

Letters written to Eleanor D. Breed by former I. House members written from various assembly centers

Gift of The Berkeley First Congregational Church, Aug. 20, 1982

June-Sept. 1942

83/36:2

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A Statement



Church Council of Sacramento

to

Japanese Friends and
Fellow Americans

We, of the Church Council of Sacramento, know of the loyalty to the United States of many of you who must now move from our community. It has been a loyalty which you have maintained under difficult circumstances, and we want you to know of our understanding. The service which you now render to America is the loss, for the duration, of your homes. We rejoice to know that many of you are facing it in the same spirit in which others are facing the possible loss of their sons, for much longer than the duration.

We too have a sincere loyalty to our country, which at this time is best expressed by offering our Christian hospitality to you, our fellow citizens and friends.

We wish you to accept this greeting as our token that *we believe in you* and that we are confident of your loyalty to the highest ideals and principles upon which our country is founded.

"May God bless you and keep you—both on your going out and on your coming in."

CHURCH COUNCIL OF SACRAMENTO

A. RAYMOND GRANT, *President*

ALFRED TONNESS, *Executive Secretary*

May 12, 1942.

A STATEMENT



Berkeley Fellowship of Churches
and
The First Congregational Church
of Berkeley
to
Japanese Friends and Fellow
Americans

The First Congregational Church of Berkeley offers its building, and the Protestant Churches of Berkeley extend their hospitality to you in these days of evacuation. The church proffers the facilities of its parish house for your convenience, happy to render this patriotic service. The Federal authorities requested the use of this building, feeling that it offered the best possible opportunity to make the burdens of this trying time easier for you. We rejoice in this consideration on the part of our government, and feel privileged to be able to assist by giving our facilities without charge.

Many of us personally know of the loyalty to the United States of many of you who must now move from our community. It has been a loyalty which you have maintained under difficult circumstances, and we want you to know of our understanding. The service which you now render to America is the loss, for the duration, of your homes. We rejoice to know that many of you are facing it in the same spirit in which others are facing the possible loss of their sons, for much longer than the duration.

The Protestant Churches of Berkeley, during this period, will extend hospitality to you, a differ-

ent denominational group being in charge each day.

The Reception Room of the Church, marked BERKELEY CHURCH HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE will be open for your comfort and convenience, with hosts and hostesses present who will extend any courtesy which will be of value to you.

The KINDERGARTEN ROOM in the basement will serve as a day nursery where your small children may be left while you are busy with the government officials. We hope to have Japanese friends among those on duty, to make all the children feel at home.

On the second floor is the LOUNGE, where those who are waiting for others of their family may rest, with chairs provided and refreshments (no charge) at all hours. Cots are available for those who need or desire them. The hostess in the Lounge will direct you to them.

This statement comes to you with two signatures. One is given under the instruction of the Church Council of the First Congregational Church, which includes representatives of every Board, Committee and Organization of the church. The other was authorized by the unanimous vote of the Protestant clergy of Berkeley meeting as the Berkeley Fellowship of Churches, the ministers in so far as they may act for their parishes, believing that every Berkeley Protestant Church

would enthusiastically approve this statement if there were time to meet and take action.

We have a deep and profound love for the United States, which we are eager to express in this opportunity to work along with the government. Our program has been projected with the knowledge and approval of government authorities, but it is offered entirely through the initiative and under the direction of the Berkeley churches. The church people must of necessity strictly separate themselves from governmental procedure, but we hope we can offer something of value to you in Christian hospitality. Our efforts will be a way for your Berkeley friends to say at least that *we believe in you*. We hope they may increase your love for your community and the United States.

"May God bless you and keep you . . . both on your going out and on your coming in"

BERKELEY FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCHES
U. S. MITCHELL, *President*

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
BERKELEY

VERE V. LOPER, *Minister*

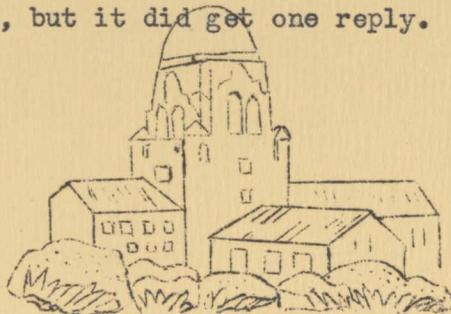
April 24, 1942.

This letter went to Caucasian I. House members.

It called for no answer, but it did get one reply.

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

Berkeley, California
June 27, 1942



Dear Friend:

The motto of International House THAT BROTHERHOOD MAY PREVAIL grows more difficult to live up to day by day. All we can do is keep on trying, and hope that through our home communities and our circles of friends, we can keep some sanity alive, in spite of misinformation and hysteria.

Mr. Blaisdell has asked the group whose names appear below to become the nucleus of a committee concerned with the welfare of International House members and friends now in Assembly Centers and Relocation Areas on the West Coast. Hence this letter, which comes to you with several suggestions and which seeks suggestions from you in return.

1. Friendly interest helps morale. If you live near an Assembly Center and know anyone confined therein, won't you call and see how he is getting on and offer to be of service? Sometimes such articles as tooth powder and laundry soap are not sold at the camp Canteen, and you can help by running errands. Often there is need of books, magazines, recreational and teaching material, flowers, etc.

2. United we stand. If you belong to a church, a lodge, a university club, will you do what you can to arouse the interest of the group? One individual alone can do a little; individuals in an organization can do more. Public opinion too often is swayed by hysteria, and there are groups already showing indications of it -- the current movement to disfranchise all people of Japanese ancestry, for instance. We can help to keep this at a minimum by displaying an attitude of generosity and fair play. When reference is made to the rumored sabotage at Pearl Harbor we can remind people that that was officially denied by the Honolulu Chief of Police, the Hawaii delegate to Congress and many on-the-spot observers. And we can say with Dean Deutsch, "...these people who are being evacuated have had no charges against them individually; they are not guilty of misconduct. They are being removed because of fear, which is gripping the hearts of some people." Perhaps you can initiate a Committee for Fair Play (name it what you will) in your area.

3. Let's keep in touch. If you find something International House as a whole can do, let us know and we'll pass it along. If you know former I. House members in an evacuation camp in your region, tell us about it and we'll pass it on to their other friends. We hope to compile a list of I. House evacuees and their new locations soon and we'll appreciate any help you can give us on that. If you live near Berkeley and would like to work with our committee, please tell us. We want all the suggestions and help you can give, because this is a new venture and we want to make it a good one. All correspondence regarding this matter should be directed to Miss Eleanor Breed, % International House Association, International House, Berkeley, California.

Sincerely yours,

Eleanor Breed, Chairman
Mr. and Mrs. J. Wickson Thomas
Mr. Penry Griffiths
Miss Bess Kirven
Mr. Sanford Treguboff

EUGENIA FUJITA, M. D.
BARRACK 91, APT. 5
TANFORAN ASSEMBLY CENTER
SAN BRUNO, CALIF.

Ackn!

Dear Eleanor :-

I feel so guilty in delaying so long to acknowledge your letter. Letter writing is a lost art with me and after you read this sorry attempt I'm sure you'll understand my reluctance in trying to write. Then too, being a physician here at Camp is a full day-nite job and I am really kept so very busy. I know you must have a lot of faithful and good correspondents from Tanjore Assembly Center and that must leave little you haven't already heard about.

"C'est la guerre" is about all we can say and I think the majority of us are taking the inevitable with good grace and making adjustments to this new life. I think most of us would definitely be happier if only we were contributing to the war effort and helping

our United States to attain a speedy victory.

Medical practice here is definitely not private practice in the city. It is quite an interesting practice and I reckon will be a good experience to do medicine with only basic equipment. I take all the day ambulance or home calls around camp which keeps one very busy. Also am supposed to be pediatrician so have well baby clinics, immunization clinics for whooping cough, Diphtheria, etc. And our Baby formula kitchen is one to be proud of. We make formula for each ^{bottle fed} baby in camp - individual formula for over 110 babies - some 400-500 bottles - which includes those who get powdered milk ready to be prepared at home.

I guess like a lot of other young Japanese Americans, I haven't still gotten used to seeing so many Japanese faces at once. We are all praying and hoping for our America to attain speedy victory and bring peace again to this poor sick world. This letter is brief and inadequate, I know, but Eleanor - just to say "hello".
Sincerely, Eugenie Fujita M.D.

ack

Tanforan
August 7th.

