

Notes from conversation with Miss Katherine Hobbie, July 11, 1944

No question the food was lousy in October when these men arrived. Apparently there was some justification in the rumor that there was considerable graft in the Commissary Department.

The first incident occurred when a farm produce truck overturned, killing a young boy of 17, who was driving. There had been considerable reckless driving. The colonists felt that such a young boy should not have been allowed to drive. That began the farm strike. The management called in outside labor and some Japanese from other Centers, with the pledge that they would not feed them food from the local warehouse. There were charges that they did.

There had also been an incident of a baby who was burned. The colonists claimed the child had not received the right kind of treatment. The baby died.

On the afternoon of November 1st when Mr. Dillon Myer was here, a large gathering of people came up to the administration building and told the three internal Securities Police (who then carried no guns) to get into the administration building. They did so. Just before this particular incident, Miss Hobbie's Japanese office helpers, girls, had received a phone call and had promptly left, saying they had been called to the colony. Miss Hobbie proceeded to go to the post office. On her way she was also asked to go into the administration building. She did so. Mr. Myer was then driving around the Center with Mr. Best. When they came back to the ad building they were told that the Committee of Negotiation wished to present themselves. They, the Committee, went inside with Messrs. Myer and Best and negotiated for four hours and during all this time the crowd gathered and stood for four hours in the hot sunshine. There was no rioting of any kind. A Mrs. Adams, a school teacher, and another lady were asked to remain inside. They got hysterical. A couple of teachers were escorted from their houses to the ad building. (Here was where the hysterical lady wrote out a will, which made possible the newspaper publicity). They wanted Mr. Myer to speak to them and had been told he would. After 4 hours, Mr. Myer came out and spoke to them and said that their demands would be taken under consideration and they would be notified in due course, but should disperse now and go home. Father Kai then translated Mr. Myer's talk for the crowd and told them to go home. Just before dispersing them he called for the salute to the emperor. Some of the crowd joined in, some did not. A Mr. Weber, who had been brought in ahead of time to prepare for Mr. Myer's visit (a Caucasian missionary who knows Japanese) says that Father Kai's translation was accurate.

During this four-hour wait, there was a disturbance at the hospital and someone came up to call Mr. Schmidt who went with several of the boys down there. This Dr. P--- had been beaten up by some boys. Dr. P. was not well liked. The hospital corridor constituted a path whereby people could walk through it easily to proceed from



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the colony on up to the administration section. He had objected to their going through, and this was one small item. In addition, I believe he was held responsible for the death of the baby mentioned above.

November 2nd, the evacuees did not come to work. It was the Emperor's birthday.

During this time there was a small group of the Caucasian staff who got together for two closed meetings (excluding others of the staff). The result was that they asked that a fence be erected for their protection and also that the army be called in. The army had a big group of men there, taking care of the incoming trains of segregees. Many of the staff did not agree. Finally, the first group told Mr. Myer if the fence was not put up they would quit. He told them O.K. they could quit, but they did not. However, the fence was suddenly put up and in Mr. Myer's later statement he mentions that erection of the fence was begun on the night of November 2nd.

Miss Hobbie's house is in the warehouse district. On the night of the 4th she heard a commotion outside her door. It developed later that several men on the staff had appointed themselves watchdogs to protect the community, and they were patrolling around the warehouse. What happened apparently was that some boys in the colony were going up toward the motor pool (a rumor was they were checking on stealing from the warehouse, this is quite mixed up). Anyway the guards around the warehouse started after them and there was considerable scuffling. Mr. Schmidt ran into Tom Kobayashi who judoed him and gave him a black eye. Mr. Schmidt immediately drove down to the barracks and asked the military to take over--or was it Best who telephoned. Best's house was surrounded with several Japanese.

Hobbie hears that two or three boys were met by a car driven by the Internal Security police, that the boys were beaten up by them. She went into her office the next morning and found blood splattered around on note books and on the floor, and dark probably Japanese hair around, and a broken baseball bat in the corner. She cleaned up the mess.

The army appeared on the scene rumbling intanks.

The next morning Col. Austin talked to the administration staff, asking for their cooperation. All this was immediately followed by a general strike. Practically no one came to work. The coal men worked a little for themselves, and Japanese mess hall workers, but that is about all. This strike lasted until November 17th. Finally some self-appointed members of the Co-op came to Mr. Best and offered to stop the strike. It was their understanding the men in Stockade would be released (they were not. They left 250, maybe 300 in the camp). Best put them in two categories--"status-



quo" and "anti-status quo" the status quo being the ones who did not want to go back to work. That morning the cooperative opened and people gradually began coming back to work. Then there were some elections, but apparently not many voted. Lefkowitz quoted 6000 as a number she heard, but Tsuda mentioned only 5 or 6 blocks voted.

Hobbie says the last group which was sent to Santa Fe--last month, the group before the June 28th group--were not permitted to see their families at all, and had not seen them since they were first arrested.

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7/15/44



SAM HORINO

Interview with Sam Horonino<sup>(sic)</sup>, evacuee at Tule Lake Center,  
July 10, 1944.

Q. In accordance with your request I sent all the transcript that you sent me to the New York office. Now, that was the only hearing you had, I take it?

A. Yes.

Q. It was?

A. It was the only hearing. I had it at Heart Mountain.

Q. Have you had a hearing subsequent to that time.

A. No, except I did the exact opposite of what you have told Mr. Okemoto. I have written voluntary statements and all those three statements. I asked for counsel, he said you are entitled to it but I want to ask you very simple questions. It ended up he had notes taken down, and said would you sign this? I signed it as after I read it through there was no harm in it.

Q. Never sign any statements of any kind; the only reason they want you to sign is to use them against you. They may look good enough to you, but to an attorney not so good. And they are always phrased not in your language but in their language to which they give particular meaning. It is not a good idea to sign statements of that kind without the advice of counsel.

That questioning had to do with your membership in the Fair Play group?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have a hand in the issuance of the three leaflets?

A. Yes, I did. I am really in on it.

Q. How old are you Mr. Horino.

A. 29.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Gardena, Los Angeles.

Q. Did you mimeograph the statements?

A. Yes, I typed them and mimeographed them.

Q. The only thing that is bad in that--and this is just my opinion--is the one statement in which you say, 'we're not going in until'--they may prosecute you for conspiracy to violate the Selective Service Act. It seems that what you fellows did was all right



from a moral standpoint but from a legal standpoint no, and they are going to get you on it, just as they prosecuted and convicted these boys at Heart Mountain and the other camps. Because unfortunately, you're required to obey the law and it is never an answer to a violation of a law that somebody else is violating the law. For example, if I park my car in a non-parking zone, and I get a ticket, you say but look, everybody else does it and the only one you pick on is me, and the answer is well, that may be true; other people may be violating the law, but because we don't happen to get them is no reason why you are not to obey the law. Maybe these WRA people and the military are not obeying the law; maybe they should be prosecuted for it. But the fact that they haven't been is unfortunately no justification for you. Morally I think you are all right and the argument you use is a valid argument; here you are an American citizen with certain rights and before the duties of citizenship should be placed on your shoulders you should have your rights. I am in absolute agreement with you, but the way to get them I do not think is the way you fellows undertake to get them.

Mr. Okamoto: May I interrupt? Previously we had filed an application for clarification of our rights and status as residents of internment camps. I had done that also the previous year through Miss Anderson of COMMON GROUND. In both cases, Miss Anderson said that her committee was taking it up with the President. We never heard anything more. From Mr. Biddle we got an answer. But it evaded that particular thing and he went on talking about something else. Now there comes a question in my mind; in all business proceedings or transactions you are supposed to clear away the past. In other words, make settlement of whatever had transpired in the past. And then proceed with the new transaction. Now we are in the camps. We had already made application for this clarification of our rights and status. On top of that came this draft. Now we were in a position of not knowing where we stood. Whether we were enemy aliens, citizens, or half-breed or what not. All right, and here some took the stand that if they were enemy aliens they saw no reason why they should proceed. And if they were half-baked potatoes, then they should be given an opportunity for some sort of settlement. Now, all right, in the third alternative if they are citizens of this country, then they want to know why they are in the concentration camps, they want settlement, understanding and guarantees for their relatives and children, etc. In other words, now the President abrogated the agreement between the citizen and the nation when he evacuated us without due process of law. We could take that stand. And that is the way I have taken it. Now since he abrogated--

Q. Violated, the constitution, in other words, violated the law.

A. Then we want to be placed in a position where the violation is rectified and the ground made clear so that we can proceed as an American citizen, we can go ahead.

Q. I know what you want.

A. There is that little angle that has been sticking in the craw, you might say. Another angle is this. We want clarification or



an amendment to the constitution in such way that--

Q. The only way you're going to get any clarification of your rights is through a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Okemoto: Those boys intended to go up to it. They still intend to do it.

Q. Under these draft law cases. But I think that that is an indirect way and a dangerous way from the standpoint of your liberties, to solve the question. It strikes me that the best way to solve all of these issues is for all of you boys who want to get out and who object to the process, to file writs of habeas corpus. The prisoners of Alcatraz, they prepare their own writs of habeas corpus and file them in the state court. One of you fellows here have done that. The only cases that have ever been brought are the cases that we have brought, and I haven't seen any of you boys--and there are some lawyers among you file any writs.

Okemoto: Our lawyers among us are just as helpless as we are. I am just beginning to know a little bit about our rights. You mentioned some time ago we were justified in making that statement. So far, none of us had any idea about the proper process. Now you say the only way we can go up to the Supreme Court is through the proper channels.

Q. In other words, the Selective Service case will decide only the Selective Service issue. This other issue is a separate and independent one.

Okemoto: There is an angle. I would like it to be tested. The government is charging them with evading the Selective Service. Our opposition is to clarify this, our condition, so that can't we ask the court for what is called a declarative verdict?

Q. Yes, but that would be a separate action. If you asked for declaratory relief, then you must bring such a proceeding. You cite the various executive orders that have been issued and the evacuation, etc., and you want to know what your rights as a citizen are. That is declaratory relief. You can bring up the same question really in a Habeas Corpus proceeding, the same issues will be determined. You can do it in two ways, just a little different road, but you can't travel the road of violation of Selective Service and decide these other issues there. Not a chance in the world. They are extraneous issues. Did you violate the Selective Service, or didn't you? That is the only question they will pass on....you are only tried for the violation, that is the only question.

Okemoto: The government assumes that we are citizens. Then the other times they have assumed that we are not.

Q. Yes, but that question must be decided at the particular point where you are treated differently. Where you are treated as a citizen coming under the Act, you decide that question there. But some other question that arises, you have to get your decision at that point. You want to drag in all these points under the one case. Well, you can't do it that way. It would be a hodgepodge. No, I know you can't do that.



Okemoto: All right, then Horino is more along the angle of the Endo case. He walked out of the camp.

Q. You didn't get very far, did you?

Horino: Well, here I am.

