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## SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF A CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE-AMERICAN BUDDHIST CHURCH

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OF THE Japanese immigrants who settled in the Pacific Coastal areas of the United States from the last decade of the 1800's until 1924, the year in which further immigration of Orientals was banned, the preponderant majority was Buddhist. Most of the immigrants, drawn from rural areas in Japan, subscribed to the simple salvationist faith demanded by the Shin sect, one of the six main branches of contemporary Japanese Buddhism. Although in Japan the Buddhist sects are primarily concerned with mortuary customs and the ancestral cult, temple worship and philosophical Buddhism occupying a secondary place, the transplanted temple of the Japanese-American Buddhists became a social center, a focal point through which ties with the homeland could be preserved. As a religion of the home with its associated rituals surrounding the memorial feasts to ancestors, Buddhism continued to be active in the United States. The temple, on the other hand, served to effect group unification in the various Japanese-American communities. Ostensibly to keep the spirit of Buddhism alive among the Japanese immigrants, priests were sent from the headquarters of the various sects in Japan, particularly from the Shin (Hongwanji), and forms of public worship different from those in Japan arose. The result was a Buddhist reformation in America which occasioned the rise of congregational bodies analogous to those which appear in contemporary Christian, and particularly, Protestant churches.

The processes of acculturation, the noteworthy changes which took place with regard to church organization and ritual, individual belief, social attitudes, and the like, are implicit in any analysis of Japanese Buddhism in America. These processes, described in terms of the total picture of Japanese-American Buddhism, are advisedly left for fuller discussion elsewhere. In the present paper, a single congregation is considered from the point of view of its interest as a form of social organization in an essentially unassimilated minority.

In 1940, slightly more than half of the Japanese residents on the Pacific Coast were Buddhist,

some 55,000 being directly or indirectly connected with some Japanese Buddhist congregation.<sup>1</sup> In the course of immigration and settlement in the United States, a number of the newcomers was attracted to the various Christian bodies. In the earlier stages of settlement this was particularly true of the urban areas. Here, membership in a Christian church came to offer the immigrant a number of distinct social advantages.<sup>2</sup> But, following the period of settlement, the rise of the American-born, so-called second generation or Nisei group swelled the Christian ranks. The desire of many Nisei to dissociate themselves from the foreign culture of their immigrant parents and to escape in this way the stigma of being assigned to what was regarded as an old-fashioned and somewhat reactionary group led them into various Christian churches. But, although a high percentage of the immigrants and their descendants have remained Buddhist, the Nisei, on the other hand, show a higher aggregate in the Christian congregations.<sup>3</sup> The outbreak of the war with Japan was instrumental in disrupting Buddhist organization on the West Coast and in causing the loss of many church members, both Issei, the conventional term now used to designate the members of the immigrant generation, and Nisei. The fear that Buddhist affiliations might be considered synonymous with pro-Japanese sentiment or activity caused a fairly large number to repudiate any connection with a Buddhist congregation. In the relocation center phase of the Japanese-American minority development, a number of these returned to the fold, but many have continued to hold aloof from church membership in the postwar period.

The problems which the Buddhist group in the

<sup>1</sup> A. Freed, and K. Luomala, *Buddhism in the United States*, Community Analysis Section, Report #9, War Relocation Authority (Washington, May 15, 1944).

<sup>2</sup> S. F. Miyamoto, *Social Solidarity among the Japanese in Seattle*, University of Washington Publications in the Social Sciences, 11 (Seattle, 1939), pp. 100-101.

<sup>3</sup> R. F. Spencer, *Japanese Buddhism in the United States, 1940-1946* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1946), pp. 63-64.

Japanese-American minority faces in effecting religious reorganization in the postwar period and in perpetuating religious values are numerous. Not only is there concern with the maintenance and preservation of the ethnic church structure, but there is also the ever growing necessity of continuing intact in the body of the church an Americanized second and third generation whose interests in Buddhism are at best half-hearted. The conflict situations which have arisen between the American born group and its immigrant parents typify the case of the foreign born minority and its descendants and may be understood in terms of cultural differences. Among the Buddhists, the Issei find in the church a means of reestablishing social contacts and of perpetuating a sentimental tie with the homeland, while to the Nisei the social opportunities afforded by church membership emerge as more or less paramount. Despite such social differences, however, the Japanese-American Buddhists of the postwar years have been able to retain a fairly unified organization. It is noteworthy that group solidarity is dependent upon social and familial ties rather than upon ideological ones.

The Shin sect remains the largest Japanese Buddhist group in the United States at the present time. Its sixty-odd churches, now existent in most large cities of the Midwest and Eastern Seaboard areas as well as in the Pacific States, are unified as the Buddhist Churches of North America with a central headquarters in San Francisco. This is headed by a bishop whose function is largely that of coordinator. The individual congregations, organized as churches and in no way reminiscent of the temple structure of the Japanese homeland, are virtually autonomous. While there is considerable variation in organization, leadership, and congregational composition throughout the various churches, it is suggested that the forthcoming description of one of them may be indicative of the general social structure prevalent among a fairly solid sub-group in a well defined ethnic minority. The following is a description of a church belonging to the main Shin body in America, or more properly, to the so-called Nishi-Hongwanji branch of the Shin denomination.

The church in question is located in a university town in California. Despite its proximity to the campus of a large public university its membership is derived from the town rather than from the university itself. To be sure, students of Japanese

ancestry now and again attend services and may join in social gatherings. Some Nisei women students have taken rooms in houses owned by the church where their activities may be supervised by the minister and his wife. Such a situation, however, in no way renders the church in question atypical; a good many churches may rent rooms to persons who cannot live in their own family circles. The temple, or to indicate it more properly, the church, for such it is, bearing the name of the town as X— Buddhist Church, was instituted by Issei residents in the town whose daily work as gardeners, small shopkeepers, janitors, and the like, precluded any active connection with the university.

The church follows the normal acculturated pattern which has come to be characteristic of Shin congregations in the United States. Semi-autonomous, incorporated as a church under California laws, the body elects its own officials who, with the minister, conduct both religious and secular affairs. Through donations and the maintenance of membership fees, the church in question has been able to purchase its own buildings: two adjacent and outmoded frame houses. Rooms in both are rented out to Nisei students and business people, while the entire main floor of one house serves as the church auditorium. The latter is a long bare room in which collapsible chairs are placed for congregational meetings but which also does duty as a social hall. In the rear, on the lot owned by the church, a former storage outbuilding has recently been converted into a residence for the minister and his family.

The Buddhist does not always share the views held by some of the Christian bodies that the church building is a sacred place. In the meeting hall, the sacred symbol is the *butsudan*, the Buddha shelf or closet, in itself the only feature which is suggestive of sanctity. Flanked with sliding screens and gilded hinged doors of the native Japanese style, the *butsudan*, rather elaborately decorated within and containing a scroll rather than an image, is opened for church services or for any ritualistic observances. The church assumes the sacred character only when the *butsudan*, located at the far end of the assembly hall, is opened. Adjacent to this altar, or cabinet, is a lectern, a piano, an old-fashioned portable organ, and a chair on which the minister may sit during the singing of hymns. It may be mentioned parenthetically that the incorporation of a hymnology into Japanese-American Buddhism

affords an excellent example of the acculturation process. Songs in both Japanese and English to the accompaniment of a piano form a definite part of church services. Also connected with the order of service is a table in front of the *butsudan* on which are placed vessels for the burning of incense.

It is clear that in the individual church the *butsudan* is the sacred symbol. Religious activities taking place in the church itself center around this object. But the church is much more than a purely religious resort. Analogous to the Christian churches in bringing its members together on the basis of a common ideology, it likewise shares with the Protestant groups social aspects which are effective in creating bonds other than religious. Church solidarity is further enhanced by the fact of its appeal to the members of the racial minority. The ethnic church structure serves to offer a set of symbols which are in part instrumental in perpetuating group solidarity in this well defined segment of the Japanese-American minority.<sup>4</sup>

Religious worship and the activities associated with it are entrusted to the priest. In all of the Shin congregations at present in existence in the United States, the priest has taken on a role quite comparable with that of the Protestant minister. In English, in fact, the designation "priest" is discarded in favor of "minister," or, as appears in the English of Nisei Buddhists, the "reverend." The Issei members of the various congregations, and also some Nisei, address the minister by the Japanese term *sensei*, "teacher." This dignitary preaches at the Sunday church services, visits the sick of the parish, and with his wife is expected to appear at church socials, club meetings, and banquets. Beyond the fact that most preaching is done in Japanese, the chief function of the "reverend" which suggests the Buddhist background is the conducting of memorial services for deceased members of the congregation or for any family which may request him to read a service for one of its departed members. Like the Christian minister, the priest may perform marriages and officiate at funerals.

The majority of Buddhist dignitaries in the United States are Japanese born. All, including the few Nisei priests, have received their Buddhist

training in Japan, normally at the Buddhist center of Kyōto, and were sent by the Japanese church heads to the United States as missionaries. The minister at X— Church is no exception. He is, however, a Nisei, or more properly, a Kibei, one born in the United States (Hawaii) and educated in the homeland. Reverend Kato\* is a personable man of about 45 years of age. He speaks little English but has attempted in recent years to preach English sermons in the hope of attracting a larger number of young people to his church. His efforts in this direction have met some success; since most "reverends" preach in Japanese to Issei and Nisei alike, Kato's use of English is regarded as indicative of his liberal thinking. It should be mentioned in this connection that most Nisei who have not visited Japan profess to be ignorant of Japanese. To a certain extent this is true; many have retained the vocabulary of infancy without materially adding to it.

The congregation, although small, is active in its support of Reverend Kato. In general, the Buddhists are quick to criticize their religious leaders. Like his Christian counterpart, the Buddhist minister is expected to lead a rather exemplary life. His actions must meet the approval of the immigrant generation and of its descendants. The minister is accordingly judged by separate standards. On the whole, Reverend Kato has been effective in placating both components in his congregation. He returned to the church from the relocation center in the latter part of 1944 and has been successful in welding together a group in which dissensions are perhaps less marked than in some other Buddhist churches. Largely through his direction the mortgages which were raised against the church property before the war have now been lifted.

In keeping with the democratic procedures which have come to characterize the Buddhist churches in the United States at the present time, the X— Church has in effect its own congregational constitution. This makes provision for a number of offices to be filled by members elected to them by the congregation. A president, executive secretary, and a treasurer form the governing body of X— Church. In the Buddhist churches elsewhere the number of elected officials may vary. Larger churches may have a greater number of officers. Since the war, policy

<sup>4</sup> W. L. Warner and L. Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), Yankee City Series, III, chap. VII.

\* Pseudonym.

in this respect has been subjected to some change. It was formerly customary to fill all officers from the ranks of Issei. Indeed, this was one means by which an individual of the immigrant generation might in the prewar period secure for himself a certain level of personal prestige in the ranks of his own group. During the war the Shin churches severed their connection with Japan. In so doing, they adopted the synodical name, Buddhist Churches of North America and attempted to place Nisei, i.e. American citizens, in central positions in the organization. In some churches all elected posts are held by Nisei and some bitter struggles between the two generations have arisen. X— Church, however, has avoided this difficulty largely through Reverend Kato's careful handling of both groups. Any dissensions here are on an individual rather than a group basis. Consequently, the president, a titular office for the most part, is held by a member of the Issei group, while the treasurer is Nisei. The minister was asked to take over secretarial duties and with his Nisei wife has handled all business with which the church has been concerned. By the constitution of X— Church, officials are elected for one year terms at an annual congregational meeting.

It is through this somewhat formal framework that the church operates. The minister combines religious and secular duties and so becomes a central figure around which church activities revolve. So far as the formation of the group is concerned, the sacred symbols coupled on the one hand with the minister, on the other with congregational representation, serve to provide an entity with which individual, or more specifically, family identification becomes clearly defined.

For both the individual and the family group affiliation is rendered still more specific by the formal fact of membership. This is enforced by the constitutional requirement that the family pay annual membership fees to the church. Of interest in this respect is the survival of the Japanese traits which place emphasis on the family rather than on the individual. To be sure, any person may pay membership dues but the Japanese-American Buddhists continue to make the family tie a paramount consideration in church affiliation. Congregational membership is determined by families rather than by individuals. X— Church counts its membership as made up to fifty-five families and does not consider as significant to the church itself the number of

individuals involved. The membership fee, an innovation which arises in American Buddhism, is thus combined with the cooperative familism of Japan.

The individual church is free to decide on its own fees and budgets them in the attempt to avoid working a hardship on the poorer families. The economic disorganization which accompanied evacuation and resettlement has worked its hardships on not a few families. Membership fees have spiraled upward nevertheless. X— Church now requires a membership fee of one dollar per month per family, a marked increase when it is considered that before the war three to five dollars annually were required of an individual family by most churches. The sums collected are used for the most part to pay the salary of the minister. The congregation pays the costs of building maintenance and repair, church debts, and contributes a variable amount to the San Francisco synodical headquarters. At the present time, the salary of the minister amounts to \$55.00 per month. His quarters and their utilities are provided by the congregation. This meagre income is supplemented somewhat uncertainly by services which the minister is able to perform for his group. Fees may be obtained by him for the performing of marriage ceremonies, officiating at funerals, and for such services as the reading of memorial *sutras* for the dead. Most of the Buddhist ministers in small churches today find their income inadequate and must supplement what little their congregation is able to provide them by taking jobs outside of the church. At X— Church, both Reverend Kato and his wife took on outside janitorial work. More recently, however, he has been able to find full time employment in connection with the university, alleviating the burdens of supporting his family of three infant children. Other ministers, particularly the Issei, have been less fortunate than he, a fact which bodes ill for the future of Japanese Buddhism in America. The discontinuing of the Japanese language schools to which most Nisei were sent as children and at which the "reverend" customarily taught has reduced the incomes of most Buddhist ministers. No such school existed at the X— Church, however.

The Buddhist churches in the United States have not adopted the Christian custom of the collection. A contribution box appears in every church, X— being no exception. The individual member or family may make offerings of

money from time to time and so add to the congregational treasury. X— Church is financially sound at the present time. The three officials, the president, the treasurer, and the minister in his capacity as secretary of the congregation, determine church financial policy. No attempt is made to enforce payment of membership fees or to solicit contributions. Church collections, thus consisting of the membership dues and the contributions to the alms box, average no more than between \$60.00 and \$100.00 per month. This sum is augmented somewhat by the contributions which are made by secondary and auxiliary organizations within the congregation.

The secondary social configurations which are contained in X— Church are distinguishable largely in terms of generation. Linguistic and cultural differences thus underlie the apparent divisions. For the reasons outlined above, the church itself, in the form of its membership and the symbols which are effective in binding the group together, becomes the primary unit. Secondary group formation arises in the social forms which surround the clearly divisible Issei and Nisei.

Of relatively slight importance are the differences which arise on the basis of social strata. The families who subscribe to membership in X— Church, or, indeed, in most of the churches belonging to the united Shin body, may be assigned to the middle classes within the Japanese-American minority. As is mentioned above, a few members have small businesses while others are engaged in various subservient pursuits. Some of the Nisei, it is true, are employed in minor white collar jobs or are attempting, by virtue of higher education, to put previous training to advantage. With the exception of an architect, there are no professional people in attendance at church services or enrolled on the membership lists. Judged from the point of view of social classes in America, the group may be assigned to an upper lower bracket, while, so far as the Japanese-American minority is concerned, it may be placed in the middle section. The lower middle might be a more appropriate designation. The upper groups in the Japanese population in the United States do not, for the most part, frequent the Shin churches. The salvationist Shin sect bears a somewhat provincial stigma. The upper classes of the minority have turned either to Christianity or to the more esoteric

sects of Japanese Buddhism such as the contemplative and philosophical Zen denomination. In X— Church, distinctions of social position based on wealth or family do not emerge.

The essential basis for group differentiation within the X— congregation is thus the simple difference existing between those born in Japan and trained there and those born in the United States and desirous of emulating its prevailing social norms. In keeping with this difference, two separate services are held in nearly all the churches of the sect. X— Church is no exception. In keeping with the division made by its sister congregations, X— Church permits a service for the *Bussei*, the young Buddhists, or Nisei, and another for the older Issei people. The former in particular has organized as a chapter of the national Young Buddhist Association (YBA). In the church in question, the YBA service takes place on Sunday morning. The Issei members of the congregation lack the formalized organization of the second generation and are less faithful in their attendance at the Sunday evening services which are held for their benefit. A third group, one which for purposes of the present discussion may be linked with the YBA, is the Sunday School, a further innovation in Buddhist organization. For the most part, the attendance here is derived from the children of the older Nisei; the Issei generation has in the main passed the age of parenthood. Some of the members of the YBA are volunteer teachers in the Sunday School.

