

# ASSOCIATED STUDENTS UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



STEPHENS UNION  
PHONE ASHBERRY 4800  
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

Rt. 2, Box 346  
Reedley, Calif.,  
May 10, 1942.

Dr. Dorothy S. Thomas  
2710 Garber Street  
Berkeley, California.

Dear Dr. Thomas,

From the semester preceding, you may perhaps recall me as one of a group consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Mich Kunitani, Haruo Najima, Tom and Tomi Shibutani, who met with you at your home; also, as one of the delegation that attended the J.A.C.L. open meeting in San Francisco. For the past two years I have also been associated with the Welfare Council of the A.S.U.C. and on the executive committee of the Y.M.C.A. Race Relations Group.

Despite adverse circumstances, I am planning to continue with my education in the East. After considerable investigation I have found that Howard University in Washington, D.C., offers to me the most in unique opportunities for pursuing my studies toward social welfare work, particularly in the field of race relations.

I inquired of President Johnson as to the possibilities of my enrolling there and availability of scholarships. In reply, I received a very encouraging letter from President Johnson, also application blanks for admission and for a tuition scholarship. These I have already filled and returned.

Since it seems exceedingly remote that I would be able to attend Howard without financial assistance, a tuition scholarship would be of immense value to me. In this connection, I would appreciate greatly your aid if you would send some sort of recommendation, on the basis of my work on the A.S.U.C. Welfare Council and on the executive committee of the "Y" Race Relations Group, to the Committee on Scholarships, Howard University, Washington, D.C., which is conferring shortly. Mr. Harry Kingman and Miss Leila Anderson are also acting in my behalf.

Thank you most kindly. As soon as I receive word from the Committee, I shall inform you as to whether or not I will be able to attend Howard.

Sincerely yours,  
*Kenny Murase*  
Kenny Murase



May 13, 1942

Mr. Kenny Murase  
Rt. 2, Box 346  
Reedley, California

Dear Kenny Murase:

I was indeed glad to get your letter of May 10. May I thank you for lending me your manuscript on the Nisei. I am having portions of it copied and will return it to you when and where you wish.

I am very glad indeed to write to President Johnson. I have met him and like him. I have one very good friend at Howard University; that is, Professor Ralph Bunche, and I am also writing to him on your behalf. I have no doubt that you will like Howard. It is a first-class University with very fine people connected there. The only trouble you will find is the racial segregation, but you will I am sure get a great deal of valuable material there on other minority groups.

Please keep in touch with me and let me have your observations on what is happening to you and your friends.

Sincerely yours,

Dorothy S. Thomas  
Professor of Rural Sociology

DST:rj



*Copied*

Rt. 2, Box 346  
Reedley, Calif.  
May 17, 1942.

Dear Dr. Thomas,

My sincere thanks to you for writing to Howard University. I haven't heard from them as yet but will let you know as soon as I receive word.

Both Tom Shibutani and James Sakoda have told me that you were very much interested in what was happening to the Nisei and I thought you might welcome some of the things I have heard and observed among my associates. These are of course my own interpretations and I may have been misled.

Most of the Nisei I've come in contact with refuse to accept the idea that evacuation was necessary because of military necessity. The more intelligent ones reason that a number of factors operated to bring evacuation about -- economic interest groups, super-patriots, but primarily pressure brought to bear upon the Army by a hysteria gripped people, with the special interests responsible for accentuating the hysteria. They will point out to the wire from Honolulu's Chief of Police to discredit ~~xxx alleged~~ sabotage dangers. Personally, I would like to know what is meant by the term "military necessity." If it has reference to aiding our enemies, then that reason is utterly unacceptable; but if "military necessity" is to include the morale of the people, then evacuating the Japs from the coast did an enormous amount of morale boosting, and perhaps justified evacuation.

The irony of the tragic mess is that if the Army authorities distrusted the Japanese, then by uprooting them from their homes and depriving them of freedom, ~~xx~~ <sup>now there is</sup> there is more cause for distrust. The simple Nisei mind runs thusly: we were loyal Americans; 3000 of us are in the Army and a lot of them volunteered; now they throw us into the camps; how in hell do you expect us to be loyal now?

A girl friend in Salt Lake City (she was a student at U.C.) wrote me of her observations, and she put it so aptly, I'll quote from her letter: The majority of the Nisei I have come to know here in Salt Lake openly express the thought that irrespective of the outcome of this war, the future of the Nisei is no longer here, but in the orient. They feel that the racial prejudice existing will be greatly accentuated, and rather than remaining here to combat it, they feel that they have a greater task in the Orient; of educating and thereby elevating the standard of the colored races in the Orient so that there will no longer be any basis for White Man's superiority anywhere. (Racial prejudice they regard as a manifestation of racial superiority). In other words, they view this course of action as benefiting not only the Japanese here, which they recognize as an insignificant minority in relation to the total population, but to the total population of the colored races of the world against the Whites. They hold to the view that ~~if going to the Orient and assuming the leadership in those conquered territories,~~



if Japan does win the war, then there will be all the more reason for their going to the Orient and assuming the leadership in those conquered territories there. If Japan loses, then they like your despicable employer believe that they will be subjected to ~~xxx~~ further mistreatment because of Japan's impotency to protect them. Their future will be definitely blighted and therefore, this leaves no reason for their remaining here.

"The foregoing seems to be the general trend of thought among the Nisei here as well as elsewhere, I'm afraid. The majority of them hold to these views because they have been greatly disillusioned, having been dismissed from the Army, where they joined eagerly and willing to defend their country's cause, and also due to the injustice of evacuation. Subsequently they have come to view this war, ~~xx~~ not as a war against fascism, but a war whereby the racial superiority claimed by the Whites is being challenged; i.e. a race war. I believe that they have been ~~xx~~ forced to take this view simply because they have been denied the right to defend democracy against the tyranny of fascism, and further, because of this, they have lost faith in democracy with the promulgation of the evacuation orders."

