

May 20, 1942

Mr. Richard Neustadt
785 Market Street
San Francisco, California

Dear Mr. Neustadt:

It is now three weeks since my arrival at Tanforan, and I must say the morale of the group is higher than could have been expected. During the first week confusion was rife as the Center was not ready to take on the evacuees that the Army emptied here in busloads, but gradually life is beginning to take on a routine quality.

Considering the Center to be temporary, I can say in all honesty that the General and Franklin did a damn good job as far as camp facilities are concerned -- hot water, adequate lavatory and shower facilities, local mess halls, recreation halls, etc. During the first two weeks the food situation was lousy. It wasn't so much the quality of the materials provided but the lack of experienced personnel to prepare and serve it. As the smaller mess halls opened up, there was marked improvement and continues on the upgrade. The only aspect that could be measurably improved now is the quantity of milk and butter for children and provisions for adequate food for those requiring special diets, i.e., babies and invalids. The hospital is still understaffed with only four doctors for 8000 people. The housing situation might be more ideal if heat could be provided for the old and the sick. I understand that the deplorable situation in the men's dormitory where some 400 men were crowded together in one huge, poorly ventilated room is going to be corrected.

I find, after coming here, that from the point of view of Americanization the group is still quite backward. As a consequence, those of us who had cut loose from the isolationism of the Japanese communities are faced with a serious problem of adjustment. As one chap put it, "To be an American is a handicap at Tanforan." While interviewing approximately 2000 people for employment, I was astounded at the manner in which they interspersed an English conversation with Japanese colloquialisms. In many instances, applicants looking for an "office" job came in, proud of their ability to speak both Japanese and English, and assumed that they could capitalize upon this fact. On each occasion I have tried to impress upon these people that this is an American center and that a knowledge of the Japanese language is not necessarily an asset. I have decided, as a result of these interviews, that I should establish a policy of speaking English exclusively except in cases of direst necessity.

The large majority seem reasonably happy. Frenzied preparations for evacuation are over, they don't have to worry about making a living, they're with friends -- now they can settle down to a nice vacation. The metropolitan press is sold here, but those who follow it seem more interested in where the next evacuation is taking place than in the Battle of Kerch or Kharkov and the attack on their franchise rights by the Native Sons of the Golden West and others of their ilk. In short, the group as a whole has not gotten around to wondering -- "What of the future?" I should have thought that the hectic events of the last five months and the physical dislocation alone would have had a tendency to shatter old lines of thought, old ties, etc. I find instead of a developing community spirit and a desire for closer cooperation an attempt, inasmuch the physical environment will allow, to perpetuate old customs and ideas.

However disappointing these outcroppings of the past may be, I suppose there are possible justifications. But there is one thing that we cannot dismiss as readily and that is the poor quality of the personnel. The officials here are at best second rate with no idea of the nature of the problem facing the group, its background, nor do they realize the full implications of the word "Americanization." As a consequence, they are wary about committing themselves on any program of education, recreation, or government and are more concerned with getting four requisitions signed to move a desk from one part of the room to another than getting out a camp newspaper. At first, those Nisei with wide Caucasian contact were the only ones to recognize the mediocrity of these officials, but one by one, those who have a working contact with them are beginning to complain and, in some instances, bitterly resent the fact that they must take direction from such men. Of course, the bureaucratic set-up and red tape that confronts a resident even in such a small matter as securing a ream of paper add their bit to this general sense of irritation.

A An example of the lack of foresight and inefficiency of the management concerns a problem that could have been readily anticipated -- that of wages. It goes without saying that any group, regardless of its racial background, is always vitally interested in the problem of remunerative economic activity. In the beginning, of course, they were not in a position to make a definite statement. One morning, about ten days ago, the newspapers came out with a story on the \$8.00 - \$16.00 wage scale. As about 700 copies of the paper are sold daily the news spread like wildfire and had camp-wide circulation in half a day. Yet not one word of confirmation or denial has come from the administrative offices to date. Other problems are handled in precisely the same manner.

As for other matters such as an intelligent editorial policy for the paper or intellectual activity in the way of forums through which we might educate the younger members of the group to their responsibilities as future Americans, a discussion of the war from the point of view of alignment of powers and why it is essential from the point of view of human liberty that the allied forces should win, one might as well give up. The arbitrary, stupid censorship of men afraid of intelligent thought checks us at every turn. I fervently hope that in the relocated areas we will have better men. I shudder to think of the future of these potential Americans under the leadership of such visionless personnel. On the other hand, not to make this a wailing wall, I am conscious of the fact that the officials could have been much worse.

