

J 15.05

67/14  
C



## SUBJECT: SCHOLASTIC STANDING

, A senior girl who is doing part-time work at school as a student reader told me that she had been correcting spelling tests for an eleventh grade class. She said, "I was very much disgusted to find that on the average the students missed 20 out of the 50 words given in the test. I was under the impression that the Japanese students rated higher scholastically than the average student." (K.U.)

## SUBJECT: OBON ODORI

The following is an incident which took place in September and which I heard of later. A sansei girl about eight or ten years old happened to go to one of the dance practices held before the Obon Festival in Poston III. She was brought up in a Christian home in a rural district of Central California and evidently had never witnessed an Obon Odori before. She watched the girls dancing and when she came home that evening, she remarked to her mother, "Those Chinese dances are funny, aren't they?"

(K.U.)



1718

4-19-43

Adobe.

Conversation. with Tom Okano by T.S. *Joseph*  
School. C.R. ~~xxxxxx~~ Hospital, 81. ~~xxxxxx~~ schools. 54

In the showers I met Tom Okano, the foreman of the one of the crews at the School construction. I asked him how the school was progressing, the percentage of isseis and compred to niseis, etc. "The timekeeper keeps ~~the~~ track of our time, and also knows about how many are working. I think there are about 250 working there, mostly isseis. We have a foreman for each department, but there is one superintendat. We don't know when we will be able to finish this because the material for the roofs are not here yet, and also because it is getting too hot. Like today, from 9:30, it was too hot to work. I think we will have to do something about starting to work at 6, and quitting about 11. If the cooking school will make the breakfast, then we can do that. Otherwise, we can't work when it is too hot."

"My daughter, who used to work at the hospital as a nurse's aide was asked to work there again, but nothing doing, she isn't going to go back. She started as a nurse's aide at the little hospital, swept the floors, did a lot of dirty work, and then when they moved to the new hospital, she asked the head nurse if she could hve certain hours so that she could go to the sewing school; and when the nurse told her to scram out of there, she left, and then went to work at the employment department. Now they ask her to come back. For 12, 16, or 19 dollars a month, and you work full eight hours a day, at all hours, even at nite, it is not worth it."



EDUCATION. 54 b  
OBSERVATIONS - K.U.  
STATUS OF POSTON HIGH DIPLOMAS

May 3, 1943

Graduating seniors have been quite concerned about their diplomas and whether diplomas awarded by the Poston High School would carry full weight as other schools. In one case a student has written to the superintendent of schools in his home town about this matter. He received an answer that he had referred the matter to the state legal department and would answer that according to their ruling.

The Poston High School has advised the seniors to obtain their diplomas from their previous schools whenever possible. The thought in the mind of many is what will happen to the records after Poston is disbanded.



Int'd & recorded --- CTS

## On replacing Caucasians

"The people are not ready for absolute self government in  
the actual running of camp. However more stability will be  
~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ result by letting the Japanese  
handle more. --- will develop self respect,--- develop confi-  
dence. So that the Project Director should have veto power in case  
of emergency. Utter self gov -- might ask for diabolical  
Japanese personel should be electething popular election.

I am reminded of the <sup>clean</sup> efficiency of the college political office. It makes for less politics and more serving the community.

In this way before long every section gets re-presented.

The important thing is to get the people to feel that they are a part of the community. This will also give Administrative experience to many Japanese.



FU: City Gov.

X Rev. Morikawas 2---Interviewed & recorded by

Soc Jrn  
5/6-43  
CTS

### CORRECTIONS:

lack of  
under-  
standing  
Adm-vs  
people

There is so much misunderstanding and hard feeling due to lack of information. The strike is a good example of what I mean. There should be a monthly town hall meeting as big as the strike gathering bringing to the people all the salient points of what has happened during the past weeks and what standing will happen during the next few weeks. --- yes a short period between films in the movie period might be utilized at first for news dissemination.

But there is a necessity for building up community consciousness, social consciousness. Build the program something like the strike, include entertainment. Make it the big feature of the month.

We need more direct contact between the people and those who sit in the Administration. The lack of information is the source of misunderstanding and bring up problems.

apathy

The present system cuts ambition. Inefficient incapable High school girls get on a good job and the more competent one who don't have connections or who don't know how to sell themselves don't get noticed.

Job qualifications should be filed and by a method of interviews and Bd of examiners even office girls jobs should be on a civil service basis. It adds prestige .

People should be allowed to take examinations periodically so that new people could have opportunity.



FU: City Gov.

Soc Jrn  
5/6-43  
Morikawa int'd---- CTS  
3

Caucasians don't know how to size up people.

