took it over and made it into a neat little office of their own. There are connecting doors all through the recreation staff offices, including the Isseis, but the separation of Issei and Nisei is apparent in that there is the intervening inner room which is still used by the Athletic dept. and there is relatively little traffic from the Nisei offices to the Isseis.) Now that the Issei have their little office over here, they're pretty well satisfied. They just took it over as soon as the Welfare dept. left, without saying anything to anyone in the main staff office."

"The second major blow-up came when the ~~Nisei~~ Nisei recreation staff went on the picnic to the farm with Chie Aoki leaving shortly for Arkansas. That night (August 5, 1942), the Issei had an entertainment in which Tanihana was chairman. He was said to have said certain things which came to Jacoby and Joe Hayes' attention, and they asked Waller about it. (The event had to do with statements made by Tanihana, as chairman, that since there were none of the white administration staff on hand that evening, since all had gone to



the picnic in honor of Chie Aoki, that there was no danger in the Issei saying anything in Japanese that they wished. This he announced several times, and indicated on one occasion that even worse things were yet to come. (One performance, an ahodarakyo (satirical monologue) or perhaps better (comic monologue), was alleged to have cast aspersions on the democratic forms of govt. It is said that the performer declared, "Anyone who does bad things in a country will be put into jail." There was much controversy as to what exactly was said, and as to whether the thing had bad intent against the U.S. or not.) Waller jumped on Harry Mayeda for the performance, but the administration fortunately took the view that it knew nothing about what was said that evening. Then the event of the Sunday night after that took place. (August 2, 1942) Ray Muramoto was fired that night, you'll remember."

"One thing happened before the Sunday night program, however, that I should tell you. Waller saw me that evening walking in the street, and he waved to me from his car. He asked me to step in, and then asked me what I knew about the Wednesday night program. I had gone to the picnic with the rest of the gang, but I had heard, even after the picnic when we reached home, about some of the things that had happened. However, I told Waller that I had heard certain things that shouldn't have been said had been said, but I told him I didn't know anything more than that."

"After the Saturday program Ray was fired because he hadn't used a Nisei announcer to announce all programs in English as well in Japanese as he had been instructed to do. But Ray also had a quarrel with Tanihana that night at the program, and they almost came to blows. Tanihana wanted to announce that a collection was being made for the use of the P.A. system owned by Ray Nakamoto. Ray Muramoto said that this couldn't be done because it was none of the rec. staff's business. (In a sense, it was the rec. staff's business, for they had been using Ray N's equipment without paying him anything for it. The story is that when some repairs had to be made, Waller refused to pay for the required parts even though the rec. staff had been borrowing the instrument and that Ray became angry and withdrew the use of the apparatus. Tanihana was trying to get something to give to Ray N. for his trouble, so he said.) Some of the tough fellows from Sacramento who were sitting in the front row wanted to make trouble, but somehow they got the difficulty settled and Ray had his way. Noone knew then, however, that Ray was going to be fired for the performance of that night." (It was only after the program was well under way that a Nisei announcer was added under orders from Waller.)

"The next afternoon there was a meeting to settle some of the differences that had arisen between Tanihana and Ray Muramoto. Still, noone knew that Ray was to be fired, and the discussion that afternoon had strictly to do with settling the difference between Ray and Tanihana, and also Ajima who was on Tanihana's side. We called together certain people like Mr. Nishioka, Mr. Miyamoto, and others of the Sacramento people who are interested in Issei entertainment but also have influence over fellows like Tanihana and Ajima. That is the way with the Japanese. Even among gangsters and gamblers, there are certain persons who can give orders to them and they will have to say 'yes.' They are persons of influence who are accepted by the group. We asked these persons in because they know Tanihana and Ajima and have influence over them, and we asked them to referee or act as advisors in settling the differences. Nothing definite was accomplished that evening, but at least the personal differences between Ray and Tanihana were ironed out so that bad feeling no longer existed. It was also decided that these referees should hereafter act as an advisory group to the Issei entertainment so that nothing like the troubles of the previous Wednesday night should happen again, and it was decided they should



look over the program each time before it went on."