Since the war, the nuclear organization in most Buddhist churches is the Young Buddhist Association. It is with this group that the future of Buddhism in America, apart from its more esoteric side, rests. X— Church offers no exception to the common practice in the Shin churches of permitting a YBA organization which is separate from the congregational grouping. In the period since the war, most churches show considerable overlapping of organization. Where the Nisei have been elected to posts of congregational responsibility, they may also hold membership and office in a YBA chapter. This question has given rise in some instances to virtual control of the church by the young people. In X— Church, this situation has not been carried so far; the YBA exists as separate from the congregation proper even though its members are included with their families in the congregational membership. The YBA is organized as a demo-

cratic social group. In X— Church it has its own constitution separate from that of the congregation proper and elects its own officers. This general pattern is the one followed by YBA chapters across the nation. Its officers range from president through vice president, secretary, treasurer, and the like. A religious chairman is also elected but it is to be emphasized that the interests of the group are social rather than religious. In this respect, a parallel to the motives underlying the growth of young people's organizations in a number of the Protestant Churches is suggested. While any broad generalizations are scarcely in order, it is apparent that most *Bussei* turn to the YBA as a social outlet compatible with the social class to which they belong. There is no doubt that some are ardent in their devotion to Buddhist doctrines but most profess ignorance of even the simplest religious precepts. Even when participating in group activities, the Nisei tend toward self-consciousness in matters religious. It is noteworthy perhaps that this general attitude is one which might be anticipated in a group which occupies a marginal position in the national cultural framework.

YBA interests are more clearly perceived when the age composition of the group at X— Church is noted. Of the 85 persons making up the membership, 47 are boys, 38 girls. All are unmarried, the average age falling between 19 and 21. A few of the older boys have played a leading role both in church affairs and in the YBA but the group on the whole remains more or less independent of the Issei members of the congregation. The YBA service in English, held, as noted above, on Sunday morning, involves the offering of incense by a boy and girl appointed for the day by the religious chairman, the singing of English hymns before and after the short English sermon preached by Reverend Kato. Attempts to promote discussion groups following the service have not met with too much success. Reverend Kato and his wife have urged the group to discuss such topics as "The Life and Teachings of the Lord Buddha," "St. Shinran" (founder of the Shin sect), "The Need for American Buddhism," and the like. At these discussions most of the group listens in restive silence while the lead is taken by a few interested individuals. From time to time, socials are held following the service and any discussion group program. Such socials may involve a luncheon for the group which is prepared by a committee of girls under the di-

rection of the day's social chairman. The afternoon may then be devoted to social games of various kinds. Not all 85 members attend either services or socials regularly. It may be expected that services followed by a social gathering draw a higher attendance. The average number of young people attending an ordinary Sunday service is perhaps thirty. In keeping with its role as a social club for the Nisei, the YBA sponsors social dances in the church from time to time and may assemble for outings of various kinds.

Of interest with respect to the YBA social activities is a fad which is currently sweeping the local chapters in California and which seems to have its origin in the somewhat more progressive chapters of the Midwest. This is the selection of a chapter "Queen," a girl chosen by the group for her popularity, beauty, or the like. In California, a statewide "Queen" contest is contemplated in which a California YBA "Empress" will be chosen from among the candidates selected by the local groups. Such a contest provides a basis for inter-chapter rivalry and supports an extended round of social events both within the individual chapter and between YBA organizations in various churches.

On the whole, there is little contact between Issei and Nisei in any of the formal groupings which have developed in the ranks of the Japanese-American minority. Family organization is of course an exception; here the parent-child relationship, particularly among the Buddhists, suggests the retention in part of Old World mores. As the second generation matures, its members are gradually being allowed to fill congregational posts and positions in other organizations which in the prewar period were held almost exclusively by Issei. The point raised above that in some of the Buddhist churches there was objection to Nisei leadership on the part of some of the older people suggests as well the opposition of Issei to Nisei social affairs centering around the church. It has been noted that Reverend Kato is a factor in preventing any congregational rift between the two generations on the basis of social interests. He has met with some success in persuading his Issei members that through the various social events the young people are kept in the church. At the same time, however, both he and his wife have expressed their disapproval of the "Queen" contests and of overmuch attention to socials. One Issei in the church made the following statement:

I want to see my kids go to church. They should know something about religion and the only way they'll learn is in church. Still, I hate to see the church made into a dance hall; that's kind of irreverent. But I guess it's better if they come to church for that than not go at all.

In general, this is the consensus of the members of the first generation. Mrs. Kato summed up her objections by saying:

When they (the Nisei) think of Buddhism, to them it's just a beauty contest.

At Reverend Kato's suggestion, some further extended contact between the two generations has come about in the annual dinners given by the YBA for "Dads." Here the Issei parents of the YBA members are invited to a banquet in their honor. Another such festival is the recently begun "Mother's Day" dinner, held on the American holiday.

While the division on the basis of generation is the one which strikes the observer from the outside at once, a third group in most of the Japanese-American Buddhist churches is notable for its absence. This is the group of older Nisei who have married and are engaged in raising their own families. In the main, this group does not participate in church affairs. The primary reason for this is the failure of most of the churches to accommodate the married Nisei. Culturally, these couples are far removed from the Issei, while YBA activities are regarded by them as a bit juvenile. In most cases the children of such couples are sent to the Buddhist Sunday School but they themselves remain away from any active religious or social participation. At X—Church a group has been begun recently in which an attempt is made to attract such backsliders into the fold. The idea is a new one, arising apparently in X—Church and promises to spread to other congregations. For sometime, about 28 couples have met for religious discussion. There is no formal service but in Reverend Kato's opinion: the

fact that they come together to reverence the Buddha is good and worth any effort on my part.

This new group is well on the way to forming its own social club with contract bridge as a particular attraction. One the whole, the group shows a greater interest in matters religious than do the YBA members and is interested in seeing

Buddhism as a religious force preserved in the United States for itself and its children.

Issei services are held on Sunday evenings. Sermons and hymns are in Japanese. At such services attendance is small; rarely do more than 20 persons appear. This does not, however, imply a lack of interest either in Buddhism or the church itself on the part of the Issei congregation. In Japan, religion is intimately tied in with the ancestral cult and the home. Buddhism particularly is a family affair. In America, the Japanese immigrant may still carry on the household duties to the dead. When a death occurs in a Japanese-American family, oftentimes, even if the family profess Christianity, the head of the house summons the Buddhist priest for the reading of the proper memorial ritual. Church attendance is thus a matter of individual choice as long as the proper memorial services for the dead are carried on in the home. But the church may provide a social outlet for the Issei as well as for their children. Before the war, Issei attendance was more regular. Since evacuation and resettlement, however, the formal church has been dropped by many even though membership dues may still be paid and the services of the priest enlisted from time to time. X—Church does sponsor a monthly memorial service at which most Issei whose interest in the church continues are in attendance. At this service all bring food, and a banquet is held after the service. This, the *Senza Kuyō*, is a service in which food is offered and the dead remembered. As many as eighty may attend at this time, a large group for so small a church. Through the service, the sacred symbols attract a group which reaffirms social ties.

In the church in question, few Kibei are encountered. These are those Nisei who have been educated in Japan and are distinguishable largely in terms of language and attitude.<sup>5</sup> Some of the so-called Kibei have joined the YBA and so may be identified with the Nisei. Others, since the war, finding neither the Issei nor the Nisei to their liking, have dropped from the church altogether. In larger churches, the Kibei may be recognized as a group apart although nominally on the fringe of the YBA. At—Church any such socio-cultural differences have been overcome.

<sup>5</sup> E. H. Spicer, *Japanese-Americans Educated in Japan*, Community Analysis Section Report #8, War Relocation Authority (Washington, January 28, 1944).

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## SOME SOCIAL ASPECTS OF JAPANESE-AMERICAN DEMOGRAPHY<sup>1</sup>

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(Read April 20, 1950)

IN 1880 there were fewer than 200 alien Japanese in the United States. Between 1885, when Japan legalized labor emigration, and 1924, when Oriental exclusion was incorporated in our Immigration Act, well over 200,000 Japanese aliens entered this country direct from Japan and thousands of others came as secondary migrants from Hawaii. By 1940 cumulative admissions had probably exceeded 300,000, and the 47,000 aliens enumerated in the United States census of that year were a surprisingly slight residue for so large a volume of immigration in such a relatively short span of time. Nor did the increase in the American-citizen group—the children and grandchildren of the Japanese immigrants—fulfill the prophecy of a contributor to the *Annals* of the American Academy in 1921 that “in ten years” there would be 150,000 American-born Japanese in California alone and that by 1949 they would “outnumber the white people.”<sup>2</sup> There were, in fact, fewer than 50,000 American-born Japanese in California in 1930, only about 60,000 in 1940, and possibly not more than 30,000 in 1949.

Some social aspects of the changing demography of the Japanese minority in the United States will be analyzed in terms (1) of the course of immigration and the concomitant changes in vital processes and in the structure and composition of the population during the prewar years; (2) of the impact of the forced mass migration, following wartime exclusion from the Pacific Coast; and (3) of the nature, scope, and consequences of resifting and relocation during the war period.

<sup>1</sup> Statistical series on which the charts are based, full documentation of many of the points raised, and a critical evaluation of sources and of methods of data collection and analysis will be available in *The salvage*, to be published by the University of California Press in 1951.

The issues discussed in Sections 12 and 13 of the present paper are given fuller treatment and documentation in an earlier volume, *The spoilage*, by Dorothy S. Thomas and Richard Nishimoto (Berkeley, Univ. of Calif. Press, 1946).

<sup>2</sup> Chambers, J. S., *The Japanese invasion*, *Annals Amer. Acad. Polit. and Soc. Sci.*, 26, Jan. 1921.

### 1. IMMIGRATION

Year-by-year variations<sup>3</sup> in the course of migration between Japan and the United States are shown in chart 1 in the series of alien admissions which were recorded first in 1890–1891, and of alien departures, for which records are available only from the fiscal year, 1907–1908. Although Japan's abandonment of a two-century long seclusion policy in 1868 had eased restrictions on free movement from the country and an edict in 1885 had removed barriers to labor emigration, the number of aliens entering American ports before the turn of the century oscillated only slightly around a slowly rising trend, from the low level of about 1,000 a year in the early nineties to not much more than 2,000 a year towards the end of the decade.

During the early period of emigration from Japan, Hawaii, rather than the mainland, was the destination sought by the migrants. The sharp rise in admissions to the mainland in 1900 is, indeed, attributable merely to the diversion to San Francisco of immigrants destined for Hawaii, whose ships were turned away because of an outbreak of bubonic plague in the Islands. Between 1901 and 1907 the curve of admissions ebbed to a trough of about 4,000 and flowed to a crest of almost 10,000, in response to the slackening and quickening of the demand for labor on the West Coast. The extent of this relationship is suggested by the covariation in curves of immigration and of business cycles.<sup>4</sup> The short period of unimpeded response to fluctuations in economic opportunities on the West Coast and elsewhere in

<sup>3</sup> Numbers of alien admissions and departures, for fiscal years through 1931, were obtained from reports of the Commissioner-General of Immigration; from 1931 through 1942, from manuscript tables made available by the Department of Justice.

<sup>4</sup> The index of business cycles used here for the calendar years 1900–1906 is a composite prepared by W. F. Ogburn and D. S. Thomas. The influence of the business cycle on certain social conditions, *Quart. Pub. Amer. Stat. Ass.*, 327, Sept. 1922.

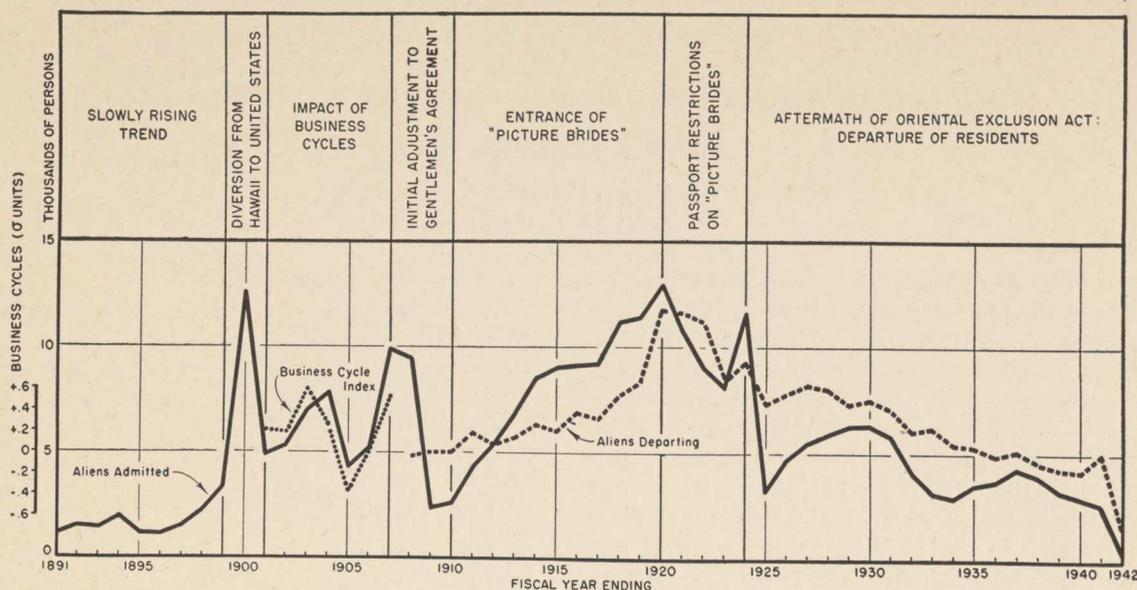


CHART 1. Japanese immigration to and emigration from continental United States, 1891-1942.

the United States was abruptly terminated by political action. Pressures favoring action had been initiated in California, which had not only received the bulk of the direct migrants from Japan but had become the destination of appreciable numbers of formerly-indentured Japanese laborers after territorial government was established and contract labor abolished in Hawaii. Although the numbers involved were still comparatively small in the first few years of the twentieth century, the influx made itself felt, and urgent regional pressures for cessation of Japanese immigration developed. Boycotts and discriminatory measures were instituted in many localities, and in 1906 the San Francisco School Board passed a resolution requiring all Japanese then in the public schools to attend a segregated school for Orientals. The Japanese government protested vigorously to President Theodore Roosevelt, who denounced the action as a "wicked absurdity" and "finally persuaded the School Board to rescind its resolution on the understanding that the President would bring Japanese immigration to an end."<sup>5</sup> In March 1907 a Presidential proclamation prohibited Japanese laborers who had received passports to go to Mexico, Canada, and Hawaii, from remigrating to the mainland, and, in the same year, the Japanese government agreed to undertake measures to bring direct immigration of Japanese laborers to the

<sup>5</sup> Buell, R. L., *Japanese immigration*, World Peace Foundation Pamphlets 7 (5-6): 287, 1924.

United States to an end. Under this, the "Gentlemen's Agreement," Japan was to issue passports only to "such of its subjects as are non-laborers or are laborers who, in coming to the continent, seek to resume a formerly-acquired domicile, to join a parent, wife, or children residing therein, or to assume active control of an already possessed interest in a farming enterprise located in this country."<sup>6</sup> Following enforcement of the Agreement, admissions fell from an annual level of 10,000 in 1907-1908 to about 2,500 in each of the two following years, while return-migrants to Japan numbered about 5,000 annually.

The renewed upswing that began in 1910 and culminated in 1920 reflected an unexpectedly enthusiastic response of Japanese settlers to the provision permitting entry of their relatives and the liberal interpretation immigration officials themselves made of this provision. Immigrants who had left their wives and children in Japan now sent for them, while bachelors made hurried trips to their native villages, married and brought their brides to America. Soon a more economical method of family-building became popular: relatives and friends in the mother country helped find brides for Japanese living in the United States, photographs were exchanged, and, if the arrangements proved mutually agreeable, marriage vows were taken by proxy. Bachelors were thus spared

<sup>6</sup> *Annual report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1909*, 121.

the inconvenience and expense of trips to Japan, and their "picture brides" were permitted to enter this country alone.

