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## OUR NEXT STEP---RELOCATION

By Chizuko Sakuma

The problem that faces the graduating seniors of any class now confronts us--the problem of what the future shall be. We are now graduating into the world--the biggest step we have yet undertaken. It will be we, the graduating classes throughout the world today, who will shape the world of tomorrow.

We, the graduates of Manzanar, have a great contribution to make in determining the kind of world that shall come after the war. Many of us have become bitter because of the treatment accorded us of being put in relocation centers throughout the United States. Yet--we have a problem that can not be ignored. What does the future hold for us who are confined in these centers? How can we best face the next big step? A solution must be found.

A solution to this is relocation. Even now thousands have relocated and adjusted themselves into the American scene. Whether they have gone to the farms, to the cities, or into the armed forces, they have become a part of the normal life of America.

Of course, relocation is not and can not, be easy. We must go into some community or area where we have never been before, and where things are quite different from what we are used to. However, by being friendly, by adhering to local customs, and by making an effort to become assimilated among the people of the community, there is no reason why an individual or family can not start anew and become a part of the normal economic and social stream of American life once again.

In Hawaii, the Japanese-Americans have demonstrated repeatedly that they deserve the respect, the admiration, and the faith of the people in the Islands. 7500 young men volunteered for the U.S. Army--five times the number requested. Records have proven that not one single act of sabotage has been committed by either Alien Japanese or by Nisei, prior to or since December 7.

We here on the mainland also have a clean record, one that we can all be proud of. Let us remember as we go out to schools, to farms, or to places of business, we must act as ambassadors, of good will for the people coming later and for those who are remaining behind in camp. Although some individuals may discriminate against us, we should not become bitter and lose faith, for they are not representative of the majority of the American people. Once on the outside,



we should do every thing possible to discourage such practices as discrimination, but let us do it in the American way; above-board, in the open, by courts of law, by education, and by proving ourselves worthy of equal treatment and consideration. Let us be firm in the belief that American sportsmanship and fair play will judge citizenship and patriotism on the basis of action and achievement and not on the basis of physical characteristics.

The challenge is before us. It is up each one of us to face this challenge squarely and intelligently. Let us do the job well. It is not an easy one but the time will come when life will again resume a more normal pace. It may not be the same world, but let us hope, plan, and strive for a world in which everybody may live in peace and friendship. It is your world--it is Our World. Let us make it a world worth living in.



## THE PROBLEMS OF MINORITY GROUPS

by Yoshikatsu Nakayama

It is particularly timely that we discuss minority groups, not because the greater part of this audience is obviously involved-- A large majority of the world's population also faces this problem. Too common is the tendency to forget the other fellow, and think only of one's self or of one's own group. There are many other minority groups besides ours. Racial, religious, made political, economic, or social minorities. We represent but a tiny portion of the total minority groups in this country.

In the last few weeks, we have seen many pages of metropolitan newspapers devoted to the zoot-suit riots which took place along the Coast, and race riots which occurred in Detroit and Texas. These things are usual in a wartime period when patriotism is emphasized on a large scale and tensions between racial and nationality groups tend to grow. But such instances of mob violence show that we have not learned to live side by side with our neighbors in harmony. These occurrences are caused largely by ignorance and fear; two factors which supplement one another. When one is about to enter into the unknown, he is often afraid. He doesn't know what to expect. He is in need of protection from fear. This closely resembles what happens in a racial situation. Many people in the Middle West have never seen a Japanese. Perhaps we fear that they have drawn their conclusions of us from the coastal newspapers. This situation is difficult to remedy, for a minority group tends to be hypersensitive. Now there are solutions. For example, oversensitivity has been remedied by mixing with people of various racial and nationality backgrounds.



Even within a racial group itself, as in our camp, so-called sectional prejudices have existed. This was evident in those days when Manzanar was first being molded into a community. There was a period of suspicion between the groups that came here. One group didn't like another, simply because they didn't know each other.

"Aw, I don't like that bunch."

"They came from the sticks, so they're waste time,"

We've all heard it. At present, however, we find that frequently the very ones who made such remarks are the ones who are fraternizing with those same people they formerly indicted. Now that we've come to know each other, we scarcely find these prejudices. We found similar circumstances back home. I can remember a friend who boasted about his high school. For reasons unknown to me, perhaps it was his bragging, the very thought of the school disgusted me. This prejudice lasted until I went to that school myself, and learned to love it. This happens the world over. We must remember that ignorance may cause prejudice. Just as we became friends here in Manzanar after we became better acquainted, so can other people who have prejudice lose it, as we let them be our friends.

Contrary to popular beliefs, we are not the only minority group who has been moved out from our homes because of the war. Many share-croppers from West Virginia have been moved by the Federal Government to New York State to meet the manpower shortage there. Similarly, many Mexican laborers are being brought to the



United States. In the Orient, 15 million people who lost their homes moved from Eastern to Western China. In Belgium, the German government forced a great movement of farmers into Nazi-occupied Russis. There are many others who have suffered beside us. These people must take up a new lease on life, just as we are about to do.