Employment With them the one who talks smoothest and writes good letters get further.

The need of persons with dependents should be considered in giving job <sup>outside</sup> preference.

School Block THE SCHOOL SYSTEM is hectic. Buildings should be concentrated in one section. Moving the people of a block is asking a lot but children's welfare far greater than the temporary feelings of a few families.

Need for Social Centers. SOCIAL LIFE is lack of opportunity for healthy -----S. L. There is a keen feeling on the part of young people for lack of recreational social life. The formal sermon is the only thing we have to offer. We need a place where young people can come and lounge around and meet their friends. Before we had at least the drug stores the parks the gyms but here social center is completely ~~in the hands of the~~ lacking. With longer evenings the need is urgent.

I believe that it will be best to give the supervision of these centers completely to the churches, establishing them distributive ~~xxxxxx~~ <sup>VVV</sup> to serve the needs of wide areas.



5/ FU: Adult Education

X: Kibei

Int'd-

Blk Sty

5/10-43

-- CTS

Topic: Program ~~xx~~ for the Kibei.

By Rev. Kubota (Christian).

The program for the Kibei should get away from controversial subject such as about democracy. There isn't much difference between totalitarianism and democracy under war conditions. It is better to get them absorbed in some other topics such as science. Scientific explorations into biology astronomy, etc, will have a stabilizing effect.

Also the Kibei has only a subjective knowledge of Japanese history. He should be <sup>given</sup> ~~taught~~ the objective view of Japanese history, <sup>during</sup> why the last ten years Japanese education has been centered around the Emperor, then he could see the pros and cons of the theory. Most Kibeis have only had high school education which is not sufficient to give them <sup>power</sup> discriminative analytic thinking.



54

Schools

Conversation with Dr. Cary by AHL

Transportation problem

C.R. Transportation & Supply-163

5/29/43

Dr. Cary was telling me as we drove back from a class in Camp II that the bus which took the teachers to Parker on Saturday night has been discontinued. He was very mad about it. It was the only chance the teachers without cars had of getting out of Poston and it was just abruptly cut off without a word. The teachers are very sore and if that sort of thing isn't stopped there will be no teachers here. There are too many good jobs on the outside.



6-9-43

Interview with Dr. Cary by EHS

Subj.: Dr. Cary's experience of the past year with the Poston schools

A couple of days ago I had asked Dr. Cary if he would give me an interview and I had explained at that time I wanted to discuss with him his years work in Poston and that I hoped he could give me some of his impressions, particularly, in regard to the following two points: (1) relationship to other administrative departments and (2) the relationship of his teachers to the people of the community. At that time he said that most of his ideas on these subjects were embodied in a letter which he had written to Dr. Ade of WRA. He gave me a copy of this letter and suggested that it serve as a basis of discussion this morning. I found Dr. Cary writing a letter in long hand. He immediately got up and greeted me cordially saying that he had just been thinking about something that he would like to discuss with me. This turned out to be the subject of national policy in regard to Japanese. He said, "It seems so doggone illogical the way our government builds up feeling against what they call the "Japs" meaning the people of Japan and then apply the same term to citizens of this country like our Nisei. It's just so doggone illogical to me that it just about makes this job impossible." I agreed with him. He went on in this vein saying little more than what he had already said for several minutes. After a little more elaboration of this same idea between us during which I tried to point out the importance of giving currency to a term like Nisei in the United States. I asked/<sup>him</sup> whether it had been satisfactory having the schools set up as part of Community Service. He said, apparently a little reluctant to come down to this most prosaic level of expression, "I don't think it was really a very good thing. You know I never got in touch with the rest of the staff



till pretty late in the game. I think that was partly a result of being set up the way we were. Now, Nell did her best. She tried to bring me and some of the rest of us into things, but that was pretty well along. That didn't come until later. I felt quite isolated during those first months. I suppose I could have done something about it myself, but I let it go and I suppose I was to blame. I have been very greatly struck by the centralization of the departments here on the project. I think they could have been handled better. I think, Dr. Spicer, that the schools should have been brought in as a very vital part of the whole project policy. I think that we would have something to contribute in formulating the general policy and plans for the project as it went along and I think we would have profited by closer contact with the other departments. But I feel that the vital contribution which the educational people have to make was not allowed to take place. I think that is a very great tragedy.

I asked Dr. Cary whether he felt that his department had been in close touch with the people of the community. He said, "To tell you the truth, I think we missed a bit there. This should have been worked out on a cooperative basis. I don't think we asked for cooperation. But I am sure that I am to blame on that point. I was so concerned with getting the schools started. Perhaps I have concerned myself too much on those details, but there seemed to be no other way to do it. I spent, weeks, I think, to get teachers. And then when it came time for the schools to open 25 of the teachers selected didn't appear. Not only that, but they failed to give me any indication as to whether they would come later on. 25 of the teachers never wrote me again after definitely accepting positions here and I think have a reflection moral state of the teachers.