The employment set-up, with which I am associated, is in a sad state, and the management is attempting to recover some of its lost prestige by conducting an occupational survey. When I first heard that this was contemplated, I felt that at last they would be able to make amends. I found to my complete astonishment, however, that the so-called survey consisted of nothing more than copying onto inadequate WCCA forms the word or two on the S-3 forms describing the individual's occupation at the time of registration. So, a young man who happened to be attending the University of California in April is set down as a student with no description of his qualifications as a potential worker, a laundryman is set down as a laundryman whether he drove a delivery truck or whether he worked in the boiler room. With such a "comprehensive" survey, I don't see how they are going to distribute skills in the relocated areas. If at all possible, Mr. Bryant should send capable U.S.E.S. workers to all of the Assembly Centers to see that this thing is done properly. I think it is vitally important.

A perpetual thorn in the flesh for those not included in the first 500 to arrive at Tanforan is that only San Francisco residents were given a chance to come early as volunteer workers. Upon their arrival they were given the pick of the jobs. Those who came later, regardless of their qualifications, just lost out. This situation has had a demoralizing effect upon the residents, as you can well imagine. Yet, the administration stands pat on its original statement that those who volunteered must be given first consideration. Hiring is not centralized and favoritism and nepotism prevail. The people who handle placements are there in the office by virtue of the fact that they arrived on the first day, and because they have had no personnel experience, are incapable of evaluating work experience. I relate these things to you in the hope that such gross inefficiencies will be avoided in the relocation areas.

I think I've said enough for my first communication. I hope I haven't given you the impression that I hope to see a Utopia come out of all this, for that wasn't my intent, but I have attempted to be perfectly candid in my criticism.

Both my wife and I were glad to see you even for a brief moment and hope that we will have an opportunity to see both you and Mr. Eisenhower on your next visit.

I'm enclosing a copy of the first issue of our camp paper. It was the best we could do under the circumstances -- plenty of red tape and a complete absence of that prized possession known as freedom of the press.

Very sincerely yours,

Michio Kunitani

Tanforan Assembly Center
Bldg. 16 - Apt. 13
San Bruno, California

COPY

LETTER

Michio Kunitani
Tanforan

May 25, 1942

Dear Dorothy and W.I.:

Rather than write you I wish I could pick up the telephone and invite you to a breakfast, somewhat sketchy to be sure, in our redesigned stall. We'll have coffee and eggs, and some bread which we will secure, courtesy of the Army, via our mess hall. After the fine time we had at your home (it seems a long time ago) we'd like to entertain you in style. Even though I wasn't quite all there by the time I sat down to dinner, I remember everything very distinctly. It was, to tell the truth, the first time I've gotten so woozy -- must have been the way W. I. shook that shaker. At any rate, your company, food and drinks were excellent. We look forward to many more occasions when we can share such an enjoyable evening -- may they come soon.

We understand that you were here at Tanforan last week and that you plan to come again on Wednesday. Though we missed you the first time, I hope we'll get to see you this week. Friends are like a breath of fresh air. This environment is just stuffy with Japanese conversation and provincialism. I won't go into details because I know Tom is keeping you informed, but I will say this: The government did a damn good job in setting up the physical facilities, particularly in view of the fact that this is intended only as a temporary center. The administration, on the other hand, stinks to the core. The local managers have no conception of the magnitude of the problem, but, of course, neither do the members of the group. With such visionless heads, those of us who feel that something should be done find it difficult to initiate anything constructive.

The kids who had more or less emancipated themselves from the group find it very difficult to make a happy adjustment. As Charlie Kikuchi aptly put it, "To be an American at Tanforan is a handicap."

I heard Chernin was here last week, but failed to see him, but we met Mr. Neustadt for a brief minute on his initial visit. As lawson had him in tow, there wasn't much of a chance for conversation. I wrote him a fairly long letter last week, outlining the "problems" so-called with which we seem to be faced.

Anne and I hope that you're both in good health and plugging like hell. We look forward to seeing you Wednesday.

Cordially,

October 12, 1942

Dear Mich,

It was grand to hear from you. If bad conscience makes you come through with such long and informative letters, I hope you continue to have a hell of a bad conscience, for I want another letter--and soon.