Dear Eleanor,

This is the long promised letter. I am so sorry not to have written before, but a surprising number of things happen every day to make my naturally dilatory self even more procrastinating than ever. As I have said before, as we stay here longer and longer, we have become better adjusted to ~~the~~ our changed way of living. But with becoming accustomed to camp life, I have also been getting inutterably bored. One gets such a feeling of insidiness as compared to the life outside these barbed wire fences. One's perspective becomes so one-dimensional that there seems to be a timelessness about the time we have been in camp. There seems to have been no life previous to the one which we are now living, there seems to be no future, there almost seems to be no war, (except when I realize with a start, how badly things are going for America) there seems to be only the present. The ~~total~~ sameness of that present is boring.

We get up ~~at~~ each morning, at 6:45 AM there is a head count of all the residents and we must all be in our rooms. ~~at~~ after the headcount we go to breakfast with the same people all the time. I go to work, for me it is teaching in high school. The newly organized school is in a long long building. There are 16 classes going on one time with 16 teachers holding forth without books, without partitions between each class, and without experience to a group of about 500-600 students. I am teaching home economics and, since there is no equipment at all, must adjust my course accordingly. For lab we have embroidery stitches, samples knitting and crocheting. For class work, we study standards of living, the variations thereof and their causes, clothing care, purchasing clothing by mail, factors which affect choice of clothing such as color harmony, physical lines, style, fashions and so on. all are things which can be done without books & other equipment. I am getting

quite inured to trying to outshout all the other teachers and my throat has adapted itself to constant talking. I feel so lost sometimes because it seems so presumptuous of me to be teaching when I know so little.

At noon comes lunch with the ~~same~~ same faces again. In the afternoon, I must go to teachers' meetings, where we try to review our work and help one another through our individual experiences gained each day by the hard way, and prepare our lessons to keep 1 page ahead of our students. 2 afternoons a week, I teach adult English.

I have a class of 12 students, half of whom are alien Japanese and half are American citizens who have had their schooling in Japan. The oldest is 65 and the youngest 15. I preach Americanization in all sorts of ways. No flag-waving because I cannot stand that but I try to make them face the problems of this war, the causes of this war and our part in the war effort. I get quite discouraged and wonder if after all my rhetoric, we will find ~~after the~~ when the war is ~~of~~ over that my words were only fine words after all. That we will find that this is not a war for the right of little peoples to live in freedom and equality, ~~after all~~ that the oppression of the minority will always be with us. Whenever I think that however, I think again, if that happens, it will be in some measure, my fault, because I did not fight hard enough and I go on teaching.

Dinner is at 5 P.M. at 6:30 we have another head count in our rooms. The evenings are spent variously. I might visit friends and talk but somehow or other, our conversation gets into a ~~group~~ groove about evacuation, relocation and the war and there we stay. Or I might go to Town Hall meetings where we discuss such things as coops, Education marriage, family problems and so on. Again our thoughts have no stimulation. We get no fresh view-points. There is to this too, an insiderness which is inexpressibly boring. There are movies once a week, there are talent shows, there are folk dancing and social

dancing. (Give them bread + circuses)
 the days become weeks and the weeks change
 into months. After 3 months, I am chafing
 at the bit. I want to start working constructively,
 want to be relocated and not spend my time
 idling around futilely in an assembly
 center.

Yours in a most confused and rebellious
 mood.

Marie

Calder

Bar. 7, Unit 1, Street 11, Dist. VII
Santa Anita Assembly Center
Arcadia, California
July 26, 1942

Dear Eleanor,

It is rather difficult to write to someone whom one doesn't know very well, but I shall try to do my best to make this letter as interesting and true to the situation as possible.

We in the Santa Anita Assembly Center are surrounded by great natural beauties on the outside, for there are beautiful mountains to the northeast and lovely residential sections to the south; but we are fenced in one hundred acres of sand and gravel, with monotonous rows upon rows of black barracks and green stables. There is little individuality either in our living quarters, our manner of living, or in the people themselves.

Yet, I must contradict myself, for within the great community of more than 18,500 people, I have met many interesting "individuals," who, I am sure, will preserve their individuality no matter how long they are "stuck-in" such a place as we are.

Life in camp is unpleasant ^{in some ways} for those who have developed their powers to think, but the ^{bad} effects ^{of the camp} upon these people ^{are} not as great as it is on the children and the young men and women who are still in the process of mental and physical growth and who think that the life here is "fun."

One of the greatest social institutions, the home or the family unit, is not existent here. I believe it is possible for you to imagine what this does. The effect of the lack is, of course, very noticeable in the young children, but the lack is also having its effect on young people. The children run wildly in the streets between the barracks and stables, running into other people's single rooms with no respect for privacy.

Since there are no playgrounds, they find things to do that do not exactly merit ^{with my approval}. These conditions will no doubt be partly solved when we move to a relocation center.

About 6,300 of the 18,500 are employed at eight, twelve, or sixteen dollars a month. The jobs are in the various fields of maintenance and service and in defense work. About 1200 men and women are working on camouflage nets. The work, in my estimation, is very unhealthy, suffocating and dirty, for the lint from the burials out of which the nets are made infects the air, but the workers are doing well. The remainder consists mostly of children, busy mothers, and very elderly people.

For a short time, I worked on the center newspaper, the Santa Anita Pacemaker, but since April 25, I have been in the recreation and education departments. I have been handling a group of fifth grade boys and girls, trying to teach a little academics so that they will not forget how to study and a little discipline which they so lack because of the missing social unit. Since there are no classrooms of any sort, all the classes are placed in one large hall, the "recreation hall," and the teachers have to shout so much that they become hoarse. Our getting hoarse is a subject of amusement until some teacher finds it necessary to leave his work because of laryngitis. It seems that any incident which happens here, though amusing on the surface, is pitiful when one considers the cause ^{or} effect. At first we struggled without even text-books, but thanks to the contributions of the many city and county schools, we now have sufficient numbers and varieties for most grades. What we need most, in my opinion, aside from classrooms and really qualified teachers, are blackboards and chalk. In relocation centers, education will probably be better organized with proper facilities. Not knowing, however,

when we are to be moved, it is natural for us to desire materials with which to work. The teachers know that we are not properly qualified, but we are doing our best. I, for one, enjoy my work tremendously. I have become so attached to my pupils, that it will be hard for me to give them up when the time comes for me to do so. It is my sincere hope that they shall have benefited a little from what I have tried to do for them.

An experience none of us won't ever forget is that of standing in long lines for whatever we do. I had the experience, especially shortly after my arrival, of standing from forty five to seventy five minutes for a meal in the rain and in the hot sun. Then we had to get in line for showers and washing. And what facilities! Not only is the number very limited, but a great change in privacy, cleanliness, aesthetics, and convenience from our homes and from the nice showers and washrooms of the Berkeley "I" House, where I was last fall. Early every morning one can hear, if one does not sleep very soundly, the rattle of wagon wheels about 5:30 A.M. What is it? It is the sound of women going to wash. Why so early? Because if they don't go at that early hour, they have to wait in line. Why the wagons? Because the washing places may be half a mile away from one's room and because one has to furnish one's own tub, pail, washboard, soap, and other necessary articles. And, oh, the remarkable display of diapers everyday — on the sides of the barracks as well as on the regular clothes lines! One could never see such a sight outside of a "concentration" camp.

Our mess hall experiences are something awful too. If one sits near the section where the plates are

being washed, one cannot hear oneself speak, the noise is so stupendous. Someone spoke of the noise as that of a great medieval battle. Unfortunately, my first meal here was right in front of the dish washing section. I thought I would go mad if I had to eat in such places. Amazingly enough, I have become accustomed to the noise, and though it is unpleasant, I do not feel as I felt that first day. We climb in and out of benches to eat. We have one tin plate, a tin cup, and usually one or two silver pieces. Though the food is good, the surrounding makes it less savory. Considering that there are children and women here as well as men, the dining room environment is very bad. I hope that the adjustment to normal life will not be too hard for the children when the time comes that we may be free again.

The picture I have been painting, doesn't seem to be very pleasant. Perhaps I can ^{tell you a little about} ~~give~~ ^{the brighter} side of our life. Various recreational activities are constantly going on. Many softball and hardball leagues have been functioning; various clubs have been organized; and entertainment of one sort or another is continually going on. The different departments, such as the police, the warehouse, the recreation, the finance, and the education departments are having their private socials. Our library, consisting of books contributed from outside libraries and individuals, serves our readers to some extent. Our well-organized church services, held in the grandstand of the racetracks, are attended by great numbers. Every other week we have a Caucasian preacher. A fine choir and a soloist add a colorful touch to the services. Our recreation hall, incidentally, is in the grandstand building

too. Luckily for us, the building serves many purposes. One mess hall and most of the offices are also located there.