As the influx of women gained momentum, the birth rate rose, and official investigations were made of what was felt to be an alarming increase in the Japanese-American population. Japan again voluntarily yielded to pressure, and in 1920 stopped granting passports to "picture brides." Although the number of alien arrivals dropped sharply after 1921, and return-migrants again exceeded immigrants, regional groups continued to press Congress for complete cessation of Japanese immigration. "Finally, the Immigration Act of 1924 was passed (effective July 1, 1924), giving California what she wanted. . . . This act abrogated . . . the Gentlemen's Agreement and provided for the exclusion of all aliens ineligible to citizenship."<sup>7</sup> Among those ineligible on racial grounds were the Japanese, and with the enforcement of the act, their immigration to the United States was effectively ended. After the short-lived rush to beat the deadline, arrivals declined sharply. Visas were now issued only to visitors, students, treaty merchants and similar classes, and to returning residents. It was this last class which accounts in large measure for the slowly rising trend in arrivals from 1925 to 1930, but the movement was too slight to stem the drainage of alien Japanese from this country.

## 2. SETTLEMENT

At no census year did Japanese immigrants and their descendants reach 3 per cent of the total population of any one of the states. As of 1890, about one quarter of the total of 2,000 settlers had dispersed rather widely. Among these 500 were students and merchants who had moved towards the eastern seaboard, but the bulk of the 1,500 others, predominantly laborers, had settled near the ports of entry in California and Washington. By the end of the next decade the movement to eastern states had failed to keep pace with the accelerated tempo of immigration. There was, however, a considerable amount of dispersion of the new arrivals from the Pacific Coast into the intermountain states, which, in 1900, held one in five of the immigrant settlers, contrasted with one in twenty-five in the Middle West and East. After 1910 dispersal practically ceased, and settlement became more and more concentrated on the Pacific Coast;

<sup>7</sup> Strong, E. K., Jr., *The second-generation Japanese problem*, 48, Stanford Univ. Press, 1934.

within the Pacific Coast area, in California; and, within California, in Los Angeles and vicinity. By 1940, 89 per cent of the country's alien Japanese and their American-citizen descendants were located on the Pacific Coast: 74 per cent in California, and almost 30 per cent within the boundaries of the county of Los Angeles.

## 3. REMIGRATION

Migration between Japan and the United States involved a great deal of waste motion. During the fiscal years 1908-1914, for example, 97 out of every 100 alien arrivals were offset by alien departures, while from 1915 to 1924, the ratio was 86 departures to every 100 arrivals, and after 1924, when there was a consistent net migratory loss, departures per 100 arrivals numbered 146. The heavy return-migration to Japan included both "sojourners" and "repeaters." The former usually appeared in the statistical series twice: once as "alien arrivals," then as "alien departures." The latter were counted repeatedly, their trips to Japan being interspersed with arrivals in America, usually in the category of "returning residents." Among the alien evacuees of 1942, no fewer than 40 per cent had returned to Japan and remigrated to America at least once, while about one in every ten had made three or more trips to Japan.<sup>8</sup>

Japanese immigrants were described by the Immigration Commission in 1911 as living in but as no integral part of the community.<sup>9</sup> Their integration was retarded by many forces and circumstances: by ineligibility to American citizenship and the necessity of continuing in the status of nationals allegiant to a foreign power; by adherence to an alien religion and failure to master the English language; by discriminatory practices, the most important of which were the anti-alien land laws; and by the overt hostility of the majority group on the West Coast. It is not surprising that they, perhaps more than any other immigrant group in America, regarded themselves as sojourners in this country, hoping to complete their education or to make and save enough money to return, after a few years, and reestablish themselves favorably in the homeland. The extensive return-migration was selective of those whose connections

<sup>8</sup> United States, Department of the Interior, War Relocation Authority, *The evacuated people*, 84, Washington, Govt. Pr. Off., 1946.

<sup>9</sup> United States Immigration Commission, *Immigrants in industries: Japanese and other immigrant races in the Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain states* 23: 166, Washington, Govt. Pr. Off., 1911.

in America were most tenuous, and whose motivation to remain was weakest. Many of those who stayed had managed to obtain a foothold in agriculture or in urban trades and services; they had established families, and their children held American citizenship. Even though sojourner-

attitudes persisted, most of the immigrants who attained economic status and had American-born children became residents-in-fact if not settlers-by-intention, and by 1940 Japanese communities on the West Coast had assumed an aspect of permanence and stability.

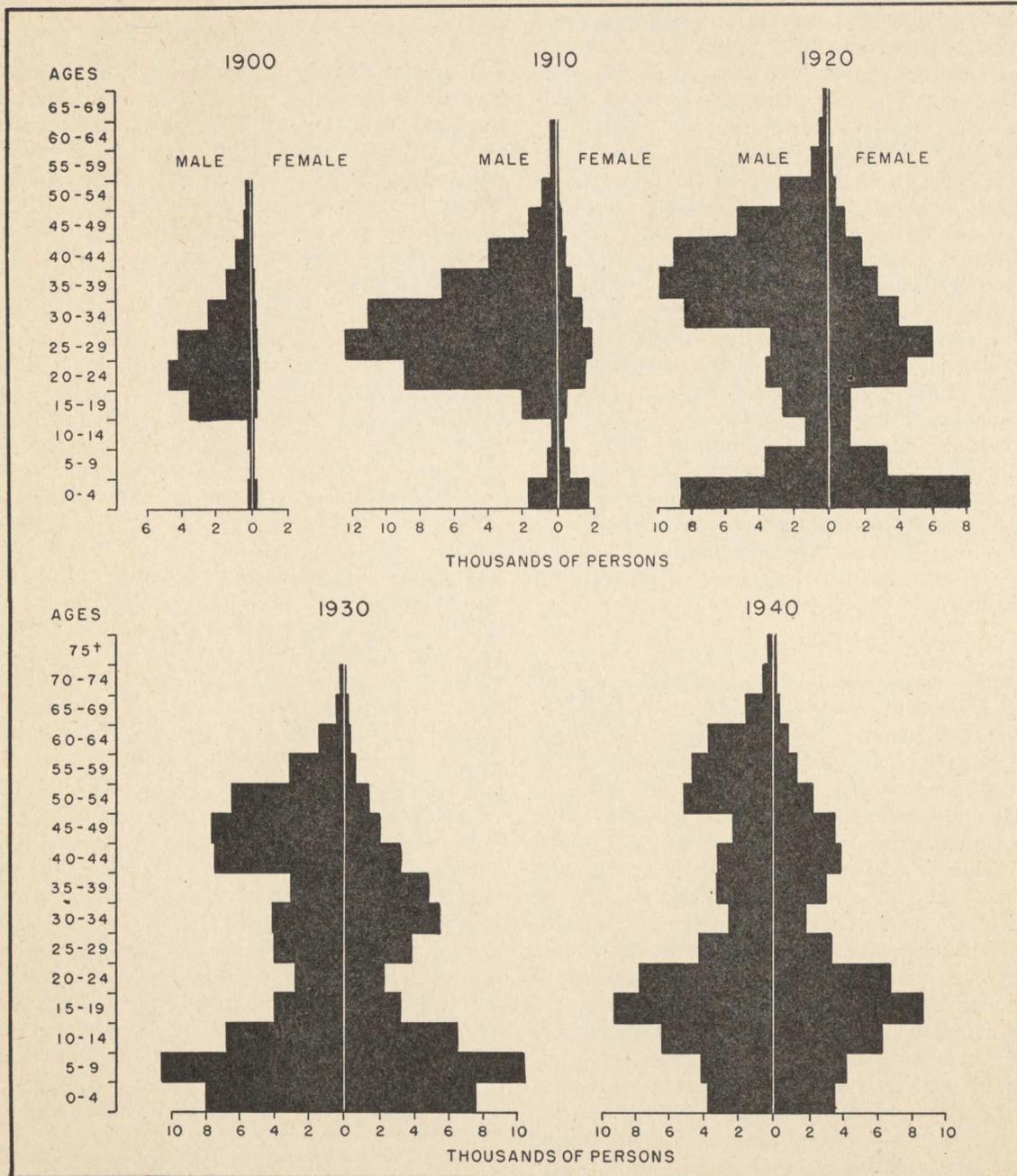


CHART 2. Age-sex structures of Japanese-American population in California, Washington, Oregon, and Arizona, 1900-1940.

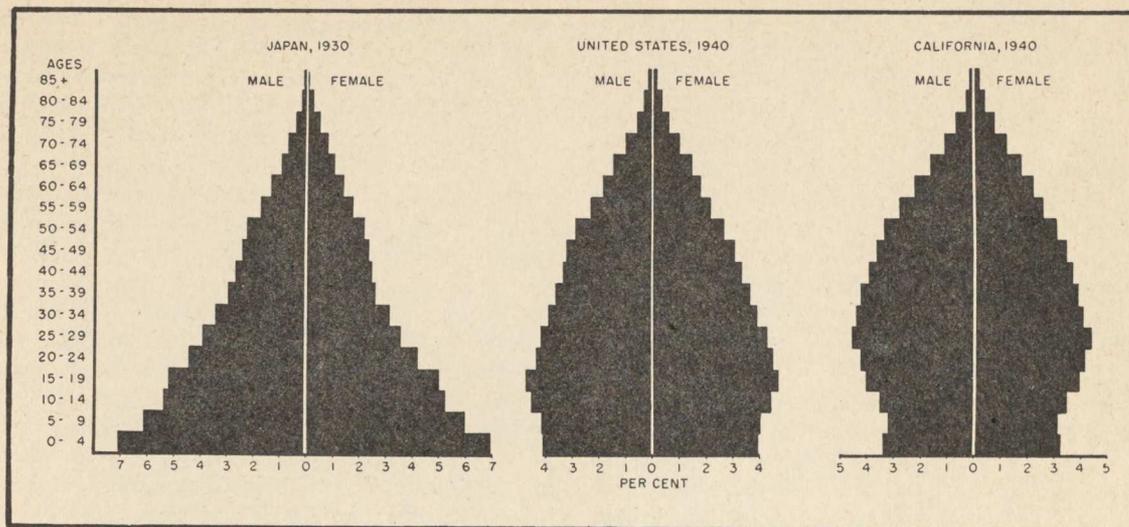


CHART 3. Age-sex structures of Japan, 1930, and of the United States and California, 1940.

#### 4. THE GENERATIONS

Foreign-born Japanese residents reached their maximum population of 80,000 in 1920. Their decline was, for a few years, more than offset by increases in the number of their descendents. The second generation—the American-born—numbered fewer than 300 in 1900. Their increase of about 4,000 in the next decade was only one-tenth as great as the corresponding increment of the foreign-born, but between 1910 and 1920 their absolute growth was almost double that of the immigrants, and the ratio of American-born to foreign-born residents was approaching one to three by 1920. In 1930 the two generations were approximately equal at about 70,000 each, and by 1940 the American born had outstripped the immigrant settlers and, totalling 80,000, were two-thirds again as numerous as the aliens. Among the American-born, a third generation was beginning to assume importance: at the end of 1942, 88 per cent of the American-born under 3 years of age were of native or mixed parentage, compared with 25 per cent of those aged 3–19, and less than 2 per cent of those 20 years of age or older.<sup>10</sup>

#### 5. AGE-SEX STRUCTURES

Concomitant with shifts in the relative positions of the generations were far-reaching transforma-

<sup>10</sup> Births to Japanese, by nativity and parentage, in the four western states, 1940–42, were collated with data on parentage of American-born evacuees, by sex, for ages under and over 20, obtained from *The evacuated people*, 89.

tions in the age-sex structures of the population,<sup>11</sup> as shown in chart 2. At no census, from 1900 to 1940, did the age-sex structure of the Japanese-American population attain the form either of the classical, tapering pyramid, characteristic of the increasing population of the mother-country or of the bulging pyramid with eroded foundation, characteristic of the areas of settlement (see chart 3). They were always in a state of transition between the two. These irregularities and imbalances in age-sex structure recapitulate immigration history and at the same time suggest the extent and rapidity of assimilation of Western population patterns.

The structure of 1900 consisted almost exclusively of young males: it had no foundation of children, no apex of old people, and a barely discernible number of females. By 1910 the male lateral had increased enormously and was covering a greater age-range, the female lateral had begun to swell, and a narrow base of children was forming. The 1920 structure, with its wide base of children, its large segment of potential reproducers, and its tapering apex implied future development of the true pyramid towards which populations with high natural increase tend. By

<sup>11</sup> Data on age-sex distributions were obtained from published volumes of the decennial census of the United States, except for 1930, for which manuscript tables of unpublished data were made available by the Census Bureau. Distributions for the four western states were estimated from that for the United States for 1900; and the distribution for Arizona had to be estimated from totals by sex and nativity for 1910 and 1920.

1930, however, the development of the pyramid had been arrested: the apex had expanded and the foundation had contracted. By 1940 the age-sex structure consisted of a series of bulges and hollows. The attenuation of the foundation had sharpened, and age-classes 0-4 through 15-19 now formed a "pyramid-in-reverse." Ages 30-34 were markedly deficient for males and females, alike, and there was another hollow class for males at ages 45-49. Both laterals had primary modes within the age-group 15-19. Secondary modes for adult males and females were apparent at ages 50-54 and 40-44, respectively.

The structures of 1900 and of 1910 show the immediate effects of age-selective immigration of laborers prior to the Gentlemen's Agreement, while those of 1920 and of 1930 reveal the transformation that followed the influx of picture brides. High and low frequencies move up the structure, at ten-year intervals, in succeeding censuses, but the bulges and hollows are damped by the effects of death and remigration. Heavily weighted as it was by aging aliens, return-migration to Japan kept the apexes of the pyramids far below the expansion that declining mortality would have made possible. Thus, males aged 50-59 in 1930 and in 1940 were only about 75 per cent as numerous as they would have been without migratory loss; those aged 60 and over represented only 60 and 65 per cent of the numbers expected as survivors, in 1930 and in 1940 respectively, of residents aged 50 and over at the censuses ten years earlier. Divergences between expectation and observation were, by 1940, only slightly less marked for females than for males.<sup>12</sup>

There was relatively little immigration of young children, even in the family-building era. And, since intermarriage outside the ethnic group was extremely rare on the West Coast, limits to base expansion were set by the age-structure of immigrant women. In the 1920 structure they were heavily concentrated at ages of maximum fecundity and almost all of them were married, but by 1940 many were at low-fecundity ages or had passed

<sup>12</sup> Expected survivors, at each census, of residents aged 5-9 and over, at the preceding census, were estimated by applying 10-year survival coefficients derived from life-tables constructed for the Japanese population as of 1920, 1930, and 1940. The procedure used is essentially that described and evaluated by E. P. Hutchinson, *The use of routine census and vital statistics data for the determination of migration by age and sex in the absence of continuous registration of migrants*, in Thomas, D. S., *Research memorandum on migration differentials*, 387-398, N. Y., Soc. Sci. Res. Coun., 1938.

out of the childbearing period completely, while relatively few of their American-born daughters had reached marriageable ages. These facts account, in part, for the expansion of the base of the age-sex structures in 1920 and its contraction in 1930 and in 1940. But, as will be suggested in sections 6, 7, and 8, the structural bases were also greatly modified by declining mortality, controlled fertility, and migratory losses.

