

Letter On the Army  
(Copy)

Camp Shelby  
Jan. 12th

..... The latest and the hottest in the way of news is that I've a good chance of going to Savage for G-2. Imagine me trying to sling the "bootch". My case proves something I've always claimed-- In the Army it's not what you know but who you know. One of the sergeants on the recruiting team from G2 happens to be from a burg near San Jose -- so, I had him interview me and inspite of the fact I could barely read the "kana", he said my translation was good and that he'd recommend me. Yesterday I found out accidentally of course, that my name was on the G2 list and that I'd probably be sent there. If this becomes a reality you'll probably find me imposing on you and susie one one of those week-end passes so much coveted by the boys.

One other thing big has happened. In fact it's so hot it's still a military secret. Maybe later I'll be able to let you in on it. Till then keep your tongue in your cheek and hang on to your ~~parent~~ pants.

This week-end a hundred "bags" are coming down from the two centers in Arkansas to try to raise the sagging morale of the 442nd. Sagging is putting it mildly!! I wonder if the girls can be of any help--It seems to me that most of the good ones have relocated, and what's left at best could be nothing but sad "fukuros". Too bad high school kids can't come -- they'd really put a punch into this outfit -- then again maybe it's a good thing it's restricted to girls out of high school, after looking at some of these guys. Anyway you look at it, four six-bits is a lot of dough to put on a "blind date" (Bid costs \$4.75 for a closed dance one nite. Limited to 11 to a company).....

--Frank



On Nisei Combat Unit

(Copy)

March 10, 1943

..... About this placing nisei in a separate battalion. Obviously it is outright unfair discrimination in its inception no matter what reasons the Army may vouchsafe. I believe one of the reasons given for this segregation was that they would be given prompt recognition for any outstanding action. How much recognition was given to the Negro unit in World War I?

We are not yet the victims of unreasoning prejudice as the Negroes have been, but by this very act we have taken a long backward step in that direction. The reasons given to the nisei by the Army are not the reasons given to the public. In fact they are so obviously rationalizations that I cannot see why the Army even bothers to camouflage their motives. The Army needs manpower sorely, so in order not to offend either the tender sensibilities of the public who heretofore, have been inculcated with the belief that the nisei were dangerous, not to blunt the enthusiasm of the nisei, where bewilderment and disillusionment in our so-called democracy has become an impediment in their natural urge to serve this country they put the nisei on the spot.

The point is this. By segregating us, we have the one chance to show the American people that contrary to newspaper propaganda we are not treacherous, but eager, willing, and anxious to display our patriotism. If you have nisei friends in the Army with Caucasian units, you know how they have won their comrades' respect and admiration. They become the most valuable source of beneficial propaganda for they (Caucasian soldiers) tell the people at home, their families, close friends, etc.



But you ask the Caucasian soldiers what they think of the Japanese in this country in general and they will say just what the civilians say, "They're dangerous." Then you ask them, "Well, what about John Nisei who is a member of your unit? He's Japanese."

"Oh, I don't mean John. He's a swell guy. He's different."

They cannot see that their knowledge of the nisei or Japanese in general is given them by prejudiced newspapers, whereas by personal observation they know that one particular fellow of the same category or race is O.K.

Take yourself. What is your reaction to Jews? Even the word connotes something obnoxious. And yet, I am certain that you have several Jewish friends whom you think very highly of. "Oh, but they're different", you say? No, you merely will not see that one opinion was based on foundationless propaganda and the other on personal observation. Which is real?

Thus if we are deprived of showing our Caucasian comrades first hand by working, fighting and ~~die~~ dying right beside them, how in the hell are they to know except what the Army tells them?

Soon, if not already, the word Japanese or Japs will have a connotation just as evil and unfair as "nigger" or New. And our one chance of proving to the public that they were misinformed will be ~~en~~ gone.

--J.F.

Note: J.F. was a senior student at U.C.L.A. when he became ill with pleurisy and was confined in a sanatorium at the time of evacuation. He wrote this letter when he was still at Hillcrest Sanatorium where all Japanese tubercular cases were confined at the time of evacuation. He has been relocated to Heart Mountain where his parents are residing at the present time. (Feb. 25, 1944)



Letter on Joint Board Clearance

(COPY)

April 7, 1943

.....Irvin Lechliter, project attorney, just came back from Washington with news regarding my clearance for defense work, and I am thoroughly disgusted. Washington, with its usual dazzling speed, has to date done exactly nothing. My name being evidently too tough to pronounce, the matter was merely gathering dust on the shelf. With a little prodding by Lech, they finally promised that investigation will be conducted but that it will take a minimum of three months to God knows how long. My decision as a result of this disgusting display of red tape or non activity is this: I have decided to go to Chicago on an indefinite leave, contact the studio directly and get them to work on the clearance personally. I think the only reason why the studio is not willing to make any overtures at present is due to the fact that I am still behind a barb-wire fence. Once I am on the outside my status regarding employment should be the same as any alien on the outside, in which case should be able to get my defense clearance within two weeks through the office of the Provost Marshal. Even if it takes longer, there are always commercial jobs I can take as a temporary measure, but there again I can barter better if I am a Johnny-on-the spot.....

R.K.

Note: R.K. is an issei who came to this country at the age of 12 and is more nisei than issei. He was formerly employed at Walt Disney studios and later M-G-M cartoon dept. He had an offer to work with a studio (animated pictures) in Chicago but was unable to accept it due to his lack of Joint Board clearance papers. He wrote this letter from Heart Mountain prior to his departure for Chicago where he is now working as a commercial artist.



Letter on Relocation Program

(COPY)

July 19, 1943

.....It's sure swell to hear that you've started out on your program of resettlement. It's something that we're all face to face with, and it's something that we'll all have to plan and cope with in the future.

.....The present WRA relocation program discourages the return of those with indefinite leaves to the Centers. If free access to the Center were permitted, I think that a lot more fellows would go out and try outside life and most likely adopt it. Some of them are afraid of failure and if they figure that their return to the Center is going to be hindered, they will just refuse to take the chance. I think that a liberal WRA policy on this point would help since the original impetus for relocation has died down, and it is no longer a rush, but just a trickle. There are still a lot more people in the Centers and the WRA might as ~~wek~~ well keep the trickle from becoming just a "drip"..... A.K.

Note: A.K. is a college graduate and had four years of study in Japan after that. He is married and has a child who was born in Granada. He probably would have left the center if the WRA policy were to permit evacuees a chance to return to the center, as he states in his letter. He was business manager of a newspaper owned by his father.



Oct. 1, 1943

"Our foreman is one swell guy. He certainly treats us right. Sometimes when I'm working real hard, he comes around and shuts off the motor of the machine and tells me to take a rest.

"I am working at the Detroit Filter Company. We make air filters out of cardboard. I am working with another nisei boy, Frank Kumamoto. We can take a time out for a smoke whenever we want to. We can't smoke in the workshop but we can go to the men's locker room to smoke. Sometimes I take time out to eat a sandwich.

"There are only about 25 people working in our floor. We are like one happy family. We have all nationalities working there. A lot of them are women and they sure are friendly to us. One of the ladies makes coffee for the whole bunch so we have hot coffee with our sandwiches at noon. We pay 10 cents a week for our coffee. Sometimes some of the women bring cookies and pass them around. We have lots of fun talking to these women.

"One of the ladies said to me one day, 'We don't care what nationality the workers are. You mind your own business, we mind our own business and we'll all get along. I've been working here for 10 years and I think everybody is swell. As long as we all do our own work everybody will be happy.'

"I get paid 70 cents an hour with time and a half for work after 40 hours. We generally work two hours over time every day but we never actually work the full two hours. The foreman comes around about an hour or at least 45 minutes before the two hours are up and yet we get credit for the full two hours. On Saturdays we work eight hours too, all this is time and a half. We start at 7:30 a.m. instead of the usual 8:30 and generally quit around 3 but we get credit for 8 hours.



"One day the foreman asked me if I knew of any other Japanese American boys who wanted to work there. I couldn't think of anybody ~~so~~ so I told him to call the WRA office. Imagine, he didn't even know what the WRA was. So I explained to him. I don't know whether he called or not. I know there are some <sup>nisei</sup> Japanese boys working on the floor below us but I don't know whether he got them through the WRA or not."

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Paul Yazaki is formerly of Los Angeles. He was quite an athlete in his high school days. Through the parish priest he received a recommendation to attend University of Notre Dame and attended school for two years in 1933 and 1934. In his sophomore year his mother died suddenly. Upon receipt of a telegram from home, Paul was able to fly home to attend the funeral services. He flew back to South Bend and completed his sophomore year.

He never returned to school after that. He had a younger sister who was still in grammar school. In order to support her he worked as a gas station attendant and later became the book keeper of the concern and was earning \$150 a month. He started at \$100 a month. He complained of neuritis, as a result of working on his feet all day on a cement floor.

He evacuated to Santa Anita with the downtown Los Angeles group. During his four months stay there he did not work at all, declaring that he was physically unable to work. In the early part of September he relocated at Heart Mountain Assembly Center. Here he did work in the employment office. About the end of June he resettled in Chicago.

Paul has had rather an unfortunate life. When he was about 8 years old his father was killed in an accident. The insurance com-



pany agreed to pay him a certain amount of money until he became 21 years of age. The fund was turned over to his uncle. Unfortunately the uncle <sup>borrowed</sup> ~~used~~ the money in his magazine publishing business which later went broke. Paul was never able to collect from his uncle.

After his father died his mother was also receiving a monthly sum from the insurance company however, this was discontinued when she married again. She had a daughter by the second marriage. The daughter is now with relatives in Japan, having gone there in 1938. The second husband also died.

Because two of her husbands had died Paul's mother did not want to wish any bad luck on a third husband she never legally married her third husband, although it was commonly known in the community that they were man and wife. The third husband is in Heart Mountain.