Beginning this month, free coupon books are being issued, with which we can purchase necessities, such as soap, and luxuries, such as ice-cream, at the "canteens" in the camp. Shoes are also being furnished. Distribution is very slow, but eventually all will receive them. Workers are being given priority.

We are on the whole being treated pretty well, especially when one thinks about those people in the concentration camps of Europe. I feel, though, that the comparison should not be made, because this is America, and we should set the example, not ~~imitate~~ ^{imitate} the actions of the fascists. No matter how trying our experiences be, however, I am sure that some of us will be able to conquer whatever befalls upon us and use it to our advantage.

Sincerely,

Heuks

ackn

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
FIELD SERVICE
COLORADO RIVER WAR
RELOCATION PROJECT

Poston, Arizona
July 25, 1942

Dear Eleanor:

At long last I am getting down to answering your most interesting letter. Somehow time flies by so fast. At least, while I'm at the office I'm too busy and when I get home I find myself too warm and too exhausted to do much. When it gets cooler I expect to be more energetic.

It has been over two months since people started to come to Poston. Since we were among the volunteers we actually saw Poston in the making. Many of the buildings were not up yet. The Administration building, the hospital where I work, and many other buildings were just floor plans at that time. When you stop to think of it in that way, I think Poston has made great progress. At least, I have never seen so many Japanese congregated together before in all my life. One little girl told her mother that she didn't like Japan and that she wanted to go back to America. I know this isn't Japan but I, too, wish I were back in Berkeley at the International House. How grateful I am for the opportunity of being able to stay there. Those wonderful times can not be taken away from me and at a time like this it gives me a new perspective on things. At times I wonder what's the use of living, but there is always something nice that comes up- maybe a letter from a friend, or else the work done was accomplished an end.

Shall I tell you of my first impression of Poston, not saying what I think of it now.

Well, my first impression of Poston was very disappointing since we arrived during a sandstorm. Oh, such dust! I thought I would be buried alive. I can see I lived through it all since I'm here to tell about everything. --The barracks were bare with only the straw mattresses that were there for us and the beds piled against the wall. Well, the looks of the apartments were much better than I had expected. And the latrine. I gave a sigh of relief to see that we had flushing toilets even though we had no partitions at that time. You had to forget all modesty since the shower room

Page 2
July 25, 1942

wasn't and probably never be partitioned off. --- About a month later I went to a party where some young people gave a pantomime of the life at Poston. One was about Bashful Betty who went to take her first shower here at Poston clad in all her underclothes.

The food! Oh, when I think of the food we were fed the first two weeks or so, especially the first week, it makes my stomach turn. The cook has changed so our food is better. At least we get more green vegetables. At that time we got the queerest combinations. We got a lot of starch and Spam, Spam, Spam, until we were blue in the face just seeing Spam. Spam may be expensive but you can get too much of it, and we did.

Did you know that Poston will be the third largest city in the baby state of Arizona when all three camps are filled? This project is supposed to hold 20,000 people. This project is under the Indian Service so the officials are all very nice. I sometimes wonder if they don't wonder themselves why they chose such a hot place to come to work. We're glad that they are here but - this heat!

Our 250 bed hospital is partially completed. We moved in before the construction was finished in order to rush the construction work since we had too many patients for our small Emergency Hospital and our Annex. Even now there are three wards open and another being completed and not enough room for our patients. These doctors and nurses get a work out. I think we're lucky in having the number of doctors and nurses that we do have, but I wish we could get more. They really get overworked around here. I never thought I'd be on the hospital staff but here I am working as secretary to the chief of medical staff. The doctor is so busy all the time that I hardly ever get to see him for every long. He not only carries on the administrative work but he does majority of the OBs cases. That's his speciality along with gynecology.

When it gets cooler the hills in the distant will look so pretty. When we first came here it was still cool so we certainly enjoyed seeing them in the distance. To watch them turn colors as the sun was sinking was a beautiful sight. On one side of us the hills are so much alike that you wonder if man didn't have a hand in forming them. -- You should see the parks we have opened up in Camp #1. They really are nice looking and very cool at times. Last Sunday our block, #6, opened up a park. We named our bridge which leads to the park, "Pioneer Bridge", but we named our park "Wade Head Park". Mr. Wade Head is the project director of this entire project. We had a regular picnic with program and all.

Page 3
July 25, 1942

You asked about social activities. There are so many things going on around here that it is impossible to keep up with everything. Once a month our quad(A) has a party. We think up clever themes for them. The very last one was a South Sea Islands theme. We had our Hawaiian group put on the program. They certainly were good! The time before the theme of the party was "Barnyard Frolics". I wonder what we'll think up next. -- Every Monday night is the Quad A movie night in the open. You take your own chairs if you don't want to stand. The movies are old but we enjoy being in the open. There are always dances going on but I can't say anything about them since I haven't been to many. Last weekend we had a "Y.W.C.A." conference. We closed with a vesper service on Sunday evening.

There are so many things I could write about but I believe that this is enough for the time being. I'll be writing from time to time.

Sincerely,

Earl Swala

*Please excuse my errors because I
won't have time to reread this letter.*

Kay Mano
Block C } Fresno
Barvaack }
apt. 1

Elean.

C-4-1 Fresno
Assembly Center
Fresno, Calif.

July 2 1942

Dear Eleanor,

I think your booklet idea is wonderful and I certainly know it will be appreciated by those people in the Centers.

My first impression of the Center? Well--I might have been prejudiced. You see, we were evacuated on May 13 and May 13 was the day on which I was to be graduated from the University. I couldn't help but notice the contrast between the two occasions. At any rate, my main impressions were of heat and dust! By now, of course, the place is more familiar and such as it is, is home. It's strange that we forget so soon the feeling of utter desolation that we had when we first left our homes to come here.

So to renew my impressions, I looked back in my diary and I find, "Will the wind never stop blowing the dust around in this miniature dust-bowl? The dust seeps into my clothing, the blankets, and even between my teeth! Just two days since I washed my hair and it's already stiff with dust. And on top of that--the straw from the mattresses insist on leaking out onto the floor."

And the next day, "I'm beginning to understand the meaning of the word "eternity." It seems like we've been here forever and it's been only four days. What will it seem like when we've been here for a couple of months?"

Well, today is exactly 2 months since our trek here. We have our recreation and education programs well underway; the first excitement and rush of getting settled is over. We should be settling down to constructive work and progress but we just mark time--the feeling of impermanence keeps us all uneasy. All that we do seems like busy work just to keep from spending too much time in thinking.

But not everything is as dark as I have pictured it so far. Even here, life has it's pleasant side. Everyone has his little pleasures like the little boy who got so much pleasure out of drinking soda-pop that he drank himself sick and had to be taken to the hospital to recuperate. Proud parents are able to see their children perform for the first time in the talent shows which are held once a week and are certainly no discriminators of persons nor talents. Some of the younger people, or perhaps I should say, older children are having a field-day in what is their first taste of real community living. Our parents, many of them, are getting the first real rest they've had since they came to this country. Oh, it's a wonderful life!

As you probably know, this last week we had a visit from a representative of the Student Relocation Committee and temporarily our hopes are high with dreams of school-life as usual once again. Even though most of us know that we won't be able to go in the fall--there is a new goal for us to think of and plan for.

The climax of my week comes every week when my visitor comes to see me and I can talk to someone objectively about our situation and get news of the outside world beyond the fences. The visiting room is always crammed with people; it's a mighty popular place. You should see it--a room full of people whispering at the top of their voices, struggling to be quiet and yet heard is really a sight to see.

Be fore I close, I must add that there is one thing about this place that's very familiar and very like I. House inspite of t the vast difference in environment and make-up. One of the most frequently discussed topics is food! What are we going to have? What will we have for the next meal? I'm reminded of the House every time I hear people hashing and rehashing (no pun intended) the food situation.

Have I given you the kind of information that you wanted, or have I just enjoyed myself blowing off? Whether or not I have written anything you care to use, it has been loads of fun thinking on paper like this.

Best of luck on your project--I hope you'll let me know of anything I can do to help you. I have loads of time.

Sincerely,

check

1921 Franciscan Ave.
Napa, Calif.

7/23/42

Dear Miss Breed,

your letter about fair play
for the internees at assembly
centers was most welcome. We
are glad to see that International
House still has courage enough
to stand for what is right,
in these difficult times.