#### 6. SURVIVAL

Even in 1920 the Japanese in America were superior to the Japanese in Japan in their ability to survive, their advantage, as measured by expectation of life at birth amounting to some eight years. They were, however, inferior to the whites on the Pacific Coast, their disadvantage at birth being five years for males and nine years for females; and although there were but slight increases in the survival potentials of Japanese in Japan, the gaps between Japanese and whites on the Pacific Coast were completely closed by 1940. Transition to a high-survival pattern had proceeded so rapidly that the expectation of life at birth for Japanese-American males had reached 63 years, for females the even more impressive figure of 67 years. With this increase, the Japanese in America reached the level attained, at that time, by only the most advanced Western population groups.<sup>13</sup>

#### 7. REPRODUCTION

The decline in natality was, for Japanese Americans, as for other Western population groups, more precipitous than the decline in mortality. Their crude birth rate had risen sharply after 1910, and in California reached a maximum of 68 per 1,000 population in 1920—a rate four times as high as that of the whites. This rate was widely publicized, and popular concern over "invasion by immigration" gave way to concern over what many believed to be a racial tendency towards "phenomenal fecundity." Better-informed observers, noting the unusual concentration of females in the childbearing ages, took issue with the conclusions of the alarmists. But, even with due allowance for peculiarities of age structure, the fertility of Japanese-Americans was extraordinarily high in 1920. The gross reproduction rate (i.e., the average number of

<sup>13</sup> Abridged life tables were prepared for Japanese Americans and for whites on a comparable basis, by use of the Reed-Merrell method, which automatically corrects for underenumeration of children under 5 years of age.

daughters imputed to a woman passing through the childbearing period, on the assumption of a continuation of the then-current age-specific fertil-

ity schedule) was 3.4 or one-third again as high as that of Japan in 1925, three times that of West Coast whites in 1920. By 1940 the rates of white

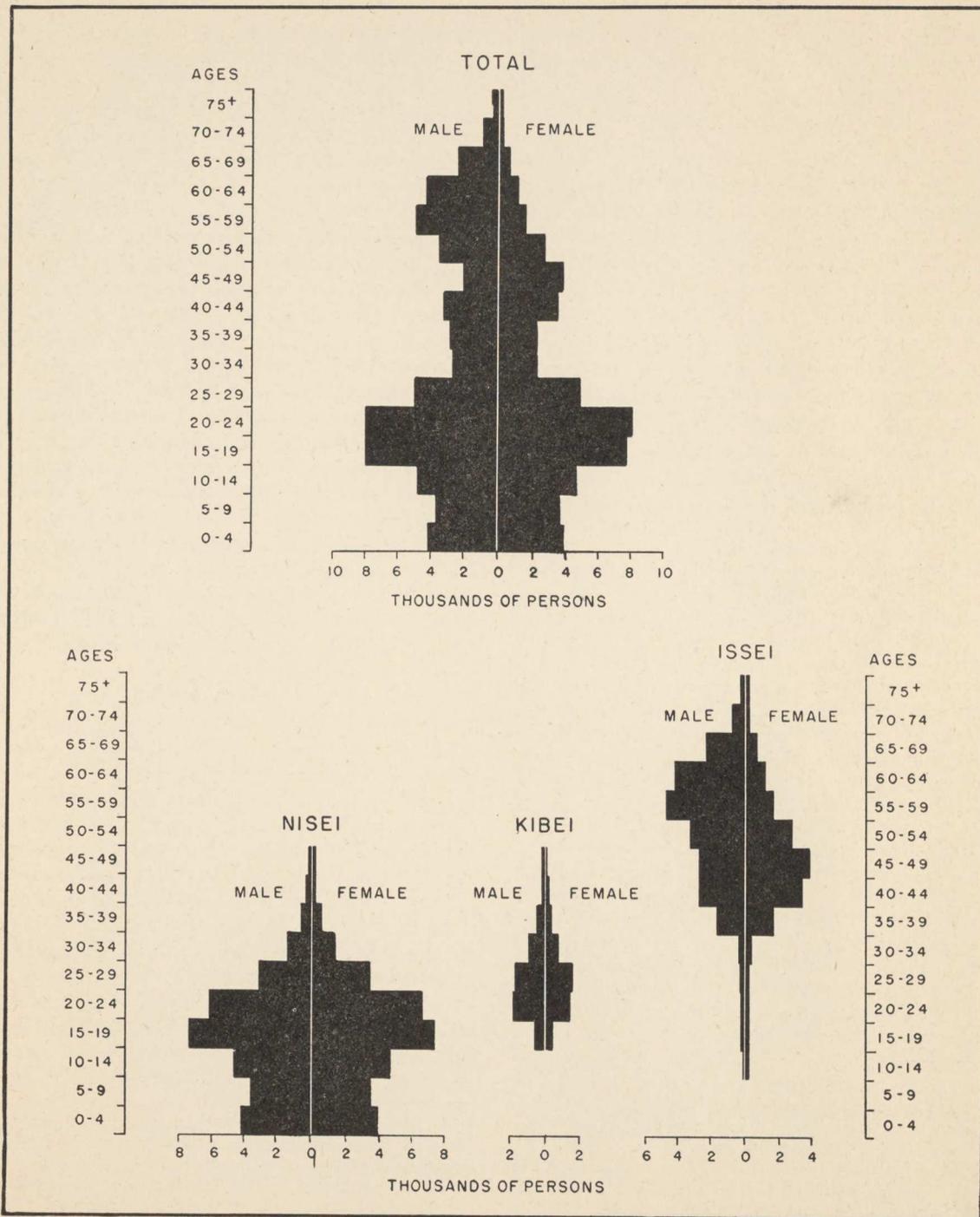


CHART 4. Age-sex structures of Japanese-American evacuees in WRA projects, 1942.

majority and of Japanese minority had converged at the level of about one daughter per woman.<sup>14</sup> This convergence—attributable to a radical decline in the fertility of Japanese-American women—is a striking demonstration of the extent to which this Oriental minority had assimilated the high value placed in the Western world on the small family.

#### 8. AGE DISPARITIES

By 1942, when the Japanese were evacuated from the Pacific Coast, bimodality had become the most striking characteristic of their age-sex structure. The modes differentiated the population sharply in terms of nativity and generation: *Issei*, the first generation immigrants; *Nisei*, literally "second generation," but including, by usage, all of the American-born except a marginal class, the *Kibei*, who will be described later. Chart 4 shows how great this differentiation was, how slight the demographic overlapping.<sup>15</sup>

The significance of age disparities was vividly stated by a writer in the vernacular press around 1920. Commenting on the birth-rate of this period, he says:

What invites our attention is the great discrepancy in age between the father and the babe. In many cases the father is a half-old man of fifty, while his children are only four or five years old. When the latter reach the age of twenty the former will be approaching the grave, if not actually in it. Time will come when our community will be made up of weak, half-dead old men and immature and reckless youths. Who will guide the young men and women of our community twenty years hence? There is no answer.

It is true that the "Gentlemen's Agreement" permits the parents in this country to send for their sons and daughters in Japan that are under age, and we see a small influx of boys and girls in their teens into our community. . . . Our community of twenty years hence will have to depend on these few young newcomers of today. These are a most precious handful. . . . They form the link between the decaying age and the immature youth, and twenty years hence they will have to serve as the bridge over an inevitable and dangerous gulf in our community.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The Japanese-American gross reproduction rate for 1920 was computed by indirect standardization. All others were computed, directly, by the usual method of summation of current age-specific fertility rates.

<sup>15</sup> Data for chart 4 were derived by collating data from *The evacuated people*, 86 and 87.

<sup>16</sup> *Hoku-shin-Juho*, San Francisco, undated. Cited by Park, R. E., *The immigrant press and its control*, 163-164, N. Y., Harper and Brothers, 1922.

The "inevitable gulf" was barely bridged. Age disparities were to persist and to be accentuated by cultural differences. Nor was the bridge strengthened by a practice, undertaken during the early stages of the family-building era, of sending preschool-aged children to Japan, there to be cared for by relatives and educated in Japanese schools. Just as the return to Japan of immigrants in the post-productive ages retarded the piling-up in the upper ranges, so the practice of sending children to Japan restricted the pyramidal base. So extensive was this practice that, on the average, one out of four children born between 1910 and 1920, and one in five of those born in the next decade, were "lost" to the base of the age pyramids.<sup>17</sup> An appreciable part of the loss was permanent, the young migrants growing up and finding places for themselves in Japan. This was especially true of the female contingent, numbers of whom were able to marry advantageously in the Old World. Some, however, returned to America, and by 1942 they—the *Kibei*—formed an appreciable part of the older age-cohorts of the American-born group as a whole. At that time the median age of all *Nisei* was 17, of *Issei* males 55, and of *Issei* females 47. *Kibei* were divided about equally above and below 26 years of age, with more than 80 per cent crowded into the narrow range of ages between 20 and 35 years. Nor was the marginal status of *Kibei* limited to the demographic sphere.

#### 9. NISEI AND KIBEI

The second generation held, by virtue of birth on American soil, citizenship that the first generation could not obtain by naturalization. This fact, in itself, provided a strong incentive for the Americanization of the *Nisei*. But the *Issei* settlers' continuing ambivalence about permanent residence in America, their constant awareness of West Coast racial prejudice and its implications for their children, their lack of information about opportunities elsewhere in America, and their nostalgia, led them to transfer their "sojourner" attitudes, to some extent, to plans for their children's future, and to institute practices that would make American-born Japanese acceptable either as Japanese or as Americans. The most pervasive of the Japanizing prac-

<sup>17</sup> The "expected" American-born population under 10 years of age at each census was computed by applying appropriate survival coefficients to births for each year during the preceding decennium. The difference between the expected survivors of births and the enumerated population gives an estimate of net migratory loss. See Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, 368-386.

tices were the Kibei movement and the establishment of Japanese language schools on the West Coast.

The practice of sending preschool-aged children to Japan for education and care was also motivated by economic convenience or necessity. Entrepreneurs formed a disproportionately large part of the foreign-born labor force: in California and Washington in 1940, half of all the Issei males employed in agriculture were farmers or farm managers, and almost a third of those in nonagricultural pursuits were proprietors or managers. Most of the enterprises were small, and were operated with little capital and few, if any, paid employees. Their success—in many cases, their very existence—depended upon the active participation of the wife. Sending a child to relatives in Japan during his dependent years freed the mother for essential “unpaid” family labor, and was, in most instances, less expensive than rearing him in America.

Relatively few children were sent to Japan after 1930, but the bulk of those who returned to America came back during the 1930–1940 decade. This is reflected in the facts that, whereas Kibei comprised 14 per cent of all of the American-born who were evacuated to WRA projects in 1942, they represented one in three of those over 25 years of age, and that their education in Japan had been quite prolonged. Over 80 per cent of them had at least six years' and only 5 per cent as little as two years' schooling in that country. On the average, they had had significantly more schooling in Japan and fewer years of residence in America than their Issei parents. About one in four, however, completed his education in American schools and one in ten was still attending school on the West Coast at the outbreak of war.<sup>18</sup>

While American schooling was a secondary feature in the training of most Kibei, Issei parents insisted that Nisei children utilize American educational facilities to the fullest possible extent. This

<sup>18</sup> By definition, Kibei are American-born Japanese who had had some education in Japan and then returned to America. Issei are defined simply as foreign-born Japanese, almost 7 per cent of them having had no schooling at all in Japan. For those with any schooling in Japan, the median number of years of school attendance was 8.5 for Issei compared with 7.4 for Kibei. If, however, Kibei are compared with *all* Issei, the percentage of the former having 10 or more years of schooling in Japan is 33, compared with 28 for the latter, and 50 per cent of the Kibei had 6–9 years schooling in Japan, compared with 48 per cent of the Issei. (Computed from data in *The evacuated people*, 87–88.)

insistence, and the eager compliance of most of the children, had far-reaching consequences in the development of American habits and attitudes, and in thus promoting rapid assimilation. By every available index, American-educated children of Japanese parentage were more thoroughly schooled than even the notably well-educated general population (of comparable age and sex distribution) on the Pacific Coast. In level attained, they greatly surpassed any other identifiable minority, and approximated that of the whites. In comparison with other population groups, Nisei children started school earlier and remained in school longer through the adolescent period; they completed full curricula to a greater extent; they obtained better grades and ratings from teachers; and they received a quite disproportionate number of honors.<sup>19</sup>

At the same time, most Issei insisted that their Nisei children attend, after school hours, privately-operated Japanese-language schools. The aim of these schools, in teaching “proper” Japanese was not only to facilitate communication and thus prevent alienation from the parents but also to

<sup>19</sup> Age, sex, and region of residence should be held constant in educational comparisons. Part of the superiority in schooling often attributed to Japanese Americans when compared with other population groups is due to their relative youth and to their location in areas of educational opportunity. Controlling these factors, however, still leaves an appreciably favorable differential, as shown by the following examples: (1) For the population over 25 years of age in California in the 1940 census, after standardizing for age, the proportions of American-born Japanese who had completed high school but gone no further were 38 and 42 per cent, for males and for females, compared with 28 and 35 per cent, respectively, among whites. Those having some college education were approximately the same for Japanese and for white males, i.e., about 20 per cent but there were only 12 per cent of the Japanese females at the college level compared with 19 per cent for whites. (2) Elimination of Kibei from the Japanese group—which was possible in a special analysis of evacuees in the Poston Relocation project—and comparing those aged 20–29 as of 1940 with California whites of the same ages, indicates that half again as many Nisei males and one-eighth again as many Nisei females in proportion to their population had attended or completed college.

Strong *op. cit.*, 191–198, analyzed a comprehensive study of marks given by teachers in the Los Angeles high schools in 1927–28, which showed “strikingly higher grades” for the Japanese compared with the total school population. Robert W. O'Brien (*The college Nisei*, 7–8, Palo Alto, Calif., Pacific Books, 1949), cites more recent data showing, e.g., that, just before the war, there were, in some localities, two or three times the number of valedictorians and honor students among Nisei than would have been expected from their proportionate representation in the school populations.

strengthen the social control of the Japanese community. In addition, they promoted the study of Japanese history and institutions and, in some instances, the newer Japanese political ideologies.

Return of the Kibei to their American homes aggravated cultural diversity within families, since it was usually only one or two of several siblings who had been sent to Japan. Most Issei fathers had grown up in the Japan of the late nineteenth and the very early twentieth century; and the residence in Japan of Issei mothers had terminated before America's entrance into World War I. The Kibei child in most families had completed his education in the aggressively nationalistic Japan of the 1930's, while the Nisei children had had no direct contact with the land of their parents.<sup>20</sup> Conflict, which might have occurred normally between the generations and among siblings, was intensified by extreme environmental and temporal contrasts, and the situation was further complicated when culture conflict became tinged with political implications. Behavior and attitudes of Issei and particularly of Kibei, which had been censured as "Japanesey" by the Nisei even when their own family relationships were characterized by warmth and mutual tolerance, were widely condemned as "pro-Japan" during the late 1930's and particularly after 1940. Generational and sibling cleavages were sharpened by real or imagined divergent national loyalties.

#### 10. THE OCCUPATIONAL LADDER

There were strong contrasts in the socio-economic goals sought by Issei, Nisei, and Kibei, and in the success each group had achieved at the outbreak of war.

Issei had obtained a pivotal place in the Western farm economy by accommodating themselves to the requirements of a mobile, seasonal labor force. Organizing first in gangs of single men, under "bosses," they had taken over much of the onerous stoop labor required in intensive vegetable and berry cultivation, and, in the beginning, they had undercut on wages. Marrying and founding families, many moved from the ranks of labor to tenancy and some to ownership, in spite of legislation aimed

<sup>20</sup> Among the evacuees in War Relocation Authority projects in 1942, 63 per cent of the Issei males had immigrated to America before 1910, while 85 per cent of the Issei females arrived between 1910 and 1925. Of the Kibei, 65 per cent had returned to America after 1930. Of the Nisei, only 1 in 14 under 15 years of age, and 1 in 5 of those aged 15-29 had ever visited Japan. (Computed from data in *The evacuated people*, 69, 83, 88.)

at restricting their vertical mobility. They had developed their farms as family enterprises; they had cleared and drained and brought raw land under cultivation; they had specialized and intensified even beyond prevailing practices; they had paid high rents and accepted substandard housing. By 1941 they were producing 30-35 per cent of California's total truck crops.<sup>21</sup>

Most of the early Issei trade and service operations were designed to meet the needs of the expanding ethnic group. When they attempted to broaden the base for a larger public, they met serious opposition from organized labor, especially in San Francisco, where their competition in laundries, in restaurants, and in many other branches, was effectively restrained through boycotts. In Seattle, however, Japanese-operated restaurants held their own, and hotels and grocery stores expanded far beyond the confines of the ethnic communities.<sup>22</sup> Their most notable success was in Los Angeles, particularly in enterprises concerned with the marketing of agricultural produce, where, just before the outbreak of war, they are said to have handled 60 per cent of the volume of wholesale business<sup>23</sup> and they had almost monopolized fruit-and-vegetable concessions in retail shops and markets. Their success in these fields was due, in large measure, to intensive application of labor, to meticulous attention to detail, and to constant care in eliminating wastage. To these ends, most entrepreneurs used family help to the maximum, required long hours of their other low-paid, unorganized helpers, and themselves gave unstintedly of their time.

Relatively few of the second generation attained entrepreneurial status. Over 40 per cent of the American-born males engaged in agriculture in California and Washington in 1940 were wage laborers, and almost 30 per cent were unpaid family workers, while 36 per cent of the females in non-agricultural pursuits were domestic servants. In San Francisco domestic service was a major occupation for second-generation males as well as for females, the proportions of the total labor force

<sup>21</sup> As reported by Fisher, L. H., in U. S. Congress, House, Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration, 77th Congress, 2nd Session, *Hearings* 31: 11,815-11,832, Washington, Govt. Pr. Off., 1942.