To think that school teachers are so undisciplined and so lacking in moral sense to have allowed me to count on them up to the end and then to have failed completely to get in touch with me at the time I needed them most. It's really something that makes me wonder about our own country, America. Sometimes I think that we Americans have no criterion judgement for anything--moral or political or social.

I asked Dr. Cary how successful the Parents' Teachers' Association had been. He said, "I am afraid that that is the place where we missed the beat. I should have been doing more there. Perhaps I should have had some women to devote most of her time to working out the parents-teachers relationship. Now in Camp 3 we had Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_, an evacuee who was very, very able and she has done a swell job in working out a PTA. I think that Mr. Potts, himself, was not experienced in such things, but it didn't matter there because there was this very, very fine women and I am wondering what we are going to do without her as she is planning to go out very soon. In Camp 2 there was Mr. McLaren always concerned with the smaller details. I don't think he worked out the PTA and in this camp I have worked with Dr. Harris, but there have been personal matters and to be very frank with you I must say I am disappointed. Yes, I am disappointed. I think that he has done a very fine job, but there has been too much concern with certain personal things and I don't suppose he really had the time to go out with the people.

I asked Dr. Cary if he had worked very much with the Council committee on Education in the period before the strike.

DR. CARY: Yes. I saw a good deal of those people. There was Mrs. Tachibana. A fine girl, but also discouraged. Her husband was interned, you know. He is still in the internment camp and she was so hopeless.



So lost about things. I think she was respected and she was too discouraged. We had the first PTA meeting, to some extent through her efforts, right before the strike. After that there was nothing and I suppose I am to blame. But Mrs. Tachibana is a lovely woman.

EHS: Did you work much with Dr. Saito who was also on that committee?

CARY: Yes. I remember Saito very well. I saw a good deal of him for a time. He was an explosive sort of person. Always at the beginning he was angry, but I soon found out as I talked with him and worked with him that he was a very fine fellow, very cooperative and very anxious to work constructively. He was so disappointed in that period just before the strike when they blocked the opening of one of the blocks for the high school.

EHS: Who blocked that?

CARY: We spoke to the Council about it. We brought it to the Council because we felt that it was a community problem, but it never was worked out. No one took it up. I had been dismayed about cooperation. You know, never once was I asked by the Council for any report on education. Never once was I asked to go tell them our program or what we had accomplished. I went before them several times myself, as you know, and then told them about my problems, but never once did they ask me to appear.

EHS: Did you consider bringing some of the older people into an Educational Council?

CARY: I do believe there was some talk of that, but we didn't go ahead with it. There was a failure in collaboration. I don't suppose we were sure how to go ahead. I wonder whether we Americans really know what we are to do or where we are to go. I wonder why we



have been able to permit such a thing as the relocation centers. There is something fundamentally out of order in the whole American system.

Dr. Cary went on at some length in this vein indicating that he had attempted to give what he called real American direction to the schools in Poston, by working out his philosophy of voluntary cooperation. As he explained this he handed to me a copy of the Educational Departments statement of school objectives entitled Voluntary Cooperation. He said as he did this that he thought perhaps it had not been the right approach. That the teachers had no clear idea of what "voluntary cooperation" meant and that there had probably been little contribution by most of them to his program. He went on then to talk about how excellent the evacuee teachers had been in comparison with the Caucasian ones. He said that he felt that not only in every case evacuee teachers had been more successful and some of them had done work which would have done credit to the most able and most experienced teachers he had ever known. He mentioned, especially, in this connection Kate Watanabe and said that he felt her work had been perhaps the finest in Poston. He went off again on the vein of Americans having no criterion judgement as to what the basis of education should be. I asked him if he wouldn't consider preparing a little account of his view of the main points of his experience as Director of Education in Poston. He said that he would like to try that, but felt that there would be little more in it than what he had said already today and hoped he might have a chance to do it before he left.



17/ A DOBE WORK  
PUBLIC WORKS  
Observation, EC  
School buildings

6/14/43

Walk over to the Adobe Works this morning and stand there watching the work. Estimate at least a crew of 60 about the place, with probably 20 women included in it. The women seem to be issei in the majority -- at least all see are middle aged. One woman looks to be in her 70s, with white hair most of her teeth gone and very wrinkled. The men have a wider variation in age. The women are working the adobe mixture in the forms, or mortaring the bricks together. The men are working with the mixer, mortaring jobs, wheel barrow work, and a few are working on the roofs of one of the buildings. At the moment the crew seems to be working to put up the walls on one building, with the work contributing to this with the exception of the roof crew. The building has the foundation laid, and the first row of bricks bound to the foundation with asphalt. They are just beginning the second tier and are raising the string that marks where this is to be.