Within a day of the coming
of your letter, I had one from
an old college friend, Mitsie
Miura (now Mrs. Saiki Muneno)
who, with her husband, three
small children, and her two

sisters, is interned at Tanforan. The quarters for this group of seven is one room, about 20x18 feet. Toilets and showers, ^{and laundry} are one block off; meals are of the "breadline" variety. Naturally Inutsie, a native born American citizen, is a little bitter about the whole thing — the mistrust especially. I don't remember for sure whether she was an International House member or not; she didn't live there, but was there often, sometimes as my guest, c. 1930-32. I have written to ask her if she knows of any former Int. House members who are at Tanforan, and have asked her for suggestions as to what service the House could best render. Likewise, I have sent her a small box of apples from our farm, and have offered to do ~~any~~ errands for her.

Perhaps the internment of innocent people is more personal to us, because we had a taste of "concentration camp" this spring, when, through the false charges of a crackpot "patriot", my husband was detained in San Francisco from February 1 to Mar. 23, until the Department of Justice could be convinced of his innocence. The treatment by government officials

and employees was most courteous, but the experience was hardly one to be sought after. As was inevitable, there was much overcrowding, little fresh air or exercise, and a diet strikingly lacking in fresh ~~fruits~~ ^{fruits} and vegetables, and meat. Having been through all this, George strongly suggests that anyone who has an surplus of fruits, as we do, can render a real service by taking the trouble to send a little now and then to the internees. Likewise, fairly recent magazines will be appreciated, no doubt.

We will be glad to hear of the whereabouts of any former House members that I might have known while I was there.

Sincerely yours,

Ruth Raeder von Uhlir (Mrs. Pitt)

Back

2519 E. W.R.G.
Newell, Calif.
Aug. 3, 42

Dear Miss Breed:

I am glad to hear that you are interested in the Japanese evacuation. There are several angles of looking at this evacuation; for some, especially the young ones, the outcome is none too bad, & in some cases very healthy, indeed, for it has opened up opportunities never before realized. For others, especially those older persons who had sacrificed a great deal to come here, the general idea of evacuation must be very dull. However, I hear very little talk along such lines.

Since I had very little to lose in coming here, I have no regrets, nor had feeling of special strength toward anyone. Since the day I have come here, I have got a job as an assistant teacher in animal husbandry. I take this to be an opportunity for a new and a greater experience.

Somewhat, the Fellowship project is coming along quite splendidly. The outlook is optimistic, in general. Soon, there will

be a school system here, & 4,000 high school & grammar school students will undergo a process of learning. At this time, the adult education program is in full swing. Such courses as mathematics, political science, floriculture, adult English, public speaking, agricultural courses (animal husbandry, soils, plant pathology, entomology) and others are being offered.

Under the recreation department, the baseball games, outdoor entertainment, boxing classes, judo classes (Jujitsu), sumo (Japanese wrestling) & I'm sure other worthwhile programs are coming up every day.

The musical program is popular, and also the dances, especially tap dancing. Every Sunday evening, the mess hall (which is used as an auditorium) is full of listeners to a classical music recording, such as Beethoven, operatic pieces and great symphonies. The tap dancing is so popular among small children, that I'm sure we'll be seeing a nice crop of chorus stars in the near future. There is also a nice Hawaiian orchestra here. They make their appearances at the outdoor programs, & at times at the various dances.

It is really surprising to see so many talents here.

The agricultural technical staff has been organized here, it comprises mainly of college graduates. There are the soil chemists, plant pathologists, entomologists, agricultural economist, poultryman, animal husbandryman, agronomists & botanist. The purpose of the organization is to coordinate the various departments in doing the field work. It is really wonderful to see their work: the pathologist would & the entomologist would examine the plants for diseases and insect pests, before & after spraying dusting with a poison dust. The agronomists make irrigation trials, & see how various methods affect the plants. At this rate, I ~~think~~ am sure we'll have a better crop next season. According to rumors, the crops now are none too hopeful, since it is so late in the season.

There are departments at work, such as the housing department, social welfare department, cooperative movement and others of which I am not so enlightened upon.

The religious groups, the Christians & the Buddhists are quite active. Though the

Buddhists outnumber the Christians, there seems to be very little strain between them. Some of us go to both services according to the speakers they may have. At least the outlook of the Buddhist leaders seems to point to a cooperative spirit with the Christian, in order to perfect a good community.

And so life goes on in camp, in spite of its many problems. (I think the social welfare department could tell you some interesting problems.) I have tried to give ^{you} some information of this camp, & I hope you are able to correlate the materials from other alumnis, so as to compile a nice record.

Sincerely,

Yes. J. Rhode '39

Wicken

August 5, 1942

Santa Anita

Dear Miss Breed:

May I apologize for my affliction of procrastination. We appreciate the interest of our International House friends in our plight and future. There is so much to be said and so much to tell that one is at a loss to know where to commence.

The egotistic nature, however, arises to assert oneself. So I shall begin by telling you what I am doing. When our group arrived in camp we found choice office jobs were filled and that only the recreation department seemed to offer anything in way of brain work. We commenced by trying to conduct a recreation-school for children 5-12 years of age. After about a month of this I was asked to organize the Boy Scouts. Completion of organization found 600 boys in the movement and raring to go. Half of the boys are in Cubbing which is for boys from 9 to 11. The other 300 are distributed among 11 troops of Boy Scouts.

As nearly as possible we have tried to carry out a normal program for the boys, but we are constantly hampered by regulations of this camp. For instance, we could not pass boys on knife and hatchet, swimming, or hiking. We have succeeded in making arrangements for cooking tests and signaling. Then we built a camp site but found that we were denied the privileges of overnight camping. On the whole, however, our program has attracted the boys from 9 to 14 and our leaders have worked hard to provide an outlet for the bounding energies of the young boys. We have a drum and bugle corps here (the equipment belongs to a former Los Angeles troop). The boys raise the flag every morning and lower it in the evenings. Other community services are ushering at community events including church and distribution of the camp paper.

It is amazing what can be done with so little, but if the American people expect our youngsters to grow up as real Americans we need more aid of all sorts. The outside world forgets that when the evacuation was put in execution, it cut all our future hopes for income and security. Naturally some of our very wealthy people have enough saved or invested that they need not ever work again or worry about economic security. But about 95% of our people are economically isolated and how does anyone expect us to survive on those "coalie Wages" of \$8 and \$12 per month. Five per cent of the workers receive the so-called professional wages of \$16.00 per month. In no sense can this wage scale called ~~by~~ adequate or even decent after forcing us to give our inalienable rights as citizens.

People expect us to be grateful that we are being treated us well in camp and they say "well, aren't you getting food, clothing, and shelter?" No, we are not satisfied because that isn't half of the stories. The real truth of the camp isn't getting out to the outside world or ~~but~~ it is it being suppressed to satisfy the conscience of our politicians, race-baiters, and economic interests.

Yes, we give some credit to the administrators for their efforts but by all sociological standards they aren't up to par. Instead of dealing with us as people possessed of sense and intelligence they try to coerce us into keeping order by severe regulations, unreasonable tactics, and penalties. They penalize the whole camp because a few of our bums get out of hand and commit a misdemeanor. They squash all attempts to organize for coordination and even the purely intellectual groups such as forums, study groups, etc. Their attitude of the administrators is: "We have the power, we run the camp as we see fit, you're Japs, if you don't toe the mark, we'll ship you to Arizona(hell-hole).camps/

The result is that all our natural community leaders are laying low. No one is willing to try to bring some semblance of order into our lives. More pessimistic talk is circulated here and rumor-mongers have their field days. I should say the morale of this community is very low. And even morals are disintegrating among the young people. The lack of privacy and quiet accelerates the break-down of morale. ~~The~~ Home is no longer the binding unit for the family members. The youngsters eat with their friends and are ever home from the time they leave for school or work till evening when they go to sleep. Many Nisei between 30 and 40 are bitter, disillusioned and instead of being an stimulating influence to the youngsters between 16 and 21 making them lose all hopes for a future. Thus, with idle time and so much pessimistic talk the young people no longer think seriously of the future. All they care about is socials and sports. Fellows form into gangs and indulge in gang fights and rowdyism. Boys and girls instead of acting normally like good friends fool around and pet and neck in broad daylight. The so-called Japanese modesty or shyness is a thing of the past.

People are losing their mental balance and even the leaders have a hard time trying to maintain their equilibrium when the administration commits one blunder after another. Somehow they don't seem to realize they are dealing with human beings, culturally and in thinking no different than themselves. And we have small children and elderly folks. We are not permitted to have Japanese literature of any sort except dictionaries or bibles. No Japanese records. Most of the older folks cannot be expected to learn English now and to strip them of their few pleasures and all the comforts of home entitled to people who have lived most of their good life is somehow akin to Third Reich.