<sup>22</sup> The economic history of the Japanese in America, up to World War I, is documented from Immigration-Commission reports in Millis, H. A., *The Japanese problem in the United States*. N. Y., Macmillan, 1915.

<sup>23</sup> Statement by Sam Minami in U. S. Congress, House, *op. cit.*, 31: 11,723.

of each sex so employed being 23 and 58 per cent, respectively.<sup>24</sup>

Of Nisei working in trade and nondomestic service enterprises before the war and later evacuated to relocation projects, 9 out of every 10 of those who came from San Francisco, 4 out of 5 of those from Los Angeles, and 3 out of 4 of those from Seattle held employee status as of 1940. Although failure to attain independent status was to some extent attributable to their youth, Nisei were generally reluctant to take over responsibility for the family enterprises which their fathers had founded. In many cases this would have meant assumption of an intolerable personal burden and perpetuation of a way-of-life incompatible with American standards. Their economic goal was, rather, to break into the ranks of majority-group activities from which their parents had been excluded. Up to the time of evacuation, they had had little success in reaching this goal. Close to half of the Nisei employees in trade and service enterprises in San Francisco and over half of those in Los Angeles were in a single type of firm: Oriental-art-goods stores in the former, fruit-and-vegetable markets in the latter. Not even one in ten Nisei employees in trade and nondomestic service, was working for a "Caucasian" firm in either San Francisco or Los Angeles, and only two in every ten were so employed in Seattle. Of these, a small number had obtained remunerative work in firms soliciting Japanese patronage. There was an occasional opening for a Nisei typist or bookkeeper or mail-order-house salesman, but there were few opportunities for positions requiring face-to-face contact with the general public. Doctors, dentists, lawyers, and optometrists usually served the needs of other Japanese and in only rare instances had succeeded in obtaining white clientele or connections with Caucasian-operated institutions, either public or private. Journalists worked for vernacu-

<sup>24</sup> Data on the labor force are from the 16th Census of the U. S., Population, *Characteristics of the nonwhite population by race*, Washington, Govt. Pr. Off., 1943.

Data on the status of Nisei and Kibei, compared with Issei, were obtained by analyzing a sample of employment histories from the WRA census of 1942. The sample was selected by location in camp, corresponding roughly to prewar address, with date of reference as April 1940. It was limited to persons born in 1921 or earlier, and excluded agricultural workers, gardeners, domestic servants, and persons not in the labor force. The total of 3216 records analyzed were distributed as follows: *San Francisco*, 548 Issei, 263 Nisei, 126 Kibei; *Los Angeles*, 883 Issei, 476 Nisei, 201 Kibei; *Seattle*, 456 Issei, 215 Nisei, 48 Kibei.

lar newspapers. Engineers, accountants, teachers, and social workers found it almost impossible to practice their skills in the wider community. Some technicians, e.g., biochemists and dieticians, obtained positions for which they had been trained, and there was little discrimination against nurses. Civil service, State and Federal, offered opportunities to a few white-collar workers. But in the main, and in spite of superior educational and vocational training, most Nisei were, at the outbreak of war, back where their parents had started.

Kibei were, again, in a marginal position. Some, whose education had been completed, or largely obtained, in America, were indistinguishable from Nisei in outlook, goals, accomplishments, and frustrations. A few, economically and socially advantaged, had achieved a superior integration of the two cultures and had obtained positions of responsibility in firms engaged in international trade, or in governmental agencies. But most of them were linguistically and culturally handicapped. Their superiority in age over the Nisei had not greatly facilitated rise to the entrepreneurial level.<sup>25</sup> The setting in which their parents had reached this goal had changed, and, unlike the Issei, Kibei had not been exposed to decades of accommodation to minority status. An appreciably greater proportion of them than of Nisei was working for other Japanese; and compared with Nisei, they were disproportionately in agricultural rather than in urban pursuits, in manual rather than in cerebral activities.

#### 11. CITIZENSHIP

Our Naturalization Act of 1790 had specified conditions for acquisition of citizenship by aliens who were "free white persons." Following the Civil War, an act of 1870 extended the privilege of naturalization to "aliens of African nativity and persons of African descent." Subsequent amendments and revisions removed racial barriers for American Indians, for Filipinos, for Chinese, for "persons of races indigenous to India" and for "persons who possess, either singly or in combination, a preponderance of blood" of one or more of some of these classes or as much as one-half blood of these and "some additional blood" of others. Japanese, however, were declared by judicial in-

<sup>25</sup> Of Kibei from San Francisco, 75 per cent held employee status, compared with 78 and 79 per cent in Los Angeles and Seattle. For the same three cities, in order, the proportions of Issei who were employees were 49 per cent, 53 per cent, and 56 per cent, while for Nisei, the proportions were 91 per cent, 83 per cent and 76 per cent.

terpretations to be racially ineligible for naturalization, and this interpretation was confirmed by the United States Supreme Court in 1923.<sup>26</sup> For a short period—between 1935 and 1937—Congress removed barriers to naturalization for certain Japanese aliens who had served in the armed forces of the United States during World War I. But up to 1950 there were few exceptions to the rule that persons of Japanese blood born on alien soil were ineligible to citizenship in the United States, however long and under whatever conditions they had resided here.

"Ineligibility to American citizenship" was used as a political means of achieving discriminatory ends at local, state, national, and international levels. To Issei, it was a constant reminder of the racial intolerance of the majority group, and a constant threat to economic security. The threat was actualized in the land laws passed in California between 1913 and 1923, affirming rights of aliens who could become naturalized citizens and denying these same rights to aliens "ineligible to citizenship." And ineligibility to citizenship was the basis for Oriental exclusion in the Immigration Act of 1924.

Strict enforcement of the land laws, which not only forbade purchase of land but introduced successive restrictions on terms of tenancy and even of sharecropping, and prohibited acquisition of interests in corporations owning agricultural lands, would have driven the Japanese back to the status of laborers or out of agriculture altogether. It would have destroyed the economic foundation, not only of the half of the population directly dependent upon agriculture for a livelihood, but also of the thousands in urban enterprises who were engaged in marketing farm produce and in services to the agricultural population. But the laws had many loopholes, and they were extensively, continuously, and collusively evaded. For example, some Issei who were *de facto* owners and operators assumed guardianship of the interests of their minor American-born children who appeared, in the records, as *de jure* owners and operators, while others purchased or leased farms under names "borrowed" from older Nisei (often Hawaiians) or Caucasians. Resort to evasion and collusion became less necessary and less frequent during the 1930's, and by 1940, the coming-of-age of at least

one Nisei son or daughter in most Japanese-American families seemed to have restored the legal foundation for tenancy and ownership. Exercise of citizenship rights by a single member could now confidently be expected to afford legal protection for the whole family.

## 12. EVACUATION AND DETENTION

When the sudden attack on Pearl Harbor precipitated war between the United States and the Axis powers, Japanese, German, and Italian nationals were, alike, declared to be "alien enemies" in Presidential proclamations of December 7 and 8, 1941. Alien enemies were forbidden to possess contraband, their traveling was restricted, their bank accounts were frozen, and their business enterprises were closed. Some were apprehended, on suspicion and held in detention, by the FBI. It was announced that all alien enemies might be excluded from military zones.

Because large numbers of German and Italian immigrants had become naturalized, the incidence of the application of these early restrictions was greatest in the Japanese immigrant communities, and, for Issei, the dormant threat to their security of "ineligibility to citizenship" was again revived. Furthermore, there were disturbing indications that the status of Nisei as descendants of the Japanese enemy might take precedence over their status as American citizens. Thus, restrictions on travel referred to "Japanese individuals" and were applied indiscriminately to alien enemies and to American citizens of Japanese ancestry. In some instances, similar interpretations were made in respect to assets. Citizens as well as aliens were stopped on the highways, summarily arrested, and held for questioning.

By the end of the second week of the war a number of the restrictions on alien enemies had been relaxed, and many of the misunderstandings regarding Nisei seemed to have been cleared up. In some cases, funds were released, business enterprises were allowed to reopen, and necessary travel was permitted. Federal and local officials, educators, clergymen, other prominent citizens, and most of the West Coast newspapers, pleaded for tolerance, for the protection of "loyal Japanese" and of "loyal alien enemies" generally, and they emphasized the citizenship rights of Nisei, their record of service in the armed forces, their participation in civilian defense.

Within Japanese-American families and communities, there was extensive realignment of lead-

<sup>26</sup> For analysis of the development and significance of our racial criteria for naturalization, see McGovney, D. O., The anti-Japanese land laws of California and ten other states, *Calif. Law Rev.* 35: 7-60, March 1947.

ership and control, for the early FBI arrests had been highly selective of Issei business, religious, and community leaders. Included among those apprehended were officers of the Japanese Association, all Shinto and some Buddhist priests, many newspaper owners and editors, and most Japanese-language-school teachers. Although relatively few families<sup>27</sup> were directly affected by these arrests, the summary and secret nature of the procedures, delay in instituting hearings, local variations in the categories under suspicion, and vagueness about the nature of the categories themselves, aroused widespread fear, and stimulated the spread of rumors. Convinced that they would be "next on the list," many Issei packed their bags, waited to be picked up, and made hasty efforts to transfer their remaining liquid assets to citizen-children or friends. Although divisive forces within the Japanese community precluded unanimity, a Nisei organization, the Japanese American Citizens League, assumed leadership and for some months acted as spokesman for the whole Japanese minority.

By the end of January 1942 our serious reverses in the Pacific area made the West Coast seem increasingly vulnerable to attack or possible invasion. Reports (later shown to have no basis in fact) that Japanese residents had formed a fifth column in Hawaii, given aid and comfort to the enemy, and sabotaged the American defense of Pearl Harbor, were widely circulated.<sup>28</sup> Fears of similar activi-

<sup>27</sup> *Bulletin 12* of the Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, 145, San Francisco, March 15, 1943, gives approximately 30,000 families as the number evacuated from the Pacific Coast, 28 per cent of them being "one-person families," and, according to press releases of the Department of Justice of Dec. 8 and 13, 1941 and Feb. 16, 1942, a total of 2,192 Japanese aliens were placed under arrest in the United States, 1,266 of them from the Pacific Coast. Thus, it would seem likely that not more than 1 in every 15 or 20 families had had a primary member arrested during this period.

<sup>28</sup> According to Lind, rumors of sabotage were formally denied in the daily newspapers of Hawaii on Dec. 25, Jan. 5, and Feb. 21, and "the state of high excitability and the accompanying susceptibility to rumors soon subsided in the larger Hawaiian community." When the same, and other, rumors of sabotage and fifth-column activities in Hawaii led to official charges and investigations on the mainland, their basis was categorically denied by the Police Chief of Honolulu, by Secretary of War Stimson, and by J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI in March and April 1942. In May, 1942, Colonel K. J. Fielder, Chief of Military Intelligence in Hawaii emphasized the repeated denials that had been made "by all authorities" and restated the fact that "there have been no known acts of sabotage, espionage, or fifth column activities committed

ties among Japanese Americans on the West Coast began to find frequent public expression and crystallized in the form of demands for evacuation and internment. Public fears, organized pressures, further reverses in the Pacific, and anticipated need for vigorous defense of the West Coast finally resulted in national sanction of a plan for total evacuation of the Japanese minority. On February 19 President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 authorizing delimitation of Military areas "from which any or all persons [might] be excluded." The Commanding General of the Western Defense Command, John L. DeWitt, who was made responsible for implementing the executive order, had already recommended "evacuation of Japanese and other subversive persons from the Pacific Coast," and had specified that "the word 'Japanese' included alien Japanese and American citizens of Japanese ancestry."<sup>29</sup> In later proclamations and directives, General DeWitt referred to Nisei, euphemistically, as "American-born persons of Japanese lineage," or as "nonalien persons of Japanese ancestry,"<sup>30</sup> and in the *Final Report of the Western Defense Command* "Nisei" was defined as "any person of Japanese ancestry not born in Japan," while the meaning of "Japanese ancestry" was clarified to cover "any person who has a Japanese ancestor, regardless of degree."<sup>31</sup>

Verbal disregard for and devaluation of the American citizenship of Nisei had its counterpart in the actions initiated and carried through by the Western Defense Command. On March 2 General DeWitt designated the western third of Washington and Oregon, the western half of California, and the southern quarter of Arizona as Military Area No. 1, and on the following day announced that "subversive persons" were being "apprehended daily," and that a gradual program of exclusion from the area would be applied to the following four classes, in order: Japanese aliens; American-born persons of Japanese lineage; German aliens; and Italian aliens. No mass action was ever taken against Germans and Italians.

The Western Defense Command planned to clear Military Area No. 1 of all "potential enemies."

by the Japanese in Hawaii either on or subsequent to December 7, 1941." (Quotations and citations from Lind, A. W., *Hawaii's Japanese*, 42-46, Princeton Univ. Press, 1946.)

<sup>29</sup> U. S. Army. Western Defense Command and Fourth Army. *Final report: Japanese evacuation from the west coast, 1942*, 33-38, Washington, Govt. Pr. Off., 1943.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, fig. 1.

<sup>31</sup> U. S. Army, *op. cit.*, 514.

**WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY  
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION**

Presidio of San Francisco, California

April 1, 1942

**INSTRUCTIONS  
TO ALL PERSONS OF  
JAPANESE  
ANCESTRY**

**Living in the Following Area:**

All of San Diego County, California, south of a line extending in an easterly direction from the mouth of the San Dieguito River (northwest of Del Mar), along the north side of the San Dieguito River, Lake Hodges, and the San Pasqual River to the bridge over the San Pasqual River at or near San Pasqual; thence easterly along the southerly line of California State Highway No. 78 through Ramona and Julian to the eastern boundary line of San Diego County.

All Japanese persons, both alien and non-alien, will be evacuated from the above designated area by 12:00 o'clock noon Wednesday, April 8, 1942.

No Japanese person will be permitted to enter or leave the above described area after 8:00 a. m., Thursday, April 2, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the Provost Marshal at the Civil Control Station located at:

1919 India Street  
San Diego, California

The Civil Control Station is equipped to assist the Japanese population affected by this evacuation in the following ways:

1. Give advice and instructions on the evacuation.
2. Provide services with respect to the management, leasing, sale, storage or other disposition of most kinds of property including: real estate, business and professional equipment, buildings, household goods, boats, automobiles, livestock, etc.
3. Provide temporary residence elsewhere for all Japanese in family groups.
4. Transport persons and a limited amount of clothing and equipment to their new residence, as specified below.

**The Following Instructions Must Be Observed:**

1. A responsible member of each family, preferably the head of the family, or the person in whose name most of the property is held, and each individual living alone, will report to the Civil Control Station to receive further instructions. This must be done between 8:00 a. m. and 5:00 p. m., Thursday, April 2, 1942, or between 8:00 a. m. and 5:00 p. m., Friday, April 3, 1942.
2. Evacuees must carry with them on departure for the Reception Center, the following property:
  - (a) Bedding and linens (no mattress) for each member of the family;
  - (b) Toilet articles for each member of the family;
  - (c) Extra clothing for each member of the family;
  - (d) Sufficient knives, forks, spoons, plates, bowls and cups for each member of the family;
  - (e) Essential personal effects for each member of the family.

All items carried will be securely packaged, tied and plainly marked with the name of the owner and numbered in accordance with instructions received at the Civil Control Station.

The size and number of packages is limited to that which can be carried by the individual or family group.

No contraband items as described in paragraph 6, Public Proclamation No. 3, Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, dated March 24, 1942, will be carried.

3. The United States Government through its agencies will provide for the storage at the sole risk of the owner of the more substantial household items, such as iceboxes, washing machines, pianos and other heavy furniture. Cooking utensils and other small items will be accepted if crated, packed and plainly marked with the name and address of the owner. Only one name and address will be used by a given family.

4. Each family, and individual living alone, will be furnished transportation to the Reception Center. Private means of transportation will not be utilized. All instructions pertaining to the movement will be obtained at the Civil Control Station.

**Go to the Civil Control Station at 1919 India Street, San Diego, California, between 8:00 a. m. and 5:00 p. m., Thursday, April 2, 1942, or between 8:00 a. m. and 5:00 p. m., Friday, April 3, 1942, to receive further instructions.**

J. L. DeWITT  
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army  
Commanding

SEE CIVILIAN EXCLUSION ORDER NO. 4

FIG. 1. Public notice accompanying Civilian Exclusion Order No. 4.