Mr. Bash comes over and speaks with EC for a moment. He says they are to have 10 buildings. At their present rate and crew, it takes about a week to finish the walls of one building. The first building they put up, took 5 weeks. That was partly due to inexperience with the work and material, and partly to the fact that they had only a small crew at the time. Some of his best workers here are the women.

Talk with one of the women. She says she has been on the adobe work for only two weeks. Today it isn't bad, but when it is too hot or when the wind blows and the dust comes, she doesn't like the work.

There is a good deal of joking back and forth among the workers. All the talk seems to be in Japanese.

In watching the work -- would say that the work pattern is a sudden spurt of energy when they go very fast, then a resting period when they either stop work or slow down to a point where very little is done.



6/19/43

Conversation with Mrs. Felsted, teacher, by AHL

(This is dictated 6/26/43 by memory without notes)

School and stuffing of ballots

I sat next to Mrs. Felsted at lunch and she told me that her class had had elections and had stuffed the ballot. There were two more ballots in the box than there were students in class that morning. She talked about this with her face looking very sharp and severe and she kept saying over and over that it was the principle of the thing. When I tried to draw her out by questioning, her answers were very brief. For example, I would say, what kind of an election and she would say, the election. I would say, what sort of an election and she would say, the class election, and I would say, I don't know much about these school elections, what were they electing, and she would say, class officers. I would say, what kind of officers and she would say, class officers.

She seemed rather annoyed with me when I didn't express much horror over the ballot being overstuffed. She asked what I thought ought to be done about it and I said I thought it was a very interesting problem to find out why it had been stuffed. I would like first of all to know what the factions and cliques are within the class and she nodded her head at that and said that they had factions. I said that I thought that I would sit down with the students that I knew best and ask them what they thought about it and what they thought should be done. Mrs. Felsted said that none of them would talk. They just sit there in silence and she can't tell what they are thinking but she is sure that the ballot stuffing is due to the pro-Axis group and the same people who caused the strike in Boston. It seemed to me that she probably got herself so far out on the limb on her class that she never will be able to get back and there was not much point in giving her any advice.

Since that time, I have seen Mrs. Felsted and she has been rather distant in her manner and it seems to me that she is angry with me because I did not give the ballot stuffing more serious thought and did not sympathize with her concern about the principle of thing but expressed more interest in cause and meaning.



6/26/43  
(typed 6/28/43)

Tonight was the Graduation for Poston 3 seniors. It was held down where the amphitheatre is going to be, on the hillside of the 310 Firebreak. All afternoon, people had been at work building the wooden stage for the occasion.

The Carys came down for dinner before Commencement and brought Mrs. Takemoto up to the Personnel Mess for dinner. The exercises were to begin at 8:30, and about that time drove down to the area with the Burges and the Drennans. The Carys followed in their car with Mrs. Takemoto. It was still full light, but the sun was a red ball just above the California Mountains when we arrived. Already the hillside was filled with people. In front near the stage were wooden benches marked off with ropes. Some of the teachers were seated there as well as quite a number of evacuees. (Earlier, Mrs. Potts was saying that she had asked Jimmy Urata for tickets for commencement. He told her that the Caucasians didn't have to have them, only the evacuees. The reason was that the benches were for the parents and relatives of the graduating students and since nobody would know who they were, they had to have tickets. But Caucasians you could tell by looking at them. So apparently all Caucasians whether connected with school or not were given seats in reserved area. Others had to bring their own seats.) Around this were many sitting on wooden stools or benches, and could see many coming from all directions carrying stools or camp chairs. By the time the exercises started, there must have been over a thousand gathered to watch it. Saw many older people, and crowds of small children who spent the evening running back and forth in the open space between stage and audience.

The front of the stage was decorated with green cotton wood branches, and right in front but on the ground was a space decorated for an orchestra pit. Here was a small orchestra, probably from the highschool since all looked young.



Observation, EC  
Commencement Exercises 2

All were girls. There were two at the old upright piano, and about eight others. Five violinists, and three with clarinets. In front of them were two microphones. And nearby was a loudspeaker box.

On the stage was a small American flag at the back, which made Mr. Burge sigh when he saw it because of its inadequate size. Then three tiers of benches, and a wooden table decorated with a white lace table-cloth and a large white covered box which contained the diplomas.