All our American friends write and say, Why are you so bitter? Well, there isn't much to write except bitterness. If we laugh, it's forced or hysterical half of the time. People are constantly reminiscing of the past and are afraid to talk of the future. Sure adjustments are being made but it doesn't come overnight.

I don't know if most people realize or not but merely food, shelter and clothing is not enough for life. And after living in an environment and atmosphere full of liberties, privileges, space, and accustomed to high standard of living and to come to this.....it's a shock, it's eating mud, it rubs one the wrong way, your faith in American way of life wavers, you begin to wonder about your Caucasian friends, you get mad, you start to hate the wrong people, you make generalities, and you don't sleep well. Then a period of I don't give a damn, what's the use, numbness of mind and intellect, and the seeking for the purely sensuous. The pursuit of romance and overeating and talk of food. All attempts at escape.

Now some of us have started to analyze ourselves. To take a grip upon our lives and making attempts to acquire new skills and interests.

*R. L. Keene did find this but were
moving out of Warner Dam Aug. 26.*

Hayao Leslie Abe

Idaho

August 7, 1942

Dear Miss Breed,

The Japanese Americans appreciate the friendly and sympathetic concern expressed in your letter. They realize that one staunch friend now in these troublous times is worth ten during peace time.

Although we on the outside have as yet to experience the hardships undergone by the evacuated and interned American citizens of Japanese ancestry, we are none the less aware of the sacrifices they have made to further the war effort. Because of "Military Necessity" they were asked to give up their homes, their business, their friends and their very freedom! Because they are American Patriots, they met the demands

quietly bravely. That Mr. Blewett
and others at the International League
realize the Japanese Americans' position
is heart warming news. However,
the rank and file white Americans
in Idaho are still referring to the
evacuees as "enemy aliens" who
should be treated accordingly. It is
my hope that some how, some
way all Americans will understand
the significant contributions that
their fellow citizens of Japanese blood
have ^{made} and are making toward the
war effort and will welcome them
whole heartedly back in their
midst after the war.

Sincerely yours,

Foley Uyenatsu

P.O. Box 325

Caldwell, Idaho.

14 - 12 - 2
Manzanar Reception Center
Manzanar, Calif.
Sept. 10, 1942.

Dear Miss Breed,

This is in reply to your letter of June the 25th. Sorry to be so late in answering but there seemed to be many things to do in this new camp life in the way of adjustments as well as trying to find a place of usefulness in this so-called "City of Manzanar".

Dr. Blaisdell was here for a visit the other week and I had the pleasure of meeting him. He reminded me of the fact that there was a letter that I should take the time to answer, meaning the one I had received from you. Here I am answering it so please tell him that his reprimand resulted in action.

My husband and I were living in West Los Angeles so we were evacuated with the others in that community on the 26th of April to Manzanar. Needless to say the experience of evacuation will leave a lasting impression of mixed emotions, confusion, injustice of such an action as well as a feeling of adventure ahead into a life heretofore unknown to us, a maze of feelings hard to describe.

Much can be written as to all the experiences that we were forced to face as we went through the process of becoming "in-mates of a concentration camp". Most of us are trying to make the best of the situation but not with a feeling of satisfaction or with a feeling of complete abandon to fate but with a stoic outlook on all existing conditions around us.

Since my husband is a Baptist minister, he has been busy organizing the Christian movemnet in this camp with the other Protestant ministers. The set-up here is Interdenominational in nature. There are 3 sets of Sunday morning services for the adults in the Japanese language, 2 sets of seVICES in the mornings for the Young People in the English language with 2 Fellowship groups in the evenings. There are 5 Sunday Schools for the children, 3 prayer meetings for the adults on Wednesday evenings, 5 Bible classes plus many other special meeting. So you see, the Protestant ministers are kept busy helping to keep up the morale of the camp with their program. I might add that there is a Buddhist Church in camp as well as a Catholic Church. Everything is carried on under much handicap as to material equipment.

I have been working in the Educational field in organizing a program of Adult Education. Since the 5th of May, my task has been to set up a system of teaching English and material on Citizenship to the adults in this camp. My staff composed of 7 teachers and a secretary just closed a summer session of 18 classes with the enrollment of close to 300 students. All of our students are of the non- English speaking group. It has been interesting to see

the students continue these courses under much handicap and on a voluntary basis. We had three groups of classes, the Beginners, the Intermediates and the Advanced. Right now we are in the middle of registration of all students who wish to continue as well as those who would like to start. We hope to begin classes next week.

Another project in which I have been interested is in the formation of a Junior Matrons Club under the Y. W. C. A. This group is open to the Caucasian matrons in the camp as well as to the English speaking matrons in our group. Life for many of the young matrons in the camp is rather drab with washing, ironing, caring for children and the like being the only things to look forward to every day. I am hoping that this club will act as a means of an out-let for them. We have chosen one Saturday afternoon and one Tuesday evening a month as our meeting days as the husbands will be able to care for the children on those nights and Saturday being half day for work. When our program is organized I shall let you know more about it.

If possible I would like to receive printed material on the activities of the International House. It is always pleasant to read of the doing of the outside world.

As to the possible ways in which anyone can help those in these camps, these may be a few suggestions: Sending books to the library, collecting toys for the children for Christmas, sending financial aid to the Children's Village, the orphanage in this camp and above all not forgetting us and our situation.

Please excuse the errors in typing. I shall be looking forward to hearing from you. If there are any members who would be interested in corresponding with students here please let me know.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Moshikawa

Selen

August 23, 1942
Santa Anita, California.

Dear Miss Breed,

For the most part I've found it very difficult to write letters from the camp. There is the heat and dust and not being able to get away from others long enough to think anything through properly. But more than these external things, I think the greatest difficulty is the feeling of the hopelessness of getting a common basis for an exchange of ideas or experiences. People are no longer the same when surroundings and acquaintances have changed. It seems better to remain a blank, rather than become an inaccurate image. Too I feel that this letter is to a past and not a thing pertaining even to the present, and the present holds little for me. The past is very definitely gone and though it was pleasant and a good past, the future holds promise of much more. This is no excuse for my negligence, but an explanation of sorts.

It is a fascinating experience, but I think I would feel the same towards being in a Nazi dominated country or anywhere where there are people doing things or having to do them. It's the actions of the individual persons, the effect on others and their reactions in return that make up the situations and that is what is interesting.

The camps have very good and surprising^yso features, and too it has its smelly aspects depending on where one looks and what one uses as the standard of measurement. I'm in no position to judge, so only absorb as much information as possible for my own interest, but their validity is such that they do not deserve form on paper.

One real opportunity that is here is the easy access to all types people that would naturally result from the condensation of nearly nineteen thousand people from cities, farm areas, small towns, fishing communities, college and residential towns and any other areas of human activity. It develops tolerance towards the stupidity that does exist among human beings, but also gives one more and more confidence for the ultimate progress of people. Believing in the future, it is easier to receive all that the present offers. without falling into the fault of living for just the day.

The other night the Blue and White messes had their social, which was in a way a farewell to Santa Anita. The songs and dances formally put on as a program lacked the feeling and appeal, for me at least, that they had when they were sung by the food servers, or any of the other mess workers to pass the time away during the lags in the hour and a

half shift three times a day when thirty six hundred or four thousand poured by in a pattern so similar, day after day. The amount of singing hit a high when all Japanese literature, but the Bible and American-Japanese dictionary became contraband and within a few days even the songs would be taken away.

There was singing after eating in that truly blessed quiet that came after the dish washing was finished. Anyone who has not heard the noise in the mess hall during the business hours at Santa Anita cannot possibly appreciate the silence that follows. It is not even the volume of noise, but more that peculiar jangling, rising crescendo, psychological perhaps, but related to the fact that the noise begins about five blocks away from the mess hall. This increases as you approach, enter the building, sit for fifteen minutes in the constant rattle and finally reaching its climax as you turn in or throw your plates in to the dishwashers.

Santa Anita will begin to break up this coming Wednesday. With the estimated rate of six hundred every other day, it will take over two months. We will be scattered over Wyoming, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Arkansas, and California. To write of the coming of eighteen thousand from their homes to a temporary assembly center, to live together for three or four months to go again day after day six hundred at a time to vague and unknown things as bizzards and vast reclamation projects is beyond me. It is just as difficult to write of the experiences and reactions of one person without knowing to whom one speaks, unless everything is said.

As for the tangible things I have done, they're few in number but varied. Steam-table server on the workers' line and then the baby line, then received a transfer to the Writers' Project to work with twenty four others in an attempt to write a documentary history of the Santa Anita Center from its very bare beginnings. The extra-curricular activities were life art classes and judo. At present I am waiting for an army permit to travel to Manzanar to work on the guayule project as a sort of assistant cyto-genetist.