Q. As soon as you got to the gate they arrested you?

A. No, I went out first. I went to Cody. I talked to the project attorney. I met the FBI and they didn't arrest me. So I got me a hotel.

Okemoto: They didn't arrest him the first day.

Horino: I told them I walked out.

Q. You met them in Cody and you told them that you had walked out and the reason why?

Okemoto: That was the second day. One of them suspicioned him and asked him, so he phoned back to Heart Mountain--that is, one of the FBI did, so Heart Mountain gave him instructions to arrest him immediately, so this FBI went to the local sheriff and asked him to arrest him. 5 or 6 of the officials got together. They finally came to a decision that he was an American so they cannot arrest him. So he was free. That night he came back to Heart Mountain and next morning he was going to walk out in front of the military guard, which he did, and he told the guard that he was going to go out regardless of you. So the guard told him, well you cross this white line then see what happens, which he did, he crossed the white line. That was the end.

Q. Then they seized him and brought him back?

Okemoto: Yes and that very evening brought him here.

Q. But you were never prosecuted for leaving the camp?

A. No.

Q. That way you could have got a test. After walking out and staying in Cody, then the civil authorities would have arrested you in due time and you would have been prosecuted, possibly for leaving WRA Camp, by the civil authorities. The whole question would have been determined and your right to walk out of the camp. That would have been the way to handle it. Once you were out. But they didn't let you out the second time. The way they decided this thing was to bring you here. Too bad you fellows didn't write to me to find out what to do in particular situations.

Okemoto: I tried for a whole year on that score, and I just came across your name accidentally in that Open Forum. I phoned Mary Ferguson who said to write you and then after I got in here I got a letter from you. Things have been working against us.



Q. Let's see where Horino stands. How did you answer questions 27 and 28?

A. I said No until my citizen status was clarified. He insisted you have to say Yes or No, I couldn't put Yes, yes, so I put No, until my citizenship status is clarified. That was the only alternative I had.

Q. None of you boys has asked for expatriation, have you?

A. No, no. I don't want it. They gave me one of those small papers. He said it had no bearing on this transfer here, just a formal form.

Q. But what did the form say?

A. It says I request repatriation.

Q. Is that what you wanted?

A. They said, if you put No, No, then sign this, so I said O.K.

Q. Did you register?

A. I registered in Los Angeles before I went to camp, and I see no reason why I should re-register.

Q. There may be some point to that, but that's neither here nor there right now. Did you ever receive a notice from the draft board at Heart Mountain to report for induction in the army or medical examination.

A. No, I only received 4 C.

Q. That classification has never been changed?

A. No.

Q. to Mr. Okemoto: Did you at any time advise them to refuse to report for induction?

A. No, never did advise anybody. I took the standpoint I was an educator. So whenever they came to me I simply quoted, I never advised. I simply placed the material before them and they took it. I said, you make your own decision.



Interview with GEORGE KURATOMI, Tule Lake Center, July 11, 1944.  
Address: Stockade

Mr. Besig: My understanding when I came over to visit you fellows was that ~~xxx~~ we were to be allowed a private conference with you. I am now informed such a private conference will not be allowed us, that the administration insists upon the presence of these boys with the guns on their hips, to which we object of course, insisting we are entitled to confer with clients privately. And I personally don't wish to participate in proceedings such as this, because I feel maybe you boys wouldn't express yourselves as freely as you would express yourselves if you were alone with us, and unless you have something to say to me, O.K., otherwise, I am not going ahead.

(At this point in the interview, the project attorney, Mr. Lechlitter, came into the police headquarters and wished to know what was wrong-- Mr. Besig having previously telephoned to Mr. Best to protest at the lack of privacy and having been told he could take it or leave it-- and at Mr. Besig's insistence that he would not conduct interviews with these boys with a policeman in the room, Mr. Lechlitter arranged for the two policemen to sit directly outside the doors of the small room in which the interviews were held.)

A. My name is Kuratomi.

Q. And you have some parents in the Center?

A. No. I have a fiancée.

Q. Oh, you are the boy with the baby. I understand it is a good-looking baby.

A. I haven't been given a chance to see it.

Q. Your fiancée was around to see us yesterday afternoon and I don't know what I can do to help you here. I understand you are a citizen of the United States. Where were you born.

A. That's right. San Diego.

Q. And how old are you? A. 29, now.

Q. You're 29 now. I understand that Mr. Ennis was around here the other day--he is from the Department of Justice--and that he discussed with you the possibility of renouncing your citizenship.

A. I have not consented.

Q. You appreciate of course that if you consent to renunciation of your citizenship, then you will therefore be treated as an alien and will be shipped out of here. That is the reason why they want you folks to renounce.

A. Now, I read and I have taken keen interest in what your organization has been doing in order to uphold the civil rights of the



American citizens and the only thing I ask, which I wish to request, is decency. The treatment we have been receiving to this date I cannot see the reason of my detention, especially over such a long period of time, in the place with the Stockade, with the army guard around, and as you notice the place is blocked off with beaver board. We cannot even see anybody, and the mail has not been coming in.

Q. You have not received any mail since about the first of July?

A. And first-class mail has always been censored and has to be opened before it comes in.

Q. The WRA or Army?

A. They won't let it in unless it is open and a third party has to open it and I know it is against a Federal law.

Q. In other words, mail that comes from outside the Center has to be opened?

A. It is always opened before it comes in. And then you have heard about the fact that we haven't been given an opportunity to even see anyone during that period.

Q. I can't see any justification for that. Can't see what in hell basis they would have for denying that. Of course, the claim is that messages might be sent to the Center proper and cause additional difficulties. That is their story, of course.

A. That is their fear. And we cannot seem to convince them that it is going to be otherwise. That is the main point. As soon as we can convince the authorities that the friction which is existing in the Center at the present time could be dissolved by liquidation of the Stockade, that is to say, that people in here be released back to the Center.--We cannot convince the authorities, especially the high officials here. That is the difficulty we are confronting now. Day after day we are being given the same line saying you might be released sometime soon. That is the only promise they say, which is very indefinite, and we ask for the reason of our detention, and they refuse to tell us, so there is a point and we can't seem to budge that. We are forced at gun point, so there you are.

Q. What sort of proposition do they come to you with?

A. They haven't come with any proposition.

Q. Except last Sunday, when Ennis was here--or when was he here? He was here very recently.

A. 3 or 4 days ago, 5 days ago.

Q. Why did he come to you? Did he explain the new bill that was passed?

A. That's right.

*Ennis  
went*



Q. Did he say he was going to send forms here?

A. That I didn't hear, but I hear someone was told to that effect.

Q. And that is apparently what they intend to do, and apparently think they have got it well set up so that the boys will request renunciation. That, of course you understand, is a personal matter with each person and you don't have to do anything you don't want to do. They won't be herded into any action. I think you boys are capable enough of deciding that issue for yourselves. It's none of my business. Anybody wants to renounce his citizenship, that's up to him.

What was your relation to this situation here?

A. I was elected to be the head of this block representatives body.

Q. You were to be the head?

A. Yes, I was elected to be the head, which automatically became the head of the negotiating committee, the chairman.

Q. You were the chairman of the negotiating committee? And who elected these block representatives?

A. The people at large. The way it worked I have to explain to you from the very beginning. But this thing-I cannot be exact, was the 15th of October I believe, there was an accident in the farm road and in order to handle that situation the people formed the block representatives, they elected one person or an alternate from each block.

Q. Now, let me interpose a question here. Was that election held with the approval of the administration?

A. The point is that--

Q. I mean were these representatives who were duly recognized by the administration?

A. No, not at that time. The intention was that since the Center was in such a turmoil on account of this segregation and that majority of us were new arrivals and there was no organization at that time to more or less combat or handle the situation and that necessity was urgent at that time that the people elected these block representatives, and our intention of course was that organization to be temporary because we had the feeling, we had the knowledge that in order to work anything out in the Center as representatives of the people we had to have the understanding between the administration; and that since that body was a temporary institution we had to get the approval of the authority in order to form a permanent one, and that formation was more or less ok'd by Mr. Myer during his visit here, November 1st. So naturally, the night of November 4th we were in the process of electing these committees and which committee would automatically be presented to the administration for approval and that was the set-up we had. But I think the whole thing, the whole matter was that



the night of the 4th there was a commotion down in the warehouse section, which resulted in the assault upon two Caucasian, Internal Security men. Well, under the circumstances of course these block representatives and the negotiating committee which was attached to it, had nothing to do with the commotion, but I don't know how the administration attached those two things together, but they evidently got the impression that the block representatives were responsible for that commotion on the night of the 4th and that was the whole mix-up, and that is what started this thing going in reverse against us, that was the whole situation. And at subsequent hearings and interrogations that we have received we just couldn't convince the persons in power to the effect that we had nothing to do with that or our detention here is illegal. We just couldn't budge the army or the WRA.

Q. Where were you at the time of the commotion?

A. I was in Block 15 Mess Hall. We were having a meeting there. Just as I mentioned awhile ago, selecting this final committee members.

Q. To interview Mr. Myer?

A. No, that was after his departure. You see, this was the night of the 4th and Mr. Myer was here the 1st of November.

Q. ~~Am~~ I see, and were you immediately arrested?

A. No, I was not arrested immediately, but that one point we still cannot figure out to this day. That is of course after the commotion of the 4th, the Army was called in to quell the disturbance and naturally the army started to fire and used tanks and armored cars and eventually the little commotion which was really a small one was quelled, and after the army had taken over there was no central organization in the colony to deal with anybody administering the Center, so Col. Austin, Lt. Col. Austin, he selected the warden's office to be the only place where there would be telephone connection between the administration and the colony and Mr. Tsuda-- I imagine you have met him--he was in charge of the warden's office then and naturally he was informed and he went to see Col. Austin and we went to see the Colonel too to discuss various matters pertaining to the return to work of the workers who were kept idle right after this disturbance because nobody was allowed to get inside this hospital area where the main gate is now between the Center and the hospital. We had three or four conferences after that. The point was this that when the army first had taken over, they wanted to return the workers group by group in the warehouse area. I think there are something like 105 persons working, the army only wanted 25 to return to work. Now, the Japanese have a psychology which more or less prompts them to work in a unit. They hate to see half of them working and the other part idle for no reason at all, and we knew that feeling so we requested for the army to reconsider the problem. In other words, if the army wanted one group to be back, we



wanted all of them to be back. We succeeded in putting the garbage crew and the coal crew back as a body but with the warehouse body we had considerable difficulty. Then during the course of discussions or conferences we have been having with the army officials, the point about the next meeting was brought up to inform on the things which had taken place up to that time. That was around the 8th of November. Then the date was decided to be the 13th for members of the colony, that is, members from all, from the block representatives body, and the Col. to speak at the mass meeting. Unfortunately that previous day, that was the final discussion we had with Col. Austin, at which time Col. brought up the point that we weren't the actual representatives. I don't know where he got the notion, but he began to say we were using pressure in order to maintain that power to be the negotiating body.