Free Association: Ernie Takahashi  
Oct. 17, 1943  
Suski

"I think our family is pretty well adjusted. All except one ~~sister and one brother are out of camp~~ sister and the family of one brother are now out of camp. My parents, George and his family, Henry and his family and Joe are all living together in a 10-room house on the southside.

"Pooling out income together, which amounts to about \$500 a week, we ~~we~~ were able to buy this house. George, Henry ~~and~~ and his wife, Barbara, Joe and myself are working. We all pay toward household expenses and for the house according to ~~the~~ the size of our income.

"We sent for part of our furniture. We had three homes on the coast. We took out all of the furniture from one house and rented it out unfurnished. We also sold one house. We sent for our furniture through Beacon's and they came here in very good shape, including a piano. If we had known how well they were packed, we would have sent for Barbara's grand piano instead of the upright. It took two months for our furniture to come, starting from the ~~final~~ initial negotiations and from the time it arrived.

"The upstairs of our house is exclusively the living quarters and if anyone wants privacy he or she can just go to his or her own room. We have a large dining room on the ground floor which can be used as a study or work.

"My parents are fairly well adjusted. My father likes to work in the garden, puttering around. He says the ground isn't as good as that of California for a lot of things won't grow as easily, however, he has fun with his hobby. My mother goes to the two Quaker churches in our vicinity twice a week. She is getting well acquainted with the people there. Both of them seem to like it



out here and find things to do to keep them occupied.

"Barbara joined the Parents-Teachers group. She found a job in the public health work and is enjoying her work. Her two daughters, 11 and 9, like their school and manage to occupy themselves while their mother is gone.

"I had a good job offer in my field (optometry and lens factory) but couldn't take it because of the Joint Board clearance which I lacked. I sent letters, wires and got all kinds of recommendations for the last three months but haven't got my clearance yet. I had to turn down that job. My brother Joe, who doesn't need his clearance, got it without even applying for it. Maybe they figure that the people who apply for it are the ones that have to be thoroughly investigated in order to get that clearance.

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"When we have socials in Chicago, it's going to be program dances. I'm not going to have the kind of dances we've had in Denver where all the girls sit on one end of the room and the boys on the other. I want to see all of the girls dancing. I don't want to have any more of those dances where a few of the girls dance all the time and the majority of them sitting out all through the evening.

"I would like to see that the boys come properly dressed to these dances. No more T-shirts, loud Hawaiian shirts and zoot suiters. As long as we get the boys started in wearing clean and neat clothes, a coat or a jacket and a tie to these socials, they will be used to it and come properly dressed in the future.

"Back in Denver the boys got off to a bad start. They come in all kinds of clothes and now it's too late to change them. We had rowdy boys who came drunk. We don't permit any drinkin inside the building but we can't stop them from drinking outside. Their manners are really atrocious. They talk back and won't mind what we tell them."

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Miss Mukaye is a National YWCA staff worker who was stationed at Denver. At the request of the Chicago YWCA she has been loaned to the local "Y". She plans to stay in Chicago until the end of the year. At present she is working to get the nisei girls into the different business girls clubs of the YWCA in the various "Y" centers of this city. She says that the nisei girls will not organize their own clubs but will try to join the Caucasian groups.



Oct. 10, 1943

"The National YWCA closed its office in Denver, however, the Denver YWCA is continuing with its weekly socials at the "Y". Mrs. Amy miura, formerly of San Francisco, is still there carrying on her work with the "Y".

"Yes, we have our share of 'zoot suiters' in Denver. We have that rowdy bunch of downtown Los Angeles boys. You see them hanging around the 'meshiyas' and pool halls on Larimer street. A number of them ~~don't~~ don't seem to be working. They talk out loud in a mixture of Japanese and English, just as they did ~~in~~ in the pre-war days, not caring who hears them.

"Hundreds of these boys and a lot of service men attend these weekly dances which are held at the Denver YWCA on Thursday nights. At these socials the girls sit at one end of the room and the boys on the other side. Only a few of the girls dance and those who do dance are cut in a great many times during the evening but the majority of the lesser good looking girls sit out for the greater part of the evening. There is no way of getting the boys to dance ~~at~~ with the less popular girls.

"The nisei boys, not all of them, talk in loud, profane language. If they were taught any kind of manners or etiquette at home, they certainly must have forgotten them. It certainly is disgusting how some of these nisei boys can be so ill-mannered.

"We have our trouble with the kibe boys too. One of them was sitting in the lounge with some nisei girls. He had his hat on so I said to him, 'If you're planning to stay here will you please remove your hat.' He stared at me and mumbled something in Japanese but I did hear him say, 'Ano namaiki no yatsu'. Then I heard him



say, 'I'll remember you for this', and I replied to him, 'You can't scare me with that kind of talk'. We have to be tough with these kibeis.

"A number of these kibeis are teaching Japanese to the Naval Intelligence men at Boulder. Heretofore they had menial jobs back home, however, they were boosted to the rank of college instructors and consequently their ego was inflated sky high and now they have a tendency to look down upon the nisei.

"All the nisei seem to look forward to these weekly socials. There is a nominal charge in order to defray expenses. The largest amount ever charged at these socials was \$1.50 per couple, a New Year's Eve dance.

"We have a number of service men attend our socials. A great majority of them are soldiers visiting their families in the relocation centers and arrange to stop in Denver either on their way to or from the center to make the dance.

"Many of these boys meet new girls and try to date them after the dance. I had one boy call me up on the following day and say, 'Can you give me Jane's telephone number?' I asked for her last name but he said that he didn't know what it was. Then he said, 'She's from Reno'. But told him that I knew two Janes and both from Reno. I was waiting for him to say, 'the good looking one,' and I was ready to reply, 'they're both good looking'. However, he said, 'I guess I don't know what girl I want'.

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"There are a lot of nisei and kibeis who think they're better than the others, especially those who are teaching Japanese to the Naval Intelligence men at Boulder. Some of instructors had menial jobs on the coast but due to the fact that they were able to read



and write Japanese, they were able to get a teaching job which gave them an air of superiority. Wives of these instructors now class themselves with the upper crust and will not even associate with the ordinary working people.

"One of the women whose husband was in the wholesale produce business back home, owned their own home and had two cars, a Buick for the family car and a Fiat for her own personal use, took a job as hostess in the dining hall on the campus. Immediately she was classed with the laboring group and her friends of Los Angeles, now wives of instructors, refused to associate with her. Naturally she resented this and quit her job. She is now staying home as a housewife, taking care of her two children. She said, 'Imagine, they were my friends back in Los Angeles and now look at them!'

"The wives of the Japanese language teachers have organized a club of their own, a social organization. They stated specifically that as wives of college instructors they did not want to be mistaken as waitresses and other workers on the campus. They who used to think the 'haku-jins' were terrible for discriminating against the Japanese, have turned right around and created a class distinction, terming themselves above the ordinary working people who have honest jobs on the campus.

"Not all of the wives are like that. Some of them who are more democratic, refuse to join these organizations for wives which spend most of their time in visiting one another and passing on the latest gossip."

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Committee Meeting to discuss Need for Nisei Socials  
Oct. 22, 1943  
Suski

Receiving many reports that nisei in Chicago desired socials and receiving various requests in helping to arrange such socials, Ralph Smeltzer, head of the Brethrens' hostel called a meeting of nisei from all parts of the city and representatives of the Caucasian groups interested in integration of nisei into the general society of Chicago. The dinner meeting was held at the YMCA cafeteria at 19 S. LaSalle on Friday evening, Oct. 22.

~~In assuming chairmanship of the meeting Sme~~

Among those present were Kimi Mukaye of the YWCA, Dr. T.T. Yatabe of the JACL, Mrs. Chiyo Izumi, Hideo Hashimoto who is a full time worker for the United Ministry, Dixie Ishida and Jean Shintani who have resided in Chicago for several years, Dick Suzuki who is a student at Northwestern University Theological Seminary and Hideo Sasaki, Roy Marubayashi, Virginia Asaka, Mirry Miyake, Esther Naito, Akira Hara<sup>Togo Tanaka</sup> and Louise Suski among other nisei. The Caucasians present were Bill McKee of the Friends and various members of the F.O.R.

In assuming chairmanship of the meeting Smeltzer said, "This meeting was called to plan socials where nisei can meet Caucasians. We all realize that the need for socials is noticeable, socials where nisei can find social expression. In the past eight months 3500 nisei have come to Chicago and that does create a social problem. The Caucasian organizations will not integrate them into their groups. There have been some all-nisei affairs. Many feel that these socials should be on the 50-50 basis, that is, half nisei and half Caucasians. There



is a need for social outlet for the resettlers. Social life for them should be on the mixed basis and not segregated. ~~How can this be best done?~~

"These are some of the questions which must be answered by this committee: How can this be best done? How can they make Caucasian acquaintances? How can the nisei make their way into Caucasian society and find their place in society? How and on what basis can they be organized? Are such organizations as the YMCA, YWCA, churches and other groups functioning as they are in the city, sufficient for the nisei? If no, what should we do? Should the YM, YW, churches, F.O.R. and other groups jointly sponsor affairs?

"No successful attempts have been made to try to put on a big scale these inter-social affairs. Tonight we are going to pick committees to plan these socials. I am in favor of doing something such as an inter-organization affair. We as a group are in a perfect position to take action."

With this kind of introduction by Smeltzer, it seemed to me that it was already decided to sponsor joint socials and that this meeting was called to make out plans for socials to take care of the needs of the nisei in the different part of the city.

Smeltzer asked Kimi Mukaye if she knew what the YMCA was doing in the matter of social outlet for the nisei. She replied that Mr. Shedd of the YMCA was calling a meeting on Wednesday night and she believed that he was calling nisei on his staff and area to plan small parties. She thought he was thinking in terms of 20's and 30's.