Deadlines had to be met, but evacuation was to be accomplished voluntarily by the persons or groups covered by successive exclusion orders, with assistance, where necessary, from a newly formed operating agency of the Command, the Wartime Civil Control Administration, and with free choice of destination outside the exclusion areas. By the middle of March, however, it became apparent that voluntary evacuation was not workable. Hostility developed in the eastern counties of California and in the intermountain states, to which a few thousand evacuees had moved. As explained in the Command's *Final Report*, "This group, considered too dangerous to remain on the West Coast was similarly regarded by state and local authorities, and by the population of the interior. The evacuees were not welcome. Incidents developed with increasing intensity."<sup>32</sup> Plans for voluntary evacuation and free selection of destinations were scrapped in favor of an *ad hoc* procedure for controlled mass evacuation and detention. To implement this procedure, Public Proclamation No. 4, issued on March 27, forbade change of residence by persons of Japanese ancestry who were living in Military Area No. 1. On June 2 a similar regulation was issued, covering the eastern half of California—an area which was until then called the "free zone" and was the officially-sanctioned destination of about half of all those who had been able to accomplish voluntary evacuation. By August 8, controlled evacuation of the whole of California, and of those parts of Washington, Oregon, and Arizona that lay within Military Area No. 1, had been completed in a series of moves, each move being covered by a specific exclusion order, and announced in posters displayed prominently throughout the area concerned (see fig. 1 for an example). Approximately 90,000 persons entered assembly centers, which had been hastily constructed by the Army on nearby race tracks and fair grounds for a "transitory phase" of detention, preliminary to another controlled mass migration and further enforced detention. Surrounded by barbed wire, flanked by watch towers, and guarded by military police, the 16 assembly centers were in operation from a minimum of 27 to a maximum of 215 days. The largest center, at the Santa Anita race track, had the longest period of occupancy, and its population reached a maximum of 18,000, with a daily average of 13,000. Here, as in other assembly centers, life in hastily constructed barracks and

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

converted horse stalls presented many difficulties, and as the *Final Report* states: "For extended occupancy by men, women and children whose movements were necessarily restricted, the use of facilities of this character [was] not highly desirable."<sup>33</sup>

The second controlled migration of the assembly-centers' population of 90,000 to relocation projects was completed by November 1942. There they joined some 20,000 other evacuees who had been moved directly from their homes to relocation projects during the summer.

The swiftness with which evacuation was accomplished rendered plans for the protection of evacuee property ineffective. Governmental responsibility was divided between the Farm Security Administration and the Federal Reserve Bank. The aims of the former were to insure continuation of farm production for the war effort and to protect the evacuated farmer from unfair and inequitable transfer. The two aims were frequently incompatible, and, under the circumstances, the former took precedence over the latter. According to the Tolson Congressional Committee, "the exhortations of the Wartime Civil Control Administration to the evacuees to continue farming operations up to the time of evacuation as a demonstration of loyalty . . . [have] frequently worked to the economic disadvantage of the evacuees or [have] proved beyond their economic means to carry out,"<sup>34</sup> and the Western Defense Command's *Final Report*, pointed out that "landlords, creditors, and prospective purchasers were ready to take advantage . . . of the adverse bargaining position of Japanese evacuees, even at the cost of serious loss of agricultural production."<sup>35</sup> The Federal Reserve Bank, which had been given responsibility for safeguarding non-agricultural property, undertook a policy of encouraging liquidation, accepted property for storage only "at the sole risk" of the owner, provided no insurance, and disclaimed liability "for any act or omission in connection with [the property's] disposition." Under these conditions, virtually all evacuees suffered heavy losses of tangible assets, and for the many engaged in activities and enterprises which could not be transferred or sold, losses incurred through abandon-

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>34</sup> U. S. Congress, House, Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration. 77th Congress, 2nd Session. *Fourth interim report*, 15, Washington, Govt. Pr. Off. 1942.

<sup>35</sup> U. S. Army, *op. cit.*, 138.

ment of intangible assets may have been even greater.<sup>36</sup>

### 13. THE SPOILAGE

Evacuation was a policy proposed by the Western Defense Command, accepted by the War Department, and sanctioned by the President of the United States. Detention of the whole of the West-Coast racial minority in war-duration concentration camps was a policy proposed by no responsible agency, nor was any attempt made to justify it, officially, as a matter of "military necessity"—the basis on which the Command had justified total evacuation.<sup>37</sup> Detention was to be considered "protective custody," which seemed, at the time, the only way out of the dilemma posed by total evacuation, when most of the persons ordered to evacuate were physically, emotionally, economically, culturally, and demographically in-

<sup>36</sup> For a retrospective account of losses to evacuees in the Los Angeles area, and for a penetrating analysis of an evacuee claims bill (Public Law 886,) passed by the 80th Congress, see Bloom, L. and Riemer, R., *Removal and return*, Univ. of California Press, 1949. In regard to the claims bill, Bloom and Riemer point out that "claims are restricted to damage to or loss of real or personal property [with an upper limit of \$2500] . . . that is a reasonable and natural consequence of the evacuation . . . and must be filed within eighteen months of the date of enactment. . . . [Among other exclusions are] damages on account of 'death or personal injury, personal inconvenience, physical hardship, or mental suffering. . . .' The most serious limitation is the exclusion of claims for 'loss of anticipated profits or loss of anticipated earnings. . . .' If narrowly interpreted, the law will . . . provide an additional and fatal obstacle to the presentation of most claims, instead of facilitating their presentation and processing. A large proportion of the population can do no more than assert that they owned property that was lost, and are in no position to provide legally rigorous documentation" (198-199).

<sup>37</sup> U. S. Army, *op. cit.*, 7-38. Among the justifications cited by the Commanding General in Feb. 1942 was "the very fact that no sabotage has taken place to date," as being "a disturbing and confirming indication that such action will be taken" (*ibid.*, 34). But, in Hawaii, although "the top-ranking military authorities were not unaware of the mainland precedent nor insensible to the logical arguments and the pressures in support of wholesale evacuation . . . the policy consistently followed . . . was to assume the essential loyalty of those whose lives had been largely spent under the influence of American institutions and culture." There was no mass evacuation, and "despite the utmost diligence and application to duty by the constituted authorities . . . the total number of Japanese actually held on suspicion during the entire period of the war was only 1,440; and the number actually interned and sent to camps on the mainland was 981, or about 1 per cent of the adult Japanese population of Hawaii" (*J. ind. op. cit.*, 72-73).

capable of finding jobs and homes in other areas, and when the few thousand who had managed to accomplish voluntary evacuation were being met by hostility or suspicion in the receiving areas. Detention as a "transitory phase" between evacuation and resettlement was, under these circumstances, recommended or accepted by all agencies concerned, including the socially-oriented Federal Security Agency and War Relocation Authority and the ethnocentric Japanese American Citizens League.

Once detention became a reality, however, it ceased to be viewed by the Army as a "transitory phase," and the War Relocation Authority's program was soon perverted from resettling displaced people to planning a way-of-life for them within the confines of barbed wire. Even before most of the relocation projects were ready for occupancy, WRA had formulated tentative plans, designed to assure evacuees "for the duration of the war and as nearly as wartime exigencies permit, an equitable substitute for the life, work, and homes given up."<sup>38</sup> And in June, 1942, the Director reported to President Roosevelt that "a genuinely satisfactory relocation of the evacuees into American life" would have to wait until the end of the war "when the prevailing [popular] attitudes of increasing bitterness have been replaced by tolerance and understanding."<sup>39</sup>

During the spring and summer ten relocation projects had been selected: five in windswept areas on the California-Oregon border and in Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado; three surrounded by the deserts of Arizona and southeastern California; two on the swamp-lands of Arkansas. The California and Arizona projects, which were in Military Area No. 1, were as thoroughly guarded and as tightly enclosed by barbed wire as had been the assembly centers. But at the other projects, although they, too were designated as military areas from which unauthorized departure could be penalized as prescribed in Public Law 503, the military paraphernalia of barbed wire, watch towers, and guards, were kept at a minimum and soon had only a symbolic significance.

Each project had communal mess halls and utility building, canteens organized as consumers' cooperatives, and schoolrooms. Living quarters were in barracks, arranged in blocks around wide

<sup>38</sup> War Relocation Authority, *Tentative policy statement* (mimeo.), May 29, 1942.

<sup>39</sup> Eisenhower, M. S., to President Roosevelt (letter), June 18, 1942.

firebreaks. Families or groups of unrelated individuals were assigned apartments, consisting usually of a single room, 20 × 25 or 16 × 20 feet in dimension, "with bare boards, knotholes through the floor and into the next apartment, heaps of dust, and for each person an army cot, a blanket and a sack which [could be] filled with straw to make a mattress. There [was] nothing else. No shelves, closets, chairs, tables or screens. In this space, 5 to 7 people, and, in a few cases, 8 men, women, and their children [were] to live indefinitely."<sup>40</sup>

In spite of physical hardships, the evacuees were, in the beginning, almost uniformly cooperative and helpful, and seemed to share the belief prevalent among WRA officials and employees that a "good life" could be built up in these isolated, war-duration communities. But, before many weeks passed, latent anti-administration and inter-group hostilities flared into the open. Faith in the good intentions of the administration declined when procurement difficulties arose and shortages of food, of hospital supplies, and of other essentials developed; when promises of producers' cooperatives, under which cash advances on profits were to be distributed to the participating evacuees, were abandoned in favor of "miserably low"<sup>41</sup> remuneration of \$12, \$16, and \$19 per month for jobs ranging from farm labor, cooking, and dishwashing to those of teacher, attorney, and doctor; when payment of even these wages was delayed; when, during the prolonged period of nonpayment, timekeeping systems were introduced by efficiency experts; and when a plan for limited self-government was imposed, which, while enfranchising Issei, made them ineligible for office-holding.

Regional and generational fissures, temporarily closed during the stress of evacuation, were reopened. Rumors of FBI inquiries and arrests aroused suspicions that fellow-evacuees were informing the administration about such "harmless," misdemeanors as listening to shortwave radios, gambling, or promoting "nationalistic" forms of Japanese entertainment. Cooperation with the administration was soon branded as "collaboration." Every faction found its convenient scapegoat. In Tule Lake, a project on the California-Oregon border, evacuees from California blamed the more accommodated evacuees from the Pacific North-

west. In all projects, leaders and active members of the Japanese American Citizens League, which had been officially accepted by governmental agencies as a liaison group during evacuation and assembly-center days, were accused now of having betrayed the whole Japanese minority. They, in turn, often showed marked readiness to denounce "hotheaded Kibei" or "Issei agitators" as the source of all trouble. Mainland Nisei, in some instances, cast doubt upon the loyalty of Hawaiian Nisei. Christians were suspicious of Buddhists. Suspected informers, called *inu* (literally "dogs"), were ostracized, threatened, and even beaten by their fellow-evacuees. Revolt against the administration took the form of major strikes or minor work-stoppages during the fall of 1942. In two projects, Poston and Manzanar, revolt assumed the proportions of riots. In the latter martial law was declared, and a machine-gunner fired upon the evacuees, killing one and wounding several others. Alleged agitators were removed to jail or isolation camps, and a number of JAACL leaders and other "collaborators" were hastily withdrawn from the project and resettled in the Middle West.

Meantime, the War Relocation Authority, under a new director, had been pressing the Justice and War Departments for sanction to reinstitute the program its name implied. By the end of July, 1942, a cautious program of highly selective resettlement had been approved, and through cooperation of the Friends Service Committee, had achieved a considerable degree of success against great odds, in relocating students in eastern and midwestern colleges and universities. But for other classes the procedures in obtaining "leave clearance" for release from detention were so unwieldy that not even a moderate number of evacuees had been relocated by the end of 1942 (see chart 5). Among the necessary prerequisites to clearance were formal investigations of "loyalty," detailed reports of behavior and attitudes in relocation projects, unequivocal evidence of a valid job offer and of provision for care of dependents remaining in camp, evidence of acceptability in the proposed community of destination, and, for a time, even investigations of each prospective employer.

Determined to liberalize relocation policy, WRA officials agreed to, and indeed promoted, a plan for obtaining mass clearance, following a decision of the War Department to reopen the Army to loyal Japanese-American volunteers. In accordance with this plan, representatives of the War Depart-

<sup>40</sup> Leighton, A. H., *The governing of men*, 65-66, Princeton Univ. Press, 1945.

<sup>41</sup> Eisenhower, M. S. to Budget Director Smith (letter), May 11, 1942.

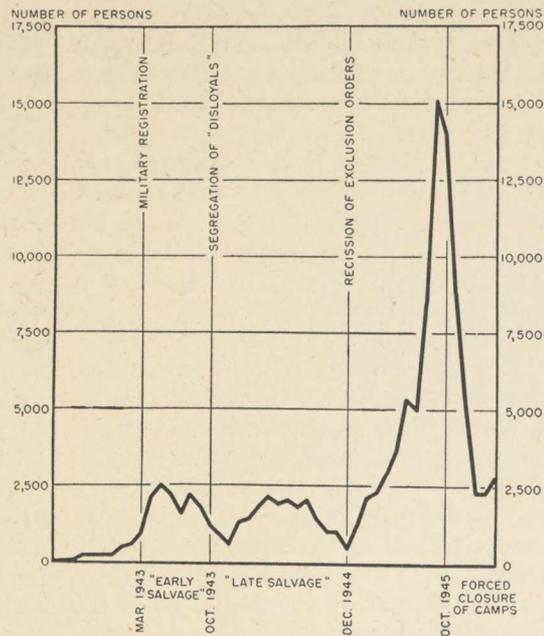


CHART 5. Outmigration from WRA projects, 1942-1946.

ment were to "process" male citizens, while WRA employees would "process" the remainder of the adult population. In both cases, processing involved registration and the execution of a lengthy questionnaire, including among some thirty items, two thought to bear directly on "loyalty." For male citizens, the first of these was:

Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?

and the second:

Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization?

For female citizens, the first was modified to ask whether they would be willing to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corps or the WAAC, if found qualified, and the second omitted reference to defense against armed attack. The form for female citizens was used initially for aliens of both sexes, without further modification, except that it was headed "Application for Leave Clearance."

The impropriety of asking aliens who were ineligible to American citizenship to forswear allegiance to the only country in which they could hold citizenship was recognized belatedly. In

most projects aliens were permitted to substitute for the second of the above questions an oath that they would "abide by the laws of the United States" and "take no action which would in any way interfere with the war effort of the United States." But American citizens, the bulk of whom were Nisei who had had no direct contact with Japan, were still required to forswear allegiance to the Japanese emperor.

Registration was postulated on the assumption that evacuees would define eligibility to serve in the armed service or to leave camps for the freedom of the "outside world" as just rewards for loyalty. Contrary to expectation, an appreciable proportion of the evacuees defined these situations as penalties rather than as rewards. A strong protest movement developed among Nisei and Kibei, who, having had so many of their rights as citizens abrogated through evacuation and detention, questioned the justice of the restoration of the single right of serving in the armed forces. Numbers of Issei, having lost most of their other possessions, used every means to hold their families intact, and to prevent the possible induction of their sons. Others, having acceded to a forced migration from home to camp, were now determined to avoid a further move to an outside world that they had many reasons to believe would continue to regard them with hostility.

Doubt, fear, and anger accompanied registration in all ten projects, and these reactions were aggravated by inadequate preparation of the teams conducting registration; by sudden, unexplained, or incompletely understood, changes in administrative procedures and definitions; and in Tule Lake by the use of force. In all projects except Tule Lake the average proportion of the adult population refusing to register, or registering as "disloyal" was 10 per cent, but in Tule Lake the unregistered and the verbally disloyal, together, comprised 42 per cent of all persons 17 years of age or older. The persistence of a collective movement of noncooperation at Tule Lake was widely publicized and its residents were stigmatized, in the press and on the radio, as politically disloyal. In July, 1943 the Senate passed a resolution asking WRA to segregate "persons of Japanese ancestry in relocation centers whose loyalty to the United States is questionable or who are known to be disloyal." WRA yielded and designated Tule Lake as a segregation center in which evacuees whose loyalties were thought to lie with Japan would be confined for the duration of the war.