- Q. May I ask one question--how many persons participated in this election?
- A. Oh, everybody.
- Q. To elect the block representatives.
- A. Everybody in the Center. Because each block elected one person to be the delegate. So everyone participated. That is, the block meetings were called by the block managers.
- Q. Those were free and open elections?
- A. That is right, anybody was to participate.
- Q. Any those over 21 years of age were eligible?
- A. I couldn't say the age limit, because I don't think there was an age limit, but anybody who is--at least one person from one unit or one family was present.
- Q. So Hartman--or was it Col. Austin, didn't think you were a representative group?
- A. Well, Captain Hartman came in rather late, at that time it was Col. Austin. What gave him that impression I don't know. But someone did mention that fact because the conferences and negotiations that we have been conducting with the Colonel had been going on very smoothly up to that day, I think it was the 10th or 11th, he began to doubt our power as a representative body.
- Q. I see. Now when were you picked up?
- A. I wasn't exactly picked up, because after November 13th--that is, right after that speech the Col made--the night of the 13th, the people began to be picked up.
- Q. And what did the Colonel say in that speech?
- A. Well, I have to explain that situation. After I came back from the meeting with the Colonel I had to explain just what he told



us, that he didn't exactly think we were the negotiating body, and that negotiation more or less came to a deadlock. Then I also mentioned the fact that there was to be a speech by Col. Austin. But unfortunately at that meeting the motion was made and carried to the effect that it would not be necessary, that the block representatives did not feel it was necessary, to attend the meeting. That was brought up and passed and that situation stands as it was, so although Col. Austin did post mimeographed sheets in each mess hall, I don't believe that the attendance was very large. That I don't know because I didn't go myself. Then the arrests started the night of the 13th and continued on and on and I don't know how many Japanese were picked up, but I imagine over 300. I was more or less in hiding until the 30th of November. Then we managed to contact the FBI because there were many points that we wanted to express and explain to them, and at that time the FBI men were in here in force, I think 10 or 12, I don't know how many but quite a few. We managed to talk with them and had to explain to them about the food situation and various other requests that the colonists made and its reasons for it--and about the food I think Mr. Sugimoto could give you full information. After we had the conference with the FBI, I was put in the small Stockade for 11 days.

Q. For what reason?

A. I can't say. They didn't tell us. But I was placed in there with Mr. Kimura, Rev. Kai--he is in the Stockade here--Mr. Sugimoto and Mr. Higashi (?)--he went to Santa Fe.

Q. And were you ever given any hearing of any kind?

A. Yes, we were given a hearing, but the result of which was never made known to us.

Q. I see, and who conducted that hearing?

A. The first time, right after I made my full explanation to the FBI then nothing was done to us until 10th or 11th of December, 10 or 11 days I was put in the little Stockade. Nothing to do whatsoever during that time. Then the 11th day I was called out to the Internal Securities office over in that section and there I was given the hearing there.

Q. By whom?

A. Mr. Mart and Mr. Silverthorn. He was the project attorney here I believe, he left already. Two army boys were present, one sergeant and one corporal.

Q. Were you informed that you had the right to counsel?

A. No.

Q. What did they say? They merely wanted to question you?

A. No, they just kept on questioning.



Q. Questioning you about what?

A. Causing the disturbance, riot and what not. Just to make their own record, I believe. They didn't allow us to have counsel or anything of that nature.

Q. Have you had subsequent hearings?

A. Yes, I was called in to Captain Hartman's office once, which resulted in no action at all. Then I had a talk with Mr. Best two or three times and his answer was that I will be released eventually, he didn't say when, or wouldn't say what reasons we were being held.

Q. Well, apparently they have every confidence that you will be released to Santa Fe, and of course, whether or not you go to Santa Fe is your business. By the way, what is the general feeling in the group on that position?

A. I think they wish to clarify themselves before ever they do go to Santa Fe--they wish to clear themselves of the accusations they have been put under. They want to be tried on charges if there are charges against them.

Q. You mean they want open hearings? I can succeed in getting these people to specify exactly what they have against you, of course. Have you any information that might be of further interest to us?

A. The point is this, now, I have been educated most of my life in this country. Of course, I was in Japan for seven years, all that time I was in school, and after my graduation and my association with Caucasians I really appreciate the principles of democracy upon which this country stands, and when I had the hearing I expressed to them time and again that after all I have requested myself to be expatriated to Japan but the point is that if I do go back to Japan-naturally, I don't know what some other people might say, but I would like to give a good impression about this country. They won't believe that, if I am to be given treatment like this. Maybe I won't say it, but some others may say those things they have encountered ever since the time of evacuation. And I don't see any sense in us being kept as in a prison.

Q. They say you are not prisoners.

A. But what is it? What is it to have a man marching in front of you and behind you and with a gun, and army guard 24 hours a day? Then another thing, I wish to mention is the fact that we have not been given any financial assistance since our internment here. About two months ago they brought us a sheet saying the persons who take care of the latrines and mess halls would be given the work order by the WRA, which would be \$16.00 a month, and at that time there were around 60 left and out of that I think ten were to be given the work order. But we had refused on the ground that we had never been given such a consideration for that time and that only a small percentage working and the rest would be not equal, so we didn't feel it was right for that small percentage



to get the profits. So we refused to accept that offer.

Q. Have you signed any statements for the FBI?

A. No, I have never signed any statement.

Q. Well, you are not required to do so, you know, of course.

A. In fact, I have never signed any statement since my internment here.

Q. How long have you been here?

A. Since the latter part of October. I went to Jerome first.

Q. You came here from Jerome. A. Yes.

Q. Were you mistreated by any of these police officers, besides being placed in the special Stockade?

A. Myself? They have tried the third degree on me, but I laughed and said don't think you are going to do that to me, but some of the boys were hit over the head with baseball bats--Mr. Yemane and Kobayashi. He still has a scar on his head. All that record is being kept in the hospital. They have a record of the injuries the men suffered, because they needed hospital treatment.

Q. How did you answer the registration?

A. I didn't sign No. All I did was put down "refuse to answer." The point is that Col. Austin and Mr. Best have expressed wishes--in fact, Col. Austin came out with a statement saying the negotiation committee would never be released. There is a statement, you could get in a mimeographed sheet, with his signature, saying the negotiation committee would never be released--December 4th, I believe.

Q. The charge is made, of course, that there are some bad boys among this group put in the Stockade that caused some difficulty. Now, that's possible.

A. That's possible yes.

Q. I don't know you from Adam and you don't know me. There have been difficulties here and it is a touch situation--when you put 18,000 people in conditions of this kind you're bound to have trouble. But my feeling is that unless these people have done something criminal or unless you can prove they have conspired to commit violence or do something unlawful, there is no legal basis for detaining them.

A. And especially, if we were to be guilty we should have been notified to that effect long ago.

Q. You should have been charged and tried.

A. We've been stuck in here now eight months and if we're to be tried it might be another year - the point is we would like to clarify ourselves.



ourselves.

Q. What sort of a clarification would satisfy you fellows?

A. The only point and what we have been asking Mr. Best, is that when these 19 persons were sent to Santa Fe--their request was that they were members of this block representatives body, they wanted to resign which would suit Mr. Best very fine because he wanted this original block representatives organization to dissolve, and of course Col. Austin expressed that desire too. Another thing is that from the date of the army taking over and subsequent release, I went to the WRA. The people in the Center would be rather curious to know just how this whole problem was handled and to what solution we came. In other words, until that thing can be effected, I don't think it is ever going to be a peaceful Center again and I don't seem to be able to convince Mr. Best, maybe I am not eloquent enough, I don't know, but that is the only point.

Q. Well, how would you do that?

A. But we have to get out of here before we can tell the people. Now these people were sent to Santa Fe.

Q. In other words, the position you take is that you should be released from here.

A. That is the only point everybody is trying to work, which they haven't succeeded as yet.

Q. The release from here--you say, release from here to Tule Lake?

A. And then it is our intention to expatriate ourselves or not.

Q. Did you ever apply for a leave clearance?

A. I never have.

Q. What is your feeling about leaving the Center?

A. I know a number of Caucasians who will back me up.

Q. What kind of work did you do.

A. I had a produce market in San Diego. Of that, I am not afraid. Also, if I did go back to Japan of course I carry my American education and American ideals with me. I understand the difficulty I am confronting. The point is it still remains to me that I was educated and raised in this country during my adolescent age which is the most important age. This idea of democracy and Americanism is just locked in my head, it is bound to pop up some place. But the point is, if I see all these things happen such as evacuation and internment here, which is very unlawful--these things I like to get cleared up, and you have noticed the attitude and disposition of some of these men in charge of this Center, it is really outrageous.



A. I agree with you.

A. I have fought with practically all of them so far, as nobody was frank enough to release us to the Center. I don't know how soon they can have a quieter Center in here.

Q. Of course, they are fearful.



Interview with Mrs. Violet Matsuda at Tule Lake Center, July 10, 1944. Address: 617A

- A. I am 28 years old. I have three children, they are 9, 7 and 1.
- Q. And your husband is in the Stockade now?
- A. My brother is in the Stockade.
- Q. You are residing with your husband here?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is your brother married?
- A. No. He is 21.
- Q. Are you coming to see me with reference to your brother?
- A. I am the only immediate family here. His parents are in Japan. My other brother is in the U.S. army serving in Guadalcanal.
- Q. Do you know why your brother is in the Stockade?
- A. My brother is from Jerome, as I am.
- Q. How long have you been here?
- A. We came here February 19, I believe.
- Q. Are you a San Franciscan?
- A. I'm a Fresno girl. I was born in Hawaii.
- Q. And you and your family were sent to Jerome.
- A. We were sent to the Fresno Assembly Center, then to Jerome, then to here.
- Q. Have you asked for expatriation?
- A. Yes, in Jerome.
- Q. And your brother, too?
- A. Yes.
- Q. But you are citizens?
- A. My brother and I are citizens. My husband is an alien.
- Q. What reason has been given for the detention of your brother?
- A. He was sent to stop the riot that night of Nov. 4th.
- Q. By whom?
- A. I don't know.



Q. He was sent to stop the riot?

A. He was with Rev. Kai and George Kuratomi, but I don't know who sent him. He was going to the warehouse area and was taken in custody that night, that night when the warden saw him he was not wounded at all. The warden came out of the hospital two or three days later after the 4th and told us he was not wounded but later on he was given medical treatment at the hospital for many assaults. No, I have not seen him but the nurse and the doctors have told me. And I have written to the Spanish Consulate in regard to that, but they can't do anything because he is a citizen.

Q. And I don't suppose it would be a good idea for you to tell me who told you? You would like me to see your brother at the Stockade, would you?

A. Yes, Because I can't get details to what extent he was wounded. I have been told that he was not given the medical treatment he asked for.

Q. Do you write to him?

A. I do and my letters are read by the WRA.

Q. They are censored?

A. Yes. But made fun of too, because I am such a hot head.

Q. Well, I am a hothead too. But he has corresponded with you?

A. Yes. Q. Have you ever undertaken to visit him?

A. I have tried, but I have been refused and denied and all that and my mother is critically ill in Portland, Oregon, and she was in the hospital two months here and asked to see him and even that has been denied.