This is all that I can say for myself. I'm sorry that it couldn't have been better after the long delay.

Very sincerely,

Fumiko Makino

Santa Anita —
August 9, 1942

Dear Miss Breed,

I received your letter a few days ago, but I'm sorry I wasn't able to write to you right away. I think the ^{folder} letters you are planning to make out of the letters from the evacuees will be of great ^{interest} help to the people who are not experiencing the same things as we are, and I hope I will be of some help in giving you some ~~info~~ information of our interesting life in camp.

It was about 2½ months ago that I was evacuated to Santa Anita from Palo Alto. I am alone in camp with another family since my parents are all in Hawaii. I came to California to go to college, and due to this evacuation I had to leave school. I hope to continue with my college work again this fall in Chicago if I could get a travel permit. At present I'm waiting anxiously to get a community acceptance in Chicago so I could get a travel permit to leave the camp.

Camp life in Santa Anita isn't so bad as I thought it would be before I was evacuated. Fortunately we were one of the later groups that were evacuated for many things had been improved in camp since the arrival of the first evacuees. In order to avoid evacuation when it was first taking place in other communities I voluntarily evacuated from Berkeley to Oberlin, Ohio. In a month I found myself back in California again, and in another month I landed in Santa Anita Assembly Center. I have no regrets for coming back to California and being sent to camp for I am experiencing something different and historic that I could talk about in the later years when I get back to Hawaii. The only thing that worries me is whether I could get out

of camp this fall to continue with my schooling for that was the reason I left the islands last August to come to the states. If it weren't for that worry this camp life is a wonderful summer vacation for me, that is if this vacation of mine doesn't last too long.

There are always some activities going on in camp that people can attend and spend their spare time. Several knitting and drafting classes are held everyday in the beautiful grandstand building. Games of Japanese "Go" are being played by the old Japanese men; day and night classes of bridge are held for the younger people. The youngsters up till the high school ages attend classes everyday to keep up to their much needed education. Even the adults have the privilege of learning English in this camp, and it is wonderful to see such an enthusiastic crowd trying hard to master this difficult language. There are woodcraft, handcraft, art classes and all kinds of classes that people can take part in. Like any other places we have church services on Sunday and in the evening there is music appreciation. Besides these activities there are social activities and entertainments for both the younger + older generations. Dances are held every Saturday evening on the tile ramp of the grand stand. Both jitterbug music + soft music are furnished by the camp orchestra or by recordings. We have a wonderful orchestra called the "Starlight Serenaders" and we also have an Hawaiian orchestra and jazz bands. Community singing is held once a week which draws a large crowd of young people. Talent shows are held now and then, and the best one that I've ever seen was held on the eve of July 4th. I was surprised myself at the great number of talented people that there are in this camp. Many of them are professionals, and

It's a shame that their abilities are put to waste now. Separate entertainments for the benefit of the older people are also held. Once in a great while old movies are shown on the grandstand and since there are almost 20,000 people here two showings are given on two nights. It isn't worth the trouble of going to see it because we have to be there early and wait hours before the movie starts since there will be a large crowd attending. We can hardly see the picture sitting way up on the grandstand since the screen is so small, and the talkie isn't very clear either. The movie cannot be shown until about 8:30 P.M. because the sun doesn't set until late. Boy do we all crave to go to a good show outside our bobbed fence! Sitting on the grandstand we could see the bright neon lights of the Arcadia theater which is just about 50 yards outside the fence.

Staying in a camp without doing anything makes one's life very dull + monotonous. I didn't mind loafing at first but now I've become sick + tired of it. Because of the terrible heat we all loose our pep + become lazy. I just watch the days go by everyday without accomplishing anything.

It won't be long now before we'll be relocated to some mid-western states. Everybody is wondering where we'll be sent; we might go to Arizona, or Utah, or Colorado, or Wyoming or Arkansas. Wherever we go it won't be a nice place, but we'll try to make the best of it. I'm getting worried now since our day of evacuation is getting near and I haven't heard anything about my being able to get a travel permit to Chicago. Well, it seems as though I'll be

going to another camp with the rest of the Japanese people. I always thought I won't have to go. Even if I get relocated I won't give up hope of getting out of the camp. At the end I'm sure everything will turn out all right as I want it to be.

Although we were sent to an internment camp we are still grateful for all the things the government is doing for us. I don't think any other country will treat its prisoners of war, as we are called, so well as America treats us Japanese.

Everybody in camp, especially the older people, are very much worried as to what will happen to us Japanese after the war. They are wondering whether or not they'll be able to go back to their old homes in California. Even if they do go back they won't have much money and they might not be able to do the work that they used to do before evacuation. This is one of the many worries that seem to be among the people here in camp.

There are lots of things that I could say about our camp but since I'm not a very good writer I won't be able to help you much. This isn't a very good letter telling you about our camp life here, but I hope it will help you a little in gathering some information.

Yours truly,
Chiyoko Nishimura

Merced Assembly Center
A-5-1
Merced, California
August 2, 1942.

ack
Miss E. D. Brud
18 Panoramic
Berkeley, California

Dear Miss Brud:

The graduates of the University of California are very busy at the Merced Assembly Center. In our communities before evacuation our Caucasian friends were the leaders, but here, except for the administration staff, we Americans of Japanese ancestry have the responsibility of being leaders. Those of us who have had the privilege of attending universities and colleges have been given many of the responsible positions.

Many of us were never busier than we are today. We are "taking it" by working hard at our jobs. We have no time to brood over the "bad luck" of this war.

I will tell you something about our Education Department. Mr. Richard

Mitchell, the administrative supervisor, is a U.C. graduate. Right under him is the Educational director, J. Terami, U.C. '22, and holder of Ph.D in Mathematics from U.C. At the present time we are having vacation school for elementary, high school, and adult students with over a thousand enrolled in our school. The majority of the teachers are former U.C. students. The Education Department is also sponsoring the weekly forum with Mr. Fred Arimoto, U.C. '42, director. Miss Martha Takemura, U.C. '42 is the director of the Nursery school.

We are informed that when regular schools begin in the fall that there will not be enough teachers available for most of the Relocation Centers. We feel that the students should get the schooling under qualified Caucasian teachers. Is there any way you could help us?

yours sincerely,
Kazuo Masuda.

ackn

Tanforan Assembly Center
Barrack 141 - Apt. 1
San Bruno, California

July 26, 1942

My dear Eleanor D. Breed,

I am very happy to hear from you and also to learn that people ^{in the} outside world are taking interest in the evacuation of the Japanese people.

I will try my best to write about how I, myself, face the situation and also how the rest of the Japanese people, who are living with me face the crisis.

To begin with, we are located at the former Tanforan Race Track in San Bruno. The weather is not too favorable for it is somewhat too windy at times and on the other hand, too hot. As for today, it is somewhat hot; no wind, and the sun is scorching. After awhile, we will get accustomed to this type of climate and then, maybe, things will turn up to be different.

We are fed very well here. Instead of growing thinner, every other person has been putting on some weight. Two times a week, Tuesdays and Fridays, we have fish for dinner and on other days, we have American Dish. At first fish was served

once a week but the Japanese people, esp. the first generation prefer Japanese dishes. than Americans so, they made this change. Personally, I do prefer American dish after being accustomed for nineteen years.

There are lots of interesting things going on practically every night, Wednesday nights are opened for Townhall meetings with very interesting topics to be discussed. Thursday nights are for Talent shows. Couple of weeks ago, under the direction of Mr. Goro Suzuki, we performed a Hawaiian Program. The orchestra consisted of a steel guitar, two ukeleles, two Spanish guitars and a vocalist. We, also had a male chorus, who dressed as Hula skirts made of crepe papers and I did my share by doing the hula. We had rehearsals every night and it was fun teaching the male chorus to do the hula. This program gathered the most crowd and I am proud to say it is the best program put on so far. Saturday nights are especially for dancing in the social hall. This is a community wide affair and we all go to the clubhouse. The hall is always decorated beautiful with crepe papers or green leaves.

Besides these days, softball games are going on every day; messhalls, between messhalls, hospitals against other workers etc.

I am working in the recreation dept. teaching dances and leading girls in athletics. There are so much to be done even if we had a start from nothing. We have been having donations from the outside world such as, ping pong sets, baseballs etc. we have the recreation dept. in far advance. Only thing is, there is not room to do all this to keep every one busy. we are still lacking some equipments as footballs, basket balls etc. but in the present, we are trying our best to get hold of these things that people ask for.