When we arrived, two Junior girls were standing at the edge of the reserved section -- Terry Hamaguchi and a Miss Sasaki. They handed us printed programs and indicated the front row of the benches. So we filed in and sat ostentatiously a long row of Caucasians in the best seats in the place. Then followed a long wait since the program did not start until 9:10, despite its announced time of 8:30. This was broken by Jimmy Urata coming rushing over to Mr. Potts, perspiring and breathless to ask him if he can remember a name -- one boy is going to be up there and here is a roll for him but it contains no diploma but it would be embarrassing for him since he will be up on the platform if he sat there when the others came forward, so will Mr. Potts remember something about it. It's finally settled that his name is to be called after the honor students so that Mr. Potts will remember to hand him this special roll, and Urata rushes off again. (He and Frances Wovarowsky are Senior Advisors and as such in charge of the Commencement.)

More children arrive -- seem to be about anywhere from two to six. They play around in the sand and gravel, rolling around in the dust. Talking and laughing. Some are dressed for the affair, others come in ordinary clothes of overalls or play clothes, and one boy about five turns up in bathing trunks. Three dogs put in their appearance and spend the rest of the evening alternately racing up and down or gazing at the stage.



6/26/43

At 9:10, the orchestra begins the Processional, and slowly from each side advances a slow line of students teetering from one foot to the next in the attempt to walk slowly enough. The two lines meet in front of the steps, and the couple mount the steps together and go on up to their places, separating again at the top of the steps to take places on opposite sides of the stage. A boy is paired with a girl, and in the line itself boys and girls alternate. The boys are dressed in dark trousers and light shirts, for once tucked into the top of the trousers. The girls are in light summer party dresses, many white, many pastel colors. The dresses are short, and most are full and stiff so that the girls look like the ballet dancers in Degas' pictures. Finally they are all in place, over a hundred of them with a few more girls than boys. Then Mr. Potts leads the way and some of the speakers go up -- Mr. Potts, Dr. Cary, Mr. Burge, Mrs. Takemoto, Paul Nagano, the two Senior Advisors, and a girl from the orchestra who is one of the seniors. (When Urata was down earlier, he asked Mr. Potts to take charge of the program).

First he announces the invocation, given by Paul Nagano. Nagano comes forward, asks all to rise and holds his arms up and out as he asks. All rise, and with bowed heads for the most part stand listening while he prays, his head bowed and eyes closed. He thanks god for the material things people have had in Poston, for the spiritual gains they have made here, and for the mental gains they have made through the schools. He has faith in the young people. He says that god is looking down at this assemblage from heaven and is sure to be pleased with what they have done. Then asks that they all be glorified through Jesus Christ whose presence glorifies the occasion, in the name of the father, the son and the holy spirit. Others raise their heads, but he stands a moment longer with head bowed. Then returns to his place.

(Next day ask Frances Wovarowsky if any Buddhist minister asked to participate-- she says none were and now she thinks of it, she thinks it was a mistake not to.)



6/26/43

(When first see the program, EC comments on absence of Buddhist minister on all these occasions. MB agrees, then says that he thinks it all right since Paul Nagano is the leader of the young people. Apparently does not see that about 2/3 of the young people Buddhists and not under PN's influence.)

Then Mr. Potts introduces Mr. Burge who gives the "Welcome Address."  
(About 4:30 this afternoon, MB did not know whether he was to speak or not.)

MB comes to the microphone, readjusts it for his height, and stands there moment, looking nervous and as though speaking to a large group of people was an ordeal for him. He speaks very briefly, but slowly, saying that like all good things in Poston, the schools started from tarpaper beginning. That last August when they were taken into 324 and told this was to be their school, this occasion seemed far away and they were doubtful that it could occur.

The success of the school this year is due to the hard work of teachers, students, parents and all the people of Poston. They can be proud of their accomplishments. Many of the students on the platform will go on to college or out to work, and they will be a credit to Poston. Some will not be able to go out, and for those -- he wants them to know that there is a place here that needs them greatly, and they will become leaders in this community.

He ends with the statement that he is proud to welcome the people to this first commencement in Poston. Goes back and sits down, followed by applause.