Q. To whom did you apply for permission to visit?

A. At that time I went to the Army and I have also called Mr. Black's secretary.

Q. Since the WRA took over the Stockade?

A. I think so. I have asked more than once to the army and they have refused flatly, and then I have asked to WRA and so did Mrs. Mori.

Q. Apparently they didn't tell me the story straight. She hadn't seen her husband for eight months. They claimed she had never come around to ask to see her husband.

A. We have always asked. All of us individually have asked, whatever we do they ignore us. Around Dec. as soon as the Army took over, I went to ask them many times, they have never hardly told me anything. But the remarks made on my brother came, so I saw the Internal Security was on the night of Nov. 4 they said my brother assaulted them, but the cause of disturbance that he is a pressure boy--that is the remark written on my brother's chart.

Q. I don't know what that means. A. I don't either.



Q. They haven't allowed you to see him, although you have requested Mr. Black's secretary?

they said I am espionage agent,

A. I have seen Mr. Best. I have been threatened for Federal offense, and ~~that~~ I have been threatened by Internal Security, 7½ hours altogether, you can check with Mr. Speiser, Mr. Black and Mr. Roberts and Mr. Opler, he is a social analyst, he is here right now.

Q. What have they done? Have they come around to your house to question you?

different

A. People were afraid to go to the army and asking a lot of things ~~but because~~ my brother being in the U. S. Army I thought there should be some consideration. I said, my brother hasn't done anything. He was sent there to stop that. On the way going he was picked up and beaten up for no reason. He has another brother serving in the U.S. army, they should give some consideration. They have ignored my statement. They more or less tell me--

Q. In interviewing you, do they request you to come to the police station?

A. I wrote to Col. Austin, commander here, I wrote many times in regard to the boys in the Stockade that food facilities was poor and heat was inadequate and asking him to improve that for the sakes of the boys because they were ill, and without any special reason, and that I held him responsible for their lives and well-beings as long as he had them under custody. The next day a message came to us saying Captain Hartman, the relations officer, wanted to see me so I went to see him and then he promised he would fix those things and it was a necessary penalty. I said they hadn't done anything, but he just apparently gave me the runaround.

Q. Have you had any further difficulty with the WRA?

A. Yes, and then sometime the end of January--up to that time the colonists had no way of getting an interview with the WRA--and we succeeded somehow in having the WRA and the Army give us a meeting. The menfolks were afraid and they sent me, another girl and a young boy, so I went to that meeting. I have asked them what the reason was they were so against the Stockade boys, what was the main reason they hated them so much for, must have been some other reason, aside of politics, and they said, well those boys are very rude, they have no manners and when they demand things they can't get anything from us, nothing but bad things about those boys. So I said, you certainly talk about those boys, but you don't say the Internal Security wounded my brother and the others, and Schmidt jumped out of his chair--Dr. Opler was there--and he asked me where did you hear that. I couldn't say where I have heard it, but I said that I could prove it. He said you are one-sided too, and he said you repeat it, and to that I didn't answer. Schmidt didn't say any more after that. Then I told him that if they could not solve this thing that I shall take it unsolved to the Japanese government and have them solve it for us, and they were so onesided, with false reports, they didn't even try to listen to our side of the story. We have plenty to say. They didn't give us a chance to say it. The next day they sent O'Brien and Sandrin? to threaten me. They came at 10:30 and stayed till 1:30, didn't even let my husband and family and kids go eat. They said they came to investigate me, to question me and my husband.

Q. Did you say you didn't want to be investigated, that you didn't have to submit to investigation?



A. First they came to my house and started to talk about the Stockade and I let them in thinking they would help me after the interview. Mr. O'Brien sat, but Mr. S---didn't sit, no matter how many times I offered him a chair he just stood there and--I don't know what you call that policeman's something--just stare at you from every angle.

Q. The point we would like to make here is that you didn't say they couldn't come in?

A. Not at that time. Later on I refused.

Q. And when you refused, they didn't insist upon coming in?

A. No. They had a report that I am an espionage agent, that I was connected with the royal family of Japan and if I knew Prince Konoye that I am a friend of theirs and a good friend of their children. I don't know where they got their reports...well, I felt very loyal to the United States before this evacuation and that is no lie, and so did my brother and he was drafted and he is serving and I am glad he serves for what he believes in.

Q. I don't blame you for feeling mad, at all, but of course I would have challenged in the courts a long time ago my detention. We are handling cases in the courts now, as you very likely know, the Kurematsu and Endo cases, and there are some cases in Los Angeles that were just filed recently, and I am up here for the purpose of getting additional cases at this Center of persons who have been denied leave clearance, who want to get out and who have not been permitted to leave. I am very eager to get hold of such persons in order to get test cases from Tule Lake particularly. If you can get persons who would be willing to file suits--we have had difficulty in getting persons to do it.

A. I went to the hospital one day--the day before they told me to withdraw the statements that I had written to Spanish Consul to the A, my and to WRA in regard to the Stockade case.

Mrs. Matsuda here submitted a written request to Mr. Best to be permitted to see her brother, Yamane, and to be permitted henceforth to see him periodically. Mr. O'Day went with her to Mr. Best. She shortly returned saying that she would not be permitted then to see her brother, and Mr. Best would not say when she would be permitted to do so.

Mrs. Matsuda: On May 5th, being a Boy's Festival day, we requested Mr. Best if we could send some food in and he O.K.'d it, o.k.'d me by telephone, so I notified all the families and they all prepared something and money contributions were taken. On the 4th of May, my husband and I got an appointment with Mr. Best because he has been double-crossing us, and he assured us and Mrs. Kai the same afternoon, provided we do not put any messages in the food. We promised and we could take the whole responsibility on the matter. What do you think, the next day, when everything was made, at 9:30 I told Mr. Best everything was ready, would he have the mess division come, the permit was refused. With all the food, a \$20.00 order of fresh fish, \$100.00 worth of food with the contributions that we got and different families made chow mein and suki? that morning it was denied to us. I pleaded with them, the food was already made and had he denied it the day before we wouldn't have to do all that, because we got up at four to prepare everything. He said, the army denied it. He said, Mr. Best, asked them. Anyway, they passed the



buck and I and Mr. Matsuda went back and forth and finally that day we had it put into the WRA storage thinking we could negotiate somewhere there and yet it was denied.

Q. What he'll very likely tell me is that now at that time the Schochide was not under my jurisdiction. Consequently, you can't hold him responsible.

A. Even in a jail--even in a jail you can say something. How can a privilege here be denied?



Interview with FRED H. MORI, Tule Lake Stockade, July 11, 1944.  
With assistance of George Kuratomi as interpreter.

*released from  
Stockade, 1st  
day of hunger  
strike*

Mr. Kuratomi: Mori has asked for release to the Center but it was denied.  
Mori was vice chairman of the group.

Q. What were you on this negotiations committee?

A. Vice-President.

Q. And you represented Block -- A. 49.

Q. I am informed by the project attorney that you were offered an opportunity to leave the Stockade but you turned it down.

A. Yes, three days ago.

Q. Did they put any conditions on that?

A. It was proclaimed, the way I understand is that I am a citizen, I could be in this Center, as soon as I drop citizenship I have to go to Santa Fe.

Q. Well, you can be released and still expatriate yourself. If you were released here to Tule Lake you could subsequently request repatriation, you understand. You understand you don't have to sign this paper. The decision is up to you alone. A. Yes.

Q. When I saw Mr. Lechlitter he said if you still wanted to get out of here to the camp, why they might let you go.

A. It was like this. I was called and I went to Mr. Best's office and I don't know whether they said I could go but I couldn't clearly make up my mind to go out. But ~~in~~ soon I decided to go to the Center and I told Internal Security about that but they said it was too late--maybe just because Mr. Best was upset at that time.

Q. How long ago was that?

A. That was Saturday evening, or maybe morning. At that time Mr. (Lechlitter) said it was all right to go out from the Stockade on Monday morning. Yesterday after I said goodbye to my wife ~~and~~ and about to go to the Stockade here, one of the officers of the Internal Security said what am I going to do, I said I like to get out of this Stockade, but he said he will tell.

A. I will tell Mr. Best and Mr. Lechlitter too.

Q. When you were questioned were you accused of having done something? A. No.

Q. You were interviewed. A. Yes, all interviewed.

Q. Interviewed separately? A. Singly.

Q. And at that time what did they want to know when they interviewed you?

A. They wanted to know about the incident of November 4th, where we were and what we did.

Q. And these boys have all denied any connection with that incident?

A. I know they haven't done anything.



Q. That incident occurred at night, didn't it, about 9 o'clock.

A. I don't even know the time.

Q. And how many people were originally involved in that incident?

A. I don't know. I never was informed and never did find out. According to Mr. Best there were around 300.

Q. Have you ever been mistreated in any way?

A. He has complaints, but no special case at this time.



Interview with YUKIKO MORI, at Tule Lake Center, July 10, 1944.  
Address: 4907-C

(Through Yamaguchi, an  
interpreter)

Q. Where were you born?

A. I was born in Los Angeles

Q. You are married? Have you any children?

A. Yes, I have three children.

Q. Do you know why they have put your husband over there in the Stockade.

A. I don't know.

Q. They allow you to write to him?

A. Yes.

Q. How often do they allow you to write to him?

A. They have to smuggle the letters in.

Q. In other words, there is no procedure whereby they may correspond lawfully or under regulations?

A. Yes.

Q. Does your husband write to you?

A. He writes periodically but they are always late.

Q. But through regular channels.

A. Has to go through hands of WRA and Army.

Q. And can you send letters the same way, through the WRA and Army?

A. (Inter.) When she wants to transmit her letters she has to take her letters to the army.

Q. The Army isn't in control of the Stockade any more, is it?

Okemoto: I understand they surrendered it back some time ago.

Q. The WRA is now in charge.

Okemoto: Supposed to be.

Q. Well, ask her whether within the last 30 days they have permitted her to send letters.

A. Yes.



Q. Has she asked to see him?

A. Yes, but they said no. No reason.

Q. Whom does she ask for permission to see her husband?

A. She said she has asked the Army and also later on the Internal Security. She has asked to see Mr. Best but this has been refused. We go through the Internal Security, Mr. Schmidt. The last week, ten days, they have changed the procedure. You can come to the gate and obtain a pass, but when you get a pass you have to say for what purpose. If not satisfactory, they will not give you one.

Q. All of the wives have not received permission to see their husbands?

A. They have been asking, and waiting even to see Mr. Schmidt but not allowed to see him either.

Q. Mrs. Mori, how long has your husband been in the Stockade.

A. 8 months.

Q. And you have not been permitted to see him all during that time?

A. No and none of the children have seen him.

Q. Would you like to see your husband?

A. Oh, yes.

Inter: She wants to tell you about asking the Internal Security and authorities to have her husband released. She has asked them why he was detained. They won't give her any reason. They just say it is a long story. That was around the 31st of December; they say in three weeks or so we will do something about it but nothing came of it. They won't give her the reason why he was detained but say it is a long story. He was detained for over 8 months and she wants to know the definite reason why he was detained.