Is it not up to us, the present young generations, to create a feeling of universal understanding between all groups by our actions and conduct? In this way, we will be ambassadors of good will, and succeed in building up friendship and understanding between racial groups, and perhaps a lasting peace to this troubled world.



## COMMENCEMENT--JULY 3, 1943

by Roy Toda

Today at this hour of our commencement the world is at war. War! An electrifying word which sends multitudes of people shuddering at the sound of it. A word which makes man lose his level head and revert to the ruthlessness of barbaric people. After less than twenty-five years of comparative peace the inferno of war again sweeps over the world spreading halocaust and destruction. Beyond these lofty mountains man has lost his sanity and is busily engaged in the destruction of his fellow men and the disintegration of his wonderful works.

Fate has isolated us from that world of inhuman killing and man-made suffering. Instead of fearfully awaiting sudden death, we, the seniors of Manzanar High School, tonight await one of the most important events of our life. Shielded from the chaotic world in the serenity of this valley one hundred and ninety-five students will soon receive their diplomas in the exercise tonight. Tonight is the commencement for the summer class of 1943.

Life is actually nothing but a series of commencements. From the moment we are born, we commence to live. As a proof of this we receive a very valuable document called a birth certificate. In junior high school, senior high school, and perhaps again at college we have commencements and receive diplomas at the completion of prescribed courses in education to show we have climbed up another step in the ladder of life. Marriage is again another institution which is commenced with a solemn ritual and the receiving of another certificate. Even the termination of



our life span we are given a ceremony and a document, the death certificate, to show that we have passed away from this mortal earth and commenced our life in that great world beyond.

But tonight, perhaps, may prove the greatest commencement of our life. It is the commencement of adulthood, of young men and women seeking their place in this complex world. Up to now most of us have been going along the road of life together, but tonight marks the beginning of many forks in that road. Many of us will part to engage in different professions and types of work in various sections of this broad nation.

Commencements usually mark a great step forward and the start of a different type of living. Here-to-for we have been dependent upon our parents and sought refuge in them from all the complexities and worries of this modern age. Now we must go out from behind the shield of our parents and assume the responsibilities and obligations of adulthood. We are now one of them. We must take our place among them and create a world which will suit us and the generations to come. From this very day we must mold a better world for the future. We must establish ourselves into normal society, surmounting the barriers before us, and striving to succeed.

Yes, we may have been uprooted from our homes and friends, but certainly our situation cannot match the pathetic forced migration of French and Belgium people before the onslaught of the mighty German war machine of destruction. These people had no shelter and were not even certain they would be able to obtain



food. But now these people are meeting their problems and re-establishing themselves once more.

We are faced with the same problem of reestablishing ourselves into normal society. We must put every effort in overcoming the obstacles before us with the same industriousness, ambition, and initiative shown by these people under such adverse conditions.

We cannot and must not be contented with conditions which may lead to a repetition of such a war as is raging today. We, the summer class of nineteen-hundred and forty-three, builders and molders of the future world, must face reality, be willing to meet the problems created by the war, and seek to make a better, saner, and a more peaceful world.



July 3, 1943

YOUR WORLD.

MANZANAR HIGH SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT.

Tonight we gather to congratulate the graduating class of the Manzanar High School. The department of Education, the faculty of the High School, every graduate, their parents and friends, are to be congratulated upon the high standing of these students and the high standing of their school, which qualifies those who hold its certificate to University entrance. Though there have been interruptions of war and of evacuation no time has been lost by these young people in preparing themselves for entrance upon the activities of life.

In addition to words of congratulation it is customary that words of counsel and advise be given those who pass out of the door of the school room to the life of the world outside.

What subject would be more appropriate to this occasion then to take up where the singers left off the song our choir has just sung-the "Ballad for Americans". It has thrilled you-it has thrilled every singer and every one in Manzanar who has heard it. It is the marching song of young America.

And what is the message of this song? Listen to its words:

"Our Country's strong  
Our Country's young,  
Her greatest songs are still unsung.  
From her plains and mountains we have sprung  
To keep the faith with those who want before."

By loyalty we mean that we shall keep the faith with those



who went before. Long books are written, legal phrases created and political speeches are made to define that loyalty. But song says everything there is to say--"I have always believed it. I believe it now. I will keep the faith." To What? In what? To and in America!

What is America? America is not just a place--nor a government--nor a peculiar race of people. America is a faith, held by people of many racial origins who have themselves created a government in which they believe--for which they give their lives in time of need. It is a country that is strong, a government that, as world time goes, is young, made up of plain people, keeping the faith, looking toward the future with the hope of a better world. That world is to be your world.

How does America differ from other countries, from other governments, from other peoples? Ask your fathers--they are here--they will tell you. America must have held out something more to them than the land of their birth had to offer or they would not have come to America, and would not have remained, and you would not have been born American citizens. America has drawn many people, of many races, from many lands, because it is the land of hope, of opportunity--opportunity that a farmer's son may have a University education and that to him there may open the fields of science, of art, of the professions and of industry and business--a limitless horizon. In other countries a fisherman's son is a fisherman, a butcher's son a butcher, but in America, with education given by parents



and freely offered by the state, man and women may rise to any heights their ability may take them.