Roger Axford of the F.O.R. declared that "nisei should



work through the normal channels of social life and if they are not meeting Caucasians through the normal channels, then is the leadership satisfying? There must be mutual understanding.

McKee of Friends said, "I do feel there are two opinions to be taken up; to talk on what need is being met by existing group and ~~to~~ see what's in the picture and see what is needed."

Kimi Mukaye was asked what the YWCA was doing for the nisei. She said, "The YWCA hasn't done much. No effort has been made to have socials of any kind. As a group nothing has been done."

Esther Naito told of all-nisei socials she had heard of. "Two were held that I know of, one privately and the other through the 'Y' some time ago. There was forced association at the first social so it was unsuccessful. The last one at the 'Y' found about 30 present of which six were Caucasians. The Caucasians came from the 'Y'."

Axford said that the churches had the advantage in not having the problem of established nisei but they have difficulty with the already established nisei. He told of mixed socials held in Denver. He said, "The F.O.R. had several parties. They were invitational and there was equal representation. There was nothing forced about it. Twice we had about 300 people present. We had folk dancing and dancing as well as other activities."

Hideo Hashimoto said, "We should <sup>not</sup> try anything artificially. There are some nisei attending our church and they sing in the choir and teach Sunday School. There is no community life. There are cliques and it's hard to welcome the people."

Emily Morgan of the F.O.R. said, "Some go with the idea that they won't see each other again. They should go with the



idea to see and know each other."

Axford said, "They should recognize between primary and secondary contacts. Don't look for secondary friends.

Janice Jensen, who attended the meeting as a visitor but who found herself interested in the joint socials said, "We should organize people according to their interests. Don't shake hands aimlessly and whip up sudden friendships. I'd like to attend singing, painting, reading and do things together and ~~see~~ discuss things. Friendships should grow gradually. Are there any such affairs? Has anybody made any survey of how many have integrated?

Smeltzer asked if the nisei in the city were getting adequate social expression. Dixie Ishida said, "If there's going to be dancing, throw some good ones."

Smeltzer added, "If were having socials, they should have lasting values. Have the organizations been doing the work adequately?"

Among the views expressed by various individuals were that the nisei were timid so this should be taken into consideration in the matter of invitations; that the 'Y' groups and other social agencies set up 50-50 committees to arrange 50-50 socials; that special affairs were needed to meet the emergency; that these affairs not be thought as permanent events; that the various organizations provide adequate social expression and invite nisei but they don't respond.

Akira Hara, who has gone into his neighboring church and become a part of it was asked to tell of his relations. He said, "My case may be different. I live in a community where there are



few Japanese. My relationship at work is on a business basis. My social relationship is sought through the Oak Park Baptist Church. I have attended their socials. On Wednesdays I attend interest groups after which we have discussions. On Sunday nights I attend fellowship meeting and one time I gave a 10 minute speech. I have gone to their socials as well as bowling. I have made several friends but I don't know whether they will develop into primary friends."

Dr. Yatabe's comment to this was that the majority of nisei are not attending church here.

Dixie Ishida said that the typical nisei "land jobs through the hostel or the WRA, spend six months looking for housing and their social contacts include meeting friends from back home. The rest of the time they go to picture shows.

Another nisei comment was that "many people work long hours. Two or three live together and cook their own meals. They repeat this six days a week. Many have little time for social activities."

One of the Caucasian women said, "That is true of many Caucasians. My friends are in the Army or in defense work and I don't see much of them."

Smeltzer brought back the subject of socials again and said, "Let us think in terms of what kind of affair we want and in what section of the city? What organizations can we call upon to help with these socials?"

It was reported that the Hyde Park area was holding a meeting tonight (Oct. 22) and they were planning to do something for the nisei. It was agreed that this committee should cooper-



ate.

"What age group do you want to ~~it~~ hit?" asked Akira Hara.

Esther Naito said, "You can't divide the nisei into groups. The nisei will have to get together first and then get together with the Caucasians later."

Mrs. Izumi was in favor of having mixed socials and then at that time announce about the different interest groups and get the nisei to take their choice. "Start with small groups in the churches and other groups and develop into inter-social parties." The University group have little difficulty and they seem to mix well."

Smeltzer said, "We need committees in three areas. We should have mixed committees and give socials at a strategic time and place."

"You don't have to worry about integration if they have a good time" was one comment.

"What is the difference between the nisei from other young people? None." said Smeltzer.

Dixie Ishida said that the average nisei who come out of camp were bashful. Dr. Yatabe said, "Those of us who were in camps can't express our feeling after we get out."

"There's something free inside. It takes six months to get over," added Ishida.

George Houser proposed that parties be held in certain sections.

Smeltzer said that these parties should be small but have several of them. He related his experience with the "Esquires", a group of boys who have been organized as a gang from San Pedro.



These boys asked Smeltzer to recommend a hall where they could arrange a dance and charge admission. They had already arranged for an orchestra.

It was reported that the Hull House, Benton House were among those which offered their facilities to the nisei. McKee reported that the nisei went to see Mr. B. who is in charge of one of these houses and they found that the houses were pretty full with their own programs. Some one remarked that the Esquires had never gone to a mixed affair in Chicago.

Esther Naito told of a group of 40 ~~boys~~ nisei who held beach parties in the summer and now this group desire to hold a dance. "I think it can be done," was Smeltzer's answer to this.

McKee suggested that this group get in touch with the other group and hold the social together. "We know the the nisei group and church institutions are ready to do something so why can't we get these two groups together? We know Mr. Ballard, Mr. Shedd and several others will help them if we talk to them."

At Houser's suggestion that the city be divided into areas and socials be held, Virginia Asaka added, "Have the affairs on the same night. At the St. James church where John Mori held his dance there were ~~ten~~ gate crashers. The 'Y' invited 150 people to their social and there were 200 nisei and 10 Caucasians." By having socials on the same night in different areas, it was believed that there would be less gate crashers. It was suggested that the people be limited to their own sections and that the socials be 50-50 and each person bring a date. Each parties are to be small. The two primary purposes of the socials are (1) to have a good time, and (2) to make primary friendships.



The problem is now to get enough Caucasians and keeping them down to attending these socials. It was decided to ~~long~~ have the ~~a~~ three committees decide on how to issue the invitations, what kind of socials to be held and how to get the 50-50 people out.

It was revealed that the United Ministry has a ~~full~~ file of all nisei listed in the 75 areas of the city.

Someone commented that one affair was not going to cover the need of all nisei in the city.

Dr. Yatabe brought up the question, "Who's going to finance these socials?"

Houser said that the cooperating organization would be responsible and that they could charge a small fee to ~~cover~~ <sup>cover</sup> the expenses.

Bill McKee said, "It's difficult to get the native Chicagoans out. They are not available and it's going to be hard to get enough of them out to these socials. That means we will be forced to have smaller groups and may throw the group out of balance. Many organizations are ready to ~~take~~ take the nisei in. We go to the Hyde Park "Y" and speak to the secretary and state our problems and ask if would be willing to have socials with nisei in that area. They say that they have organized something out there. If Hyde Park is doing something, let's do something in another part of the city.

Smeltzer was in favor of getting a committee to plan and execute those plans. Houser said that he could contact the United Presbyterian Church in the south side and try to get all 15 groups in that area to jointly sponsor something. He suggested that the city be divided into three areas and have three committee meet



separately and have a broader representation. Smeltzer added that we should get people who were willing to work as the job was more important than representation.

These three committees are to ~~cont~~ decide how to contact the people and when they will meet again as a whole committee. The three committees are to be 50-50 committees to sponsor 50-50 parties designed for good time and lasting friendship. They are to be normal as possible and there should be no artificiality. Invitations are to be limited and try to reach nisei most bored.

The next meeting of the entire committees is to be held on Nov. 12 at the La Salle YMCA cafeteria at 6 p.m. Roger Axford, who was elected general chairman, is to preside.

The three committees then held their respective committee meetings to decide on the personnel of the committee and general plans for their respective socials. At the Nov. 12 meeting these committees are to report on their progress and on the socials if any are held.



South Side Sub-Committee meeting  
Oct. 22, 1943  
Suski

Jean Houser was chosen chairman of the South Side sub-committee which met immediately after the general meeting.

It was decided that all churches and organizations on the south side would be contacted to see what they had planned or done toward activities for the nisei. Among the groups to be contacted are the Hyde Park "Y", Concord Co-op, First Presbyterian Church, South Congregational Church, South side F.O.R. and Midwest F.O.R. Reports of these contacts are to be made at the next meeting of the sub-committee to be held at the La Salle St. YMCA cafeteria on Saturday, Oct. 30, at 12 noon.

All socials to be sponsored by this group will be 50-50 socials. It will be invitational. All committee members are to submit names to the committee which will issue invitations.



YWCA Meeting  
Oct. 21, 1943

Suski

The nisei in Chicago need and desire socials was the concensus of opinion at a small meeting called by Kimi Mukaye, YWCA secretary at a southside YWCA hall on Thursday evening, Oct. 21. Among those present were Mary Lucy Nakamura, formerly of Yakima Valley; Mrs. Dorothy Baba, formerly of Stockton; May Morioka and Mrs. Fumi Hoshiyama, both of the San Francisco Bay area, and Louise Suski, formerly of Los Angeles.

The discussion of the evening centered around the leisure time and how it was spent. Most of them stayed home practically every night.

Mrs. Baba said, "My husband and I stay home almost every night, with the exception of a movie now and then. On Sundays we like to visit our friends. My husband goes to night school so that takes care of many of the evenings."