I wouldn't agree with the girl that such an attitude is a prevalent one, but I do feel that the Nisei mind is progressing in such a direction. The whole thing is loaded with dynamite, and I'm afraid that one of these days, some uninhibited Nisei is going to shoot the works. To prevent any such outbreaks, it's going to take a stupendous campaign of re-education. I myself can't conceive of any program of action whereby some of the bad effects of evacuation can be nullified, unless it be that a program of education be formulated to include the total population, and only a dreamer such as I will think of such fanciful notions.

You may be interested to know what is happening in areas which are unrestricted. Reedley happens to be in Tulare County, in the portion which lies out of Zone 1. Tulare County is a stronghold of the Associated Farmers and the Republicans. When voluntary evacuation was still possible, hordes of Japs descended into this erstwhile ~~xxx~~ out-post of provincialism, about 2000 of them concentrated hereabouts. Most of them came with no little wealth and so were able to idle about, riding in their nice new Buicks, Packards and Lincolns. The local people became irked and shortly resolutions were sent to the Army by the local Chamber of Commerce recommending removal of the remaining Japs. Governor Olson came down about two weeks ago and in a speech gave his "best assurance" that he would have all the Japs cleared out of the state by the end of the year (in time for his re-election). <sup>in the interest of the Republic</sup> Nothing has as yet been officially pronounced as to this area, but <sup>in the interest of the Republic</sup> will surely be forthcoming after all of zone 1 goes. With the threat of evacuation hanging over the head of the local Japs, ~~xxx~~ there's a good deal of friction between them and the newcomers. Story has it that the local JACL has broken off relations with national headquarters because national accused the local JACL of insubordination when the local instructed the national to advise people against voluntarily evacuating, for fear of its security being jeopardized. In the FBI raids, a number of prominent local people were pulled in, and now there's a good deal of suspicion and distrust among the local Japanese because someone must have pointed the finger.

Am enclosing something which I banged out. I used to write considerably for the vernaculars, and thought of sending this to the organ of the JACL. Would appreciate your comments, but if you do not have the time, I shall not be stricken with grief. Till <sup>again</sup> ~~again~~, adios,  
Kenny Murase



HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May Twenty-first

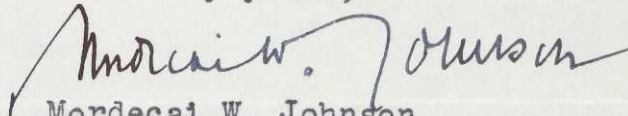
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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

My dear Professor Thomas:

I thank you for your letter with regard to Mr. Kenny Murase, former student of the University of California. I am bringing your letter, together with Mr. Murase's letter, to the attention of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, who will give the matter very careful consideration and will write you directly.

Sincerely yours,

  
Mordecai W. Johnson  
President

Professor Dorothy S. Thomas  
College of Agriculture  
University of California  
Berkeley, California

HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

29 May 1942

THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

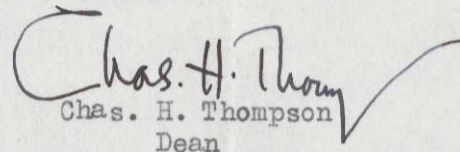
Professor Dorothy S. Thomas  
College of Agriculture  
University of California  
Berkeley, California

My dear Professor Thomas:

The President of the University has referred to me your letter of May 14th together with application blanks and transcript of Mr. Kenny Murase, former student of the University of California who is desirous of entering Howard. I am forwarding this information to our Board of Admissions.

You will understand, I am sure, that in view of the fact that the Eastern seaboard has been declared a military zone it might be just as difficult for Mr. Murase to transfer to the Eastern seaboard as it is for him to remain on the Western. However, we shall look into the matter and if there is any possibility of assisting this young man naturally we shall be very happy to do so.

Sincerely yours,

  
Chas. H. Thompson  
Dean

CHT:S  
CC: President Johnson  
Registrar Wilkinson  
Mr. Murase



CONFIRMATION COPY

May 29, 1942

AIR MAIL

Mr. Kenny Murase  
Route 2 - Box 346  
Reedley, California

Dear Mr. Murase:

I certainly appreciated your letter of May 17. This is the sort of document that I am very anxious to get, and your intelligent and objective observations are extremely helpful to me in formulating questions about the Nisei.

I received a letter of acknowledgment from President Johnson, but apparently the committee has not yet acted on your application.

As you may know, I am planning a research project on the relocation process. Tom Shibutani and James Sakoda and several others are already recording observations. I hope to be able to arrange their early transfer to Tule Lake, in which case we will center at least the beginning of the study there. In connection with the study, I hope also to be able to arrange to carry on some courses in sociological method. Naturally, there are a great many details which must be still cleared up both with the Army and with the Relocation Authority. Tom suggested that you might be interested in joining us as an observer. I hesitate to bring the matter up because I feel there are real advantages in keeping outside of the area and maintaining your personal liberty. If, however, you decide that you can't manage the eastern venture now, I shall be delighted to have you as a member of the study group. I can't say now just exactly what I would be able to pay you or what the conditions of payment and work would be, but I shall know pretty soon. If, therefore, this appeals to you in principle, please let me know.

Do you want me to hold on to your material until your plans are settled? I can send it to you at any time if you will let me know.

I hope you are keeping the letters that you are getting from your Nisei friends for they will be very important documentary material in the long run.

With cordial regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Dorothy Swaine Thomas  
Professor of Rural Sociology

DST/dr



Rt 2 Box 346  
Reedley, Calif.  
June 1, 1942.

Dear Dr. Thomas,

Thank you again for your letter to Howard University, and your recent letter of May 29th. The response to my requests has certainly been gratifying and I'm sure the Scholarship Committee of Howard will give me more than the usual consideration.

I heard from our captive malcontent, Shibutani, a few days ago regarding your project. At that time I replied that I felt unqualified to assume the sort of work that would be required in such a project, and said that I would be of much greater use if I were to go ahead and work for my social welfare certificate; and then do what I could.