Q. Tell her I will talk to her husband, and I will talk to Mr. Best.

Note: Mrs. Mori upon written request was permitted to see her husband that afternoon.



Interview with KOFUMI NISHIOKA, Tule Lake Center, July 10, 1944  
Address 615 A

Q. You have a family, do you?

A. Yes, I have a big boy, 12, then a girl 10 and a boy 6.

Q. And your husband went to Santa Fe on the 28th of June?

A. Yes. I don't know what reason. He was in the Stockade for over 5 months.

Q. And you never found out why?

A. Yes. I went to see Mr. Best and he told me that they hold him because he was in status quo; and first I met him he told me that because he was supporting Rev. Kai and---, but he hasn't nothing to do with it. I told Mr. Best he had nothing to do with it.

Q. And your husband was held there because he was in 'status quo' - a supporter of the status quo?

A. Yes, as a supporter of the status quo during the strike. That is what Mr. Best told me. He was sure he would be sent to Santa Fe and the family could be together in Crystal Spring City.

Q. But then you were never given an opportunity to join your husband? You haven't been told you will be sent there?

A. Mr. Best and the attorney said he will be sent to Santa Fe and later on the family might be together in Crystal City.

Q. Did you attempt to visit your husband.

A. I interviewed him before he left.

Q. Did you ever attempt to visit him during the 5 months.

A. Nobody was allowed to.

Q. Did you ever ask anybody?

A. No.

Q. What made you think you couldn't?

A. Everybody was saying we can't visit during the Stockade. We just wrote letters back and forth.

Q. How did you know you could write letters?

A. They told us we could.

Q. Who is they?

A. Everybody.



Interview with Kiyoshi Okamoto, Tule Lake, July 10, 1944.

- A. I refused to answer Question 28 until my rights as a citizen were clarified. The other question I answered Yes.
- Q. You had a hearing, didn't you, a leave clearance hearing?
- A. Yes, I had a hearing.
- Q. And did they inform you that leave had been denied?
- A. They didn't inform me until after I came here, then they delivered me the notice that my leave clearance was denied, by transmission; in other words, one of the WRA workers was instructed to hand it directly to me. I still have that envelope with that statement in it.
- Q. And the statement says that by reason of your transfer to Tule Lake your leave application is automatically denied?
- A. No, simply states that we have reason to doubt your loyalty.
- Q. That formal notice.
- A. Yes, that is all I have received to date.
- Q. In other words, it says your application for leave clearance has been denied because they have reason to doubt your loyalty.
- A. Yes.
- Q. And did you ever undertake to file an appeal from that decision?
- A. No, I didn't because it is only recently since I have been here. They told me the morning that we were brought into the administration for release into the camp, Mr. Black told both Mr. Horino and I that we could appeal, that the Appeal Board will convene very shortly.
- Q. And they have named such an Appeal Board, you know.
- A. Well, they were not sure.
- Q. There are some men, Professor Bradley of Stanford University, a very fine person, a lawyer by the name of McInerney on the Board of Education in San Francisco. I don't know anything about his attitude with reference to matters such as this. Then the Judge of the Utah Supreme Court--all outside the WRA, at least five of them. They have been named to serve on this Board and two of them constitute a majority, or at least a quorum, to do business. So just as a technical matter, it might be a good idea just to file a notice of Appeal.
- A. I questioned him who would be on the Board and he didn't know, so I just supposed that it would be WRA people so I haven't paid any attention.



Q. One difficulty we may face in the courts. It is a point that has been raised in the Endo case, that Miss Endo could have gotten out if she had just followed the procedure, our answer is that under this leave procedure all these Center residents filed applications a year ago February; some 16 months have transpired and they're still in the camps despite the fact that they have asked for release. That isn't a speedy procedure. If you apply and within a few weeks they let you go, that may justify this type of procedure. In other words, an administrative remedy is supposed to be a speedy one, not supposed to take years.

I want to ask you a few questions. My understanding is that you were chairman of this Fair Play Committee?

A. I have to clarify. I was chairman of the original FPC and there was an organization, I appointed myself chairman, that's all. Then comes the next step. I had been doing some public educational work in opposition to the WRA policy especially pertaining to the relocation program.

Q. You mean you were objecting to the relocation program?

A. As it consisted. No guarantees whatsoever, no assurance, no sufferance of prior claims. In the meantime, came this draft proposition and three or four people came to me, so during the course of conversation--

Q. Just a moment. When was the committee established, roughly speaking?

A. Around February, 1944

Q. After the draft announcement was made, is that true?

A. The committee of which I claimed to have been chairman was around October in 1943. Then, around February, 1944, three or four people came to me, so during the course of the conversation I suggested that I have got this thing established, if you folks want it you take it, it is a good sounding name. So they went off, they elected their own chairman, so that there is the general principle.

Q. But you were no longer the chairman of the group after February?

A. Not active work, I was no longer chairman.

Q. They had their own elected chairman for their particular work?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have any hand in the issuance of the three mimeographed sheets?

A. No, absolutely no.

Q. You didn't, particularly Sheet No. 3?



- A. No, I knew of them after they came out.
- Q. You were at Heart Mountain at the time they were issued, however, weren't you? You hadn't been transferred?
- A. No I hadn't been transferred.
- Q. And you were a member of the committee?
- A. No, I wasn't. I insisted that I be kept out of it. I did act as adviser or whenever they thought they wanted some advice they would come to me.
- Q. Oh, if they wanted to talk to you about some of their problems, you would be glad to talk it over with them.
- A. But not as a participant, I had no reason, I was beyond the age limit.
- Q. What was necessary for membership in the FPC?
- A. An understanding of the principles and ideals of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
- Q. Of the United States Constitution.
- A. Yes.
- Q. These were all citizens, then, who belonged?
- A. Yes, and only those who believed in upholding the ideals and principles of the Constitution were accepted. Of course, later others may have infiltrated. I advised them that it was not necessary to build a big organization but a small group that know what they want and what they're after, would be more effective. So on the whole they worked along that line.
- Q. Do you think you may be prosecuted on the conspiracy charge?
- A. I have been told. I got two letters, one from Heart Mountain and one last Saturday from Denver. This was through Mennen, I think that Mennen saw this indictment on the District Attorney's desk. But as far as the reason is concerned it is all fabrication. I was interviewed by the FBI three times here.
- Q. Do you appreciate that you don't have to talk to the FBI agents?
- A. I understand that.
- Q. So anything you say to them is said voluntarily. If you say, I don't want to speak to you, don't care to discuss this matter with you, they may not insist upon your discussing it with them?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did you sign any statement?



A. No.

Q. But they did take notes?

A. Once in a while.

Q. What did they discuss with you?

A. Well, probably wanted to know who was responsible for the issuance of these three pamphlets. Where we got the mimeograph, the paper and the carbon and who was chairman. They insisted that I was chairman and that I presided over some of the meetings.

Q. Did you ever preside at any of the meetings?

A. None of them. I was present at several of them. But in none of them I presided. That's what they tried to get at. Now they have three statements from people who are working for the WRA. One of them is Sentinel Reporter, rabidly anti-Fair Play.

Q. Japanese, I take it?

A. But none of them is substantial, for the simple reason that of course he includes some of the lectures that I had been giving on this relocation program and I contended that we as Nisei had certain rights and my contentions were all based upon the Open Forum of the Los Angeles Branch, so none of the ideas emanated from myself. Denman's decision, etc.

Q. You have written various people, I take it, from time to time?

A. I wrote about 48 letters. I titled it a proclamation.

Q. To whom did you address these letters?

A. To the President, to General Emmons, to the Secretary of War, Dillon Meyer, Attorney General Biddle, then to all the news syndicates that I could get hold of.

Q. And this wasn't only with reference to the Draft situation?

A. This was long before the draft situation. I mailed it I think on the 31st of December. No, it was a complaint of internment conditions, etc.

Q. Have you had any further hearing from the WRA with reference to your leave.

A. No.

Q. The only hearing you had that time was this one of which I got a copy?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it customary for them to give the evacuees copies of these clearance hearings?



A. Absolutely not.

Q. In other words, this one I had was just gotten surreptitiously?

A. No, sir. I asked the attorney that examined me. He said it is impossible. I asked him why, he said I am not responsible; so I asked him who is responsible, so he said Mr. Robertson, so immediately I got up and went to Mr. Robertson's office. The secretary told me he was busy. So I left a note saying I wanted a copy, I will be back Monday next week. I went back, No Mr. Robertson had not time to see me, which was all right. So I immediately went home and addressed a letter to Dillon Meyer stating the condition. About two or three weeks later, I got a reply addressed in the local project envelope and also a letter to Robertson stating that if I went to the office probably I would receive a copy. Now Robertson accompanied that with a letter, if you care to see a transcript of your hearing you may do so in the project attorney's office, and at the same time if you care to perhaps you will make a copy of it yourself. That is the substance.

Q. Is it customary for them to show the evacuees after such hearings the transcript for correction purposes?

A. Absolutely not. They try their hardest to prevent any such thing.

Q. Have there been others besides Horino and yourself who have secured transcripts of the proceeding?

A. Since then I broadcast the news, the fact that we can get a copy of it so that maybe some of them have received it. But up to that time none of them had received any of the transcript or any other kind of receipt or admission on the part of the WRA. It's the same too with lost goods and things of that kind. They like to avoid any written comment.

Q. Do you have any relatives who are in the armed services?

A. Yes, in the last war.

Q. In the United States Army.

A. In France he got wounded on the last day, about an hour before crossing the Hindenberg Line, 7 machine bullets, Argonne Forest I think. He is goofy today.

Q. Well, I think you ought to take an appeal. They will very likely hold these appeal hearings within the next month or so and if you file now it would bring up your appeal then.



Interview with ISAMU SUGIMOTO, Tule Lake Stockade, July 11, 1944.

Mr. Besig: You were a block representative, I take it.

A. No, I was not. I was sort of adviser to the food investigation committee.

Q. And who set up that committee?

A. That committee was set up by block representatives. They had a different committee set up, like while there were the investigation committees. At first the idea was to improve the living conditions in the camp because when we came in here from other centers we found out and we felt that the conditions in the center here and outside where we came from is quite a bit different, physical aspects, and so first thing the block representatives wanted to do was to investigate where those differences originated. The food wasn't any good when we came in here.