Miss Mukaye said that she wanted to encourage the girls and married women to take advantage of the various activities on the program of the YWCA at 59 Monroe St. in the Loop. "Transportation facilities are pretty good for the women on the south side and so they come down to the Loop. Consequently the "Y" on the southside has no gym nor other facilities outside of this hall and one in the Hyde Park district for meetings of the high school age girls," <sup>she said.</sup> She urged all those present at this meeting to come to the downtown "Y" and see the different activities open to the women. Choral singing, folk dancing, crafts and many different subjects are being conducted there.

"How many of you have gone to churches in your area?" asked Miss Mukaye.



It was discovered that I was the only one going to church regularly. I attend the St. Ambrose Catholic Church which is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  blocks from where I live. May Morioka said, "Some of us have been planning to attend services at the p Presbyterian church on 64th Street one of these days."

"Do you think there is a need for socials on the south side?" asked Miss Mukaye.

I told them that I had not attended any of the socials held in Chicago so far, however, I thought that the nisei really want socials as they work six days a week and have not social outlet. They either go visit friends or go to shows, some of them go to the Aragon or the Trianon to dance, but the nisei would go ~~to~~ to almost any distance to attend a social.

"Judging from the crowd that attended the recent tea held at the YWCA, there nisei want socials," said May Morioka. "As long as we can keep the zoot suiters out, I am in favor of these socials."

MaryLucy Nakamura arrived late but she voiced her opinions in favor of socials. "How big of an area do you intend to include at a southside social?" she asked.

It was agreed that the south end would be unlimited but the north end of the ~~area~~ area would be up to ~~the~~ Roosevelt Road.

The agreement was to hold socials once a month at the YWCA hall located on the second floor of the building at 6743 Stony Island. The hall is about 80 by 60 feet. It was estimated that the hall would hold about 100 persons. Admittance to the first social will be by invitation only. All persons attending



are to turn in names of people they know who are residing in the south side. Then at the second social only a small percentage of those attending the first social will be invited again while the majority will be new persons. In the future it is the plan of the YWCA to hold socials on the north side and west side on the same evening in order that the nisei would attend socials held in their ~~own~~ respective areas.

The five persons attending this first meeting are to form the planning committee for the south side social. The date and other details will be brought up at the next committee meeting to be called by Miss Mukaye.

These five persons were picked at random by Miss Mukaye from a group of women whom she knew were residing in the south side. She tried to pick them from various localities.



Juski

Free Association: YWCA meeting  
Oct. 21, 1943

Kimi Mukaye: Many nisei girls are terribly lonesome but some of them don't dare go out at all. They are scared of coming up against some unpleasant incidents. I've asked one girl whether she knew of any incident which has actually occurred and this girl could not name a single one. I told this girl that it wouldn't do her any good to feel that way, that she was just leading herself into a nervous breakdown. I told her that she had to come out and make new friends and get herself interested in something.

Fumi Hoshiyama: Kiku Kato told me that some nisei girls are so lonesome that they pick up anybody. Some of them even pick up soldiers.

When questioned further on this subject Fumi Hoshiyama said: They pick them up and go to rooms in the YMCA.

Kimi Mukaye: How can the girls take men to their rooms when they have matrons on each floor?

Fumi Hoshiyama: I don't know, but that's what Kiku told me.

From one of the boys who used to live at the Wabash YMCA Hotel, I heard that the "Y" has a certain floor for single men, another floor for single women and another floor for families. He said that the boys can take the elevator to the roof garden and then walk down the stairs to the floor for women. Perhaps this is how the girls can take the boys to their rooms.

Then the subject turned to the question of nisei and their bad manners. Kimi Mukaye told us about the following interesting occurrences:



"That day the YWCA gave a tea for me on Oct. 4 I saw a group of 'zoot suiters' in front of the building. One of them asked me, 'Is there going to be dancing?' I said, 'I believe so.' Then one of them said, 'Can we go in like this?'

"I noticed that some of them were not even wearing coats or jackets, let alone a tie. I told them that I thought it may be all right this time but I said, 'Next time I think you'd better wear coats and put on ties before coming here for any social gatherings.'

"At this tea I noticed that so many nisei were so glad to see their friends, especially those they did not even dream would be here in Chicago. You know, several people have told me after the tea that they were so sorry not to have met me at the tea. Most of these people told me, 'I was so busy greeting my friends that I didn't have time to say anything to you at your tea'.

"That tea was the hoisiest place. Everybody was talking at once. I heard comments that the nisei wish they would hold more social gatherings where they could meet their friends. As a consequence of this tea, I think the general consensus of opinion was that such socials were desired by the nisei.

"At future socials I would like to see the nisei better mannered. When there's dancing I would like to see all of the girls dancing and not have a few girls dancing all the time and the majority sitting out. I'm going to try to have program dances in order to see that all the girls get to dance. I would like to see the nisei have a few good manners so we won't be ashamed of them any place. They've acquired so many bad habits



and manners in camp that it's going to be a long time before they can improve for the better. It's going to be a problem but it's got to be done."

Then she told us about the couple she knew up in Barrington who worked as a domestic. "The Caucasians who hired this couple seemed very pleased with them at first sight. When the American lady asked the hired man to wear a white coat when he acted as a butler, he refused. He compromised by wearing a white turtle neck sweater. When his wife was asked to do certain things she did not like to do, she absolutely refused to do it. She wanted to run the house the way she wanted and not the way her employer wanted. Being a very talkative lady, the Japanese woman made comments on various things all the time. One day she told her employer (the husband) "You talk too much," right to his face.

"Then I heard of another domestic in the suburbs of Chicago. One of this nisei girl's duty was to take care of the couple's baby. One night the employers returned from a dinner party and found the baby all alone and no nisei girl in sight. The domestic had left the sleeping baby and gone out with her friends. Some of these domestics do not realize that they have certain responsibilities when they work in a home. They forget that their time is not their own and when they are supposed to do certain duties, they should do it. Anything could have happened to that baby during that nisei girl's absence. Evidently she did not realize that the baby's well-being and safety had been entrusted to her during the parents' absence.

"Some nisei girls who work as domestics are so timid that they are afraid to ~~tell their employers~~ complain to their employers



ymca meeting - 4

and try to get some misunderstandings smoothed out. One nisei girl working as a domestic didn't like her job and wanted to ~~leve-fe~~ leave for another domestic job which paid better. Instead of telling her employer that she wanted to leave and the reasons why, she said that her mother was ill and she had to gone back home. Naturally the employer was sympathetic and wanted to know if there was anything she could do. The girl politely refused and said that she didn't think she would return to her job again. This girl went to work immediately as a domestic a few blocks away from her previous employment. One day she accidentally bumped into her former employer and she had a hard time explaining about her current work as a domestic for another couple. It would have been a simple matter to discuss the dislikes and disadvantages of the work and in all probability the employer will change things. If not, the girl can easily say that she must quit because she does not care for the working conditions. All this can be done politely and without irritation to either party. But when the girl backs out of her job with a false story, that's what makes the Caucasians distrust the nisei.

"Going back to the subject of nisei manners, a Caucasian friend of mine who is interested in the integration of nisei into the general community life, told me of one visit she made to a nisei couple's home. It was after dinner and the couple were in the living room. My goodness, but the husband had his shoes off and his suspender straps were off his shoulders. He didn't even excuse himself or put on shoes or slippers. He just walked around in his stocking feet. It is these little things which the Caucasians notice. Little things like that make either a good or



bad impressions.

"I visited a Negro church one Sunday. I had an occasion to ask the Negro young people whether they objected to having nisei attend their services and join their groups. They got a big kick out of the question and laughed. 'Why should we kick if the Japanese young people come to our services?'"

With this the informal meeting came to a close.



Special Meeting called to discuss Nisei Socials  
Oct. 25, 1943  
Suski

Hearing reports that if socials were held for a mixed nisei-Caucasian group, it may lead to some good, but on the other hand, it may lead to further segregation and disaster for the nisei in the long run, Ralph Smeltzer called a special meeting of the committee which met on Friday to discuss socials to reconsider several points which were omitted at the previous meeting. A good representation was seen at this second meeting which was also held at the La Salle YMCA cafeteria on Monday, Oct. 25, 1943.

Among those present from the previous meeting were Roger Axford, chairman of the committee, Ralph Smeltzer of the Brethren's Hostel who called the meeting, Virginia Asaka, Mirry Miyake, Esther Naito, Jean Shintani, Bill McKee, George Houser, Hideo Hashimoto, Emily Morgan and Louise Suski. Among those present for the first time were Roy Smith of the Church Federation, Merrill Inyard of the YMCA, Harriett Yarrow of the Church Federation and Mrs. Smeltzer.

Smeltzer, who presided over the meeting at first, announced the the Friends had released Bill McKee to work full time for two week for the integration program. He gave the following reasons for reconsideration of the plan of hold 50-50 socials:

"1. All the facts were not presented; 2, perhaps the need for special social affairs is not great; 3. several at that meeting on Friday did not speak up; 4. some committee members have changed their minds on the method of reaching integration objectives; 5. we must consider every phase that is important for the future of the nisei; 6. we must be consistent as possible toward our goal,



integration." He then gave ~~and~~ the chairmanship over to Axford who called for any expressions from those present.

Charlie Kikuchi spoke first. His opinion was that "these parties are sponsored to create friendship but it will eventually result in a nisei society. Why should we have special needs?" He said that Chicago was different from Detroit, St. Louis, Cleveland, Denver and Salt Lake City. These cities too have the same objectives of integration but their socials have degenerated into their own group and now there is a barrier. "Not enough ~~ground~~ <sup>ground</sup> work is laid. Not enough Caucasians will come to these socials. We just make superficial contacts at these socials. If integration is our goal, we should be consistent. The nisei haven't broadened their cultural side. War has changed life. The nisei have ~~lost~~ <sup>suffered</sup> contact. We have ~~lost~~ <sup>suffered</sup> through evacuation. This committee should probe all phases of the question first. This committee won't keep other groups from being organized.