During the late summer Tule Lake was transformed, physically, from a relocation project to a segregation center. A double "manproof" fence, eight feet high, was constructed around the whole area; the external guard was increased from a couple of hundred soldiers to full batallion strength; and a half dozen tanks, obsolete but impressive, were lined up in full view of the residents. At the same time renewed efforts were made to screen the disloyal from the loyal in all projects. The criteria for segregation, as finally accepted, were the following: applicants for repatriation or expatriation to Japan; persons persisting in holding to negative answers given at time of registration or still refusing to register; persons about whom there was "other information . . . indicating loyalty to Japan";<sup>42</sup> and persons who, falling in none of these categories, wished to be segregated along with a "disloyal" member of the immediate family.

Official pronouncements emphasized that "disloyalty" was not culpable; and that segregation was not being undertaken in any sense as a measure of punishment or penalty.<sup>43</sup> The privilege of leave-clearance would be denied, but otherwise the center would be run in much the same way as the relocation projects to which the evacuees had become accustomed. Having, however, "indicated their desire to follow the Japanese way of life," evacuees would not be required to send their children to the American schools in the center, and they were to be permitted to establish, at their own expense, Japanese-language schools. In other spheres, too, bans on "Japanese" activities were to be removed or restrictions moderated.

Beginning in September, trainloads of "disloyal" evacuees were moved from the nine other projects to Tule Lake, while over 6,000 "loyal" Tuleans left for other projects. When the movement was completed, in May, 1944, Tule Lake had a population of over 18,000, of whom 34 per cent were "Old Tuleans." Among these were over 1,000 persons, themselves "disloyal" by none of the criteria set up by WRA, and having no close relative who was "disloyal," but who simply refused to move. Among the transferees were hundreds of the technically "loyal" who had come to Tule Lake and among the Old Tuleans were other hundreds who

had remained to avoid family separation, or who were too young to make decisions. And among the "disloyal" in both groups were many individuals who had so declared themselves in order to achieve war-duration security for their families.

The conflicts and tensions in Tule Lake after segregation and the course of interaction between "disloyal" and "loyal," between groups of evacuees and administrative agencies, and among the various agencies themselves, are traced in the Thomas-Nishimoto volume, *The Spoilage*. There was almost immediate revolt, led by disaffected transferees; an outbreak of violence, following a labor dispute, and two serious accidents; administrative suppression, involving the importation of "loyal" harvesters from other projects as strikebreakers, the institution of martial law for two months, and the establishment of a "stockade" in which alleged agitators were confined for periods up to eight months "without the filing of charges or the granting of a hearing or trial of any kind."<sup>44</sup> During the period of martial law evacuees maintained a general strike, which they called "status quo." Abandonment of *status quo* was accomplished when a group, led by Old Tuleans, prominent in the cooperative-enterprises, acted as liaison between evacuees and administration. By the spring of 1944 an underground pressure group, in which Kibei were prominently represented, had come out into the open. Determined to pursue to the limit the Japanese way-of-life sanctioned in official pronouncements, they accused the administration of failure to "clarify the distinctions between the loyals and the disloyals" and insisted on a resegregation of the "truly disloyal" (i.e., themselves), from the "loyal Americans" still in the center, whom they estimated at several thousand. Factionalism bred suspicion, persons thought to be informers were terrorized, there were numerous beatings, and the manager of the cooperative enterprises was murdered during a wave of *inu*-hatred. In July, 1944, the Nationality Act of 1940 was amended to permit the renunciation of citizenship, during wartime, by American citizens on American soil. Renunciation then became the keynote of the resegregationist campaign, and two administrative decisions, announced simultaneously on December 17, 1944, transformed general reluctance to accept the resegregationist program to popular support of its main issue. These were (1) rescission of orders by the Western Defense Command

<sup>42</sup> War Relocation Authority, *Administrative instruction No. 100*, July 15, 1943.

<sup>43</sup> War Relocation Authority, *Segregation of persons of Japanese ancestry in Tule Lake relocation center* (pamphlet), August 1943.

<sup>44</sup> *American Civil Liberties Union-News*, San Francisco, August 1944.

excluding Japanese Americans from the West Coast, and (2) announcement by the War Relocation Authority that all projects under their supervision would be liquidated within a year. These decisions, taken together, imperilled the security of the "disloyal" who believed that they had attained a war-duration refuge. For all segregants forced resettlement, and, for the young men of draft age induction into the armed forces, loomed as disturbingly high probabilities. By March, 1945, seven out of every ten citizens old enough to be eligible to renounce their American citizenship had done so, and in so doing had, it was believed, afforded "protection" from forced resettlement to over 3,000 families. One out of five of the male renunciants and one in four of the females were under 21 years of age at the time of renunciation. Family security had been achieved in 1945 by the action of children who had been between 14 and 18 years of age when they were removed from the "outside world" in 1942.

Writing in April 1946, Thomas and Nishimoto evaluated the situation as follows:

With mass renunciation of citizenship by Nisei and Kibei, the cycle which began with evacuation was complete. Their parents had lost their hard-won foothold in the economic structure of America. They, themselves, had been deprived of rights which indoctrination in American schools had led them to believe inviolable. Charged with no offense, but victims of a military misconception, they had suffered confinement behind barbed wire. They had been stigmatized as disloyal on grounds often far removed from any criterion of political allegiance. They had been at the mercy of administrative agencies working at cross-purposes. They had yielded to parental compulsion in order to hold the family intact. They had been intimidated by the ruthless tactics of pressure groups in camp. They had become terrified by reports of the continuing hostility of the American public, and they had finally renounced their irreparably depreciated American citizenship.

Many of them have since left the country, voluntarily, to take up life in defeated Japan. Others will remain in America, in the unprecedented and ambiguous status of citizens who became aliens ineligible for citizenship in the land of their birth.<sup>45</sup>

From the standpoint of 1946, and perhaps also in the long run, this was the spoilage. On August 26, 1949, however, the legal basis for the restitution of status for those "citizens who became aliens ineligible for citizenship in the land of their birth" was established through a decision in the United

States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. This confirmed a decision made in the District Court of Los Angeles which had held, in regard to three Nisei plaintiffs, that ". . . the benefits of citizenship can be renounced or waived only as a result of free and intelligent choice. Since the purported renunciation of the plaintiffs . . . was not as a result of their free and intelligent choice but rather because of mental fear, intimidation, and coercions depriving them of the free exercise of their will, said purported renunciations are void and of no force or effect."<sup>46</sup> And, in a press release on October 26, 1949, it was announced that the Attorney General of the United State would not ask the Supreme Court to review the order of the Court of Appeals and that this decision would be accepted and applied in all future cases of this kind. It was further reported that some 4,000 Nisei and Kibei renunciants were then seeking restoration of their American citizenship.<sup>47</sup>

#### 14. THE SALVAGE

Evacuation and detention aggravated culture conflict within the already culturally-divided Japanese-American population group, and forced dissident elements to redefine their status in America, or to have it defined for them.

As described at length in the preceding section, some revolted, and many were led towards verbal disloyalty and renunciation of American citizenship. Together, these classes and their dependents represented about one in six of the evacuees in War Relocation projects.

Almost half of the evacuees took the way of least resistance, and simply sat out the war years, behind barbed wire, in the camps provided by the government of the United States. There they lived on what were essentially culture-islands until, with rescission of exclusion orders and forced closure of camps, they faced the necessity of evacuation-in-reverse. The majority of them returned to Pacific-Coast communities.

More than one in three of the total deliberately chose the difficult path of resettlement in the Middle West or East while the war was still in progress. In so doing they embarked upon a life that,

<sup>46</sup> This opinion was written by Judge William C. Mathes on Aug. 27, 1948, in the United States District Court of Los Angeles. The decision in the Court of Appeals was written by Judge William Denman, and included a scathing denunciation of "General DeWitt's doctrine of enemy racism inherited by blood strains."

<sup>47</sup> *New York Times*, October 27, 1949.

<sup>45</sup> *Op. cit.*, 361.

they had been assured, would not be without hardships but that would involve "the same hardships . . . being experienced by other American families"<sup>48</sup> and, at the same time, they knowingly accepted the special risks and uncertainties to be incurred because of their close physical resemblance to the Japanese enemy. Many of them served with great distinction in the armed forces; others were active in war industries and agencies. Numbers of them moved into the ranks of skilled labor, and into clerical, sales, and professional occupations. Some became disorganized and failed to make adequate vocational, personal, or social adjustments. But, whether narrowly defined as "successes" or as "failures," these were the salvage of the war, to the extent that resettlement broke their isolation, promoted their acceptance by the majority group, and integrated their activities into those of the larger American community.

Demographically, the salvage was highly selective. Seven out of every ten of the persons in-

<sup>48</sup> So described in a skillfully-worded document, read to the evacuees in each camp by a member of the team conducting military registration during 1943. See, *The spoilage*, 59-60.

involved in the two waves of outmigration from camps, between military registration in March 1943 and rescission of the exclusion orders in December 1944 (chart 5), were young people between the ages 15 and 35 (chart 6). Their age-structure closely resembled that of the immigrant settlers of 1900 (chart 2), but the balance of the sexes was quite different. Young men were the pioneers in the migration from Japan to America, but appreciable proportions of young women migrated, alone or with their husbands and their brothers, from camps to the "outside world."<sup>49</sup> Correspondingly the age-sex structure of the salvage differed strikingly from that of the spoilage (the "disloyal" who were segregated in Tule Lake) and the residue (those who sat out the war in relocation projects for the "loyal"). Although salvage comprised, on the average, twice as many

<sup>49</sup> Among the American-born, who comprised four-fifths of the salvage, 82 per cent were between 15 and 35 years of age; while 83 per cent of the population in 1900 were in this age range. But the sex ratio of the American-born salvage of these ages was only 135 males per 100 females, compared with almost 2,300 males per 100 females in the immigrant settler population of 1900.

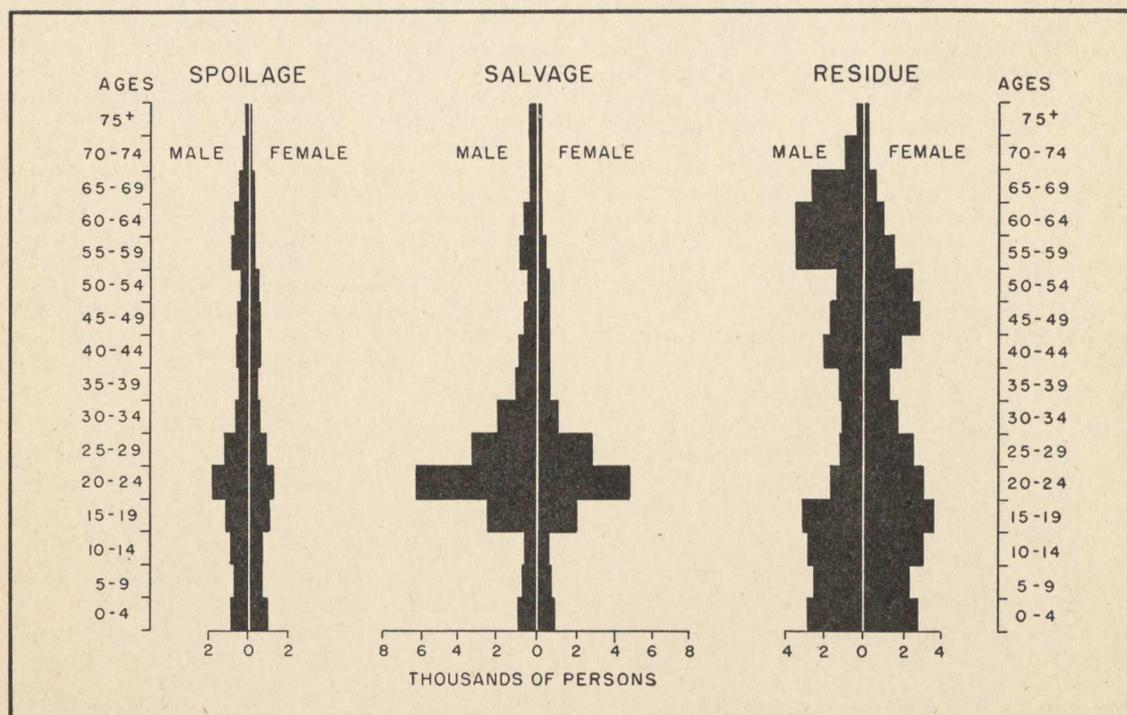


CHART 6. Age-sex structures of *spoilage* (evacuees in Tule Lake project, July 1, 1944); *salvage* (outmigrants from all WRA projects to Jan. 1, 1945); and *residue* (evacuees in all WRA projects except Tule Lake, Jan. 1, 1945).

persons as did spoilage, the very young and the middle-aged or older were approximately equal in the two groups. And although the residual population was almost twice as large as the salvage, children and older people were four times as numerous while young adults were only two-thirds as great in number.

More significant, from the standpoint of assimilation and integration, was the strength of cultural selection.<sup>50</sup> So highly selective of "generational"

<sup>50</sup> Generalizations in the concluding paragraph are based on analysis of 23,466 individual records, covering the total population aged 17 and over in 3 WRA camps: Tule Lake, Poston (I), and Minidoka. Because of extreme variations in administrative procedure in regard to registration and relocation, all comparisons are on an intracamp basis, with multiple classification by sex, generation, religion, and occupation; for Tuleans, also by origin in California or the Northwest; for Nisei in Poston and Minidoka, also by education and year of birth. The following examples, limited to males, are merely illustrative of the pattern of differentials.

In all camps, spoilage was proportionately highest for Kibei Buddhists formerly employed in agriculture, lowest for Nisei who were Christians or had no religion and who had been engaged in nonagricultural pursuits. Issei held intermediate positions. Highs and lows for spoilage (per cent "disloyal") were, for Californians in Tule Lake, 79 and 14; for Northwesterners in the same camp, 46 and 6; for Postonians, 43 and 1; for Minidokans, 24 and 0. Early salvage (outmigrants, March-Sept. 1943, as percentage of specified population in March) ranged from high proportions for areligious and Christian nonagricultural Nisei to low for Issei or for Kibei agricultural Buddhists, as follows, for the camps in the order given above: 46 and 2; 45 and 4; 40 and 2; 51 and 3. Most Nisei college graduates were concentrated in the Christian-areligious nonagricultural class, and were born in 1920 or earlier. For this class, in Minidoka, for example, 84 per cent of the college graduates were early salvage, compared with 52 per cent of those who had had incomplete college education, and 43 per cent of those with no more than high school education. In general, late salvage followed the

classes was the incidence of segregation, of sedentation, and of outmigration, that these alternative resolutions of conflict may, without undue exaggeration, be called the Kibei way, the Issei way, and the Nisei way. Within each generational group, prewar residence, occupation, religion, and education, to a large extent, determined the course taken. Japanese Americans who had lived in the more tolerant Pacific Northwest were more frequently found in the salvage, those from the more prejudiced California were disproportionately among the spoilage. Occupation, differentiating as it did the more isolated farming folk from those following urban pursuits where contact with the majority group was closer, stimulated salvage among the latter and retarded it among the former. Religion was perhaps the most clear-cut of the statistical indices that could be used to differentiate cultural groups: the Japan-polarized Buddhists and Shintoists from the America-oriented who, like the white majority, either professed Christianity or accepted no formal religion. Segregation and sedentation were the ways taken by the former; outmigration was the path of Christians and the areligious. Finally, those who were most highly educated in American colleges and universities were—quite out of proportion to their numbers—the salvage.

same pattern as early salvage, but differentials between Nisei and Kibei were reduced, and Issei consistently held low positions. With Kibei drawn off so heavily in the spoilage, and Nisei in the salvage, the residue was, of course, heavily weighted with Issei. In Poston, for example, 94 per cent and 91 per cent of the Issei Buddhists in farming and in urban occupations, respectively, and 89 per cent and 82 per cent of the corresponding Christian-areligious classes were in the residue, while the highest proportion for any class of Kibei was 76 per cent, for any class of Nisei, 47 per cent.

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"BOY FROM NEBRASKA"

by

Sergeant Millard Lampell

This script, number 46 in the series of monthly selections by the Writers' War Board in cooperation with the Association for Education by Radio, is a study of a peculiarly difficult problem of World War II.

Broadcast on the Columbia Broadcasting System on January 19, 1945 as part of the U. S. Army's "Service Time" series, this script by Sergeant Millard Lampell (whose "Talk Their Language" was, it will be recalled, our December selection) is hereby made available for purely local, patriotic, non-commercial use.