Yes, WI and I plan to come down to Arizona, but probably not until November, as we have to wait for things to settle down at Gila before we can go there, and we want to take both places in on one trip. Leighton has suggested that I spend several days at Poston, and that suits me fine. We certainly would like to have a chance to see you and Anne under more favorable circumstances than was possible at Tanforan. We stuck to Tanforan to the bitter end, fighting our way in time after time (literally, Davis turned us back several times and we had to get special permits from the Whitcomb).

One thing I wish you would do for me on the q.t., and that is get me some advance information on what Leighton is actually doing, how extensive his study is, who are the Caucasians on his staff, just what he has in mind on the anthropological and sociological side, and to what extent he is actually cooperating with the administration in solving social problems. That is a pretty large order, I realize, but anything you can tell me will be helpful. Bob Spencer, who has been in Gila for the past two months and is now here writing up his notes, will stop off at Poston before we come, and we want to know something before he gets there. Leighton, by the way, has been swell in his contacts with me, and I really look forward to cooperating rather than competing with him.

You are damned right that the kids who are working for him are not as high calibre as those working for me. I just assume they couldn't be, or, if so, the Nisei as a group must be super colossal. We were just up at Tule Lake, and you should see what that crowd is turning out. Miyamoto, Shibutani and Sakoda and their various associates and helpers put on a seminar performance that I have never seen equalled. They are working their heads off on a report that is really superb. And Charlie is the world's wonder. His journal (he is approaching his 1000th page) is a unique and marvelous document, even though he seems to think it isn't worth a damn. Charlie is certainly a talented fellow, and I am lucky that he has joined up with us. Now, if you and Anne weren't so allergic to research and would give me what you know on the Tanforan situation (politicssas well as education and anything else) I would be really happy.

I think you have one misconception about our program. It isn't that we are negativistic and refuse to direct our work towards practical ends. It is that we feel pretty strongly that research is unlikely to lead to the solution of immediate problems. If it had or if it could, there would be little excuse for the many social ills we have with us. You can't get your answers that easily. On the other hand, I am convinced of the long-run practical importance of what we are doing. You have no idea how abysmally ignorant people are concerning the Nisei, for instance. A professor here, whose name I would hesitate to mention because he damned well ought to know better, thinks they are all aliens. Another, equally eminent, thinks the prime issue is one of loyalty, and has grave doubts as to the possibility of loyalty of any of the group. An unbiased record of what the group is, what their problems are, and how they are solving these problems ought to do a lot in the postwar situation. And, from the scientific standpoint, analysis of the effects of this forced migration is unquestionably of first rate importance.

Yes, I do know John Powell, and I agree absolutely that he is swell. And your educational program sounds grand. Far superior to the other centers, I should say. Gila will be particularly difficult in this respect, due to the difficulty of getting any Caucasian teachers.

Morton is still in Washington, and he is certainly cleaning up there. Boy, am I proud of my kids!

I look forward to your article on Tanforan. I need it badly to complete the report that I am now whipping into shape. I am still getting some of the loose ends finished up by the crowd in Utah, but it is so hard for them to shift back to Tanforan with all the excitement of settlement that I expect things to slow up a bit. Did you hear about Fred's good fortune: \$1000 fellowship at Springfield. (I am not sure what Springfield is, but Fred is terribly happy about it and leaves as soon as the FBI gives him clearance.)

WI sends his best to you and to Anne and looks forward as much as I do to seeing you both.

Yours,

October 5, 1942

copy

Dear Dorothy:

Time after time the inner man keeps saying: you should, you must, you ought to, you owe it to a friend, it's your duty and responsibility, yeah--I shall, I will, I must, damit write! I could start off by assuming a bureaucratic air and say: dear Dr. Thomas--this is to acknowledge your letter of such and such date --delay --due to ----pressure of government etc. etc. or feign a mercantile manner and say: dear Dr. Thomas ----I am sorry but delay---due to gigantic "battle of production" etc. etc. but I shall simply say dear Dorothy you will have to attribute the procrastination to the frailty of the human soul desiccating in the Arizona heat--you're right --the soul of a heel.

After being in Poston for nearly two months I have picked up plenty of dope about the policies and personalities of the WRA, the staff here and the Indian Service. Other than that I don't give a damn! I don't know what's come over me lately but perhaps a little introspection will ascribe my sullen and saturnine attitude to general frustration or perhaps to a ~~new~~ new york cut and beer. Anne and I are well but not too happy even in spite of the fact that we have a good administration. We survived the summer heat and dust with not too much difficulty. The afternoons are still quite warm but the mornings and evenings are wonderful.