"What were the reasons for relocating? Their friends were out here, there were some good job offers. Now if you have parties those who come will be those who don't need contacts. Those who come will be there with the idea of meeting other nisei."

Axford asked each person present to give his or her opinions on the matter.

Mirry Miyake said, "Those who stay away will come to meet other nisei. I heard of a dance which is being planned for Nov. 20, by a group of nisei. They will charge \$1.50 per couple."

Kikuchi added, "The nisei should remain as inconspicuous as possible. As the war progresses the feeling against the nisei will increase."



Smeltzer then asked, "Do you think that by not having any socials, we can integrate any individuals?"

Kikuchi related the experience of the Japanese Students Club at Berkeley. He said, "Before the war, at the University of California a Japanese Students Club was set up to promote nisei going into other activities. The nisei had a student body within a student body as a result. In the smaller colleges the nisei are forced to participate in various campus activities. We want to be treated as individuals and not as a minority. We live under a democratic principle."

At this point Hideo Hashimoto wanted to add something about the students at the University of Michigan. He said, "I want to add at at Ann Arbor the Japanese students started a 50-50 club. Andrew Kuroda who helped to organize the group said to Hideo Tanabe, 'I just can't break it up', indicating that the nisei segregated themselves in the end. There was no transitional stage because they could not solidify the group. Friday night's committee meeting the people were railroaded. Some of us felt that the 50-50 parties were wrong. It was pointed out that as integration was established then the groups would get the ~~nisei~~ nisei into their organizations. For example, the Caucasians are not ready to take them in. Some groups are holding socials, they said, 'Why should we keep them apart. Let them have their own party.' The Church Federation is sold on integration."

George Houser said that nothing special was set up but "we're going to be shot in the arm. We've got to take various organizations to take the into into their group."

In reviewing last Friday's meeting, Virginia Asaka said, "We



assumed a lot of things at the last meeting. We assumed that we needed socials for the nisei. With that we planned, will we meet that need? How will we get them into the integration program? That's what I'd like to hear answered."

Esther Naito's opinion was that "there was a need for social life but there was an unwillingness on the part of the nisei to integrate".

Louise Suski was called upon next. She said, "The nisei have been thinking about socials when they were back home before the war. They worked hard during the week and went to the socials held over the week-end. That's all they seemed to work for. Then when they went to the assembly centers and relocation centers, it was the same thing over again only socials were held oftener. Now these nisei have come out to Chicago and they still want to carry out the same idea of having socials or going to socials every week. They forget that this is war time and we shouldn't be thinking so much about socials. The older nisei don't crave for socials like the younger ones. They can find other things to keep them busy but the younger nisei are the ones who are eager for socials! If the nisei can study, join interest groups and help to better themselves culturally, it will be better for them in the long run."

To this Smeltzer commented, "Louise's opinion bring another important point up, marriage. The nisei desire to meet persons of the opposite sex."

Kikuchi added, "More fellows will come to these socials. The majority of evacuees are males out here. This may make frustration greater. Socials and the draft create another situation! The more popular and prettier girls are going steady."



When asked about her opinions, Jean Shintani said, "I consider myself an outsider. I've been here since 1928. Many nisei have come over. I've had discussions with them but I just can't understand why they feel the way they do."

To that Kikuchi said, "The anti-oriental feeling gave them an escapist idea."

Jean continued, "I visited Southern California one year and when I wanted to take my friends to eat at the Brown Derby they said that they would rather eat in Japanese town because they claimed that there was too much anti-Japanese feeling in the American restaurants and other places." She also related that a group of nisei wanted her to organize a bowling league. She said that there was a group which monopolize the bowling alley on Saturday nights and the manager finally told them that they could have only half of the place. The boys asked the manager if they could organize a league and they were referred to Jean. Jean said that she was stalling the boys off because she didn't know whether it was wise to have an all-Japanese league or not. She has to give them an answer soon.

Hideo Hashimoto said, "We are beginning to wonder if there is not another approach to integration. We comprised. The best way is thru the normal channels. It will not be a betrayal to the Friday group if we push the program thru the normal channels. Many churchs have social social programs and they have invited the nisei many times. At the St. Paul's Church many nisei attend the 11 o'clock service but not to the socials. They gave the excuse that they had other social engagements which they felt was more important. The people we say need social contact the most won't come. We will pull ~~them one-way~~ those people back who are well on their



way toward integration. I favor going back to the normal way with double effort this time."

Harriett Yarrow said, "these parties are not helping to integrate. The promise of that looks slim. I'd rather work on what is better for integration. We of other groups should pull them into our group rather than segregate them."

Roy Smith spoke for the first time when asked his opinion. He said, "I favor integration. We expose two side to expression if people look for it. Some people feel that the 'Y' was out of place. A lady told me that the 'Y' said that they had four new nisei in their club. I think they did a good job thru their recent tea."

Bill McKee said, "I seriously question whether those four girls came in because of the tea. Kimi Mukaye's work may be the factor. Tuesday's session pointed directly into the 'Y' activities."

Axford then said, "the problem then is (1) will the 50-50 parties get the people we want, and (2) we will defeat the purpose by setting up partially mixed groups in a stricter sense."

Smeltzen declared, "If integration was to be our measuring stick, we were over-zealous to speed the program when we advocated the 50-50 affairs. We may not stimulate the program, we may even retard the program. We have have integrated fewer persons. Advocating nisei affairs may sound harsh but we may be defeating our purpose."

McKee said that he favored working through organizations. He said, "We have the problem: how do we get the nisei to participate in these groups? These organizations have done everything but can't get the nisei to come to take advantage of the many facilities offered but no one takes them up on it."



Hideo Hashimoto said, "I don't have trouble with churches. The people who need it don't come. Are we neglecting the large number in between, those who aren't used to mixed groups?"

McKee said, "I guess the only way we can reach certain nisei is through a big dance, an all-nisei affair.

To this Kikuchi said, "I am interested in the function of this committee. You have to work ~~up~~ up step by step."

Smeltzer said, "If we follow the new step we have to accept the fact that there will be all-nisei affairs. By a negative answer we may reach a positive result. I don't know."

Mirry Miyake said that the approach made a lot of difference. Emily Morgan suggested that "maybe we can speak to them".

After being silent all this time Merrill Inyard of the YMCA said, "Ralph Smeltzer sent me material of ~~an~~ an outline on the discussion of nisei. Has anything been developed on a large scale to get the nisei when they first come to the city among nisei with nisei leaders? Could that be done? It may help some to realize the seriousness of the thing.

To this Smeltzer said, "It was a discussion of what ~~we~~ we have been using at the hostel. How can we adjust our life in this community? How can we adjust our social life to this community? The outline has been revised with each discussion which are held twice a week. We try to keep Caucasians around so the nisei will get used to them."

Axford then asked: "Regarding the YW relations, what does Kimi Mukaye expect to do?"

McKee said, "When they started the 'Y' hoped to get people into their group. Had all information except about the YW. Twelve



or 15 showed up at the first meeting. There were more boys than they expected. They didn't have the information the boys wanted. A person is supposed to attend any two successive sessions. We can help by providing facilities."

Axford said, "There are two directories. I suggest that the Church Federation put out things to do and expenses."

McKee added, "Mr. Shirrell had an integration session on Friday afternoons then the YW substituted for the WRA."

Kikuchi then spoke up, "We want to be accepted as individuals. When we talk about nisei we are segregating right there. People came out here to lose themselves. Then when all kinds of people, just casual friends call because they are lonesome, it's quite disturbing. I know people are lonesome and as ~~they~~ long as they keep on visiting among themselves they will drift into a nisei society."

Smeltzer said that the Brethren's hostel never gave out addresses and phones of former residents as they consider them as confidential.

Hashimoto said, "How can we help the nisei who won't take the first step? We got to go after them. It's not enough just to send them a post card. If I were a nisei, I would like a strange minister to come visit and call on me? No."

Inyard's opinion was that "The Americans have never integrated. The Japanese Americans have never integrated either into the American life and we can't expect it to happen easily."

Kikuchi commented that in regard to the cultural progress in American life the nisei had moved fast but socially "we're slow".

Smeltzer then said, "We know now how we feel. What are we going to do?"



Hashimoto said, "Bill McKee will see Mr. Sheed of the south side YMCA. We want to work for integration the natural way and see if the 'Y' can benefit. Follow up and see what the ministers are doing. I know the Hyde Park Methodist Church is holding a Hallowe'en party to which they are ~~invite~~ extending an open invitation to nisei."

Smeltzer said, "We must see that we are not patronizing."

Mirry Miyake added, "Was against 50-50 parties. I am for working through existing organizations to get nisei to get into the program thru regular channels. I attend the church in our neighborhood with three other nisei girls with whom I room together. We have been accepted into their Queen Esther Club. I understand they don't expect to accept any more nisei into their group. They think four is enough now."

Bill McKee said, "What can we do to get at relocatees? How should we go about getting to these people? Can we talk to some nisei leaders?"

Mirry Miyake said, "Give us time to get settled. I remember being flooded with post cards from this church and that organization but I was too busy trying to get settled so I ignored them. But now I go to church regularly and even joined their girl's club."

Jean Shintani told about the young people's organization which was formed once in Chicago in order that the nisei could get together once in a while. Then soldiers came along and for socials they rented ~~hall~~ a hall. Everynight this hall was used for some nisei activity, with Saturday night being reserved for dances. Every night the nisei went bowling and one time a fight started."

A motion to send a word of appreciation to the American Friends Service Committee for Bill McKee's services toward integration program was passed. "Let's go back and work with individuals



and organizations," said Axford. Two which Emily Morgan said, "A lot of people want to do something but don't know what to do."

Kikuchi suggested that this committee make some policy to be followed and distribute to the well meaning groups.

Axford said, "Many groups say they're getting frustrated because they've done everything they can but can't get the nisei out." Roy Smith suggested that the south side group work with the existing organizations.