After a violin solo by one of the members of the orchestra (which is very long and quite well played and fairly well listened to but not by the children who are running back and forth and laughing and talking) Mr. Potts introduces Dr. Cary who speaks on "The Price of Liberty: Eternal Vigilance." He talks on and on and on, and covers the universe. He talks about his great great grandfather coming from Ireland because he was Protestant and not wanted in Ireland, he talks about the decreasing size of the universe, and the definition of liberty, which he regards as the cooperation of the common men to have a voice in the decisions affecting their own fate, on conservation and



6/26/43

child labor acts. He says that liberty doesn't mean just getting away from authority. Then says that the minimum requirement for the people here before they can have liberty is to get out again into the outside world. He talks about the fact that the graduates want to go on to school but because have no finances can't, and therefore don't have liberty to go. The answer to that is for the people to support state colleges and schools so there will be equal opportunity. And on and on, while one of the graduates gets a nose bleed and drops over the back of the stage to attend to it, and the dogs rush back and forth, and the children rush around and laugh and talk to such an extent that finally Winnie Hemingway comes down and tells one little group to be quiet and they go over and play on the gravel pile. The graduates sit fairly quietly but there is some squirming and gazing at programs and apparently few bother to listen to the speech. Hear that in the back of the crowd, good deal of noise and restlessness going on, but those in front are quiet. The speech is not interpreted (nor is any other part of the program — following the pattern of the Baccalaureate and the Volunteers Send-off). Finally Dr. Cary sits down after speaking for probably half an hour. There is applause.

Then a trio sings, and Tatsushi Ishida, the Student Body President, is introduced and makes a speech on "Highlights of '43'." It is fairly brief. He starts with the tarpaper barracks as all they had to make a school (doesn't mention the teachers I noticed), mentions Cotton Picking and its contribution to goodwill among the outside people and its contribution to the school funds, the day when chairs arrived, the work through December on student body organization, ending with the election on December 21, the new semester in February, several student parties including the Barn Dance in May. Says that he thinks they have gained much from this year in Poston.

Mr. Potts now introduces Takeo Shirasawa, the Senior Class President, who is to present the class gift, saying that the seniors have learned to give



6/26/43

as well as to take, Takeo comes forward, says that the Seniors earned money during cotton picking, and have tried to decide what to do with it. They thought finally that they would present a showcase to the school in which to display the awards earned by the school. They decided this after taking into account the temporary nature of the schools here. Now since the student body officers for next year have not yet been elected, he is asking the president of the Junior class to come forward. A boy from one of the front rows comes up, is handed an envelope, shakes hands and this is over.

Mr. Potts comments on the good fortune in Poston 3 of having an active PTA group, refers to Mrs. Takemoto as the leader of this and mentions the cooperation she has had from the other parents. Mrs. Takemoto comes forward, says that this is the high spot of the Parents Activities for the year. They are giving an award to those students chosen not only for scholarship but also for leadership and character. It was a hard decision to make since there were many outstanding people in the class. She hopes the fact that they did not get it will not discourage them but that they will work harder with the knowledge that there are awards. She also hopes that the Juniors will work for the award next year. Before she begins the speech she has asked Takeo Shirasawa and Lily Nakagawa to come forward. They stand there while she speaks -- not to them but into the microphone. (Same true of other speakers -- they have their back turned to the class and face into audience and microphone.) She hands them each a small white package.

Mr. Potts says that since the seniors have waited for 12 years to get this diploma they may not mind waiting a few moments before while he says a few words more. He wants to speak about the meaning of these diplomas. Says that in terms of the actual length of time it takes to earn one, this is the most difficult diploma to obtain. He himself knows that the one he received at the end of high school meant more at the time than any he has received since.



6/26/43

It means they have succeeded in surviving 12 years of hard work. Here in Poston this year we have been lucky -- haven't lost a ~~teacher~~ senior and every senior is graduating tonight. He is proud of them and their record. He thinks the Principal should know every senior, but he has not been able to do that. He does know the leaders, and they are very good. He also knows the worst students in the class (jokingly, and gets response of laughter), and he has this to say for the class that the worst students are still pretty good. So while he doesn't know the average students, if the best are outstanding and the worst are pretty good, then the average are all right. He has no hesitation in saying that the Poston 3 senior class is probably equal to any class graduating this June anywhere. He is proud to give them their diplomas.

Frances Wovarowsky stands on the east side of the stage, calling the names of the seniors and they march down in a continuous line to take them. Mr. Potts hands the diploma to them and shakes their hands, and they return to their seats. Before he started, he asked for all applause to wait until the end. But every now and then when a student comes forward there is a little wave of applause. When some of the boys come forward there is <sup>apparently from students in the background,</sup> whistling or "boo", or applause -- from tone and reception, gather that these boys are the popular ones in the class. No such recognition given to any of the girls. It is over, they are back in their places, and stand there for a moment smiling broadly, while the audience applauds. Then the recessional and they march down and off to one side. As they come to the edge of the crowd, the ranks break and they are surrounded by friends who shake their hands. Notice one of two of the boys in a friendly scuffle immediately. Then they stream off toward 324 where they are to have a party, and the crowd itself rapidly disappears.