Housing rates a C- mark and the food D. We're overcrowded in camp #1 but not in #2 or #3. I believe the barracks are of the same size as the ones in Tule and they are divided into four apts. The army engineers evidently have a one tract mind and they never thought to build smaller apts for small families and couples until it was brought to their attention. As a result we have no small apts. in camp #1 and we find in many cases two or three families occupying one apt. In the other two camps the engineers divided the barracks into eight instead of the standard four. Fortunately we occupy a large apt. but eventually we'll have to move when they partition off the smaller apts --just when no one knows. The barracks have a double roof to fight off the heat, but no double floors, ceilings or plaster board walls and as yet the stoves haven't arrived. To battle the heat and dust the staff and hospital quarters are furnished coolers, but not the residents. Some of the residents who have some money left lay down from \$70-\$25 to buy a cooler and some of the others get together a makeshift one. The more cooperative blocks have got together and purchased one or two coolers for their mess halls. It's really hell trying to stuff down lousy food while you perspire. We just came at the end of the period of intense heat and high winds but for the first week we couldn't do anything because it was so warm. Never before did I wake up in the morning with perspiration around my neck. It's an experience and it makes you appreciate the conditions under which the men are fighting in North Africa.

The food stinks ! at least in our block. Some of the other blocks have better food but generally the food is bad, both in quantity and quality. The only place where the food is half decent is at the cooking school. The resident white collar workers have the privilege of eating their lunches there. The terrible food situation can be charged up to heat and lack of transportation. For the past two weeks we've had weiners and bologna three times a day. Special food for

diabetics and babies is lacking although the patients in the hospital are fed well. Due to the bad food and heat the canteen grossed close to a \$100,000 for the month of Sept. and while I'm on the subject of money I might add that approximately \$18,000 per week in money orders are sold --now that's not counting the the personal, cashier and travelers checks which go out. All in all we figured out that that a quarter of a million dollars was being circulated during a month in the whole of Poston.

The schools got under way today with 5500 students enrolled in classes. For the elementary and secondary students there are 75-80 caucasian ~~xxx~~ and 80 nisei teachers. In addition 800 kids will enroll in the preschool program and on top of that 200 students will enroll in the seminars. If we take into account all of the other miscellaneous classes, like sewing, ~~xxxxx~~ poetry, music, art and craft basic English etc approximately 8000 residents will be receiving some kind of instruction--that's something new in America. Anne is ~~xxing~~ teaching English and social studies to high school seniors. The school buildings are not built (and will not be until next Sept. -- they hope.) It is proposed that the building be made from adobe, so the adobe project has some priority. The rec halls are being used for the class rooms and they are partitioned off into three parts.

Have you seen the proposed curriculum for the relocation centers which was worked out by the Stanford ed. dept? It's a lulu. Prof. Paul Hanna who supervised the program seems to be a swell guy. He was down here for a couple of days last month and talked to the teachers. I might add that the teacher ~~xxx~~ training program conducted here was excellent. You might look up Hubert ~~xx~~ Armstrong who is a research man for the Oakland schools. He gave a course in ed. psych here and he can give you plenty of dope. We told him to get in touch with you as soon as possible. If the the program for the secondary ~~xxxxxx~~ schools is a lulu the proposed curriculum for the adult program is a whiz bang. We're very fortunate in having a staff here composed of seven or eight Ph.D.s and several men in specialized fields. The core program for the seminars is the course in the great books. This curriculum was worked out by a young classicist by the name of ~~Ray~~ Wilburn who is the assistant dean of St. Johns college (one of those progressive schools) He ~~was~~ financed to the extent of \$1000 by the Friends to come here and work out a program and that he did with the aid of John Powell. I will send the program under separate cover. I don't think the kids will get much out of the ~~seminars~~ philosophical seminars because many of them cannot contribute anything. Around the course in the great books there will be additional courses in soil science, plant pathology, business law, public administration anthropology and sociology. A special seminar around the Tolson committee findings and possibly a course in Japanese ~~xxxxxxx~~ history will be given.