Smeltzer said, "our purpose has completely changed. Now we are to help individuals and organizations. The committee's function is to counsel and act as a clearing house. We have a list of people who were active on the west coast. Our idea was to get those leaders to help in the integration program. If they don't get a chance, they may form their own group to lead. The YW, YM and other groups ~~can~~ can make use of these leaders."

McKee added, "This group can get leaders and talk to them. When the nisei go into the 'Y' they won't find people of their own age. We have another problem, if we know of any group planning parties or anxious to get into any group, pass on their names and address to Roger's office, Smeltzer or to me."

Before adjourning it was agreed to encourage inter-racial activities.



South Side Sub-committee meeting to Plan Socials  
Oct. 30, 1943  
Suski

Having arranged a meeting of the South Side Sub-committee for the planning of 50-50 socials, six members of this committee were present at the YMCA cafeteria, 19 S. La Salle St. on Saturday noon, Oct. 30. The meeting was more or less informal with Louise Suski leading the discussion in the absence of Jean Houser, chairman of the Sub-committee who was elected to this position at the previous meeting on Oct. 22.

Those present at this meeting were Bill McKee, Walter Godfrey, Catherine Raymond, Evelyn Nichols, Mirry Miyake, <sup>Mrs.</sup> Chiyo Izumi, and Louise Suski. George and Jean Houser, Togo Tanaka and Roger Axford were the absentees.

McKee, who has received two weeks' leave of absence from the American Friends Service Committee to devote full time towards the integration program, gave a brief report on some of the things he had observed through visits and other contacts.

He said that the ~~original~~ original committee would not disband but continue to work toward the integration program individually through churches and various interested organization, by encouraging nisei friends to participate in these activities. He said, "We can't tell these nisei not to have segregated socials because they'll do it anyway. I wonder if we can't have something else in our way, that way, I don't know what that is. I wonder if we can't put our energy in some alternative."

"Have you heard anything about the all-nisei dance to be held on Nov. 20?" was asked by Louise Suski.

"Yes," said McKee, "and it made me so mad when I read the



card which said, "Reminiscences<sup>Dance</sup> of Relocation Days". They must be the same group of boys who approached Ralph Smeltzer and asked for information regarding a locale for an all-nisei dance. I've seen the hall where they're planning their dance. It is a small hall located just above a beer parlor. The whole atmosphere is no good. I am only hoping that nothing happens during or after the dance." The only thing we can do now is to encourage people not to attend a dance in a place like that. Why couldn't they have picked a better location?"

Regarding the invitational list, McKee said, "It seems that they got the list from the Friends' Hostel for I've noted that none of the people who visited the Brethren's hostel got invitations. The Brethren's hostel will not give addresses or telephone numbers of their former residents to even relatives. They're that strict. Whereas, the Friends hostel has the names and addresses of people right there in the office. Even though it's not supposed to leave that office, it's easy enough for a person to look at the book and jot down a names and addresses,"

"If our committee is not going to plan 50-50 socials, what will be our function?" asked one person.

"We are going to act as a clearing house and issue information to nisei regarding places to visit, what to do and any important matter regarding the city. We should encourage the Caucasians to invited the nisei rather than approach them from the nisei's point." This was McKee's answer.

"Any person desiring to get in touch with a lot of people on the south side can approach Kay Nishiyama, Olive Takahashi or George and William Hiura," said Walt Godfrey. "These people know



a lot of people in Chicago and know how to get in touch with them. Call on them and I'm sure they'd be glad to cooperate. I don't know them personally but these names were given to me."

McKee suggested that the nisei organize baseball and bowling teams, not as segregated groups but with people they work with. "Many nisei work in large concerns and these nisei can approach some head of that concern and ask about the possibility of organizing athletic teams but see that they are mixed groups. A lot of bowling alleys are signed up for the whole week but there are a few alleys which are open."

Mirry Miyake was interested in knowing just what the nisei could do regarding Red Cross work. "I'm sure there are a lot of girls who can afford one or two nights a week toward some welfare work but don't know where to go," said Louise Suski. Bill McKee said that he would find out and let Mirry and Louise know just who to contact for this.

All those present agreed to do all they could toward getting the nisei on the south side to participate more in church activities and any Caucasian-nisei affairs. This committee is not disbanding but will remain on call until further notice.

Mrs. Izumi, who was able to stay for a short time, told about the young people she knew and who visited her at Beverly Hills. Those who have stayed with her have been taken to the community church unless they had a particular church which they desired to attend. All those who visited her she told them how they should act and gave them information about places to visit, shop, etc.

Mirry Miyake will remain as secretary of the committee and send out notices in case of future meetings.





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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30 - 9:00 P.M.

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INTERNATIONAL HOUSE \*\*\*\*\* 1414 East 59th Street \*\*\*\*\* Chicago



ywca meeting  
Nov. 12, 1943  
Suski

Launching a program of world service which will work toward the promotion of permanent ~~and~~ world peace, the Chicago YWCA joined the other YWCA organizations throughout the United States in sponsoring a membership meeting during November. The Chicago "Y" held its membership meeting at the McCormick Residence at 1001 North Dearborn St. on Friday evening, Nov. 12, which was attended by some 200 women. Miss Barnes, president of the Chicago YWCA was chairman for the evening.

Having conducted a drive to raise Chicago's quot of \$500 toward the \$150,000/<sup>goal</sup> set by the American YWCA toward the world service program, the donations collected from the general Chicago membership was turned over to the treasurer at this Friday meeting. A total of \$740 from the members of the Metropolitan Board, the YWCA staff, business girls, industrial girls and Girl Reserves was reported by the evening of the evening.

The first part of the evening was spent in a songfest after which Helen Beevers, noted writer, was introduced as the main speaker. She spoke on the theme of the evening, "Together Toward Tomorrow". She said in part, "In our YWCA we must get people with different backgrounds and see what they can contribute. We should not limit ourselves to our own little circles; we must think in terms of a greater spere... Our membership is open to all, let us share experiences and show the value of women workers... International relations is our common interest now, let us set aside racial discriminations and let us move forward..."

After few reports were heard, the group went to the reception room on the main floor where light refreshments were served and an



informal hour followed.

Among the nisei present at this meeting were Kimi Mukaye of the YWCA, Mrs. Chiyo Izumi, Tello Nagatoshi and Louise Suski.

After the meeting some of the women went to look at the rooms where the girls reside. Shinko Obata and her sister live there but they are occupying adjoining rooms as doubles are not available at the present time. They both have single rooms about 12 ft. by 12 ft. Each room has a single bed, a dresser and one chair. There is one closet for clothes and another smaller closet which has a wash basin and racks for towels. On the inside of the door is a small shelf for toothbrush, cosmetics, etc. The inside of the clothes closet has a full length mirror.

On the same floor is a laundry where the girls can do their own washing. There is also a dryer there. Across this room is the shower room and next to it is the bathroom where the tub baths are located. The lavatory is a few door away.

Mrs. Obata, whose husband is in the Army, said that she paid \$12.00 per week for room and board. She said that the "Y" have rooms at \$10.00 per week and some at \$15.00 per week. She said that she had made reservations for a double and intends to room with her sister when it is available.

Just inside the entrance of this "Y" building stands a girl who directs persons to their respective meetings, etc. However, she tells them first to go to the cloak room and leave their wraps there. The colored porter who takes the cloak has been with the "Y" ever since this residence opened. He entertained with several songs during the informal hour of this membership meeting.



Reminiscence Dance  
Nov. 20, 1943

The following is Alfred Doi's description of the "Reminiscent Dance of Relocation Days" held at the West Room of Ashland Auditorium, 328 S. Ashland Blvd. on Nov. 20:

Boy, the dance was a riot. When I got there, two guys came staggering out. Inside the "keto" were handling the money. I walked in with my date and two cops stared right at us. They were there to collect the money. The dames there were a bunch of bags, most of them anyway. A lot of the yogores had been drinking, you could smell it all around the room. Some of them put empty whisky ~~b~~ bottles on the floor. There was a check room there and a Caucasian person checked the stuff in. The hall was small. It was about one and a half times the size of a recreation hall in camp.

The dance was quite crowded. I would say there were about 200 there. It's hard to say for sure because there was a flow in and out. The hall was located on the second floor. There was a bowling alley on the <sup>1<sup>st</sup></sup> floor. I guess there were about 60 girls and a hundred boys. It wasn't quite two to one but there was a lot of stages. There were also seven stagettes there; there were at least seven I knew.

I met more people there that I knew from before. I was embarrassed because a lot of them said "hello" to me and I didn't even remember their names. I knew them from camp and from before. Kaz Suzuki of Seattle took me around and he introduced me to a lot of dames. There was also a Sacramento boy that I knew and he took me around too. Then some of the women I knew there also introduced me around. I had a good time because I went there to raise hell anyway.



The orchestra was a Caucasian one and it was lousy. There were nine to eleven pieces in there and they didn't have a vocalist. They didn't announce anything during the evening except the last dance.

The odd thing about the dance was that some low crust "keto" and Mexicans were there. There were three hakujin women who looked low crust too. Some of the nisei boys brought good looking Caucasian women and they were of the better type. I would say that I saw about eight Caucasian women there. Three of them came alone and they were low crust. I saw three Mexican fellows there but I don't know who they came with. There was one Mexican who was a zoot suit boy. I was astonished that there weren't so many Japanese zoot suiters there as I had expected. The funny thing was that five or six nisei wore overcoats while they danced. They had their collars put up. It wasn't because they wore work clothes on either because they all wore slacks.

There was a lot of tagging on the popular girls. There was almost a fight once when two smarty pants laid whisky bottles on the floor expecting it to be kicked around the floor, but a smart boy picked them up. There were about 30 nisei Army boys there. They said that the civvy boys looked dirty and needed haircuts. The nisei soldiers behaved themselves. There was also quite a few nisei from the northwest and they mixed pretty well.

