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KEEPING FAITH WITH AMERICA

As a Committee on Un-American Activities, the Dies Committee, in its rounds of the projects, has been seeking primarily for evidences of un-Americanism. At this time we would like to point out certain concrete evidences of the identity of Japanese-Americans not only with the American scene and the American spirit but also with the country's war effort. This comes as no surprise to those who know the Japanese-Americans and have watched their progress. Virtually all of the aliens in the group have been here twenty years -- most of them longer. Their citizen children born in the United States, and accounting for two-thirds of the total of Japanese-Americans, for the most part, know no other country and no other language than English. Exposed as they have been to our American school system, to the opportunities for higher education which their parents sought for them, through their contact with other American youngsters in typically American organizations and groups, with the greater part adhering to religious creeds shared by other Americans, they have built up a stake in this country and a concern for its best interest^s, which even the shock of war, evacuation, and being herded together at relocation centers cannot dislodge.

In Hawaii an important segment, numerically, economically, socially and every other way of the population of the Islands, the Japanese-

Americans are playing a full role in the war effort. On the mainland, detention in relocation centers of a vast majority of the group has restricted their usefulness to some degree but there is increasing evidence that the Japanese-American population, even under the ^{adverse} conditions, is strongly bound to the ideals which actuate all Americans at this time.

Outside the Centers

Close to nine thousand Americans of Japanese ancestry are now serving in the U.S. Army. Some were inducted prior to Pearl Harbor. The majority are volunteers since that date. The bulk of the nisei in the armed forces are serving on a combat team organized in the early part of this year by the War Department which includes commissioned and non-commissioned officers, medical, engineering, and other specialized units in addition to combat troops. The unit is undergoing arduous training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. Captain Pershing Nakada, highest ranking nisei officer, recently said, "They just don't want to quit work and they'd train night and day if we would let them."

In addition to those training in this country, some nisei from Hawaii and the mainland are now serving in the U.S. Army overseas. Some of them are interviewing Japanese prisoners, broadcasting to Japanese troops and engaging in general intelligence operations. Three soldiers of Japanese ancestry have already been cited for bravery in action.

At Boulder, Colorado, Camp Savage, Minnesota, and Ann Arbor, Michigan, several hundreds of Japanese-Americans including some aliens are teaching the Japanese language to Army and Navy Intelligence language students. Hand picked by officers from both services who visited the relocation centers, these language instructors, maintaining a rigorous teaching schedule, are preparing scores of Army and Navy personnel for service in the Pacific theater. Pointing out that 90% of the faculty of the school were nisei, Captain Frank Roberts, ^{Commander} of the Naval Units at the University of Colorado, said, "No greater work could be done by any individual citizen than is being done by the members in our Japanese language school faculty to bring an early victory to the American people."

A sizable group of Japanese-Americans with maritime experience are serving their country in the Merchant Marine. Several have been reported lost or missing in line of duty. Plans for the use of nisei seamen in Great Lakes shipping have been approved by the major security agencies.

Other Japanese-Americans whose abilities fit them for bilingual work have aided the O.W.I. and other government agencies in translation and transliteration. They have also worked on the preparation of material for broadcasts beamed at Tokio.

Though return to farms in evacuated areas is denied them, a substantial number of evacuees have left assembly and relocation centers

to assist in the cultivation and harvesting of essential crops. Nearly ten thousand Japanese-Americans volunteered to help harvest sugar beets in the Fall of 1942. They harvested enough beets to produce a year's sugar allowance for ten million people. Of approximately 14,000 persons of Japanese ancestry who have been given indefinite^{leave}, about half are in agricultural employment. Some are continuing in sugar beet production and other large scale cultivation, while others are in specialized and needed jobs, such as chick sexers, egg candlers, truck farmers. Farmers who were not affected by the evacuation are continuing to operate in the regular way, such as the Nebraska family of Sergeant Ben Kuroki of the United States Army. Ben is a machine gunner in the turret of a Liberator bomber on operations in England. He and three of his brothers enlisted after Pearl Harbor. George, an older brother, and the rest of the family are working the farm near Cozad, Nebraska.

Of the thousands of Japanese-American students who have, with private aid, been enabled to continue their higher education and professional training in colleges and universities outside the evacuated zone, the vast majority have made excellent campus adjustments. A student at ^{OBERLIN} ~~Overland~~, in his first year at the Ohio College, was named president of the Student Council. A number are completing training in medicine, dentistry, engineering, nursing, and other essential skills.