A recent letter from Joe Conard, of the Student Relocation Committee, however, seems to indicate that students will have difficulty enrolling in Eastern schools in time for the Fall term. This, of course, referred expressly to those students already in reception centers, but the situation may no doubt also apply ~~xxx~~ to those of us in Zone 2. I will, however, check with the authorities on this point. If I am able to leave for the East to go to some school (I expect to continue at some other college if I fail to receive the scholarship to Howard), I feel that it would be the wise thing to do.

On the other hand, if this area is to be evacuated, and the possibility of this is not too remote, then certainly it would be a very profitable and valuable experience for me to be received on your staff at Tulalake. This question of whether or not I will be forced to evacuate should be the deciding factor. We should know definitely within the next few weeks on what action is to be taken with areas in Zone 2 of the state. I shall keep you informed on this matter.

I believe you are familiar with Bill Himel--he's the special student in oriental languages who seems to have an extensive knowledge of the Japanese, and a particularly keen insight into the nature of the problems facing the Nisei. Bill remarked that he has enjoyed the company of you and your husband on some previous occasion. Last Friday night, Bill descended upon this peaceful ~~xxxxxx~~ hovel, at the outlandish hour of twelve midnight, accompanied by a chaos of barking dogs and battering upon the door. Was very much elated to see Bill again and we had a joyful reunion.

his

Saturday, after calling upon ~~xxxx~~ numerous evacuee friends from the Coast who had moved to Reedley (they were, of course, all comely "musume-sans"), we decided to take a chance and visit the camp in Tulare. Pretending to be ignorant of restrictions, we did get to the camp and were allowed to see our friends. Neighbor Sakoda was among them; he seemed in the best of health and was ~~xxxx~~ making himself very



useful, befriending the psychological misfits and maladjusted ones in camp. He said he was working in the social welfare office and had already compiled some statistics. I believe you will hear from him soon, if you haven't already. According to Bill Himel, who has visited Tanforan and Turlock, the camp in Tulare, aside from the infernal heat, is very comparable. Sakoda said that the food was being received with little dissatisfaction, and that most of them had become pretty well adjusted with the place. They all complain, of course, about the lack of privacy and sanitation facilities. In the Fresno Camp, there were reports (suppressed in the news) that a whole barrack of about 250 was stricken with ptomaine poisoning and while no one died, the ~~xxx~~ situation was extremely alarming.

We returned from Tulare in time to attend a local JACL meeting, where Saburo Kido who has moved to Visalia (about 20 miles out) spoke on the general history of evacuation. He said he was the very last to leave San Francisco, and was remaining here in this area because he felt it important that at least one JACL official be responsible. Kido seemed to think it of utmost importance that at least one area in California be left free so that after the war, there will be some "entering wedge" into the state. The campaign hereabouts to keep this area free, which I think is entirely too negative, consists essentially of "laying low"--there have been numerous complaints that the Japs are overrunning the town and "fooling around when everyone should be doing something for national defense." The police records show such offenses as bad checks, forgery and "indecent exposure" as cases held traceable to evacuees. The general agreement was that some sort of voluntary curfew and travel restriction was necessary, and the nearby town of Parlier, the JACL has adopted a resolution whereby anyone found guilty, by a reviewing board of violating an arbitrary curfew, would be recommended sent to ~~xxx~~ a reception center.

Incidentally, Mrs. Harry Kingman was in through here a few weeks ago, making investigations of reports arriving in San Francisco from this area that Japs were being tarred and feathered out of town. She's doing an immense amount of good work and the local people all appreciate her efforts. Aside from her, there doesn't seem to be anyone actively interested in seeing this area remain free. I myself have been bombarding the local newspaper with letters, but there is always a counter-barrage of letters from stupid jingoists and self-righteous but badly misguided patriots.

Himel thinks that the great tragedy of evacuation is that many of the camps are administered by short-sighted incompetents ~~xxxxxxx~~ whose policies are guided by the premise that the Japs must be completely isolated, segregated and severed from Caucasian influence. He's been rebuffed so completely in his many attempts to visit camps that he feels that Caucasians are ~~xxx~~ unwelcome. I'm inclined to feel that in the temporary assembly centers, at least, there are too many administrative complications arising from opening the camps to visitors that it has to be discouraged. I only hope that in the permanent centers, the authorities will recognize the paramount importance of allowing American influence to enter. If not, it will really be a tragedy.

Regarding my material, if you have no further need for them, you may send them to the above address whenever convenient.

I hope that I may receive further details on your project soon. In the meantime I will keep you informed on what proceeds here.

Sincerely yours,  
Kenji Murase



Rt 2 Box 346  
Reedley, California  
June 3, 1942.

Dear Dr. Thomas,

Well, it seems that the ax has finally fallen. We just got our waking papers from the Army, and tho they haven't specified the exact date, we expect to be removed from Zone 2 within a week or so. This was certainly an overwhelming blow to all of us, and particularly to the two or three thousand who have already moved once and into this area. The Army very discreetly avoids issuing the specific reasons why this action was necessitated; they choose to leave it to the fertile imaginations of we ingenious Japs.

Interesting to note the immediate reaction to the news. We were all in the peach orchard working when some fellows from the neighboring place came rushing over with the information. At first, all were furious, threatening things which the FBI claims we threatened in more sober moments; now it seems that all the Japanese are in a very depressed state of mind, worrying to death over problems arising out of property settlement, insurance, business, etc. The next probably state will be that of utter indifference to what happens next, a reckless, devil-may-care attitude.

This, of course, decides my future plan of action. I am very anxious to join your staff at Tulalake as soon as possible; it may be difficult to arrange once I am interned in <sup>and other</sup> camp. I earnestly trust that you will do all that is possible to make this arrangement. In event, however, that you are unable to complete arrangements, I would like to suggest someone whom I feel very capable, indeed, much more so than I. She may have been recommended to you already. She is Lillian Ota, Barrack 18, Apt. 2, Tanforan, a junior Phi Beta Kappa whose specialty is history research. I'm sure she is well qualified to do research work, has the necessary intellectual equipment and is an indefatigable worker.