America is a country not tied to the tradition of place. In other countries men die in the towns where they were born and in the very houses in which their fathers were born. In this country men follow a calling and freely move with new opportunities.

America holds to the ideal of freedom of religious worship, to speak one's thoughts and to have one's share in the choice of those who govern.

America is stirring, striving, restless, unfinished but surging onward.

But-as in the Ballad a voice breaks in to say "Did they believe in Liberty in those days?" You might now interrupt to say "How come, Mister, do people believe in Liberty in these days? Look at the barbed wire around us, see the soldiers who guard us, read what Senators and Congressmen say about us in the papers. What do you mean, Liberty?"

And so-as the voice of the singer replies in the song, I would say to you, "Yes, I'm coming to that. You see, it's this way." When we speak of America we speak of the ideal toward which we are groping our way. The Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence signed 167 years ago tomorrow, are human documents, interpreted by human people with all the weaknesses, all the selfishness as well as all the glories, to which men are heir. The mistakes and failures of men make clearer the ideals



that are not yet reached. To admit that there yet remains much of tolerance and understanding to be reached is only to set the goal of achievement-not to despair of reaching that goal.

When the great goals of freedom, equality and liberty were set up 167 years ago, they were to include, in the minds of the founders, only those men like themselves-men of European stock and similarity of background and outlook. It is only in recent years that these ideals have been expanded to include peoples of many origins and many races. So human minds still struggle with the practical problems of tolerance and understanding.

Recently there appeared a book that has had a larger sale than any book except the Bible. It is Wendell Willkie's "One World". Not so long ago Mr. Willkie was candidate for President of the United States and he made many speeches. Nowhere in all these speeches is the idea he presents in this simple but powerful book even mentioned. Mr. Willkie's thoughts three years ago were in terms of the country he then knew and loved. But recently in 49 days he flew 'round the world. He saw battle fronts in Africa, in the Middle East, in Russia, and in China. "One World" was born because Mr. Willkie saw with clear and prophetic eye all peoples of all lands brought into harmony and understanding in one world.

A month ago I flew across this continent and, in the cities and farms, the factories and prairies upon which I looked down there were people from all the nations and races and many more



than those described in "One World". They are all here in America. In Detroit there were race riots, in Los Angeles Zoot suit wars, and in the coal fields there were strikes. Before we can bring peace and understanding throughout the world, we must bring understanding and peace at home. And among these evidences of misunderstanding, Manzanar stands in the forefront. That Manzanar exists is not an evidence of failure of the American ideal-that we recognize that evacuations must be avoided in the future by earlier correction of mistakes, proves that the ideals of America live and will triumph.

A democracy is made up of a welding of minorities. No other form of government can afford to have a minority. The song says "I'm just an Irish, Negro, Jewish, Italian, French, English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Polish, Scotch, Hungarian. Swedish, Finnish, Canadian, Greek and Turk and Czech and double check American!" What a roll call of minorities! All of them have welded their strength into America. Paul Robson and Marian Anderson, by their art, Fiorello La Guardia by his talent for government, deSeversky by his science of aero dynamics and Knudsen by his talent for industrial management, all representatives of minorities, have built their lives into America. On my bookshelves are the names of the authors of my chosen books-Ludwig, Sandburg, Frienfels, Alexis Correl, Piexotte, Kournakoff and Michael Pupin and many more-all men and women of minority groups in America.

Every minority has brought the strength of its art, its culture, its workmanship, its inherent love of liberty and a



spirit to die for it, to weld that strength into the fabric of all America.

You too can bring the strength of your heritage-love and respect for family, willingness to perform your share of the common land of labor, the spirit of cooperation, respect for law, and your God-given skill for the creation of the beautiful.

But why do all these other minorities welded into what we call America stand looking at the citizens of Japanese ancestry with an eye that has admittedly been none too friendly? Because these others brought something with them to America. They became members of this family group by reason of their contributions and their sacrifices. They now jealously guard their rights as citizens against a weakening that may come from too easy dilution through the admittance of those whom they think may not believe-may not keep the faith. They are asking you-what have you brought with you to enrich the life of America by your culture, your heritage, your willingness to sacrifice for the common cause?

The past is dead-the future lies ahead. It is yours to make it as glorious as you will by bringing your contributions and by your record of faith.

Your world does not lie in the old home in California-your world does not lie in this temporary home between the Inyos and the Sierra, no matter how safe it may seem just now-your home lies in the great country to the east.

You are the new pioneers-you do not go in covered wagons to



seek gold-you go with your marching song on your lips to tell  
this great group of mixed races called America that you too  
believe, that you will keep the faith, that you bring with you  
all your talents and training and that you lay them at the feet  
of those who have gone before and pledge them to the cause  
of those who strive with you for peace and understanding and  
freedom. And by these steps you will be received into this  
great company of liberty loving people who will then be persuaded  
that you swear your loyalty as you sing your song!

Deep as our valleys

High as our mountains

Strong as the people who made it

For I have always believed it

And I believe it now-

And you know who I am-

AMERICA.