Since evacuation (up to June 15, 1943) a total of 32 doctors, 26 dentists, 41 pharmacists, 50 registered nurses, and other persons of professional competence ^{in the health field} have left the relocation centers. The majority are giving essential service in hospitals and clinical work.

A variety of other needed skills and accomplishments are to be found among others who have left the relocation centers. Mechanics, welders, machinists, carpenters, and many other vocations are represented. It is worth noting that the War Department has ~~a list~~ ^{made} of citizens of Japanese ancestry eligible for employment at army posts and camps with civil service approval.

At the Centers

Despite the confining and isolated atmosphere at the relocation centers, the evacuee residents have continued their associations with many organizations and activities traditionally American in character.

^{Insert} ⁽¹⁾ ~~The schools, although held in barracks classrooms resemble other schools in America, and ~~the~~ curriculum and extra-curricula interests give emphasis to American themes. In a recent poll, the students voted their project schools approximately at a par with those they previously attended. Parent-Teacher Associations exist at virtually all the projects. Junior Red Cross, National Honor Society, Future Farmers of America, and other student organizations encountered in schools the country over are represented at the projects.~~ ^{on a number of}

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Although held in barracks classrooms, schools resemble other schools in America in that American themes are emphasized in the curriculum and in extra-curricula activities. School programs have been developed to promote an understanding of American ideals and institutions, educate for responsible citizenship, prepare for successful relocation, and maintain contact with American thought and action outside the centers. The educational standards of schools outside the centers are maintained. Students have their own student government and their own mimeographed newspapers. A memorandum of understanding has been drawn up with the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and P-TA Associations flourish at virtually all the projects sponsoring nursery schools, Junior Safety Patrols, etc. The National Honor Society, Junior Red Cross, National Quill and Scroll Society, Future Farmers of America and other organizations encountered in schools the country over are represented on a number of projects. High school youngsters, like thousands of other school-age children throughout the country, are engaged at several projects in the production of scale model aircraft for use by the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics.

School functions such as band concerts and dances have been held for such causes as the March of Dimes, Junior Red Cross, and War savings stamp sales.

The majority of high school students are enrolled in vocational training courses. Working through State Boards of Vocational Training, WRA is now receiving Federal aid for Rural War Production Training programs for out-of-school youth ^{at} about half of the centers. Funds provided for supervision of trade and vocational classes and in some cases

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equipment is supplied. The offering of courses is geared to preparation for the relocation experience. At the Granada project, for example, courses are given in tractor repair, blacksmith and general metals (forging, welding, etc.) and auto and truck repair. At Heart Mountain the shop courses include motor mechanics, general metals service, plumbing, electricity and woodworking, while farm courses take in dairying, poultry, commercial vegetable production, swine, beef, sheep and irrigation.

As part of the program of Americanization and as an aid to future reabsorption into American life, a comprehensive program of adult education has been developed at all centers. Many courses in English, commercial subjects, languages, American history, and other subjects are offered. During March, 1943, approximately 25% of the population above school age was enrolled in these courses.

The principal national organizations carrying on youth - serving programs are represented at virtually all the centers. The total enrollment of Boy Scout troops number several thousand. YMCA, YWCA, Girl Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls carry on extensive programs. National officers and field representatives of these agencies who have visited the projects have commented favorably on the spirit they have found in the membership of their ^{so regularly} affiliated branches. Several YMCA and YWCA conferences have been held at the centers in conjunction with visitors from nearby communities. Delegates from the projects at their own expense have represented the center chapters and branches ~~to which they belong~~ at county, state and regional meetings. Last winter a Girl Reserve from Minidoka was elected vice president of the Magic Valley District and Twin Falls Girl Reserves at a conference held in Filer, Idaho. The same project's Boy Scout Drum and Bugle Corps made an appearance in Twin Falls in connection with National Boy Scout Week activities. Topaz Boy Scouts held a joint meeting with Troop No. 5 of Lynndyl, Utah, a nearby community. ^P In general there have been many favorable contacts between the projects and neighboring communities, except where military zone prohibitions interfered. Baseball and basketball teams have played those of nearby towns, dramatic performances have been given for the schools, and exhibitions of handiwork done by the residents in their spare time have been shown. 85 members ^{of} ~~have~~ a trained choir at one project sang three concerts in nearby towns on invitation of local church and civic groups.