In case I am unable to join your staff, I am trying to make connections to join a work camp sponsored by a church group in Dearborn Michigan. These work camp projects are organized on the underlying, basic philosophy of sending college students and young people into an area of social tension to learn about social problems (race relations, labor, poverty, crime, etc.) by actually working with these problems, and by living with the people, becoming closely identified with them as possible. It's operated on a co-operative, inter-racial system, and I feel, of immense educational value.

It's extremely doubtful that I may make arrangements to be accepted into the Dearborn work camp before being removed into a reception center. In any case, I would certainly appreciate anything that you may do in my behalf so that I might be able to join my old confederates at Tulalake. I hope I may hear from you soon.

Sincerely,  
Geney Mura SF



Japanese Evacuation Study  
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

207 Giannini Hall  
June 4, 1942

Mr. Kenny Murase  
Route 2, Box 346  
Reedley, California

Dear Kenny:

Please let us know what your plans are now. I don't think I shall be able to do anything about you until Mr. Coverley returns. That may be a week or ten days. President Johnson sent me a letter about you, and I also received one from Dean Thompson. I believe you have received copies.

Mari Okazaki is at W.C.C.A. headquarters in Reedley. If you have a chance, look her up.

Sincerely yours,

Dorothy Swaine Thomas  
Professor of Rural Sociology

DST/dr



June 6, 1942

Dear Kenny,

I sent you a short letter yesterday, before receiving yours dated June 5. I am enclosing a copy of a letter I wrote to Mr. Coverley, which shows where we stand now with regard to the project. From Mr. Coverley's memorandum, you will note that orders have already been given for the removal of Miyamoto, Shibutani, Sakoda, and Najima to Tulalake. For all I know, they may be on their way today.

Everybody seems to have left town or to be inaccessible this week: Mr. Coverley left on Tuesday, Mrs. Adams on Monday. Both were planning to be away for about ten days. However, Mr. Province of National Headquarters will come here just about the time they return, so I hope to have a further plan worked out for them to act upon at that time. Included in that plan will be a request for your removal to Tulalake, if your other plans have shown no further development by then. As you know, I can't guarantee anything at all. I may say, though, that the cooperation of both the Army and the WRA has been excellent up to the present. Therefore, I want to be particularly careful not to irritate them by requesting things discontinuously. That is, I cannot take up your case as an isolated favor, but must wait until I can present a further segment in the whole plan for their consideration. I don't think there will be any trouble because of the fact that you will by then doubtless have been moved to an assembly center. After all, they picked up Tom and Naj from Tanforan, Miyamoto from Puyallup and Sakoda from Tulare!

I wish you would take detailed notes on what people who are caught in this new order are doing or saying. If you wish, you may delete the names, but keep them in your own private file for reference. Try to get as many details as you possibly can showing their changing attitudes. Find out what they are doing about their property difficulties, and how well or badly they are faring with the agencies set up by WCCA. Be as concrete as you possibly can. There is no evidence yet of any attempt to censor mail, so you can, I believe, continue to write freely. Keep me informed about any change in your plans.

Re Lillian Ota, she has been highly recommended to me, and I know that she has a brilliant record. I haven't met her yet, but shall try to do so on one of my next trips to Tanforan. How extensive my project will be, and how many students I can include in it, remain to be determined. The Rockefeller grant is much smaller than I had hoped for, and I shall have to trim my sails. I must talk frankly to Mr. Province before I go any further, even in regard to you.

Sincerely yours,



Rt 2 Box 346  
Reedley, California  
June 8, 1942.

Dear Dr. Thomas,

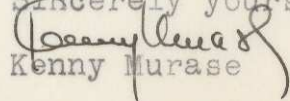
Thank you for your letter and for the enclosed copy to Mr. Coverly. I believe it has given me a much clearer perspective of what you and the staff hope to accomplish.

Rumors are current that this area will be evacuating by the end of next week. Typhoid shots are due this week-end. No one seems to know where we are going. Indications are, however, that we will be stationed in Fresno. I've just learned from a lawyer who's generally on the inside that the Army ~~has~~ is seriously considering a plan evolved by local fruit packing interests to allow former operators of farms to travel to and from the camps (at their own expense in own cars or trucks) so that they can work on their former property. This seems to be an absurd idea, but the fruit packers are anxious to have fruit handled properly for shipment, and the former operators of the farms are in the best position to do so. Much of the property around here are being taken over by these fruit packing interests; I don't think it's going to work out well for the farms or for their owners. Everyone is worried about the acute labor shortage. The other night, a newly arrived laborer from Mexico knifed and murdered a fellow compatriot in one of our streets. Incidents like these may dampen the ardor for importing Mexican labor. Some talk of coaxing the dust-bowl migrants back.

Within a week I should know how the Dearborn, Michigan, work camp deal pans out. I'm waiting now for the necessary statements to apply for a travel permit; but it's ~~xxxxx~~ such a damned cumbersome procedure, we will probably be in camp by then. In the meantime I would appreciate your going ahead with arrangements for my inclusion in your plans. I hope this does not entail complications. As I understand it, Lillian Ota is on her way to Wellesly, where she has a full maintenance and tuition scholarship. This offers a faint glimmer of hope.

At any rate, I shall keep you fully informed on developments. A great deal is happening down here and I'm trying to observe what I can. Mari Okazaki is at the local office; she's doing a great service. Will write again as soon as I know anything definite.