6/26/43

5

K/ Honda announces that now will have dancing. The phonograph is started with dance music, but everybody keeps on eating. We leave about 12:20 when most are just finishing. As yet noone has started to dance, but hear next day that there was dancing about 12:30 and it was kept up for a long time. As we left, saw a couple leaving also. From fact that a few people did not appear when their names were called during the games, gather that some of the seniors did not attend the party.

(The decorations were those from the party the faculty gave to the Seniors on Wednesday night -- and were made and put up by the faculty.)



6/26/43  
(Typed 6/28/45)

12 Entertainment

After Commencement, which ended about 11:30, most of the seniors went over to Block 324 Mess Hall for a Commencement party. EC went over with the Burges, Brennans, Carys, and Mrs. Takemoto. At the Mess Hall, a crowd had already arrived and more seniors kept coming all the time. Aside from Caucasian and evacuee teachers we seemed to be the only older people present. In the kitchen part were about 14 girls, probably most or all of them Juniors, who acted as waitresses and helped with the food.

The Mess Hall was decorated with blue and white streamers, on a nautical theme, with an orchestra pit fixed to resemble a boat with life-savers and paper anchors liberally bestowed. More anchors in the windows. The messhall posts were camouflaged with white and green fronds and green coconuts into palm trees. The large tables had been removed, and small tables were scattered around the room in nightclub fashion leaving only a small space for dancing. Noticed that here the boys seemed to sit as a bunch on one side of the room, and the girls on the other. Noticed no table where boys and girls sat together. Even among the evacuee teachers, the boys all sat at one table. There was a loudspeaking system already hooked up.

About five minutes after we got there, they started the program. First Mrs. Takemoto brought the Senior class officers up and introduced them to the people at our table. Then the Shirasawa boy, Senior Class president, made an announcement that there would be a program and turned it over to Ben Honda (younger brother of the head of Recreation). He directed the rest of the program. First he announced that they wanted to have a contest to name this mess hall, a theme for the mess hall, in from one to seven words. Each table was to be a team, and the ones who had the best name would get a prize, "something delicious." Meantime Shirasawa distributed pencil and paper to each table. Just at the moment that everyone seemed to be settling down to work on this problem, Honda



6/26/43

told the men teachers to be busy thinking of the name of some movie that they could be activing out, and then told a ~~girl~~/fi table filled with girls the same thing. Then he started a game of Truth or Consequences. Calling to different girls and boys in the Senior Class to come up to the microphone. The first girl knew the answer, and escaped with no consequences. The boy who followed her failed, and was told to imitate a messenger boy paging an Okie. The boy claimed he couldn't think of any way, was given a period to think and after several others called simply maintained that an Okie wouldn't get a telegram so ~~app~~ no need to call him. Much teasing of him about some telegram he has apparently received. Next call in a girl, who fails and is told that she has to tell the truth for half a minute. So Honda asks her about boy friends, while everybody else laughs. The next boy, Honda says is known for his duck walk, so told to walk like a duck and quack at the same time. He does so a d quickly gets off into a corner again. Much laughter and teasing back and forth, and atmosphere seems quite relaxed.

Meantime, Cary's want to leave, so Mrs. Takemoto goes over to serving place and asks them to start. Honda calls on the men teachers to present the ~~stick~~ skit they have prepared, Shirasawa comes to collect the themes, and the waitresses begin to bring food -- liverwurst sandwiches, potato salad, lemon jello and cool ade. The boys say that they have decided to give more than a movie -- they give cartoon, newsreel, special feature, and a double feature. Then the girls called in -- and they give a cartoon and one feature.

Honda announces the winning themes, "Ferry Boat Inn" and "Coed Canteen". Then produces large cake which he says will be divided into four pieces, one to each of winning name crews, other two to men teachers and the girls who did the movie titles, commenting "it is a beautiful cake" with some awe in his voice. Shirasawa takes the cake around the room to show everybody that it is indeed a beautiful cake.



6/28-43  
9:30 A.M.

GRADUATION OF 6th Graders. at Rec. 22 6/28-'43.  
Number graduating: 185 5 classes.

The heroic attempt of the teachers in trying to make something out of a program in spite of the terrible physical handicaps is realized. A resentment for promises unfulfilled rises momentarily as one thinks of the taxes being paid in California for the education of our children here interned. & so poorly provide<sup>d</sup>

\* As the master of ceremonies takes his position and the program starts with the singing of the Star Spangled Banner one suddenly realizes the lack of the Salute to the Flag, the Pledge of Allegiance. Then one realizes that the repetition of the oath would only serve to refresh the irony of the words citizenry to ~~participate~~ interened in a camp like this.