Q. What center did you come from? A. Poston, Arizona.

Q. When did you come to this Center? A. I think it was October 7th.

Q. You came October 7, 1943. A. Yes.

Q. And when were you detained? A. November 26th, I think it was.

Q. November 26th you were picked up and you have been here ever since? A. Yes.

Q. Where did you reside in the United States prior to the evacuation?

A. I evacuated from Ontario, California, in southern California.

Q. How old are you? A. 38.

Q. Were you born in the United States? A. Yes.

Q. Where? A. Yolo County.

Q. Have you asked for expatriation? A. Yes, I have.

Q. Have you any relatives in Japan?

A. No. Well, of course I have relatives ~~in Japan~~ there all right. My father and mother live over here, they are going back there too.

Q. Did you originally want to expatriate? A. Yes.

Q. Are you a Chibei? A. Yes, I think I am grouped as a Chibei.

Q. How long were you educated in Japan?

A. I was there about ten years.

Q. What is your occupation? A. I was a farmer.

Q. And are you registered in the draft? A. Yes.

Q. Where? A. Yolo County. I registered there about 5 months prior to the evacuation.



Q. And then at that time you moved down to Ontario?

A. Yes.

Q. Were you raising peaches? A. No, tomatoes, asparagus--

Q. You're a farmer. A. Yes, I didn't have my own farm, but the lease.

Q. Have you asked to see your wife?

A. No, I have not.

Q. Do you correspond with her?

A. Yes.

Q. Via censorship?

A. Yes. Since they put up that wall over there we decided there is no use trying to communicate. Every time you try to communicate with them, they look at it. They want to butt into all the business and we don't want to be misunderstood, and at that time we knew you were coming so thought we might just as well excommunicate ourselves from the rest of the world and wait for you to come down here.

Q. You answered the questionnaire?

A. No on 27 and No/ on 28. I had a condition with it, I signed neutral. I did not want to take sides on either side, but they told me it's got to be yes or no, got to be either yes or nothing else would go, so my answer was classified as No.

Q. When were you ~~put~~ picked up? A. on the 26th of November.

Q. What were you doing at the time you were picked up?

A. I was hiding.

Q. You were one of those who went into hiding around November 13th--and stayed in hiding for a couple of weeks.

A. That's right.

Q. And then you gave yourself up?

A. I was caught.

Q. Oh, you were caught.

A. They got the record of <sup>mine.</sup> ~~me.~~ The thing was like this. I think George explained to you we all had a special investigation to do. Mine was food, and I wanted to find out why we weren't getting enough of those rationed articles like meat and processed foods. I checked everything that came into the kitchen and I calculated every week there as to how many points we received we received for certain number of people in the block--according to the proportion of the number in the block, supposed to give 16 points and so many blue points to each person, same as outside, and this is what the WRA has been telling us, that people in the Center will get the same ration as outside people. That means 16 points for meat, and so forth. But when we came into this Center



A. (cont.)

we weren't getting that full ration points. So my job was to find out why we weren't getting it. So I went in and ~~looked~~ pushed my nose into this and that and ~~was~~ dug up a few things and found out that some of the meat was going into the personnel kitchen where the Caucasians were ~~sitting~~ feeding. Of course, if you take ribsteaks etc. out of a quarter of beef you won't get much of a beef left, but that is what the Centers have been getting. That was recorded on a sheet they had over in the mess management office. Well, I naturally took that and copied it and I made a report covering all those points and in order to present the results of investigation to the administration I had to be present to explain all those details, so I was put in as one of the members of the negotiation committee. Originally there were only 7 members to the negotiating committee but they put in people like myself and other special investigators and made 14 of them all told. Now, naturally, when Mr. Myer came over here November 1st, I was in the office and I presented the result of that investigation. What was his reaction? He said, well I just came in here, don't know anything about it, if what you say is correct <sup>why</sup> certainly we will do something about it. He said he has to have a couple of days to look into the matter, so we let it go at that.

Q. Was there any reformation in the food?

A. Yes, quite a bit after that. Mr. Peck was chief steward at the time. He left here at that time and Mr. Hayward came in his place and things worked along better. There must have been something wrong over there. Then, when I was picked up, FBI men were in here and they had an accountant with them. He wanted to go over my investigation with the sources I worked on, so he went ahead and got all this information after I got it and must have compared those two and I think he has all those records, photostatic copies of those records. That was quite an interesting investigation and Mr. Best knows too that the thing wasn't exactly right so far as food is concerned at the time.

Q. Have you had any semblance of a hearing?

A. Well, the only hearing I have had was just the other day with the Internal Securities. I don't know whether you call that a hearing or not.

Q. They asked you questions? A. Yes.

Q. And what did they want to know?

A. What they wanted to know--they just asked me a lot of questions like if I was a member of representatives or if I participated in November 4th riot or whatever they call it, and when I was picked up, that is about all pertaining to the incident.

Q. Where were you at the time of the disturbance, at the meeting?

A. I was at home. I wasn't a member of the committee at all.

Q. You were only on the negotiations committee because of your particular investigation?

A. Yes.



Q. And that was only recently that they questioned you?

A. Yes, it was last month or a couple of months ago.

Q. That is the only time they have questioned you.

A. By WRA, yes.

Q. But the A<sup>my</sup> questioned you?

A. The A<sup>my</sup> questioned us once.

Q. The FBI?

A. The FBI, yes.

Q. Did you sign any statements for the FBI?

A. No, I never signed any statements.

Q. Mr. Best ever talk to you after you were in?

A. I asked for interview once and of course he never answered me on that, but after WRA took over the Stockade here we wanted to straighten up the food situation inside the Stockade, so we wrote to Mr. Best, the Stockade as a whole, that we want to see him regarding our food, and he came down with Mr. Hayward once and talked to us. This is the only time I saw Mr. Best after I was in here.

Q. ~~Handwritten~~ They have in no way indicated to you why you were here?

A. No, this is still a mystery to us.

Q. They have left that to your own judgement.

A. We only see the police. I wanted to see Mr. Best. I asked him through a letter. He never answered it.

Q. I understand Mr. Ennis was around here recently from the Department of Justice and that he ~~announced~~ informed all of the people in here of the act of Congress which was adopted under which citizens would be able to renounce their citizenship. You appreciate, of course, that there is no duty, no requirement on your part to renounce your citizenship if you don't want to do it. The intention, of course, is to ship you boys down to Santa Fe as soon as you sign on the dotted line, and they believe that will solve their Stockade problem in that manner, at least~~and~~ they are hopeful it will solve their problem.

A. So I gathered. But I don't think it will work out that easily. The thing we have to do is to settle this mess somehow and in order to do that the people got to go out at once to the Center and we have to make a report there. At the present no negotiating committee or no representatives have resigned since that incident. The people still are supporting the original committee and original representatives. In order to solve the problem and put the camp back into peace all these people have to go out at once and settle all these things. Until we can do that, I don't think it will be settled. Of course, the administration



A.(cont.) might think that if they could send us down to Santa Fe that is the end of the whole thing. I don't think it will work out that easy, and we will not be sent down there without settling this thing amicably.

A. Well, in any case you appreciate what your rights are, and if you have any question <sup>what</sup> of your rights are I hope you fellows will write to us at the American Civil Liberties Union and I will write ~~you~~ to some of the boys in the Stockade anyway.

A. At the time when we were hiding after November 13, we expected to see the Spanish Consul. We had our intention shown to the WRA that we were going back to Japan, and this Center here is designated as a Segregate Center. The Spanish Consul from San Francisco came up here twice prior to that day and we talked to him. Isei and Neisei combined, because all those problems we presented to the Spanish Consul are the problems of the residents as a whole. So there wasn't any discrimination until then. But this thing started and of course we wanted to see some neutral person, Spanish Consul or somebody, who doesn't take either side, to settle the question. The only person we thought about was the Spanish Consul, so we wanted to see him. We didn't want to be caught and put in here until he showed up. But after we were picked up he came up again but at that time of course we were told that the fact that we are American citizens, we can't do that with the Spanish Consul. We thought, all right, but if American citizens we have civil rights and we like to find out where we stand through the courts of the United States.



INTERVIEW WITH FUDE TSUCHIYA, at Tule Lake, July 10, 1944  
Address: 5605D  
(through interpreter)

- Q. What is your problem?
- A. My husband was sent to Santa Fe.
- Q. Do you have any children?
- A. Yes, four. 24, 23, 21 and 14. Four boys.
- Q. Are they all here?
- A. No, first boy is in the army; second boy is in Minnesota, working on a farm. This second boy was to go back to Japan with me, but since his brother is in the army he wants him to stay outside so he can visit him sometime.
- Q. Where is the boy in the Army? What state now?
- A. In the state next to New York in a Mechanic School.
- Q. What does the third boy do.
- A. He is here, and the 14 year old is here.
- Q. She wants to be with her husband?
- A. She wants to be with her husband, yes.
- Q. And you want the whole family to be together.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Have you asked for repatriation?
- A. Yes, in Jerome.
- Q. And your husband too?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You want to go back to Japan?
- A. Yes
- Q. Tell her I will do the best I can to try to fix up her return to her husband. What is his name?
- A. Kakunosuke Tsuchiya. He went to Santa Fe on June 28th. Is it possible to send the father of a soldier to an internment camp?
- Q. Yes. He is an enemy alien and under the law-and that is the



law and there is no question about it, the Attorney General has the power to put all enemy aliens in camp and he can keep them there. Even though you have sons who are citizens who are in the army, and daughters born here, enemy aliens may be detained. It isn't on the question of race. Suppose we were fighting France, the U.S. would have the power to intern all French citizens. But with the United States citizens it is a different question.



Interview with HIROYOSHI TSUDA, at Tule Lake Center, July , 1944  
3015-C

Q. Are you a citizen?

A. Yes, citizen. I am from Sacramento. I was born in Sacramento. I was back in Japan for eight years.

Q. You are what the boys call a <sup>K</sup>Chibei.

A. Yes.

Q. Are you married?

A. Yes. I have a son 21 years old. I am 43.

Q. Have you any more children?

A. No, I lost one child.

Q. And you have this boy. And your wife resides here with you, I take it? Resides is the proper term?--

A. She's here--

Q. Or confined here with you--imprisoned, is that the term I ought to use? What is the story? What is your problem? Would you like to get out?

A. It is not my personal problem. I was in the Stockade myself. It is the boys in the Stockade. I was in there for five months.

Q. When were you picked up?

A. I was the first one picked up by the army.

Q. And you 'initiated' the Stockade?

A. Oh Maybe so. And I got picked up on November 13th and released on April 7th. While I was in there they didn't tell me why I got picked up or why I have been kept in there for that length of time and when I got released there wasn't anything said, they simply, Mr. Best and Mr. Schmidt have told me that they have confidence in me, that I am no longer any trouble maker and such and such and so have released me.

Q. They never informed you the reasons for your detention?

A. No, they simply said that I was one of the trouble makers, that's all. They haven't showed me any evidence or anything like that. Merely I was arrested on a mere accusation, and although they went through quite a bit of investigation about my activity and maybe they clarified their accusations themselves and brought my release, I guess. That is about all, I can assume.

Q. Let me ask you a question. You say you came from Sacramento.



When you were evacuated, where were you first sent?