So, you see, there were two lines of difficulties in the Issei department at that time. On the one hand, Ray Muramoto was in opposition to Ted Waller and he was in danger of losing his job in the rec. dept., and on the other hand, there was the opposition between Ray Muramoto, and Tanihana and Ajima. Tanihana and Ajima had been trying to gain leadership over the Issei entertainment for some time, early in July, but noone wanted that type of fellows in there and they had been kept out until then. That was the source of the difference between Ray and the others."

"Then, Sunday night, Waller called Ray down to his office and gave him his termination paper, that is, he fired him. When we heard about it the next day, the Issei dept. had a meeting, and everyone wanted to resign right away. That's what they decided to do. The reason for firing Ray, according to Waller, was because Ray had not complied with regulations on Saturday night, and had failed to announce the program in English as well as in Japanese as the regulation required. But all the Issei said that that was probably not the real reason, they refused to accept it as the real reason, and they felt that Ray was being fired for what had happened on Wednesday night. The Issei disliked Waller anyway, so they decided that they should all walk out. Then Wednesday night we had another meeting, this time with the advisory council that had been informally gathered together, the same one that had met to settle the Tanihana difficulty. The advisors suggested that everyone wait to see if some negotiation couldn't be carried out with the administration whereby Ray would be kept in, so the Issei all decided that they would wait before resigning."

"On Monday morning of the same week, however, I heard something which was to cause terrible difficulty later. I heard from Waller that he was trying to set up an Issei Advisory Council for their entertainment group. So Waller was trying to form an advisory committee, while the Issei dept. had already chosen their own advisors. Waller, of course, went ahead with his plans to select the committee, something which he kept in the dark at the time. I didn't tell Waller about the other advisory group because I couldn't very well reveal it."

"Waller refused to reinstate Ray, and he wouldn't permit him to submit a resignation instead of being fired. The Issei dept. then decided that they would resign but it was again suggested that they remain in their offices until some entertainers group could be gathered to replace them."

"In the meantime, however, it was announced that a Recreational Advisory Council had been selected by Waller and the rec. staff. When that news came out, the other advisory council jumped on us, for they had thought they were to be the advisory committee. Tanihana and Ajima, of course, goaded them on because they wanted to get into the recreation dept. That was the most terrible experience I have ever had. It finally came to a point in which the whole blame for the mix-up was placed on my shoulders and Harry Mayeda's, because we had known about both the advisory groups. We apologized for the mistake, but the whole thing never did entirely quiet down. Tanihana and Ajima kept trying to get in. The new Recreational Advisory Council appointed Mr. Uo as director of the Issei group, and Mr. Takeda as chairman of Issei entertainment. Mr. Takeda is very much respected among the Sacramento people, and so he has been able to control things pretty well. In the meantime, Tanihana and Ajima decided to start an Issei entertainment club, and they said that they would hereafter have everything to do with the stage since we didn't know anything about it and didn't have the performers. But when all those disputes arose, the recreation department turned the matter over to the advisory council to let them handle things, and we just washed our hands of the trouble. The



Issei entertainment club, however, never got in because noone would recognize them."

"Then Waller and Harry Mayeda wanted to put on something in Issei entertainment right away because rumors were getting around that the affair of the Wednesday before had come to light and no more Issei entertainment would be put on. This was bad for the morale of the community, so the rec. dept. wanted some thing put on right away to show that nothing serious had happened. But none of the Issei performers were willing to participate in the thing because the dept. had fired Muramoto without, what they regarded as, sufficient reason. This question, too, however, was finally settled with the help of the advisory group, and Issei entertainment have since gone on. There were also several rumors that the old man who gave the ahodarakyo was sent to internment camp, but he's still around."

Now, things are much quieter in the department among Issei, and they rather fight among themselves.

Added Note: Roy Teshima had mentioned in connection with the quarrel between Tanihana-Ajima and Ray Muramoto, that the latter had been accused of informing the Administration of what had gone on at the August 5th program. The assumption was that the incumbent Issei entertainment group had ~~is~~ in fer Tanihana and Ajima and that to get even they had gone to the Adm. The whole Issei dept. was later accused. It is slightly a contradiction of facts that Ray Muramoto was accused of being an informer, and then the next day was fired by the administration for his alleged carelessness in seeing that nothing of anit-American nature happened at the entertainments, but events were coming rapidly at the time and all kinds of accusations were being shot back and forth.