I don't know whether you've heard of John Powell, but gal they don't come any better. He was formerly with the Meikeljohn school in San Francisco and before that with the Meikeljohn experiemntal college in Wisconsin. He's essentially a ~~philosopher~~ philosopher--pragmatist--and probably the only man on the staff who has the confidence and respect of the staff and residents. J.P. is the director of community welfare and recreation and I am acting as his assistant until I get into vocational guidance work. I could go on a and on and tell you about Poston but since you're coming here I'd rather tell you then. One more word --Dr. Leighton and his work.

I was introduced to Leighton by Collier on the first day I was here and during the whole course of the conversation which lasted

about ten minutes he uttered about five words. When I spoke to him again with Provinse --this time the conversation lasted ten minutes Leighton uttered ten words. I couldn't figure him out but lately he's broken down and speaks very freely and I found out that he was a swell guy --plenty interesting. I hear the whole staff approached him with caution because he was a navy man and he ~~is~~ likewise. I found out that he knows Margaret Lantis--came back from Alaska with her and that Margret is slated to come here for two or three months next spring. Leighton was sent here by Collier and here's how it happened. Leighton has a M.D. in psychiatry from Johns Hopkins and has done some work with the Indians. Just before he came here he was drafted by the navy (he was in the ~~navy~~ naval reserve) and sent to Pensacola. Collier knew him since he did some work with the Indians and had the Navy release him for sociological work in Poston. The funny thing is that he still draws his pay check from the Navy.

He has a staff of about 20-25 kids in the three camps. With him on the staff is Spicer a Ph.D. in anthro from the Univ. Of Ariz---was a Guggie in Mexico before the war broke out and Tamie. I believe the staff is going to receive credit from the Univ. of Chicago for the work they do. Kenny Murase was working for ~~it~~ him until today. Tonight he leaves for school in Philadelphia. In contrast to your work Leighton plans to use his material to improve the conditions of the center. The calibre of the kids working for him is not as high as the kids working for you. He has one or two artists working for him depicting life in pencial sketches with captions ~~and descriptions~~ descriptions.

The calibre of the administrative staff here is beyond reproach. I believe it is the best of any of the centers. You might be interested to know that we have a caucasian ~~staff~~ personnel of close to 400 including the teachers. We seem to have plenty of engineers and two-bit clerks roaming around here. Blasidell came here two weeks ago and got a pretty rough going over by the staff when he tried to tell them something about education. The staff is open-minded but they can make it pretty uneasy for you if you treat them like a bunch of people with hayseeds in their hair. Some of the guys here are pretty sophisticated. There seems to be a conflict of policy between the men of the Indian ~~Service~~ Service and the regional WRA office as to the role of Poston in wartime America but it is hushed up. The conflict was ~~apparent~~ almost brought to a head on the problem of temporary furloughs. The WRA seems to be pressured by Washington and it is conscious itself of the manpower shortage on the outside and therefore ~~the~~ recruiting of harvest labor is emphasized, whereas the Indian Service people have a tendency to forget the outside and ~~the~~ concentrate on building a model community in Poston. I believe that this conflict exists within the WRA itself between the agricultural dept. and the employment dept.

It seems that the residents and the staff ~~are~~ ^{are} conscious of the fact that America is in a hellava mess. They're too isolated both in mind and body and faced with a maze of internal problems that they ~~lose~~ lose a proper perspective of the whole relocation program. I've been advocating to the staff members that anyone who has anything ~~to~~ to do with the morale in Poston get out of here for a couple of days every other week and go on a bender. Since the radio reception is bad I've been desperately trying to keep up with the world via two day old Chronicles the New Republic and the New Yorker. All of the regional officials who have visited the other centers tell me that the morale here is the lowest of all the centers. This is probably due to the heat, dust and lousy food. About 88% of the people are rural minded and progressives are scarce as hen's teeth as it is with leadership material. We have plenty of freedom probably more than at any of the other centers. We can go to the other camps ~~any~~ anytime we can get the transportation. We been to the Colo. river two or three times for a swim.

I heard that you had planned to visit Poston around the later part of this month. I don't know how you plan to come but if you come via train from Los Angeles take a sleeper because the ride from L.A. to Poston is holy hell and the train is always four or five hours late. I hope to have the article on tanforan ready by the time you get here. Regards to W.I. Love from Anne. *nide*

June 10, 1943

Mr. M. Kunitani
1100 Schofield Building
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mitch:

As you know, many statements were made in justification of evacuation to the effect that the Japanese Americans approved the role of the Japanese military aggression in the Far East. Proof of this statement was alleged to be the fact that no Japanese American groups took opposition to this military aggression.