Robert J. Landry, Chairman  
War Script Committee  
Writers' War Board and  
Ass'n. for Education by Radio

May, 1945  
"Boy From Nebraska"

MUSIC: OPENING PYRAMID, CARRYING DOWN UNDER SOFTLY.

NARRATOR: (NOT SHOUTING, BUT STRONG) Air Forces returnees, right this way. (NORMAL) Name?

BEN: Tech-sergeant Ben Kuroki,

NARRATOR: Job?

BEN: I was a tail gunner.

NARRATOR: Where?

BEN: Eighth Air Force -- European Theatre.

NARRATOR: Welcome home, Lieutenant.

MUSIC: UNDER LAST LINES, SEGUE TO "YANKEE DOODLE" -- IT NOW COMES UP TO FULL FOR SEVERAL BARS...THEN DOWN, UNDER.

NARRATOR: This is the story of the time when a man has finished his tour over-seas and the Air Forces tells him, "Pack up Joe, before your next job, you're going home," And the men come back to the Personnel Distribution Command to relax and take it easy at Atlantic City, Miami Beach, or Santa Ana. And the wounded, and those with severe combat fatigue go to the convalescent hospitals. Every veteran in his own individual way talks things over, and adds things up and gets ready for his next Air Force job. This is a program about how it's done.

MUSIC: UP TO FINISH.

NARRATOR: Oh, that first day back in the states -- that first phone call, and the unbelievable sound of your girl's voice, and the U.S. license plates, and the heck driver's Bronx accent -- oh, that first day home, that first great day,

MUSIC: GREAT DAY MANANA.

NARRATOR: After you hit the States, it's 21 days home before you go back to your next assignment. Take a new look at the place, now that it's gone to war. This is your home town, Joe - North Platte, Nebraska.

MUSIC: UP FULL TO REGISTER AND DOWN UNDER;

VOICE: You come in on the Union Pacific, across the Lincoln County Line into the red brick station. The same battered taxis are there, and it's still 15 cents, anywhere in the city. Up along Jeffers Street, past the Pawnee Hotel, the statue of Buffalo Bill and Cody Park that was named after him. No screaming breaks, no mobs crossing the streets, not even a traffic light. 'Cause out here it isn't the town that's gone to war, but the country that surrounds it. It's wheat and alfalfa, milk and butter; it's fresh corn and hogs. Naples asks for food, and Nebraska answers; London sits down to breakfast and Lincoln county

VOICE: fill the plates; the Ninth Air Force lines up for chow, and  
(cont.) North Platte hands it out.

MUSIC: COMES UP FULL INTO "FARMER SONG."

MUSIC: SEVERAL FULL, RICH CHORDS, THEN CARRY UNDER:

NARRATOR: Every month, thousands of Air Forces men who have finished their first tour of duty overseas come back to the United States. Hot pilots just about old enough to shave, and master mechanics with six kids -- they come home for a rest and reassignment. They come home to be treated as individuals, not numbers; a careful medical examination and a new job based on experience, physical condition and training. And there is a point where the work of army doctors and classification experts merges with the ideas and attitudes of friends, relatives and...well, and you. Which brings us to today's story:

BOY FROM NEBRASKA.

(MUSIC COMES UP LIKE A SUN RISING - THE OPENING THEME HAS A HEALTHY, SMALL TOWN FARMER QUALITY, ALMOST GAY, IT REGISTERS AND THEN HITS A TREMOLO UNDER:)

NARRATOR: This is the story of a boy from a farmhouse near a potato field in Hershey, Nebraska;

VOICE 1: About a short walk and a long spit from Cozad, Nebraska,

VOICE 2: Which is a little further than you'd want to carry your Grandmother from North Platte.

(A BRIGHT PUNCTUATION, THEN INTO THE THEME AGAIN UNDER.)

NARRATOR: He was a tail gunner, a B-24 boy, strictly a Liberator man.

VOICE 1: With an Eighth Air Force outfit named "Ted Timberlake's Flying Circus;"

VOICE 2: Which will be remembered without much enthusiasm by the citizens of Kiel, Hamburg, Muenster, Wisner-Neustadt, Ploesti, and other joints dealing in the import and export of fascism.

ANOTHER PUNCTUATION, A LITTLE HIGHER, AND BACK INTO THEME.

NARRATOR: And I might mention that this boy from Nebraska picked up a very fancy collection of decorations, commendations, medals and citations;

VOICE 1: Including two Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Air Medal and four Oak Leaf Clusters, a Presidential Citation and half a dozen Bronze Stars,

VOICE 2: But no Purple Heart. Which is the point of the story.

(MUSIC UP QUICKLY AND OUT)

NARRATOR: The point is, Ben Kuroki flew his full tour of missions and five more for good luck, including that last baby over Muenster where flak blew open his turret and the plexiglass cut his face and the blast ripped off his oxygen mask. A gunner named O'Connell from Superior, Wisconsin took off his own mask and held it to Ben's face and everything came out okay. A nice Hollywood ending, and no Purple Heart.

MUSIC: SNEAK THE FARMER THEME, STARTING NORMAL AND GROWING HARSH AND OMINOUS.

NARRATOR: That's the point. They sent this boy from Nebraska home, and he didn't have a leg gone, he didn't have operational fatigue so bad he stuttered, he didn't have malaria or a hunk of flak in the stomach. He was right down the Personnel Distribution Command's alley and the program simply called for fresh milk and sunshine and plenty of sleep. A new army job and a change of pece. Give him twenty-one days home in Nebraska and send him on to Santa Monica, California to the Air Forces redistribution center and let it go at that...(OVER FOLLOWING BIZ) Except all the wounds in this war don't get you the Purple Heart, and that's the point of the story.

MUSIC: (MUSIC FADES OUT UNDER ABOVE SENTENCE, INTO)

SOUND: TRAIN INTERIOR

SALESMAN: This seat taken?

BEN: No.

SALESMAN: (SETTLING HIMSELF) Fine. Always like to sit next to a serviceman. I was in the last war myself. Say, that's quite a collection of ribbons you got there. You ain't a California boy by any chance?

BEN: No. Nebraska.

SALESMAN: Oh. Well, I'm a Kansas man myself. Californian by adoption. Brawley, California. Fine, up and coming community. You fly out in the Pacific?

BEN: No.

SALESMAN: Europe, huh? Well, I guess it's not so bad fighting the Germans. Those Japs, now, that's a completely different proposition. Hands me a laugh, these stories about loyal Japanese-Americans. Out in Brawley we had a mass meeting out on the high school football field. Fellow gets up and yells, "Do you want them yello-bellied sneaks to come back to Brawley?" We told 'em, all right.

BEN: I suppose you've had a lot of contact with...

SALESMAN: Don't have to. Can tell just by looking at their pictures. Just from the stories a man picks up. I can tell you, it ain't nothing about whether they're born in Japan or born right here. Once a Jap always a Jap. It's in the blood. 'Course, you being Chinese and all, I guess you know about Japs. Loyal Japanese-Americans! Don't make me laugh. It's in the blood, right? (PAUSE) You are Chinese, aren't you.

BEN: No.

MUSIC: A BITTER PUNCTUATION - IT REGISTERS, THEN RETURNS TO THE  
NORMAL THEME - UNDER

NARRATOR: What makes an American, brother? You name it. Is it growing up on a farm in Nebraska, raising seedpotatoes and garden vegetables, hauling them to town in a second-hand Ford, going to barn dances with guys you've known all your life?

BOY: Hiya, Ben. How's the folks?

NARRATOR: Is it flying tail gunner in a Liberator, thirty missions over Europe and that first Floesti raid when two out of nine planes in your squadron come back?

PILOT: You've got to try and forget it, Benny, You've got to try and get some sleep.

NARRATOR: Is it ducking flak and Messerschmidts and then coming home to a pullman of the Union Pacific to get it right where it hurts?

SALESMAN: Once a Jap, always a Jap. It's in the blood.

NARRATOR: What makes an American, brother? You name it.

MUSIC: COMES UP SHARPLY TO PUNCTUATE, AND OUT

BATES: (A FAST, NERVOUS TALKER) So this is Santa Monica. What do you figure a hotel room like this used to set back a civilian? Twenty bucks a day, huh? More, huh? Guess we're rooming together. My name's Ed Bates.

BEN: My name's Ben Kuroki.

BATES: Hey, get this (READS) "Welcome from the Commanding Officer. To all returnees; I hope by this time that you are comfortably settled..." Huh, that kills me, Kuroki, huh?

BEN: That's right.

BATES: Hey, look...out there...the Pacific. Big ain't it? I had a brother out there somewhere. With the 27th Division. He got it on Saipan...Jap sniper. Kuroki, that's a funny name. What is it?

BEN: When my grandfather had it, it was Japanese, now I've got it. Now it's Nebraska, U.S.A.

BATES: Japa....Are you kidding?

BEN: No. If you want me to move to another room, just say so, it's okay.

BATES: What'd you get the DFC for?

BEN: Twenty-five combat missions.

BATES: And the Cluster?

BEN: Floesti.

BATES: And you're asking me if I want to kick you out of the room? Are you kidding?

MUSIC: A BAR AND THEN CARRY UNDER

NARRATOR: A couple of tail gunners sharing a room in an Air Force Redistribution Center. Ed Bates of the Fifteenth Air Force, and Ben Kuroki of the Eighth. Just two more GIs back from the war to rest for a while, it happens every day. I wouldn't even mention it except for a man in Arizona. The man owns a barber shop and there's a sign on the door; Japs Keep Out You Rats. And he doesn't mean the Emperor of Japan, or the Emperor's soldiers, or the Emperor's people. He means the boy from Nebraska.

MUSIC: UP AND OUT ON A LONG FADING NOTE

DOC: Inhale...(BIZ TAPPING ON CHEST) Exhale. Inhale. (BIZ AGAIN) Okay.

BEN: (LETS OUT HIS BREATH) I'm still okay for flying, huh?

DOC: Depends on what you call okay, Kuroki. Sure, you can fly. You can also lay around and take it easy for a while. It won't hurt you a bit. Nobody goes to the targets you went to without needing a rest.

BEN: But there's nothing wrong? I'm okay for flying?

DOC: Look, don't you think I know what's on your mind? You're fed up with the suspicions and the fishy looks and the drunks who want to pick a fight. All right, there's your answer. You went and fought your heart out and came back with enough medals to choke a horse. Isn't that enough?

BEN: (QUIETLY) No. Not for some people. Are you putting down that I'm okay for flying?

DOC: Yeah. Yeah, you're okay.

MUSIC: A BAR TO ESTABLISH, THEN CARRY UNDER

NARRATOR: An army doctor giving a special physical examination. Pulse and lungs okay, heart okay, timing and blood pressure okay. Symptoms of fatigue - minor. The usual routine for returned flyers, it happens every day. I wouldn't bring it up except for the gentlemen in Oregon. The gentlemen up in Oregon counted off the names of sixteen Japanese-Americans on their servicemen's honor roll and got a bucket of paint and wiped out the sixteen names. They weren't wiping out the people who raped Nanking, who came to Pearl Harbor in the dawn, who planned the death march of Bataan. They were wiping out the brothers of the boy from Nebraska.

MUSIC: UP SHARPLY AND CUT ON A LONG FADING NOTE.

INTERVIEWER: Civilian occupation, farmer, right?

BEN: Right. Now I'm a gunner.

INTERVIEWER: Qualified Army clerical work, Sheppard Field, Texas.

BEN: Yeah, only, now I'm a tail gunner.

INTERVIEWER: I'm just trying to check your background and your physical condition and match it with what the army needs.

BEN: The army needs tail gunners.

INTERVIEWER: You're a persistent guy.

BEN: I'm a persistent tail gunner.

INTERVIEWER: (LAUGHING, GIVING IN) Okay.

MUSIC: A BAR AND UNDER AGAIN

NARRATOR: A classification expert conducting an interview, checking the records, remembering every veteran is an individual, a very special guy with his own talents and his own desires. That's the way every returned veteran is interviewed and Ben Kuroki is no different, and I wouldn't make a point of it except for the neighbors of that New Jersey farmer. The New Jersey farmer who needed help with his crops and hired five Japanese-Americans. His neighbors gathered in the darkness and burned down his storehouse and kept yelling, "Run those Japs out of here!" until he gave in. They didn't run out five of the people who brought death to China; and plunder to Burma and starvation to the Phillipines. They ran out five people like the boy from Nebraska.

MUSIC: UP SHARPLY TO TIE IT OFF, AND OUT)

BEN: If it's okay with you, sir, I'd like assignment back to combat.

LT: We don't assign returnees right back to combat.

BEN: Yes sir, I know, but ....

LT: ... but your case is different.

BEN: I think it is.

LT: What should I say, Sergeant? Should I say it isn't different? Should I say it wasn't different? I do. Should I say it shouldn't be different? It shouldn't.

BEN: But it is.

LT: Just a few people think that way.

BEN: A few is enough. About that assignment ...

LT: All right, Kuroki.

MUSIC: SNEAK, THE OPENING THEME. BUT LOW AND BITTER

NARRATOR: Have you heard the story of the boy from Nebraska? He was missed by flak over Germany, but he got it right in the teeth from a man in Arizona. He flew past the Fock-Wulfs all right, but the gentleman from Oregon nailed him. He made it through the Ploesti raid, but he didn't quite make it through New Jersey. And the point is, there are wounds in this war that don't get the Purple Heart.

MUSIC: UP AND OUT ON A FADING NOTE

VOICE: (OFFICIAL) Report from: Classification officer, Air Forces Personnel Distribution Command, Santa Monica, California. Regarding the assignment of Technical Sergeant Benjamin Kuroki. It is recommended the EM be assigned to duty as a tail gunner. To be attached continental Air Force and considered for a new combat assignment as soon as possible.

MUSIC: SNEAK, THE OPENING THEME, CARRYING IT SOFTLY UNDER

BEN: Bates ...I got it.

BATES: Nice going.

BEN: I got a hunch it's going to be the Pacific this time. Just got a hunch, that's all.

BATES: Yeah.

BEN: First Zero I get is for your brother.

BATES: Thanks.

BEN: So long, Bates.

BATES: So long, Kuroki. Good luck.

(MUSIC SWELLS FOR A BAR, AND THEN UNDER)

NARRATOR: Do you hear the story of the boy from Nebraska? Do you listen closely and understand that he could have been from Seattle or Staten Island, or Sandusky, Ohio? And for Kuroki, read Canelli, read Kantrowitz, read Kerchuski. Any name that comes hard to the tongue, a different slant to the eye, the shape of a nose. They are riding the tail turrets from Hell to Burma. They are spelling it out slowly in fifty calibre bullets that it isn't race or religion that makes free men. They are writing it across the sky in demolition bombs that freedom isn't color, but a way of life. And all men are created equal until they prove otherwise. That's an old idea they have in Hershey, Nebraska, just down the highway from Cozad which is near North Platte.

MUSIC: BROADENS TO FINALE.

EBERWEIN: This is Lieutenant Bruce Eberwein. Over in Italy I flew with jokers that were every name in the book. Chinese and Czech and Choctaw Indians. Those boys finish their first tour overseas and come home, and the Personnel Distribution Command knows what they need. Rest and medical care and careful reassignment to a new army job. And beyond that they need understanding and dignity and the feeling they fought for something and they got it, and they're going back to keep fighting for it. Well, the Army'll make sure they get that rest and reassignment. And you take it from there.

MUSIC: "MY HEART STOOD STILL" . . . UNDER

NARRATOR: You're back in the States now ... you're waiting for her in the train station, and she comes at last, you can tell from the tilt of her head, the way she walks. You just say hello very quietly and kiss her, and then you're really home.

MUSIC: UP INTO . . . "MY HEART STOOD STILL"

NARRATOR: After the furlough, after the fresh milk and the sleep it's back to the Army, to whatever new job you can do now to help the guys who are still back there ... the Air Force boys in China, the doughfeet up along the Rhine, the Russians moving in across Europe, moving in from the East ...

MUSIC: RED CAVALRY MARCH

MUSIC: THEME

NARRATOR: And so, it's so long from our men wherever they are. From the men in England, cheerio; from the boys in China, wah mun dzo-bah; from the boys in Russia, dos vhidanis. As they come back home from their next assignments we'll be telling their story.

MUSIC: BOARD FADE THEME

ANNOUNCER: \_\_\_\_\_ has presented "BOY FROM NEBRASKA" written by Sergeant Millard Lampell, with \_\_\_\_\_ as Narrator. Music conducted by \_\_\_\_\_. The program was directed by \_\_\_\_\_.