The people on the outside may figure evacuation is horrible as a bad nightmare but there are many of them who feel thankful for we are having good food and a place to sleep. I have been talking to a British Lady who, is one of us here, and she is very grateful that she can now have a decent stitch on her clothes and luxurious food. But on the other hand there some people who miss the nightclubs and buying pretty clothes. I myself am one of them but, this camping life is

thrilling and yet sometimes, disgusting. Up till recently, our group, so called, "Jivers" have been having jam sessions in the laundry rooms but people has complained so we quit entirely.

At first, during the first couple of weeks, I hated myself for being a Japanese but now after associating and living among them and learning their language, I have no such silly ideas, any more. In fact, I have the idea that we should feel proud of our yellow color.

One thing, there is to regret is, it made a lot of changes in the future for me. It shattered our future but we are hoping, it will not be for long until the old friends are together again.

In our so-called "Jivers", the boys are all the age of twenty - to twenty-three. They also miss their night clubs and their outside friends for they were among negroes and the caucasians.

The camp life as a whole is all right except for the fact that this sort of life may retard the growing children in their manners and also the disadvantage for education.

So, as a whole, you can see, that even if we are living such uncomfortable lives here, there are yet many comfortable things.

As far as this life is concerned, I ~~would~~ would give anything to be back at the International House with my old friends but on the other hand, I would hate to leave my ^{few} new Japanese friends I made here. Of course, there are lots of people, I may not like but those few are worth and mean a lot to me. For they are practically the only ^{Japanese} friends, I really came to know and like.

A good title for the booklet? Well, let me see, ———. How would this be: "Camp life at the Assembly Centers"? or this: "Various Assembly Centers"?

I hope, I was of a help even if, I did not follow some of the questions asked.

Sincerely yours,
May Mukai

ackn

July 24, 1942

Dear Miss Eleanor D. Breed,

Words fail to express my feeling of gratitude and happiness which your kindly note brought to me.

Please accept my most sincere thanks for remembering me as House member.

I had been studying very hard for the past two month or so. Everytime I am transferred from one camp to another, I wonder how far or how close it will be from "I" House.

Now that I am in Minnesota, it seems more hopeless than ever to visit the House. However, I know that there will come a day when everything will be normal again, and we will be able to see each other as we used to do.

As to the school, we are strictly forbidden to give out any information pertaining to what we do, and so I shall just say that I am studying hard and doing my best to fulfill my duty to my country.

And by order from the commanding officer, we are not allowed to discuss, by orally or by writing, a matter regarding our present situation. Therefore, will you kindly forgive me from discussing this matters as you requested in your letter.

I sincerely thank you, again.

Very truly yours,

David J. Watanabe

Put. DAVID J. WATANABE
Mil. Inf. SERVICE,
HEADQUARTER LANGUAGE SCHOOL,
CAMP SAVAGE, MINNESOTA.

U. S. ARMY.



Miss Eleanor D. Breed,
c/o International House Ass.
International House, U. of C.,
Berkeley, California

Ackn

Block C, Bar. 4, Ap't. 1
Fresno Assembly Center
Fresno, California
July 24, 1942

Dear Miss Breed,

Thank you so much for your letter---we sure appreciate the interest that you and your committee have shown in us. It really means a lot to know that those on the "outside" are trying to help us. And the booklet idea sounds really swell---please put me on the mailing list so I won't miss out on any of the news.

Let's see---as to the life here, and all---The first thing that comes to my mind is the HEAT! Simply terrific! With my sunburn and all, I look like a licorice drop wearing glasses. I'm T HAT black. But this place is really not bad, although it's far from being a "recreation center", as some people have mistakenly called it. The food's O.K., (I've really gotten on very intimate terms with the potato) the straw mattress is still lumpy but better, and johnnies have been improved. As for the dust---welll---it's so thick that it doesn't do much good to shower, except that you can acquire a new coat of dust.

Needless to say, the evacuation was such a drastic change for all of us---but we've finally fallen into a normal routine of living as possible under the circumstances. Our jobs take up the greater part of our time and the evenings are pretty well filled with talent shows, forums, dances, etc. Right now, I'm teaching three English classes in our Summer School, working ~~the~~ with the Forum groups, and doing Girl Scouts work. Lots of fun, and lots of new experiences.

All in all, the setup here is fairly good, generally speaking. I won't mention morale, because I'm not qualified to make any statements. However, I will say that the new orders which came out today, establishing lights-out (also radios turned off) at 10:30 P.M. every night, has lots of people wondering. I for one am awfully anxious to know the whys and wherefores of the whole thing, because these new orders certainly seem to infringe on our personal and individual rights. Also, I'm afraid that there's a tendency to get into a rut, physically, mentally, and spiritually. It's so easy to go stale in a place like this, which is not inspiring, to say the least.

Luckily there are a few Cal kids in our center. Last night, about ten of us had a get-together, and had a grand time eating watermelon, cheese crackers, and potato chips, interspersed with a lot of gabbing about Cal and stuff. It felt so good to talk about the "Good old days" when we were out in civilization. (that's what we call the outside world.)

Right now my main interest is in getting out of this place, back east to some university. The idea of spending any length of time here simply doesn't appeal in the least. I'm too afraid that this sort of life will get the best of me, and I'm also anxious to get out so I can continue my education, possibly in the field of Social Group Work.

Let me know if you'd like more information as to the set-up here---I didn't know exactly how much factual material you wanted. Thanks again for your interest in us, and I'd certainly appreciate it if you would let me know if I can help out in any way.

Sincerely,

Rayko Mano

P.S. My handwriting is really very scribbly, so I thought this typewriter might save you a lot of unnecessary deciphering.

Acken

Building 413, Apartment A
Tule Lake Project, W.R.A.
Newell, California

July 16, 1942

Miss Eleanor Breed
The International House Association
International House
Berkeley, California

Dear Miss Breed,

I received your note requesting letters giving information on the life led by evacuees and suggesting the printing of booklets for circulation among the alumni, and during the past few days have given the matter considerable thought. While it is easy to see the sincere intention of your project and the potential value of such a pamphlet, I cannot find a way in which I can cooperate with you in the wholehearted manner in which I should like to participate. There are two reasons that make me hesitant.

I must confess that I do have some material of the nature that you suggest; however, I am a paid employee of the University of California stationed here in Tule Lake for the purpose of making observations. While some of the data I am collecting will be used for material for my Ph.D. thesis, most of it belongs to the University and I cannot take the liberty of disposing with it as I see fit. (Please keep the subject of the research project by the University and my connection to it confidential).

The second reason that I cannot send some of the material I have is that I wish to cooperate with the War Relocation Authority as much as possible. After the cordial reception that they have given to our research project, there is little else that we could do unless we were unduly ungrateful. The War Relocation Authority frowns upon too much information leaving the Centers because they realize that the public opinion in certain segments of the population are not in accord with their humanitarian policies and anything short of prison treatment will be attacked. When we consider the fact that the W. R. A. must ask Congress for millions of dollars a year to pay its expenses, their attitude is easily understandable. While there is no censorship in the center, I feel that individually and as a part of the staff in the study I should cooperate with their efforts to the best of my ability.

It is indeed with regret that I must reply in this manner. Please rest assured that I shall be glad to cooperate with you in any other way.

Very sincerely,

Tamotsu Shibutani

This letter was sent to evacuees, former I. House members, as soon as we could locate which Assembly Center they were in. The letters that follow are their replies, from which a digest has been made for publication in a forthcoming issue of the Quarterly.

Dear

Mr. Blaisdell of International House has asked me to be chairman of a committee of the Alumni Association concerning itself particularly with evacuees, to keep House members and friends in touch with each other. There are a thousand things for such a committee to do, of course, and we won't be able, I'm afraid, to do them all. But one important one, I feel, is the spreading of information. Hence this letter to you, to ask you to write me a letter in return.

During the past three or four months History has come pretty forcibly into your life, taking you away from the things you have known and planting you down among things that are new and strange, and, frequently, uncomfortable. Your friends want to know about you -- where you are, how you are, what you are doing, what you need, how they can help.

Most of us realize that this business of being a victim of war is a matter of luck -- bad luck -- depending upon decisions made across the seas, over which we have no control. The fact that you had to move and I didn't is nothing either of us were to blame for, ourselves. You are meeting the situation in reality -- I meet it only in imagination, and I wonder, often, whether I could "take it" if I had to. How did you meet it, and how has your point of view changed as time has gone on? Will you write me about this, and add little human interest incidents about some of the other people around you and how they are adjusting to the situation?