In your testimony before the Tolan Committee, you referred to anti-Axis resolutions, etc., that had been passed in the previous year by the Young Democrats of Oakland, and other Nisei groups. I would very much like to get my hands on documents (minutes of meetings, copies of resolutions or letters) that would concretely substantiate your statement. I wonder if you have these documents in your possession, or if you know where I might get them? Any help you can give me on this matter would be most appreciated. Incidentally, it would also bury one of the nasty ghosts that still stalks the Nisei in America.

Since I am now writing a chapter on this phase of the evacuation movement, I would like to hear from you as soon as possible. If you don't have the stuff yourself, would you refer me to the person who can help me and also, perhaps, drop that person a line to let him know that I'll contact him?

Dorothy, as you know, has been in Chicago for the last month. I have had, consequently, a month to write reports, and I am beginning to gain a little confidence in the validity of the work that I am doing. I continue to hear good reports of you and Anne, and I send you both my most cordial regards.

Very sincerely yours,

Morton Grodzins
Research Assistant

MG:mw

COMMITTEE FOR THE RESETTLEMENT OF AMERICANS OF JAPANESE DESCENT

July 2, 1943

THE CLEVELAND HOSTEL
2429 Prospect Avenue
Cleveland, O.
CHerry 7241

MAX FRANZEN,
Hostel Director

MICHIO KUNITANI,
Placement Director

Mr. George Trundle, *Chairman*
Trundle Engineering Co.,

Mr. John Love
Cleveland Press

Mr. O. M. Walton
Cleveland Church Federation

Dr. Everett M. Baker
First Unitarian Church

Mr. Robert Schmalz
Jewish Family Service Association

Mr. Eugene Freedheim
Jewish Family Service Association

Mrs. Daniel E. Morgan

Mr. John Theban
Institute of Family Service

Mr. G. F. Basinger
U. S. E. S.

Dr. Grace Coyle
Western Reserve University

Mr. Eugene T. Lies
Occupational Planning Committee

Mr. Henry Zucker
Welfare Federation

Dr. D. R. Sharpe
Cleveland Baptist Association

Mrs. Olive Banister

Miss Catherine Cronin
Travelers Aid Society

Dean Francis R. Bacon
Western Reserve University

Mr. A. J. Davey, Jr.
Editor, The Cleveland Citizen

Miss Grace Mayette
League for Human Rights

Brigadier Wm. Spatig
Salvation Army

Rev. V. A. Peterson
St. James Episcopal Church

Miss Elizabeth Magee
Consumers League of Ohio

Mrs. Frank J. Lausche

Mr. Ray Livingston
Thompson Products Co.

Dr. C. V. Thomas
Y. M. C. A.

Mr. John Stewart
Y. M. C. A.

Mr. George Washington
Urban League of Cleveland

Mrs. Margaret Hawkins
Cleveland Church Federation

Mr. Max Franzen

Mr. Michio Kunitani

Miss Kathleen McCarty
Catholic Charities

Rev. Robert Zearfoss
Lakewood Baptist Church

Mr. Elmer Galt
County Relief Bureau

Mr. Don Knowlton
Hill & Knowlton

Miss Margaret Fergusson, Sec'y
International Institute, Y.W.C.A.

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HOSTEL COMMITTEE

Mrs. Daniel E. Morgan, *Chairman*

Dr. D. R. Sharpe

Dean Francis Bacon

Mrs. Olive Banister

Miss Margaret Fergusson

PUBLICITY

Don Knowlton

Dear Morten:

I'm in a very depressed mood as I write this letter. I just can't seem to grab on to anything tangible --something which will sustain my craving for some positive democratic action. The riots in Detroit (you should see the pictures in PM and Life), the "zoot suit" troubles in L.A., the riots in Mobile and Beaumont, the goddam Congress, the amazing apathy on the part of the people to think and act in terms of a people's war and a people's peace and the bottlemecks faced in the relocation program all come to mind as I write. If we want to stop fascism in America we'd better get off the dime pretty damn quick!

As I looked at the pictures in PM and Life of the Detroit riots I got a sinking feeling that probably the Japanese would have met the same treatment on the West coast. Since I haven't seen a S.F. Chronicle for some four months I can't very well gauge opinion on the West coast but I hear from reliable sources that community sentiment out in California is so bad that I'd be strung up if I went back. What do you think?