Sincerely yours,

  
Kenny Murase



File  
Tuesday —

Dear Dr. Thomas —

I may have been mis-  
taken about Sillian Ota

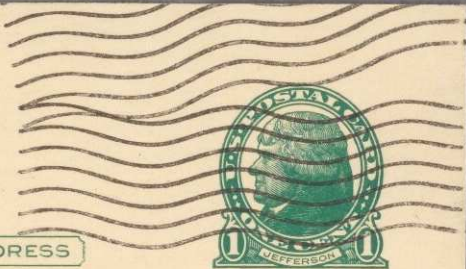
I've just heard from her and  
she's apparently still at

Tenforan, Banak 18, Sept. 2.

Shibutani seems anxious  
to have me join him in his  
refarious activities. Will you  
please forward the letter I'm send-  
ing him via you. Thank you.  
Sincerely,  
C. M.



2-346  
Reedley Calif



THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS

Dr. Dorothy S. Thomas  
University of Calif  
College of Agriculture  
Ag. Economics  
Berkeley, Calif



For but not before Fall semester.

copy

2710 Garber St., Berkeley.

Rte. 2, Box 346  
Reedley, California  
June 15, 1942.

Dear Dr. Thomas,

Apparently at the present time, the Army is not issuing any travel permits for out of state; exceptions are being made only in those instances where the individuals are contracted to work in the beet fields. So despite excellent verifications and references from Dearborn, the Army has replied with a curt, "NO!" For the present, therefore, I shall have to forego what seemed to be a wonderful opportunity to do the sort of work I would like.

I've had a number of interviews with Miss Helen Sorensen at the local WCCA office and she felt that until we get into camp and until some sort of over-all plan is worked out, the Army will not permit students to leave for the East. Miss Sorensen seemed to think that the Army is not too anxious to give its blessings to Japanese students, especially when fellow Americans were being yanked out of colleges to serve in the armed forces. And Joe Conard in a bulletin from his Student Relocation Committee intimated that students should not be optimistic about being able to enroll in time for the Fall semester.

Miss Sorensen agreed that if I expected to get into Tule Lake, I would have to make arrangements immediately, lest the Army ship us to some inaccessible relocation center in Arkansas, or Colorado or some distant point. Feeling is prevalent that we will be sent direct to a permanent camp, and not via an assembly center. At present the Provost-Marshall's office is receiving applications from those wishing to transfer to a specific center, either from Zone 2 or from an assembly center. I believe if you will supply duplicate copies of a statement addressed to the Provost-Marshall, indicating the nature of your project and requesting my admittance to Tule Lake, I can retain ~~xxx~~ the carbon, and send the other with the rest of the necessary information to the Provost-Marshall. Of course, I shall leave everything to your discretion, whether you think it advisable now to act through the Army, or to wait until I am in a relocation center. In any case, I am very anxious to join your staff as soon as possible.

To prevent any misunderstandings, I might say at the outset that I am still determined to complete my studies for the social welfare certificate, since I don't think I could serve any useful purpose otherwise. If there is any opportunity for going to a school in the East, it would be unfair to you if I should leave with work incomplected or perhaps inadequate. I feel, therefore, that any work for you should be on a voluntary basis, with no remuneration. I believe you can count on my complete co-operation, and I assure you I will be an earnest and willing student. I don't think, however, I should be held



responsible for any misplaced confidence in my ability, especially where friend Shibutani has had anything to say. All that I can ask for is to be with my buddies again and to be studying a problem which holds a special interest for me.

With the revelations of the now epic Coral Seas battle still occupying the newspaper headlines, there have been some interesting reactions among the Japanese--especially the bewildered Issei. I've been jotting down some observations on typical reactions; they seem to follow some ~~xxx~~ pattern of consistency with reactions to former decisive battles. I've also been at work on another paper. There's a girl in New York, Ina Sugihara who used to work for Besig of A.C.L.U., who's trying to get into "Asia" or "Common Ground" and other such publications. I think we may collaborate on something that stands a good chance of getting into "Free World"--if you want a copy of the material, I'll be glad to send it on to you.

So much for now. I earnestly hope that you will act upon my case without delay.

Sincerely yours,  
*Kenny Murase*  
Kenny Murase

P.S. It may help to know that I am in a position to be able to ~~pay~~ pay for my own transportation and all other expenses.

Mari Okazaki told me that if I had a "fiancee" in camp, it would be sufficient reason for granting a permit. Well, I do have a girl friend, not especially a "fiancee", and shall probably be at Tree Lake -- it should be apparent by now who she is.



Rte. 2, Box 346  
Reedley, California  
June 17, 1942.

Dear Dr. Thomas,

I hope you will excuse my impatience but this morning I received pretty positive indication that exclusion orders will be out for zone 2 in a few days. I thought I had better act fast so I am sending you a ~~xxxxxx~~ letter addressed to the Provost Marshall, and if you will send it with your supplementary statement, I believe we will save a day's time, which may mean the difference of whether I go or not. Indications were also that the attitude of the camp officials was an important factor in granting admission. I believe in your letter to Mr. Coverly you stated that a Mr. Jacoby in Tule Lake was very much interested in the project. In event the Army does inquire about the project, a memorandum to Mr. Jacoby may facilitate matters.

Although nothing is certain, there seems to be a general agreement that we in zone 2 will be sent ~~xx~~ directly to a relocation center, probably in Arkansas. If this be the case, it may be impossible for me to join your staff at Tule Lake. In any case, I believe I should leave everything up to your wiser judgement

If you decide to act upon this matter at once, and if the statements I requested from you are already in the mails, please notify me immediately so that I won't be duplicating your efforts.

I'm sorry I must continually inconvenience you, but I hope you will understand my anxiety to join the staff at Tule Lake.

Sincerely,  
*Kenny Murase*  
Kenny Murase



Rt 2 Box 346  
Reedley, Calif.  
June 23, 1942.

Dear Dr. Thomas,

The response from the WRA was, of course, disappointing. Under the circumstances, however, it is quite understandable, and it may be that something may be worked out later. I am still anxious to join the group at Tule Lake, and would appreciate your continued interest in my case.