"Poston school funds were appropriated by Congress. This proves faith of U. S. in your future. If it had not done so you would have had to bear the burden yourself or resort to charity. ~~---there were no public school problems that I should not have solved.~~ While there are some losses there are great gains.---

To those who understood ~~ik~~ such poor reasoning only served to strengthen resentment for lack of facilities, obligations unmet.



54 SCHOOLS

6-29-43

Observation by TY

Subj.: Corner Stone Laying Ceremony

CR: 171 Adobe, 35 Local Administration

A corner stone laying ceremony was held on June 29, 1943 at the school construction project. The ceremony began about 9:30 A.M. and ended about 10:00 A.M. There were about 100 people in attendance representing the men, women, and children. The ceremony was for the purpose of dedicating the Poston schools, the building of which are in the process of being completed. Mr. Charles Popkins, the Project Construction Engineer acted as Master of Ceremonies and presided over the ceremony. He opened the ceremony with few remarks explaining the purpose of the occasion. He said the school buildings are rapidly being completed and that the workers and the community at large had done a great deal toward this end. Pointing to the corner stone he said contrary to the usual procedure of inscribing names of those directly responsible for the construction of the building no names have been inscribed on that particular stone. Instead the stone revealed the words, "Built by the Japanese residents of Poston". This drew some applause from the audience. Mr. Popkins then stated that there would be two speakers participating in the ceremony, namely, Mr. Head and Dr. Cary. He first introduced Mr. Head, Project Director. As Mr. Head walked toward the front he drew a loud applause from the audience. Pointing to the specially prepared platform he said, "I am not going to stand on the thing and talk for I am scared stiff standing here". This drew a laugh from the audience. Mr. Head then began his talk which was rather informal and extemporaneous. He said: "This morning we are laying the corner stone to dedicate not only this building, which will become the auditorium for the school, but also all



the other school buildings which are in the process of being constructed. I don't like the word auditorium to describe this particular building. Rather I would like to call it the Community Building for it will be available not only to the school, but also to the community at large. All these school buildings which you see about you are being completed very rapidly as the result of your hard work. In the beginning there was some misunderstanding as to the purpose of these school buildings. But as you came to realize the real purpose you immediately gave 100% support to the construction of these school buildings. All of you, not only those who are present here, but those who have actually participated in aiding the building construction need to be congratulated. You have built a monument for yourselves and you should be justly proud. These school buildings will be used by your children for school purpose. Some of you who decided that they would like to stay in this valley and make it your permanent home even after the war will be able to use these same buildings. Even for fifty years from now they will be of valuable use to some of you. Mr. Popkins has asked me to lay the corner stone and I will do this now." An evacuee laborer brought in the wheelbarrow full of concrete mixture and Mr. Head immediately proceeded to lay the corner stone. During this process someone yelled, "We ought to put Mr. Head on the WRA payroll". Another yelled, "Yeh, \$16 man". Mr. Head retorted, "I used to be a CIO member until John L. Lewis came. I should apply for a \$19 job here". All of these remarks brought much laughter from the audience. After Mr. Head had completed laying the corner stone he received a loud applause and Mr. Popkins introduced Dr. Cary as the next speaker. Dr. Cary stepped to the front and gave a ten or fifteen minute



talk. He praised the cooperative spirit of the evacuees who contributed toward the building of the schools. He said, "I can see these buildings being completed in a few months. I know that it will be one of the best schools in the country. Our government is not neglecting the education of your children. That is why these beautiful buildings are being built for you. If the government desired to neglect your children's education they would not have provided money for the construction of the school buildings. These school buildings will be used by your children and even your children's children. They are the handiwork of your labor and steady efforts. They are yours to keep. During the past year we have experienced great difficulties, but we have survived all the obstacles successfully. We have passed the period of constructive building of the community. It is necessary for me to leave Poston and to return to Hawaii and resume my obligations. However, if and when I return to the mainland one of the first places I will visit will be Poston." Dr. Cary talked on a few other points, but these were the main points that he covered. As he concluded his talk a loud applause followed. Mr. Popkins again stepped to the front and announced that the ceremony is all over. Following the ceremony I heard conversation among the Issei group to this effect. "Gee, that guy Dr. Cary thinks that Poston will be functioning for years to come and that it will serve as a community for our children's children. Does he think that we are going to be here that long?" Numerous similar remarks to that effect were heard even among the Nisei members.

#### IMPRESSIONS:

The speech by Mr. Head and Dr. Cary impressed the observer as a contradiction to WRA established policy of resettling the evacuees out



of the centers as fast as possible. It left a state of confusion in the minds of the residents both Issei and Nisei.

(TY)