A. Wallergo, that is 24 miles north of Sacramento Assembly Center.

Q. And from Wallergo where did you go?

A. Direct to Tule Lake.

Q. And have been ever since?

A. I've been here two years or more, a little over two years.

Q. And were you among those registered a year ago February is it?

A. No, No. You mean--

Q. The general registration.

A. Oh, yes. I registered then. Though we had quite a bit of dissension at the time.

Q. I remember I got a wire from somebody or other, head of the Council here, and my opinion was asked. I thought the questionnaire was a hell of a questionnaire, but maybe a good idea to answer it anyway. But in any case, you answered the questionnaire. Did you answer questions 27 and 28?

A. Yes, I did. I answered "No."

Q. And your son, where is he?

A. He is here.

Q. He answered 'No,' too?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. And consequently, because of your answers you are at any rate not eligible for release.

A. From this camp, you mean. I can understand that part. Yes.

Q. And you have never asked for release? you are content to stay here?

A. That's right.

Q. What did you work at before you came here?

A. Outside, you mean? Produce.

Q. Produce business.

A. Yes.

Q. None of my business, I don't give a damn how you feel one way or



another but why did you answer 'No' on these questions: You know my position here, I am from the American Civil Liberties Union, I am not a part of this administration.

- A. Yes, I heard about the Civil Liberties Union quite often, and Tsukamoto, he is a lawyer from Sacramento, he's in the army, I think. He was one of the Council members and is sat in the Council myself - The reason I answered 'No' is if the evacuation did not take place presumably I won't answer No. But since we have been thrown in a place like this, - of course the reason and cause and things like that I don't argue, but nevertheless this is a war time you see, if it wasn't a war time of course I'll do a lot for this country and have been doing for 25 years, but since the war broke out I have a mother in Japan and relatives in Japan, two brothers in Japan, and furthermore I have been educated in Japan. So my feeling was more or less leaning over to the Japan side, and in that question 28 especially, you can't just say Yes.
- Q. There were two or three questions in one as a matter of fact.
- A. Now, just because I signed 'No' that doesn't necessarily mean I hate the United States or anything like that.
- Q. There is a tremendous conflict here, of course.
- A. So in other words, where I answer Yes-No, I am not answering, I am not giving a clear answer. You can't answer Yes or No.
- Q. You want to explain and you might take a book to explain.
- A. That's right. So after that I have been segregated and detained in Tule Lake Center, and that's O.K. with me too, because I knew how I am supposed to be treated so that part is all right. But what today I am very much interested in are the boys that still remain in the Stockade. Whether they will have a chance to release or whether WRA has a right to keep them in there.
- Q. What they are undoubtedly going to try to do with them is this. They are going to try to get them to request expatriation. You know recently Congress enacted this law permitting citizens to renounce citizenship. That is an innovation in our law here and what they're going to do apparently is to try to get them to renounce. I haven't seen the boys yet. I have asked Mr. Lechlitter and he wants to talk it over with me first. I think that is what he is going to say, we are going to go to these boys and we are going to have forms with us and we are going to try to get them to sign them. If they sign them, then they become aliens. And then they are sent to Santa Fe or some other place. That is what they have in the back of their mind, I believe. I haven't found out definitely, but that is a conclusion. I think what they should do--it depends naturally on their own decisions, of course--if they don't want to be treated as aliens then I would say the thing is not to sign it. If you want ultimately to expatriate, that is your desire, your wish, and you exercise it if you wish. You don't have to do anything and nobody can compel you to do anything. I don't know whether there is any reason why



they should continue to be held in the Stockade. I don't know what they have done, have no idea, don't know if the administration charges them with anything. They do not tell me anything specific, all I get is a lot of innuendos. ~~They do not tell me anything~~ 'Well, you don't know what we know,' that's what I hear all the time.

- A. As far as this incident, the November incident, is concerned, and the reason why a great many of them have been picked up, I presume that you will get first-hand information by Kuratomi, Rev. Kai and Andy Tsukemoto, and if I can help those boys to get out from the Stockade which I have been doing ever since release, appealing to Mr. Best and Mr. Lechlitter, talking whenever I get the chance, and by doing so of course I am in a precarious position right now I know it and by now whoever is the intermediate for them why you are classed as one of them and if they have something against them they have something against you. So probably I can give you an outline of the incident after you see these boys in the Stockade.
- Q. Maybe sometime this afternoon. I'm going to see Lechlitter at noon and we are going to talk about it and they have indicated I can see them at that time and after that I will ask to see you. Now I presume that with reference to your own detention, you would like me to inquire into that somewhat, the reasons for it, the reasons for your detention?
- A. Yes, I would like to know the reason why I was detained.
- Q. Did they ever give you a hearing then?
- A. Yes, they only asked me two questions. I happen to be a chief investigator in the colony police department, and they didn't tell me when, but whenever the officer asked me the question No. 1-- that I stuck a knife in a wall and said tonight was the deadline-- now what made me say that was the question they asked me about. I don't remember those things, they are so foolish and fragmentary. I said give me more of the circumstances, maybe I can remember something. Well, then they accuse me of saying that. Oh, you simply do not want to answer any question, so I got in an argument all right. No. 2 was that --
- Q. Who was questioning you?
- A. Two of the Internal Security Police. I don't know these gentlemen. Hired after I was thrown in the Stockade. Second question was that I made remarks that the Japanese was pulling the wool over the Caucasian's eyes. So I told them the same thing, when did I say this, what circumstances, where and how.
- Q. Time and place and who was there?
- A. So I said to these two gentlemen, I said I don't think you gentlemen know anything about this incident. I do not think you have a right to interview me. If you call this a hearing or anything like that, I would rather see Mr. Best or Mr. Schmidt. You two gentlemen don't know anything about this whole incident. So that



was the only hearing I had. And one day I went to see Mr. Best and I told him all about my end of the activity prior to my arrest and that very afternoon they came and let me go.

- Q. May I ask you, when they came to get you did they say you are under arrest?
- A. No, I was in my office at the warden headquarters and a bunch of jeeps and all the army cars came by the office and a lot of police boys surrounded the building and I think it was Lieut. Forbes walked in there. He told me that Col. Austin wants to see you, Tsuda, so I said O.K., so I got up and he frisked me from behind, put me on a cargo truck, bunches of cars following, and they packed me in and put me in the Stockade.
- Q. In other words, it was the military who picked you up and the military who released you?
- A. I don't know.
- Q. The military was still in charge of the stockade?
- A. When I got released, it was absolutely under WRA.
- Q. How long had the WRA been handling the Stockade.
- A. The entire administration was transferred by them to the WRA around about January 15th.
- Q. Was the Stockade being run by them too?
- A. No, the Stockade has just only recently been transferred.
- Q. In other words, it is quite possible the Army was still running the Stockade when you were released?
- A. Only way I understand was that the Army and WRA in conjunction were running the Stockade.
- Q. The WRA tries to get out of responsibility by saying the Army was running it.
- A. I have been told that a lot of times but never once has the Army investigated my case, never even asked me any questions.
- Q. All the investigation was conducted by Internal Police?
- A. Internal Security.
- Q. And Best's office?
- A. That's right.
- Q. Did you get to see your wife while you were in there?
- A. No, of course I wrote to her but I didn't see her.



Q. Your letters were censored?

A. Every letter, papers and everything, all censored. And that has been denied. I know that several wives requested Mr. Best to see their husband, which has been refused.

Q. Did you ask to see your wife?

A. No.

Q. Do you know whether your wife asked to see you?

A. You see, I believed when I got arrested that I haven't done anything wrong, so I wrote and told her you stay home and just stay put and some day it will come they will find out they made a mistake by arresting me. When that day comes they are going to release me. Until that time comes, do not make too much noise and stay home. But she got worried and she went to see Mr. Best one day and talked to him about my release and Mr. Best told her it is the Army that is keeping me in the Stockade. As far as Mr. Best is concerned he would like to see me released that very afternoon. He said he would try his darndest to get me out of Stockade. So just wait for a little while or something like that, he told my wife. Of course, we asked from the Stockade to see our folks. At the same time I know that several wives went up to see Mr. Best and asked permission to see their husbands, which has been denied. But I heard yesterday Mr. Mori saw his wife. I think that is the first time.

Q. Yes, we asked if Mrs. Mori could not see her husband.

A. So I just asked Mr. Lechlitter whether Mrs. Kai will have a chance to see her husband, but his answer was pretty much negative.

Q. Is she a citizen.

A. She is a citizen, yes, and she has just been out of the hospital about two weeks with a new baby. He hasn't been permitted to see her or the baby.

Q. Is he a Buddhist priest?

A. Yes.

Q. There is some reason or other, the administration seem to think he is the bad boy of the colony.

A. Yes, that he is the whole instigator.

Q. What is the apparent means of communication with the administration here? If you have problems, do you have to go to Best's office?

A. Well, I have to get either a permit at the gate and get these passes, like this morning I came to see Mr. Lechlitter, so the



gatemanager called up Mr. Lechlitter and got his O.K. and after that they issued this pass and with this pass I come in this area.

Q. Do they sometimes refuse to issue those passes?

A. Like Mr. Lechlitter, I never had any trouble seeing him, but Mr. Best or Mr. Black or any other person I don't get to see them, very rarely. Either they are too busy, have no time, something like that.

Q. What sort of representative do you have for the colony?

A. Only thing they have is a block manager, a decentralized station of the administration.



Interview with YAMANE, Tule Lake Center, Stockade, July 11th, 1944.

With assistance of George Kuritama as Interpreter.

Mr. B. sig:

Q. We saw your sister and she wanted us to come to visit you and to see what we could do for you. You have no other relatives?

A. Yes, a brother fighting on Guadalcanal. His mother's sister is here.

Q. Where were you born? A. Hawaii.

Q. When were you picked up? A. November 4th.

Q. You were one of the first.

A. He went to stop the commotion.

Q. You were one of the boys who were sent to stop the commotion.

A. Tom Kobayashi reported in and he was a warden at that time.

Q. How did you get hit?

A. First Tom told him that it was a commotion, but anyway he said there was no use starting anything or doing anything about it, so he told them to go home. (Inter.) He thought everything was O.K. so then afterwards of course he came to the meeting and then he was sent from there to stop the commotion and see what was taking place. So he went out with one boy by the name of Toderoki (he is in Santa Fe now). He started out toward the motor pool where the commotion was supposed to have been taking place. Just as he was going he met Tom Hayashida. He volunteered to help stop the commotion. The three began walking towards the hospital section but about 20 yards from the dental section of the hospital, and he met a WRA car and he stopped. And the men came out of the car and without saying anything he knocked him over the head. Toderoki was thrown on the ground by a baseball bat. Hayashida was beaten up, then they were taken into the administration building and Kobayashi was in there and Yamane and Hayashida and Toderoki and Fred Kokawa. In there further beating took place.

Q. Without any provocation, is that his claim?

A. They even made them put up their hands and while they had their hands put up one boy was beaten up over the head with a baseball bat.