The funny thing was that the Stockton bunch was divided into four groups of five or six. That's because they lived with each other. They bunched in their little groups because they didn't have common interests with the others.

There were some women from the Edgewater Beach Hotel. I would



say that most of the zoot suiters came from the Rohwer center. They were the Stockton bunch. One of them, Minki, got married recently so that his bunch quieted down. Most of the people there were from Rohwer, Stockton and L.A. altho Seattle was fairly well represented.

I think I knew about one-fourth of the people there. I don't say this to be bragging, but I think over half of them there knew me. There weren't many married couples there. There were five or six of the JACL type there. They were the small town type and they had their JACL pins on their coat lapels.

I didn't see Fujimoto at all. I looked around for him, hoping to get something from him. He is the one who was supposed to have sponsored their dance. They charged \$1.00 for stags and \$1.50 per couple. The cops were there because everybody was anticipating trouble. The fellows who had been drinking were all stags but they didn't go in and out for drinks. There were a lot of yogores downstairs who came stag and they argued loudly whether they should go in or not. Some of them didn't go in at all.

The thing I noticed was that most of the girls wore red and black dresses. Some of them were dressed rather gaudily. They were all in street dresses, although three of them had corsages.

They had a hot dog stand and a soft drink bar there but you had to pay for it. I don't know what they charged as I did not buy anything there. The place looked too dirty.

I took a date there but it was one of those last minute dates. She was a very popular girl and she knew many people. I had a good time there and I was happy to see all my friends. The dance ended about 12:30 and we all went to an all-night show after that. My



date was one of those cosmopolitan type and she draws a line before she will let you neck her. That was sad.

I think that most of the people there enjoyed the dance. There were four or five fellows I saw who didn't dance all evening. Stags crowded all over the place and it was hard to dance. Whenever they had the real fast music only about 15 couples went out on the floor to jitterbug. People were tagging in all evening. It didn't matter whether they knew the girls or not. The girls didn't mind although some of them acted kind of cold. I cut in on a few and they thanked me for rescuing them.

There were a few girls there who didn't have such a good time. I saw four girls who were wall flowers most of the time. You know how the nisei fellows are about these sad cases. They just ignore them because they don't want to be stuck. The popular girls were always getting cut in, that's why the stag line kept on squeezing up most of the floor and there were lots of changing of partners.

The only big complaint I heard was that the orchestra was lousy. The hall was too small too.

The funny thing about the dance was that there was a tense feeling in the air at first. Everybody expected something to happen but the dance ran smoothly and the people eased up after that. The Army boys all cut in and they were well behaved. None of them were drunk.

The type of nisei who came were mostly of the unskilled workers. There weren't very many professional people like me. There were machinists, workers in paper and cardboard factories, workers at the Edgewater Beach Hotel and other unskilled type of this sort. A lot of the stags couldn't get dates because they worked late and they



didn't know the girls.

I'd say the average age of girls there was about 20 and the fellows ranged from 17 to 25. There wasn't any great demarcation in the age group as it was mostly the young group. The fellows had a tendency to take girls they knew in camp or those they knew back home.

I think the dance served a useful function. It established some feeling of stability among the nisei. They had missed all of their friends and this was a chance to see them at the dance. There was a lot of communication going on and all the fellows were taking down addresses and phone numbers, even of boys. I got five or six addresses of girls and they told me to drop up. I don't think I'll ever get around to see all of them, at least I'll have some place to go.

When the last dance came the stags did not all go home as they usually did before. They all hung around. I guess they wanted to talk to their friends afterwards. I don't know what they did after the dance. A lot of them went to Chinatown to eat. Many of them went downtown too. We went in a car so that I don't know how the feeling was on the "L" when so many nisei go on. I know that as we were walking down the street my date said she was glad it was dark because the people couldn't recognize the Japanese then. It was a pretty quiet district and the dance hall was located in a respectable spot.

There's no doubt that the sponsor made money on the dance. I don't think he paid much over \$100 for the orchestra and he must have taken in two or three times this amount. The dance turned out well although I had expected to see trouble. It was going full



swing when I got there because our party, a double couple, arrived about 9:45. One of the girls hesitated; just before we went in and she wanted to go home. She had refused a couple of dates before and she thought it would be embarrassing to go in at the last minute.

The dance differed in some respects from those held back home. The dances back home were not as crowded and people wouldn't think of coming so far for it. The respectable church type of girls just weren't at the dance. Most of the girls who were at the dance were the more experienced ones who got around or the very popular type. There were more yogores at that dance than what used to come to the dances back home. I was surprised because the northwest nisei and California nisei did not split up.

After the dance we took our dates to an all-night show. We went double date in a car. I didn't roll in until six o'clock in the morning. It was rather stiff and dull in the car after the dance because the girl would not let me neck her.

I don't know if I will have a more satisfying life they they have more of these socials. I only went because I knew that Tom would back out at the last minute. I went there with an altruistic mind. I know that there will be more clamor for these dances after this. It will be up to Fujimoto or somebody with gumption enough to sponsor these dances. If he made money at the dance Saturday, he'll probably do it again. I wouldn't be surprised if they would draw a much larger crowd if they had a nisei orchestra there. Now that the nisei have found out that these dances won't cause any riots, they will surely clamor for more and the next time more people will show up.



YWCA Tea for "Y" Secretaries  
Nov. 21, 1943  
Suski

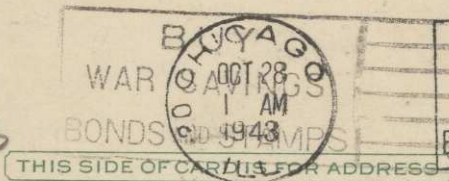
En route to the different relocation centers, Esther Breisemeister and Mrs. William Chambers of the National YWCA staff stopped in Chicago for two days. They were guests of the local "Y" at a tea held at the Loop YWCA (59 E. Monroe) on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 21, where Kimi Mukaye was hostess. Miss Breisemeister is secretary for relocation centers while Mrs. Chambers was delegates to make the rounds of the centers with Miss Breisemeister.

Girls who were active in "Y" work in their respective centers were among those who came to renew acquaintance with Miss Breisemeister and meet Mrs. Chambers. Among those present were Mrs. Chiyo Izumi, Masaye Morioka and Fumi Hayakawa of Topaz, Mrs. Clara Yoshimura of Poston, Alyce and Virginia Asaka of Manzanar, Kay Mano of Arkansas and Mary Lucy Nakamura and Louise Suski of Heart Mountain.

Miss Breisemeister said that she and Mrs. Chambers would both visit the Arkansas centers and then split, the former covering the northern centers of Granada, Heart Mountain, Topaz, Minidoka and Tule Lake while Mrs. Chambers visits Poston, Gila and Manzanar.



Del.  
4263



Betty Kikuchi  
4743 Drexel Blvd  
City



Sports formal

SATURDAY NITE  
NOV. 20 1943  
TIME 8:30 P.M.



West room

Ashland Auditorium  
322 S. Ashland Blvd.  
Ashland Entrance

BOB ANDERSON'S ORCHESTRA

REMINISCENT DANCE  
OF RELOCATION DAYS



Vogue Tea Dance  
Nov. 21, 1943

The following is Alfred Doi's account of the second tea dance sponsored by the Vogue School of Fashion Art and Interior Decoration specially for the some 30 nisei students enrolled in this school and their friends. It was held at the school located at 116 S. Michigan Ave on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 21, 1943, at 2:30 o'clock.

Sunday afternoon I went to the Vogue tea dance which the nisei girl students put on. It started at 2:30 but I didn't get there until 5 o'clock. It was a small group but it was held in a darn good place.

They plan to have another party in December and I got an invitation. I'll see if I can get Frank and Michi and invitation because it is a nice sort of party that they could go to. I'll try to get an invitation for Tom and Tomi too.

There were about 60 to 90 people there yesterday; more girls than boys. They were all dressed up and well mannered. I cut up a little bit just for the hell of it.

They gave us coffee and cake for refreshment. The atmosphere was very good and there was a nice lounge there for people to sit in. The school paid for all the expenses.

~~I don't know if I will have a more satisfying life if they have more of these parties. I only went because I knew that Tom would back out at the last minute.~~



Comments on Nisei Dance of Nov. 20  
Suski  
Nov. 22, 1943

Mary Lucy Nakamura: I didn't go to that dance held Saturday night but I heard it was lousy. One of the boys in our building, who's only 19, went and he stayd for couple of dances only and came right out. He said the music was terrible and the girls were just a bunch of bags. He said the crowd was too old for him and he couldn't enjoy himself where the ratio of women was four to one.

Mary Lucy Nakamura is formerly of Yakima Valley. She is now employed in the Loop as a beautician. She is engaged to a boy who is a few years younger than herself. He was living in the same apartment building with her but moved to a place closer to his work in a defense plant.

Ted Yoshimura: There was a big crowd at Saturday's dance. I would say over 300. At least they were in and out and not there at one time. I didn't see any fights on the floor but I did see some fights outside. There were several small fights, nothing serious though. I only knew about four or five girls there. I just went to the dance to see what it was like. Two cops were at the entrance. There must have been four times as many boys as girls. The music was no good. I hear there's going to be another dance in December and this time they're going to try to get a "Y" hall. It's going to be better than.

Ted Yoshimura is a chick sexor who works in Iowa but has come to Chicago to work during the off-season. He does not go steady but goes around with a group of boys who came from Arizona, his home state.