Among visitors to the centers have been delegates from Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions Clubs, American Association of University of Women, American Legion and other groups. At the Jerome project in Arkansas, members of the American Legion Post in neighboring Lake Village, Arkansas, combined with Jerome World War veterans in giving a reception to nisei volunteers for the new combat unit. Similarly, at Heart Mountain, the State Commander of American Legion recently spoke at a banquet ^{has} for the volunteers given by the USO club, which incidentally ~~is~~ received official USO recognition. At most of the projects, World War I veterans and parents of soldiers currently training for combat have formed *some* organizations. ~~Although not in most cases recognized by~~ " " ^{" "} USO Clubs at most projects have been formed for the entertainment of nisei soldiers visiting projects on their furloughs.

The Red Cross units at relocation centers netted large amounts in this year's ~~Emergency Fund Drive~~ from a population whose principal sources of income have been cut off. Minidoka with \$2595; Tule Lake with \$1897; and Granada with \$1794 are three examples for which collection totals are at hand. The showing in the other centers was comparable. The Red Cross was aided in other ways. Heart Mountain's Surf Riders, a Hawaiian orchestra, received more Red Cross pledges in the course of a two-hour impromptu radio show over KPOW, Powell, Wyoming than had previously resulted from any program. (\$65.00) Several other project orchestras played at benefits at which collections were made

Boy Scouts at Tule Lake have begun the planting of 10,000 pine trees obtained from the U.S. Forest Service as part of a national program sponsored by the Scout organization.

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for both the Red Cross and March of Dimes campaigns. Voluntary salvage collection at Heart Mountain brought in egg crates, sacks, mason jars, grease, and bones worth several hundreds of dollars. At the same project the war savings program is handled by a special evacuee war savings staff working in close collaboration with the Wyoming State Administrator of War Savings. In addition to the regular program of agricultural production, adults and children at Manzanar and at other centers are cultivating many acres of victory gardens. Perhaps the most unique contribution to the war was made by an evacuee at the Topaz project in Utah. A former national dry fly casting champion, he recently completed four dozen trout flies and donated them to the U.S. armed forces through the League of Service Men in San Francisco.

A substantial majority of the American citizens of Japanese ancestry at relocation centers are Christians. Methodist, Episcopalian, Baptist, and other protestant ministers are paid by their denominations on the outside for their guidance of religious work at the centers. Freedom of religious worship ^{at the centers} is guaranteed ^{to} Buddhists, Catholics, Seventh Day Adventists and those of other religious convictions. The War Relocation Authority, however, has never tolerated the preaching or teaching of state shintoism. Many visiting ministers and religious workers have visited the centers upon request of the evacuees. At Christmas hundreds of churches throughout the country sent thousands of gifts for the children within the centers and mammoth Christmas

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The greater part of the evacuee population at the centers is employed in ~~performing~~ essential community ~~services~~ health, education, maintenance and other services, and in the ~~growing~~ of crops.

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parties with all the trimmings were organized by the residents.

In keeping with the best fourth estate traditions, the evacuees publish their own newspapers at each center. Included among them are the Granada Pioneer, Manzanar Free Press, Rohwer Outpost, Minidoka Irrigator, and other names illustrative of the setting in which these papers are produced. Churches, schools, Boy Scouts, and other organizations at the projects also issued mimeographed papers from time to time. Drawing on the centers for much of its news and circulation, the Pacific Citizen, published by the Japanese-American Citizens League in Salt Lake City, has consistently sought to combat discrimination and further American goals in the war effort.

While WRA administers the centers, evacuee government of an advisory type exists in one form or another at every project, in most cases taking the form of a representatively elected Community Council. Those Councils in existence for a longer period of time have enacted ordinances governing the health, sanitation, property protection, gambling, traffic, and other features of community life. The Community Councils have been of invaluable service in interpreting WRA policies and in securing the cooperation of residents in the production and conservation of food and other items essential alike to community and national life.

Insert (A) → It is anticipated that production of \$5,000,000 worth of vegetables live stock, feed and dairy products at projects will put WRA well on the road to self-sufficiency this year in the matter of food requirements. The centers will produce practically all vegetables needed, and a considerable amount of poultry, eggs and meat, thereby releasing for

military and civilian use huge supplies of food which would otherwise need to be obtained for feeding 100,000 persons. Over 24,000 acres have been planted in subsistence and feed crops. In addition, it is expected that small acreages will be devoted to cultivation of sugar beet seed, soy beans, cotton seed, flax, castor beans, and other needed war crops.