Q. How are you now?

A. I am all right now. Sometimes my arm and back hurt--eight months now.

Q. He has asked for expatriation, hasn't he? Does he know his rights with reference to the matter?

A. Yes.

Q. You understand you don't have to do anything, and as soon as you sign you will be shipped out of here to Santa Fe. You know that? A. Yes.

Q. Has he had a hearing?

A. About two times. During his first hearing, Mr. Mart told him that he beat him up because he was more or less upset over the fact that one of his comrades was assaulted, so he said please don't feel too bad about it. He said he would try to release him as soon as he can.



Q.- Does he write to his sister?

A. I write for him ever so often, in English.

Q. When they questioned you, what did they question you about?

A. Why he wants to go back to Japan.

Q. What did you tell them?

A. He answered that until the time of evacuation he had every intention to stake his life and fortune in this country, but after the evacuation he began to doubt the advisability of his staying in this country and said he saw no reason or what benefits a citizenship really did do for him. So he made up his mind to go back to Japan and live with his parents.

Q. Your parents are both over there?

A. Father dead. My mother is there, and a sister.



Interview with TOM YOSHIYAMA, Tule Lake Center Stockade,  
July 11, 1944.

Mr. Besig: You are a citizen?

A. I was born in Salinas, the rodeo city.

Q. How old are you?

A. 26 right now.

Q. And you don't have parents in the Center?

A. No, they are dead.

Q. Do you have any brothers or sisters?

A. No relatives whatsoever. I do not know the reason why I am being confined here for eight months. Of course, I am a member of the negotiating committee, executive secretary, but what I did I acted in behalf of the people of the colony and because I was secretary I never said a word in a meeting anyway and of course, as you probably already know, the people of Block 6 elected me to represent their interests, and after the block representatives got together in Mess No. 15, they also elected me a member of the negotiating committee and executive secretary because I was educated in Japan and I am educated here too.

Q. How long were you educated in Japan? A. About 4 years I think.

Q. You are what they call Chibei. A. Yes, Chibei.

A. Of course they try to pin something about the November 4th incident. As far as that is concerned, I took no part in it, although I went to the motor pool, but I am sure there are about four or five Japanese employees that will witness for me although I don't know their names and doubt if I can recollect their faces either but I told them if any young men came, tell them to go home, but as soon as I said that I returned to the meeting again. But it seems that the WRA thinks that I had a part in that riot.

Q. They apparently have the idea, as far as I can gather, that you fellows promoted and conspired to have a disturbance.

A. They think that the members of the negotiating committee was one that put out that riot. But I don't think they can prove it, as far as I am concerned I had no part, I never did try and urge anybody to commit violence.

Q. Where were you located before you were in this camp?

A. Before, I was in Utah, Topaz--

Q. With most of the San Franciscans.



- A. Of course, I was in San Francisco, and there I was evacuated to Santa Anita and from there to Topaz, then I came here. I had been in the center about a month and a half, the 13th of this month will be exactly eight months for me.
- Q. You came in here November 13th? A. Yes.
- Q. And I suppose the military -
- A. Picked me up? Oh, yes, about 40 of them all around the block and about four of them came in, searched me and searched the whole room and came in and picked me up with flash lights and bayonets. It was a sight though. They put me in the little Stockade there for about 4 days. Oh, I had a helluva time in there, jiminy, that place--
- Q. In what sense?
- A. Well, in the first place you can't wash your face or anything and of course if you want a toilet or something two police guards escorted us with the point of bayonet, even if we sat a couple of minutes on the toilet, urging us to hurry up. It was really a terrible time. And every time of eating they brought us to the mess hall up there and about 20 soldiers maybe more escorted us to that mess hall and we ate and came back again. I had that experience of one week or eight days altogether.
- Q. Did they push you around at all?
- A. They didn't beat me up or anything like that, but of course we couldn't do very much against a bayonet anyway. So we just took the consequences as calmly as we could, but it was very unpleasant the way we were treated. Of course, when we were transferred here the food situation was the worst. When we were first in here we only had rice and carrots I don't know how many weeks. The food now is a little better. Much better compared to the time we used to have. Of course we had some rice--so much-- and one spoon and if lucky a carrot on top, and of course we have to eat because there is nothing else. But it was very unsanitary here. Incidentally, I was the first spokesman for the Stockade until December last and I negotiated with Lt. Shaner who was in charge of the Stockade quite often, trying to get a bucket and broom and some sanitary facilities, disinfectants, etc., but we didn't accomplish very much.
- Q. There aren't very many of you in there?
- A. 18 of us.
- Q. Tell me, while you were at Topaz you asked for expatriation?
- A. Yes, I did.
- Q. Had you previously filled out the questionnaire?



A. What questionnaire?

Q. That long one, with questions 27 and 28.

A. Was it at that time you asked for expatriation? A. Yes, I did at that time too.

Q. Of course, most of the people in here have the intention of going back to Japan anyway. How about you?

A. Yes, I do too because of the fact that I have all my brothers and sisters in Japan and since my father died, only about 5 months ago I received a telegram from Japan stating that my father died, and because of his death I have to go back and take care of the property since they are all in my name now.

Q. But you are prepared to expatriate yourself at any time?

A. Yes.

Q. I understand Mr. Ennis was around here recently. Did he talk to you?

A. From the emigration?

Q. From the Department of Justice, about three or four days ago.

A. Yes, he did but I don't know, I think I will still hang on to my citizenship yet. I understand I can drop it any time I like.

Q. Two years from now, when you think conditions are right.

A. You see, since we are elected members of the negotiation committee, we have to go back, otherwise the Center won't be normal. The people still support us. We have to go back and resign. If we resign, then the Center will elect new representatives. So I can't go to Santa Fe or any place. Otherwise, I have to go back and put in my resignation. That is why the people are supporting us now.

Q. Of course, the line that Best's office is taking is that they want you to request expatriation now and that will solve this problem by immediately sending you to Santa Fe.

A. They want us to resign now. In other words, Mr. Best has made quite a lot of blunders. Committed himself too much. Like Block 9, that is where my fiancée is, they had mess trouble and Mr. Tordi and Ishimaru (?) when they left there for Santa Fe they told me everything and they put everything in my hands and in case they bring it out in the court they want this case cleared too. The dope is that first Ishimaru and Tonya ? and Oka--?, three of these gentlemen, were interned here for about two months and the charges were that they were making liquor in their home. That was the first charge. But these three gentlemen they don't even drink liquor and they never make any liquor at all.



- Q. They were accused of selling it, I suppose, not drinking it?
- A. Accused of making it too. They were released because they couldn't find anything against them. About a month later they picked them up again, this time five of them, these same three gentlemen and one my fiancée's father, this time they accused them of intimidating school teachers not to work.
- Q. Are the parents opposed to their children learning English?
- A. Oh, yes. They just had a meeting at Block 9 and they had a meeting in regard to the Japanese tea that was sent to this country through Red Cross. Of course the tea didn't amount to much, but because it came from a far-away country and because it was Japan they wished to have it divided equally. And because some of the Japanese block residents hid it and just drinking it themselves they talked about it and naturally 5 of them they wanted some explanation.. and Mr. Tonee before he said anything at the meeting he showed what he was going to say to the block manager to get O.K. and the block manager gave him O.K., so he said what was there, and they apportioned it. So Mr. Tonee thought that was all right, he didn't think of anything else and about a day later he was picked up, accusing him of intimidating these Japanese school or American school teachers-something like that, some teacher anyway. Of course, what I think is the Japanese made a false report to the WRA which even then the WRA should have investigated more thoroughly before they put it out in a paper like that--WRA put it on a radio.
- Q. There has been some difficulty in the Center subsequently?
- A. Yes, of course I never was in the Center, I don't know how it is. But I can sense some friction, yes.
- Q. And undoubtedly divergent groups in the Center. Have all the 16 fellows that are left asked for expatriation?
- A. I think so.
- Q. Did they do so originally, do you think? A. I think so.
- Q. In other words, most of these are Chibei? A. Yes.
- Q. How is it so much of the leadership is Chibei?
- A. You think Chibei have a leadership?
- Q. I don't know myself.
- A. I don't think that is right, though. Of course, there is more nationalistic, brought up in Japanese fashion.
- Q. I mean here at this Center.
- A. At this Center, I don't know--I never had the chance to see anything



- Q. This whole negotiation committee was essentially a Chibei and Issei group, I take it. Now, did you have any hearing?
- A. From the WRA they don't give me much chance. Do you know what they said, they said you son-of-a-bitch.
- Q. Who said that?
- A. Mart here. Two other boys who were being investigated, the same thing. And quite a lot of others, I don't know their names. They didn't give me a chance to say anything. I talked about the food, how bad it was compared to Topaz Center where I came from, and they got perfectly nasty and almost pushed me down. And there were two police, a sentry and guard that brought me here and they just said you son of a bitch and pointed at me. I don't think they really investigated me, though.
- Q. Would you say that among the 250 picked up there might have been some bad boys among the group?
- A. Oh, probably there were. But I don't know for sure because I never was friendly out there. Since I came in here I have gotten friendly. You have to make friends and talk in here.
- Q. You didn't know any of these people at Topaz? None of them came from Topaz, did they?
- A. There are some from Topaz.
- Q. Any of them who were on this negotiating committee?
- A. No, I am the only one from Topaz. They even stopped some mail. Outside the Center they censor it and even take it, I think. I had some letter coming from the Spanish Consul, I think, because my girl friend wrote that she sent it, I never received it. Of course I even had a talk with the army once regarding that and the army said flatly that in time of war they could do anything they pleased.
- Q. Have they continued to censor your mail since the Army? A. Yes.
- Q. Who censors it?
- A. The WRA, I imagine. That is why we can't get in contact with anyone.
- Q. With whom did you try to get in touch? Not me.
- A. No, I wrote to the Spanish Consul about the conditions in here.
- Q. But you are a citizen, you have no standing with him.
- A. No, but I thought there is no one else I could really write. But I doubt if it went out.



- Q. You hever got an answer? A. No.
- Q. You folks haven't gotten any mail since the 1st of July?
- A. No mail at all. And they put that beaverboard up so we cannot even wave hands any more.
- Q. Do you think anybody was signalling from there?
- A. I wasn't.
- Q. You know there was a murder in the Center recently, didn't you?
- A. Yes, the Internal Securities men told me.
- Q. Apparently there is some feeling that possibly the murder was engineered from this Stockade.
- A. After putting that thing up there, I thought I knew that feeling--
- Q. When did they put it up?
- A. On the third, I think, 3rd or 2nd of July.
- Q. I assume the only reason they did is to prevent you from communicating.
- Q. I don't know what they're doing. You would like to see your friends even from a distance. But if they think we are signalling, I don't care. I don't think anybody was signalling and besides a thing like that, nobody would work on our order anyway. I doubt it. If I told you to attack someone I don't think you would do it. The murder was a grudge, that person had it so long. Of course, that food investigation, Co-op, things they sell are too expensive. This is hearsay, I don't know anything definite.