In the meantime, I shall go with the local group to camp and try to be as useful as possible. Since I would like very much to be a part of your research project, I will keep ~~in~~ constantly in touch with Shibutani or Sakoda, obtain from them the necessary instructions as to procedure, and record whatever I can in the camp to which I am sent. I believe I will be in a position to make some worthwhile contributions since there are a number of associates near here who I know will be glad to assist.

I still haven't given up all hopes of getting out East, and will do so if the opportunity presents itself. In any case, this may not be until next Spring. There'll be plenty of time in between to do some speculating, and perhaps writing.

Still no indication as to where we go or when, but it's nearing the end of the month and we should have definite word shortly. I shall probably be writing from camp the next time.

I am returning the letter from Mr. Coverly. Thank you again for all you have done.

Sincerely,  
*Kenny Murase*  
Kenny Murase



copy

Rt. 2, Box 346  
Reedley, California  
June 28, 1942.

Dear Dr. Thomas,

I was just informed that the Army is issueing travel permits fo people going East, upon the condition, of course, that a mountain of evidence, credentials and verifications be submitted with the application.

Some time ago, on May 13th to be exact, in response to my request, you very kindly sent a letter of recommendation to the Committee on Scholarships, Howard University, Washington, D.C. Since then I have been informed that the Committee is deferring consideration of my application, pending clarification of regulations involving release of Japanese students to the East.

The Dearborn deal, however, is still open, and a contact there is making arrangements for my admission into Wayne University. I am writing to all of the people who wrote to Howard in my behalf, asking them for similiar recommendations, but addressed to the Provost Marshall, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, San Francisco. I would appreciate it if you would send me duplicate copies of something similiar.

There is no word yet as to when we leave, but there's a strong possibility that we may be hear until August. The peach season is getting underway and labor is essential. One bad effect of the Army's stalling is that it completely balls up contracts that have already been made and signed between the owner and the operator who is to take over. Most of the contracts go into effect on July 1st, some already have, with a division of this years crop on a 60-40 basis--60% to the owner and 40% to the tenant. Since almost all the work has been done in the fields, except for the actual harvesting of crops, the 50-40 agreement works very much to the advantage of the new tenant; and if the owner is allowed to stay until the crop is actually ready, he stands a big loss, since has to irrigate and cultivate at his expense.

Psychologically, this stalling is also bad. While peaches and apricots are falling to the ground unpicked, many of the Japanese laborers refuse to get out and work, waiting around for the exclusion orders. And if any work is done, it certainly is not worth the 50 cents an hour that most of the farm operators are paying.

If anything furthur happens, I shall keep you informed. I hope you will attend to the above matter without delay, since I wish to send ~~me~~ all of my papers to the Provost Marshall at one time.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,  
*Kenny Murase*  
Kenny Murase





HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FOUNDED BY GENERAL O. O. HOWARD

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR  
F. D. WILKINSON

June 30, 1942

Professor Dorothy S. Thomas  
College of Agriculture  
University of California  
Berkeley, California

Dear Professor Thomas:

I am writing to thank you for your letter of recent date in which you wrote me in the interest of Mr. Kenny Murase, an American of Japanese ancestry, who is seeking admission to Howard University.

The application of Mr. Murase is now being considered, and as soon as a decision is made I will write you concerning the result. I appreciate the interest that you have taken in this young man, and consider the information given as very valuable.

Very truly yours,

FDW:MB

F. D. Wilkinson  
Registrar



July 1, 1942

Mr. Kenny Murase  
Route 2, Box 346  
Reedley, California

Dear Kenny:

I am enclosing two copies of a letter to the Provost Marshall. I certainly hope you are able to get your permit. Remember that I still have you in mind, and if things go completely wrong with the eastern plans, I will reopen the question of your transfer to Tulalake.

I visited Tulalake last week and saw many of your friends. The surroundings were from the mental standpoint highly favorable in comparison with what I have seen in the assembly centers. There are really swell administrators there and if they are allowed a free hand I have no doubts about a satisfactory community life being worked out.

You have doubtless heard from Tom and Jimmy yourself.

With cordial regards,

Sincerely yours,

Dorothy S. Thomas

DST:rj  
Enc--2



July 1, 1942

The Provost Marshall  
Western Defense Command  
The Fourth Army  
San Francisco, California

Dear Sir:

I am writing on behalf of Mr. Kenny Murase, a former student of our University. I have had a number of contacts with Mr. Murase, and have followed his work and his activities closely. I am impressed with his intellectual ability, his initiative, his thoughtfulness, and his unquestioned integrity.

I understand that Mr. Murase is requesting a travel permit from Military Area 2 to go to Wayne University. I have no hesitancy in recommending that every consideration be given to this request.

Respectfully yours,

Dorothy Swaine Thomas  
Professor of Rural Sociology

DST:rj



May 14, 1942

President Mordecai Wyatt Johnson  
Howard University  
Washington, D. C.

Dear President Johnson:

You may remember me as a friend and collaborator of Ralph Bunche. I am now writing you on behalf of Mr. Kenny Murase a former student of our University. I have had a number of contacts with Mr. Murase although I have never had him in my classes. He has loaned me certain material that he has collected on the second generation Japanese and I am impressed with his ability, initiative, and thoughtfulness.

As you know, the situation out here is tragic in its consequences for these young Americans of Japanese ancestry. We are most anxious to see those who are well equipped continue with their academic careers, and if you could possibly offer a chance to Mr. Murase it would be a very fine thing indeed.

With cordial regards.

Sincerely yours,

Dorothy S. Thomas  
Professor of Rural Sociology

DST:rj



Sorry but the  
cartoon was lousy

Memorandum

Kenny Murase

#### SIZING IT UP

In the past few weeks things have been popping with such bewildering speed we have had hardly any time to stop and consider what was going on. Suppose we pause a moment here, and think this through, find out where we stand, what has happened in the past, and why; and then we might figure out what we can do in the days to come.