I want very much to have a booklet made from your letters, if it can be worked out. If we can finance the printing (my next problem) we can send the booklets out (1) as a sort of round-robin letter to all former House members and friends now in Assembly Centers and Relocation Areas, (2) to other West Coast House alumni, who so far know very little about what the evacuation orders have meant in the lives of those evacuated, and (3) to the Chicago and New York Houses, who know still less. In a way, this booklet may turn out to be a rather historic document, you see, and it may seem wise to work up a Volume II, perhaps, six months from now. Any suggestions for a good title for the booklet?

Please let me hear from you on this soon.

Sincerely,

Eleanor D. Breed

Enclosed: stamped return
envelope

(Ackn -)

Tanforan

3:30 AM

6/9/42

Dear Eleanor:-

Thank you for your letter and your interest in us evacuees! Not many people would take a personal interest like you are taking! Life here isn't so bad, in fact it is interesting, only we miss the variety and freedom of ^{our} life outside.

Probably, in fact, most likely you know Anne Saito - Kunitani who has worked at the C. House for several years and you have written & corresponded frequently. So in case she hasn't sent you one of our "Totalizer" (our newspaper) I'm sending you one. I think you will find it interesting as well as a good source of "what's going on in this camp".

At present I'm working in the hospital and am now on night duty 12-8. Hence the reason for this beautiful stationery and the ungodly hour I'm writing to you. All the patients are asleep and "not a creature is stirring not even a mouse." So I took

time out and am writing to you. Otherwise you may, Chances are, not receive a letter for a long time. I'm a terrible correspondent - it's that lagg bone in me. My family, who are now in Denver Colorado on their own, always complain on that point.

Getting down to the subject there are about 8,000 people here at Taqran. Our hospital is divided in 4 units. ~~at base~~

BARRACK 1 = Clinic

BARRACK 2 = WOMEN'S WARD

" 3 = MATERNITY "

" 4 = MENS "

(I'm giving you just the round figures, so if you want to know more, I'll gladly write to you again around the early A.M.s as I'm on night duty for 2 weeks.)

There are about 11 Mess Halls which accommodate from 500 - 900 people daily. We have 2 shifts for each meal: Morning (breakfast) 7:00 - 7:45; 7:45 - 8:30; Noon ^(LUNCH) 12:00 - 12:45; 12:45 - 1:30; Dinner (supper)

5:00 - 5:45; 5:45 - 6:30. Meals are pretty good. Only we do miss home-cooking! And also our choice of food, as variety - Italian, Spanish & Chinese dishes! And good desserts - Cream & fresh Berry pies! (Let's leave the subject, before my mouth waters too much)

I haven't covered very much ground, but if there is any thing specific you like to know, I'd gladly inform you, if I can.

Thanking you again and my best wishes included

Yours hopefully,
Fitch

P.S. The average attitude around here is optimistic: "making the best of the situation" so life goes merrily on. Especially if you have something to do, time just flies. So most of us try to find some kind of employment or other: - Recreation, teaching, nursing, medicine, Road work, Carpenter's work, etc. A community on itself.

ack

Mine Okubo
Tanforan
Barrack 16--50
San Bruno, California
September 1st, 1942

Dear Miss Breed:

On May 1st, 1942 I was reduced to a number and placed in a horse stall at Tanforan Assembly Center, San Bruno, California. This place was formerly the Tanforan Race Tracks. I arrived here under armed guards.

The Center is surrounded by high barbed wire fence, with a good number of soldiers on patrol outside the fence and internal policemen within.

Conditions have been improving but they could be still better. No matter how well we are treated, we can't get away from the feeling of being prisoners. --Censorship is also very strong.

Up to the very last day of April 30th, 1942 I was in the employ of the Northern California Federal Art Program as a Grade A Artist. I designed and executed mosaic murals for the United States Army and I planned posters and signs for the Oakland Defense Council. --The last of the six mosaics for the new Oakland Hospitality House had to be completed so I didn't have much time for packing. I shall never forget the sleepless nights and the mad packing. To this day I am not quite sure where I scattered my belongings, including all of my furniture.

All this happened too quickly for most of us to think about, and fight for our Constitutional rights. Before we knew it we were represented by a small organized group of Japanese who took the matter wholly into their hands. I personally think we got a rotten deal. When decree so and so came out, I was evacuated with the rest of them.

The irony of the whole thing is that during the years 1938-1940 I was in Europe. I was on a traveling art scholarship from the University of California. Being an artist I was interested in people as individuals, not as political bodies. As I traveled through more than a dozen different countries, I noticed the self-centeredness

of individuals within these various countries. I wondered if ever the nations would get together to think alike. Racial persecution was also very strong at the time, more so in some countries than in others. When I saw all this I thought how happy I would be to be back in America.

I have made many friends in these countries and I have kept up correspondence with them. Censorship has stopped a great many of them but to this day I receive letters postmarked Switzerland, Egypt, France. My friends tell me about the conditions abroad in their letters and express their envy of my living in a country like the United States. What am I to say to these friends? I have not answered their letters because I hate to tell them what has happened to me in this beautiful free country. The idea alone would sadden them.

Life on the tracks is far from being a paradise as many people would have you believe. It may be such a place for those who have no grey matter but for those who have any normal amount of sense and who are used to an active life, it is a pity and a lot of waste of energy.

I have friends who say, "Why, you are getting free board, free food, free clothing, etc. You have no worries." Having not been in our shoes, how are they to judge our inner feelings? It isn't so much the material or physical aspects that matter. It is something far deeper. It is the effect on our spirit. It isn't the question of whether we get hot or cold water; beans or stew; feather or straw mattresses, it is the idea of being put away into camps, completely divorced from the National Defense effort. This is what hurts. An act like this only helps to bring about greater hatred and greed.

We are supposed to be fighting for democratic ideals and yet everything seems so contradictory. What is said and what is done are absolutely different. Everything points to the welfare of individual groups and not for all. Are we to follow the footsteps of the other countries?

Being ambitious and optimistic I look forward to a better tomorrow but I don't expect it soon. Sometimes I doubt if things will be cleared up by the many sacrifices made in this war.

For four months I have been in camp making observations studying individuals as human beings. There are

many interesting characters here. Many of them have heart-breaking life stories to tell. The truth is clearest among the "down-to-earth" types. Most of them have suffered and sacrificed much to find a better place for their children. They have fought persecution and intolerance before. Of course there are those who make it difficult for the rest by seeking things for own selfish interests but you should not judge everyone by these few. On the whole, I think the majority of the people wish to make an honest livelihood.

Personally, I feel that the four months have not been very pleasant, but I have found it interesting and humorous. Since this is the first time I have lived among the Japanese people this camp is like a foreign country to me.

We all think and wonder what this is all about. The old folks here accuse the second generation for bringing about this evacuation and vice versa. Many do not know what it is all about. The young, especially, ask many embarrassing questions. However, there are more of us who do know what it is all about and pray for our future. I have noticed lately that this passive existence has given many the "I don't give a damn feeling."

I teach Art three full days a week and when I keep smiling to these youngsters about the joys of living in this democratic country sometimes I wonder whether I really believe in the things I tell them.

There have been several art and hobby exhibitions given here in Camp. If you could see the industry and the capabilities of the Japanese evacuees as shown by the various articles they made from limited materials collected here in camp, you can't help but notice the talent and energy which are being wasted. It is a shame to hear that on the outside there is a labor shortage. The ex-convicts are freed, laborers are transported from Mexico. Children in teen age are asked to work. What are we in our position to think?

The inconsistencies of this evacuation puzzle me. I have a friend in camp who originated from Utah but because he was in San Francisco when decree so and so came out, he came here. His folks are in Utah. Now since the camp is going to be removed to a relocation camp in Utah, he, a citizen, will be interned in camp while his alien parents will come to pay him a visit. --I have another friend.

His father is an alien internee. His oldest brother is teaching Japanese to Army men. His other brother is a private in the United States Army and he is in turn a private. His mother and sister are in camp.

They say the one reason for evacuation was because of lack of time. But why? Even in England where war was in full swing a fair trial was given to all foreign individuals who happened to reside or be there.

It all boils down to the same old story--prejudice, money, politics. Pressure groups over minority. Until there is complete understanding there will never be peace.

What I pity most is the future of the younger generation. An atmosphere like the camp is a prize. Children run around here as if they were out of the cage. Most of them think it is a grand picnic. Respect and manners become an afterthought. With complete lack of privacy in the families as well as between families what can one expect of the young curious minds?

Very sincerely yours,

Miné Okubo

Miné Okubo