At the two Arizona centers, 1,000 citizen evacuees in a five month period terminating in May, 1943 garnished approximately 150,000,000 square feet of camouflage nets for use by the U.S. Army. This output was greatly in excess of what was originally thought possible. At the Gila River project, ships are being built in the Arizona desert - model ships made according to government specifications for use of the Navy Department, which supplies the materials, for training programs and identification purposes. At Heart Mountain and Granada, posters for the Navy Department are being produced by the silk screen process.

The post offices at ~~the~~ all of the centers have done a brisk business selling war bonds and stamps to residents. The Japanese-American soldiers at Camp Shelby bought over \$100,000 worth of war bonds in the two days following the announcement of the execution of American flyers in Japan.

But it is not just their purchase of war bonds, ~~even~~ their work for the war effort, the organizations in which they claim membership, their predominant church preference, or their ~~schooling that stamps~~ schooling that stamps citizens of Japanese ancestry as Americans. It is the slang in their talk, their informal clothes, their soda fountain tastes (the favorite of Camp Shelby volunteers is strawberry sundae.) They like the same corny radio programs and movies as the rest of us, their kids read the same comic books, and the leading periodicals sold at the centers are Life, Time, the Readers Digest, and the Saturday Evening Post.

Though all these facts point to the essential loyalty of the Japanese-American group, and the identity of their interests with this country, they would be meaningless if evidence to the contrary were at hand. How does the record read, in Hawaii and on the U.S. mainland?

Despite a flock of rumors, reports of sabotage by Japanese American residents of Hawaii at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack have been officially denied by the Honolulu Chief of Police, President of the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce, Secretaries Knox and Stimson, and Director John Edgar Hoover of the FBI. The following quotation from a speech given by Col. Kendell J. Fielder, Chief of Military Intelligence in Hawaii in a speech given at the University of Hawaii forum in March 1943 is further testimony ^{to} the loyalty of Japanese-Americans to the United States:

"Without revealing secret military information, I can say truthfully that members of the Japanese race have themselves constituted our chief liaison with the Japanese community and our most reliable check on its morale, its needs and its activities....."

~~Hoover of the FBI. The following quote from a speech given by Col. Kendell J. Fielder, Chief of Military Intelligence in Hawaii in a speech given at the University of Hawaii forum in 1942 provides a further example of the loyalty of the Japanese-Americans to the United States:~~

"It would take much too long to tell you of the many concrete ways in which many of these people who were put on the spot have proved their love for America and have helped solve an otherwise ticklish military problem here. For the information of all who might be misled, there is none among us who has been led into this policy out of a mawkish sentimentality or gullibility. To us Japan and her people are a race of stubborn, hardy, despicable warrior zealots, who would stop at nothing to snuff out our lives and our way of life. Her army and navy must definitely be crushed. The question of Americans of Japanese blood is far different. They are Americans--and until they prove (or show themselves dangerously capable of proving)--traitoroug, they should be treated as Americans."

(2) In the weeks immediately following the Pearl Harbor attack, apprehended the Department of Justice ~~prohibited~~ several thousand Japanese Americans in Hawaii and on the mainland whose presence at large was deemed undesirable in time of war. They were taking no chances. Many of these are now interned for the duration of the war in intern-
(3) ment camps operated by the Department of Justice. A year and a half has elapsed since Pearl Harbor. During that period a sizable segment

of the Japanese-American population who ~~lived~~ outside the evacuated zones have continued about their business in the same way as any other native or hyphenated Americans. Of those who were evacuated, some have been out of the centers for over a year. Those who engaged in harvesting sugar beets were in many cases released from assembly centers and relocation centers with War Department approval but without the intelligence check that has since become mandatory in the case of ^{release of} every release. The total number of evacuees back in circulation is nearing 15,000 which, added to those who were never evacuated, makes a total of almost 30,000 Japanese-Americans -- one fourth of the total group ^{- living} ~~who live~~ in freedom outside the evacuated areas. It is highly significant that in all this time there has not been one act of sabotage committed in Hawaii or on the mainland in which Japanese-Americans have been implicated. ^P When we consider in addition the many services performed by the Japanese in the Army in the Army and Navy language schools, on farms, and in other types of employment, it becomes evident that the continued detention of those whose loyalty can be established is a drain ^{on manpower} no country involved in total war can afford. While they are keeping faith with America in the centers, and their ^{evacuation} ~~original location~~ ^{can be} they represented a needed war sacrifice, they ~~keep~~ far more useful back in the country's life stream where they belong.