Much of the beginnings of the circumstances which we find ourselves in today may conceivably be traced to our attitude towards and our relations with the land of our now dishonorable ancestors. We have not studied with any degree of objectivity the nature of the controlling forces in the new industrial Japan. Our views were molded by listening gullibly to propagandists who lectured piously on a destiny dictated by the grace of heaven; we read and believed implicitly in the Domei dispatches appearing in vernacular newspapers.

And so it is not astounding that we could not see the consequences of the internal revolution taking place in Japan -- the feudal system swept aside and a capitalist economy entrenched, the incredible rate of industrialization, saturation of her domestic market and the subsequent need of foreign markets; then the need for raw materials to supply an ever increasing foreign market captured by ruthless underselling, made possible by near slave-labor and a subsistence standard of living.

We could not detect through the camouflage of her industrial growth the rise of fascism -- and the military now took over the helm and plunged forth on a relentless campaign of aggrandizement. Manchuria fell and we thought little of it; then colossal, inert China was next, and still we could not understand the nature of the forces underlying Japan's driving juggernaut. We refused to believe in the rape of Nanking; we gloried in tales of heroism and sacrifice -- the army of the rising sun was invincible.

But the war in China dragged interminably on; we heard no more of savage annihilations and swift advances. Now it was counter-thrusts and counter-attacks, entrenchments in captured territory, and sieges -- and slowly in the minds of a few of us, the myth of Japan's invincibility began to break. But still we hopefully clung to illusions of a New Order, of Japan controlling the destiny of the restless, stirring millions in Asia.

And so it was when our day of reckoning came, when our now dishonorable ancestors misbehaved at Pearl Harbor, we were caught with our pants down and there was no use in kidding ourselves that it wasn't. Things turned from bad to worse. People began to talk about shooting all the Japanese from the coast. They can't do that to us, we said with a shaking confidence, we're American citizens.

We watched and we could see the movement for evacuation slowly gathering momentum. The radio, newspapers and magazines began to take up the chant; farming, fishing, nursery, real estate and other special interest groups joined in the cry; politicians added



their oily words -- the torrent began to swell. We tried to stem the tide but our attempts were pitifully feeble. Our resistance crumbled beneath the deluge -- and that was the end of at least one era in our young lives.

We have learned many lessons from this experience but perhaps the most tragic of all has been the sickening realization that people will hold freedom so cheap that they must defend it only when it concerns themselves, and only then. What is freedom -- a meaningless abstraction except when expedient as a slogan? Is freedom only deserving of lip-service by glib-tongued hypocrits who profess to believe in its institutions? Where have they all disappeared to -- they who uttered such ~~xxxx~~ brave words about defending freedom? And when in a crisis a whole body of people are coerced into forfeiting their freedom, the cries of protest are nowhere to be heard. Someday historians will write indulgently about this episode and call it a travesty upon human freedom, and we will laugh, bitterly.

We who are disillusioned idealists have cause to lament. Even from the very front ranks of the vanguard bearing the burden of the democratic advance, we heard no rallying cry to the defense of democratic rights. We found organized labor heartily endorsing voluntary evacuation; it was our patriotic duty to do so. The Jews and the Chinese and other racial minorities found it inadvisable to raise too vehement a protest. The liberal and radical left-wing elements would not budge from their position of victory at all cost. Didn't any of them fear evacuation as a dangerous precedent that could very well be employed against them, or any other racial, religious or political minority. Or did they think it wiser to save their necks now and to receive the blessings and the gravy of national defense, than to protest and uphold a principle that would safeguard for the future their position in our democracy?

Why did these progressive-liberal-labor groups let us down? Is it because we let them down? Is it because we ourselves held freedom so cheap that we did not rally to the defense of freedom and the democratic rights of labor, the Jews, the Chinese, the Negroes, the liberals and the radicals and other racial, religious and political minorities? Isn't it because we have never ~~xxx~~ convincingly demonstrated our love for freedom and democratic rights and for America; because of our background, our training; because we would not think about it soberly; because we had taken it for granted?

We went to school -- the grade schools, high school, and a few of us went on to college. We read about democracy, its origins, its growth, ~~xx~~ as we know it today and as others have known it and fought for it yesterday. We found its historical heritage in Plato's "Republic", Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy", Silone's "Mazzini", Locke's "Of Civil Government", Rousseau's "Social Contract". We traced its growth in Bryce's "American Commonwealth", de Toqueville's "Democracy in America", in "The Education of Henry Adams", Hamilton's "The Federalist"; and we came into our day in Dewey's "Democracy and Education", the interpretations of Charles Beard, Haskin's "American Government" and scores of other books. But read -- that's all we did. We didn't learn. What we had read didn't sink in, and democracy was still to us an abstract, meaningless thing.



We could not think and feel and know that it was something dynamic and forceful, something tremendously alive and exciting with possibilities; that it was an ever-changing, living, organic reality; and that it could make us sad and miserable with sorrow, or make us laugh and shout and cry with joy.

We couldn't feel that way. We couldn't feel that we were a part of this big, broad America, and that we could fling ourselves on its rich clean soil and hug its thick green grass and feel all wonderful and excited about it. No, we just took it for granted. We said, So this is democracy. So what? and let it go at that. But we knew, strange to say, enough about the theory of democracy to know when it wasn't working, and we would get sore about it when we thought ~~were~~ weren't being treated right, like they're supposed to treat us in a democracy. We made the mistake and kept kidding ourselves with the idea that we had a system called democracy, ~~xxx~~ that it was working and that it was perfect.

We didn't see democracy as a living, organic thing; that it was composed of human beings and that it would behave like human beings -- that it could become sick and diseased and unhealthy. We didn't see that democracy was still young, untried, inexperienced; that it was always in the process of growing and growing towards a state of perfection. But in order to make any progress towards that perfection, it had to be nursed along, its illness cured and its wounds healed, and that we, the people, would have to shoulder that responsibility ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ and see to it that democracy remained healthy.