The relocation program in Cleveland is being stymied by the lack of housing. Of the ~~200~~ some 200 evacuees relocated here only 4 or 5 parties have found apts and unsatisfactory at that. Community sentiment is good and to date we haven't had any evidence of organized hostility towards the relocation program. As far as the employment situation is concerned we can place 1000 more easily and in very good jobs if the housing bottlemeck is broken and if the army permits us to place the evacuees in war plants with prime contracts without the evacuees having to go through another investigation.

Now as to what you asked for in your letter, I'm sorry that I do not have the records nor do I know where ~~they~~ ^{they} but I know that they have not been destroyed. I've written to the former president of the Young Democratic club who is now in the army to locate the stuff for me. As soon as I hear from him I shall let you know. Please keep us informed as to what progress you're making on this whole study and give our best wishes to Dorthy and W.I.

Sincerely,

Nick

331 - 6th

Jan. 4, 1944

Dear Dorthy:

Thanks for the card. Here's hoping that your four leaf clover will bring all of us some good luck this year. (Did you or W.I. pick it in your garden?)

This is just a hasty note (I always seem to be in a hurry) to ask of you a favor. I feel guilty as hell everytime I write to you because it seems that I'm always asking for help. Well anyway, among other things I am now being ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ investigated by the Civil Service Commission for a position (a fairly interesting one) with the Cleveland area office of the War Relocation Authority and it seems that they have some misgivings about certifying me to the position. I believe there is some question about my loyalty.

Now I am sure you have some definite opinions about my attitudes with relation to various social and political issues and particularly the war, and I should appreciate it if you would send a statement to Mr. L.A. Moyer, Executive Director & Chief Examiner of the U.S. Civil Service Commission in Washington D.C. reassuring the Commission that the treacherous chromosomes in my case have been practically eliminated. I seem to be hounded by investigators of various stripes and perhaps you're in the same boat.

Since I could not make it to Chicago I promise a letter on my recent experiences and observations. By the way if you want to go through our letters and stuff we have written since we first set foot into Tanforan you are welcome to it.

With best regards.

Sincerely,

Mich

p/s The statement must be in D.C. by Jan. 12.

January 11, 1944

Mr. Michio Kunitani
1100 Schofield Building
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mich:

I don't know what is the matter with the airmail, but I didn't get your letter about the Civil Service situation until I got home last night. I have, therefore, sent a night letter to Mr. Moyer just to be sure it gets there on time. I can't understand the actions of the Civil Service Commission. One of their investigators came in before I left for Chicago and spent practically the whole afternoon checking up on you. My impression was that they thought you were probably a communist. There is no question but that they tried to get you one way if they can't the other. They were also suspicious when I told them that you don't look Japanese, because they wondered if you could wander around in the crowd and not be suspected of being a "yellow peril." I certainly hope you get the job in question.

Thanks for your offer to make the various documents that you and Anne have been collecting since Tanforan available to us. They will certainly be useful to the study. I wonder whether you could send them to us, registered mail, so that we could have any parts copied that we thought we could eventually use, and then we would send the originals back to you by registered mail.

I certainly was sorry that you couldn't get to Chicago to see us, but maybe we'll have a chance to meet somewhere before too long.

W.I. joins me in cordial greetings to both of you.

Sincerely yours,

Dorothy Swaine Thomas

Kunitani
January 11, 1944

NIGHT LETTER

L. A. MOYER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF EXAMINER
U.S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C.

SUPPLEMENTING MY RECENT STATEMENT TO YOUR INVESTIGATOR RE CIVIL
SERVICE APPLICATION MICHIO KUNITANI FOR POSITION WITH CLEVELAND
OFFICE WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY:

(1) KUNITANI IS COMPLETELY AMERICAN IN CULTURE, THOUGHT
ACTION AND DEVOTION TO DEMOCRATIC IDEALS

(2) I CAN VOUCH FOR HIS LOYALTY AS CERTAINLY AS I CAN FOR
ANY OTHER PERSON I KNOW.

(3) KUNITANI TOOK STRONG ANTI-FASCIST STAND BEFORE THE WAR
AND HAS STOOD BY IT CONSISTENTLY.

(4) KUNITANI IS AS DEFINITELY AGAINST COMMUNISM AS HE IS
AGAINST FASCISM.

DOROTHY SWAINE THOMAS

PROFESSOR RURAL SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Sent 10.30 a.m.