But in our own world of Lil' Tokyos, up and down the Coast, we were too busy keeping up with the latest shows, shooting pool, playing basketball, and going out with the boys to have a merry good time; and together with trying to make a half-ways decent living with our jobs, ~~xxxx~~ we were too much in that famous rut to be able to get at the real meaning and significance of democracy and social change.

That was why it didn't bother us so much when we read about the Negroes in the South and how they were deprived of the right to vote by poll taxes. We read of the poll-tax state of South Carolina with only 14% of the potential voters exercising their right, and of the neighboring state of North Carolina, where there is no poll-tax, with a 50% vote. We read of how the most reactionary, undemocratic Congressmen came from these poll-tax states -- of die-hard "Cotton Ed" Smith who was sent back to the Senate ~~xxxx~~ from South Carolina by 5.5% of the potential ballots; of Congressman Cox, violent opponent of the Wages and Hour Act, with only 3.8% of the voters in his district in Georgia behind him; of Congressman Smith, leader of the attack on the National Labor Relations Board, with only 10% of the voters in his district; and of the lowly Martin Dies, who owes his office to about 8% of the voters in his district. We read about these conditions where democracy certainly was not working, and when the Geyer Anti-poll tax bill came up before Congress, we did nothing to support it.

We read of other injustices suffered by fellow American Negroes -- of how they are excluded from jury service, and of their



segregation into ~~a~~ separate and inferior school systems, in street cars and buses, in residential districts and in the Army and Navy. And yet we thought these were matters that wouldn't affect us, and so why should we do anything about them? It was inconceivable then that anything like that could ever happen to us. When the Marcantonio Bill came up before the lower House, prohibiting discrimination against persons employed or seeking employment on government contracts, we were not among those urging our Congressmen to push it through.

There were other cases involving issues of civil rights and liberties, but they failed to arouse us. We didn't think that deportation charges against labor leader Harry Bridges was an outrage, that it was another indication of the growth of an American brand of fascism which threatens to become as naked and insidious as any of the Axis' powers. We thought nothing of members of Jehovah's Witness being beaten up and jailed, or of building being refused to speakers from the America First Committee, or even the Communist Party. These were items in the news that meant little.

We lacked completely social vision to recognize the coming importance of organized labor as one of the most ~~xxxxxx~~ potent instruments of social change today. We dismissed with little concern legislation intended to curb labor's right to strike, and the use of military force or police to restrict this right. The wielding of such industrial weapons as the "yellow dog" contract under which employees were forced to agree not to join unions, lock-outs, black-listing and the use of labor spies drew no heated protest from us.

We cannot deny that these inadequacies and shortcomings of American democracy were not recognized. It was simply that we were not sufficiently impressed with the importance of doing something about them. And this goes back to our failure to see the relation between democracy and social change -- that failings can be corrected but such changes must be motivated by a people willing to struggle for them.

We can see now that we have had a consistent record of gingerly side-stepping "hot" issues which would align ourselves with those dissatisfied with the status quo. We have neatly avoided affiliation with the progressive, liberal movement, those forces which have been abreast of the democratic current -- organized labor, the American Civil Liberties Union, the League for the Protection of Foreign Born, and similar groups. We have never taken a stand ~~xxx~~ or gone out on the limb on a controversial issue; we have been a soft, unprincipled, gutless bunch of compromisers.

Maybe it was because we were young at the time, but that excuse has outlived its usefulness. We have salvaged a bitter lesson from the ruins of our experience, and the lesson is substantially that we have not been aware of what was going on, of the democratic current flowing through a small but aggressive American minority, and that we have failed utterly to take up our position in that current.

for us

One thing which the war has demonstrated/conclusively is the woe-ful lack of progressive-minded Nisei. The few who were brave enough to stand up for their convictions, who were in the thick of the battle



for civil rights and liberties, the rights of labor and of all minorities -- their efforts were discredited; they were branded "Reds" and carried on their work under a barrage of criticism, contempt and obstructions. The organized groups of Nisei progressives are now ~~xxx~~ flung afar in the many centers; we hope their scattered forces will not impede them in their job of injecting a social awareness in the Nisei conscience.

Such has been our record, somewhat rose-colored, but shady and offering nothing with which to exonerate ourselves; a record which lends no substance to claims, no matter how loud, to the contrary.

We have a colossal job ahead of us, of emerging from our disillusionments and coming out of the resettlement camps with a stronger, more vigorous faith in America and the democratic process. But this is going to take the sort of initiative we have never had to summon before. Reading, discussion, questioning and organization, these come first. We will have to determine what is going on, learn to follow the trend of opinions and attitudes throughout the breadth of America, and especially in Congress, of conservatives and liberals alike, of sensation seekers and native fascists like Dies; we will have to delineate the warring factors within the country, the conflicts between capital and labor, between the right and the left-wing elements, between regions of special economic interests (the farm bloc, the big business bloc, etc.) -- and then, after these considerations, we will have to take an active interest in the side ~~of~~ that champions democratic rights.

But above all, we have a war to win. This is just as much our war as it is for 130,000,000 other fellow Americans. We have got to shake off our fatalism and awaken to the very ~~xxx~~ subjective realness of our position in this fight to smash completely the fascist menace to freedom. Despite the adverse circumstances that we find ourselves in, the job before us is clear cut. We can win for ourselves the final acquittal that we are valuable Americans.



## MEMORANDUM

Kenny Murase  
Reedley, California  
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One thing which the war has demonstrated for us conclusively is the woeful lack of progressive-minded Nisei. The few who were brave enough to stand up for their convictions, who were in the thick of the battle for civil rights and liberties, the rights of labor and of all minorities -- their efforts were discredited; they were branded "Reds" and carried on their work under a barrage of criticism, contempt and obstructions. The organized groups of Nisei progressive are now flung far in the many centers; we hope their scattered forces will not impede them in their job of injecting a social awareness in the Nisei conscience.

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