From C.K. Diary  
Nov. 26, 1943

Fay (CH-22) had some interesting comments to make on the nisei dance of November 20th. She started telling me all about it just as I came in and I didn't have to prompt her at all. I am beginning to think that these interviews on such topics as social parties indicate that the majority of the nisei are of this frame of mind. They don't have much to say when you ask them about Tule Lake riots and the Dies investigation. The nisei just are not politically conscious at all. They don't feel that these things affect them very much. But when it comes to talking about social parties, the nisei have all sorts of comments to make. I think this is one of the reasons why I avoid nisei groups. I just don't have much in common to talk to them about. The subject matter is all superficial and I get bored. I wouldn't mind it some of the time, but in a nisei group it is the chief diet and it doesn't agree with me. I rather thought that Fay would be one of the nisei who would be greatly satisfied with these all-nisei parties as she is something of this type. She certainly doesn't have much political consciousness and she is not in the least interested in such things. (See CH-22) However, she thinks that the social life is pretty important. Maybe that is normal, but I think that the nisei over-emphasize it too much to the exclusion of more important problems which they should face right now instead of seeking these superficial escapes. Anyway, Fay had the following comments to make about the dance:

"Last Saturday I went to the nisei dance at the Ashland Auditorium, and I was so disappointed. I said to myself after I was there for five minutes, 'I wish that Charlie was here to see this.'



Oh my gosh, it was the most awful sight I had ever seen. My escort and I didn't stay very long because it wasn't a good dance at all. There were some cops standing there and I thought this was strange. Most of the kids there were zoot suiters. My goodness, what drunkards! There was one fellow there that I felt like kicking and I don't know why I let him disturb me. He was sprawled out all over a chair and sleeping. He was so drunk that he just passed out. Our little party proceeded to the Aragon dance hall after staying at the nisei dance for an hour. We couldn't stand it for any longer than that. There was an American orchestra there and they played more of the jitterbug music.

"Gosh, there were more boys. I would say there were about 300 there altogether. Everybody was jammed together and the air smelled bad. I think there were only about 75 girls there. It was a very small hall. I certainly was disgusted and I didn't enjoy myself at all. I guess many of the couples enjoyed themselves though. The zoot suiters thought they were having fun too. Maybe a lot of girls there had fun too, but I would have enjoyed being pushed around like that.

"I didn't like the crowd at all because it seemed cheap. Oh, I saw some Mexican boys there. They really looked greasy. I don't know why in the world the nisei have to associate with Mexicans. All of the fellows were stag and they were eager to dance but there weren't enough girls. I knew some of the Gila nisei there but there weren't too many of them. The people I saw were mostly the rowdy type. I didn't see any fellow there that looked like they had any ambition. You know what I mean. They were the ordinary type of nisei. It was awful.



"The dance didn't look nice at all and I was thinking that suppose the Mayor of the city saw that group. I wouldn't have looked nice for us. The girls came with dates and they were all pretty young. Some of the girls showed off by jitterbugging but most of the girls were all right. I didn't like the way some of them jitterbugged though with the Mexican fellows because it didn't look decent. Maybe it was the cheap atmosphere of the dance hall that made it this way because I usually don't object to jitterbugging.

"My escort was from Camp Savage and there were three couples in our group. The fellows heard that there was a nisei dance and they wanted to go. I didn't object because I was expecting to see a nice group of nisei there and I thought it would be a nice smooth dance like we had back home. I thought that the dance would be ~~like~~ ~~it was~~ done in a calm way and I didn't imagine that it would be like it was.

"I don't think they should have any more of those kind of dances. They should only have small groups ~~of~~ of nisei meet like from the northside or northwest or southside. They shouldn't have it so everyone comes together in one place from all over Chicago. In that way it would be a more friendly group and there wouldn't be those jealousies and bad atmosphere that you had in that large dance. Such awful dances will keep the nisei girls from going and it won't make them feel very good about it. The dance was so bad that we left after one hour.

"Gosh, what a funny crowd. I wonder what other nisei thought about it? I met some old acquaintances there and I'm going to call them up some time and ask them how they felt about the dance. I



don't know who in the world put that dance on. They sold tickets at \$1.50 a couple. It wasn't worth it at all. I'll never go to such an affair again. I like nisei groups, but not that kind. I thought it was going to be so good too. I sure was disappointed. I don't know what makes the nisei boys act that way. They weren't that way before. Maybe they were too eager to meet the girls and they wanted to show off. However, I don't think they came with the purpose of making trouble though. I did hear that some of the stag fellows wanted to make a fight with one fellow who brought a date but I don't know if they really had a fight. I heard that there was a fight afterwards but that may only be a rumor.

"Maybe the reason for the atmosphere was because the nisei were looking for new people to meet. They don't have dances very often out here and the nisei have to get rid of their excess energy. They just work and sleep and eat and they want dances too. It is too bad that it turned out this way. I think the nisei have lost all of their manners. A lot of them looked like they were having fun, but I still think it was a lousy affair. I'm glad that no respectable hakujin saw that crowd. I said to my escort that I thought there was going to be a fight there and sure enough I did hear of one afterwards. The soldiers we went with didn't like it all all. They all noticed the number of zoot suiters and the long hair of the boys but they didn't condemn them too much. They thought that all nisei girls like the zoot suiters. I'd hate to have somebody say they saw me at that dance. It's a funny thing to say but it is true. Until the nisei get more manners, I'm not going to any more of those things. I think it hurts our reputation."



From C.K. Diary  
Nov. 22, 1943

"Mariko and George went to the nisei dance last Saturday night. George (CH-17) was very disgusted at the whole thing and I was rather surprised at this. Mariko was also quite disgusted. She now feels that these large gatherings are bad for the nisei and that is a change on her part. The thing which disappointed them was the general atmosphere of the dance and the attitude of the nisei. Following is what they had to say about the dance:

"George: I've been to many Filipino dances back in Seattle where I was engaged in the union work among the cannery workers and I used to think that the Filipinos were the worst drunks I've ever seen. But now, I have changed my mind after seeing the conduct of those nisei last Saturday night. I kept thinking all the time that I was dancing that I would get beaten up because I refused to let them cut in on Mariko all the time. Those fellows got very ugly about this and it was an experience that I never want to go through again. I think there would have been a lot of trouble there if they did not have those cops around. I know that I'll never go to one of those things again.

"Mariko cuts in: It was really something that amazed me because I have never seen the nisei act that way before. They used to get drunk on the coast, but it was because they wanted to be loud and they were fun. The attitudes of those nisei at the dance was so different. It's hard to say exactly what it was, but I could just feel that the nisei had changed. They had no manners at all. One boy was so drunk that he fell flat on his face.

"George: I tried to find out who sponsored the dance but nobody seemed to know for sure. One fellow told me that it was the Esquire



Club who sponsored it. He said that it was a bunch of San Pedro zoot suit boys and they had been working on this dance for a long time. I rather think that it might have been this group.

"Mariko: Some people there thought the American Friends Service Committee sponsored that dance and I had to convince them that this was not so. There is also talk that Mr. Fujimoto sponsored the dance, but I really do not know.

"George: I've never seen such a disreputable bunch of Nihonjin in all my life. Such things like that never did happen in the northwest. Some of those nisei fellows at the dance stood around with cigarettes drooping out of their mouth and they actually sneered at you. God, I don't know what's wrong with them.

"Mariko: It was just like the Denver dance that I went to while I was on my vacation. The fellows acted the same way. I think that the camp life did that to them because I went to one dance when I was in camp and the fellows acted the same way. There were about 150 or 200 people there. I don't know for sure how many girls there were but I would say around 50. It's hard to say for sure. The girls were mostly okay but the stags just didn't fit. Some of them brought cheap looking Caucasian women. I don't know where they picked them up. There were some Mexicans there and they made a great play over Maudie Yamazaki. Maudie looks cheap now. She has dyed her hair red. The popular girls at the dance were Maudie and Jean Yamazaki, Martha Yamada, Eileen, Yuki and a few others. Most of the girls got around because the stag line was so big that they all got cut out a lot. (These girls mentioned above are all under 21 years of age and they have always been the social butterfly type since I have known them.)



"It was the stags who hung around and tried to show off. I didn't enjoy the dance at all. I only knew about 10 people there as all the rest were young. The atmosphere was very cheap and the hall was small and smoky.

"George: You shouldn't criticize too much because you want there yourself. You were too critical at the dance. I didn't enjoy it either. I only went there to see some of my old friends. I was curious too. After the dance we went with some of our friends to a bar and we stayed out for quite a while. It wasn't an all night party though. I think that those dances like they had Saturday night doesn't solve any of the nisei ~~preg~~ problem. The fellows act like that because they are all frustrated and they make it too obvious that they are after something. It no longer means social recreation to them.

"Mariko: The next time they have a dance like this, I'm sure that a lot of people won't go. A lot went on Saturday just out of curiosity like we did. Some of my friends were pretty sore and disgusted at the way the nisei were acting at the dance. Of course, Maudie and girls like her thought it was a wonderful dance. That's because she was so popular with the Mexican boys. There were too many yogores at the dance. Their dressing was grotesque, but the worst thing was that they had such sneering attitudes. They tried to act important.

"George: I would go to the can and there would always be a lot of fellows there passing the bottle around and you should have heard some of the dirty talk going on there. They made comments on what girls they could feel up at the dance. They were just perverted, that's all. They were worse than any Filipino groups I have seen



and I can't make any digs at the Filipinos any more. I think the Filipinos conduct themselves in a much more gentlemanly fashion. It was disgusting to see the nisei fellows keeping themselves. I wonder what kind of background they had?

"Mariko: In the dressing room for girls, I overheard many comments. The girls were really disappointed about the dance but they tried to make off that they were having a wonderful time. They were all saying, 'Where did all those awful things come from?' They were annoyed at the zoot suiters and other fellows cutting in all the time. I don't think the girls had such a good time. They had been waiting for such a long time for an event like this that they had to say that they were enjoying it. I don't think I'll go to these kind of events again. It's too bad that so many of the nisei fellows are turning out this way. It must have been the camp that did this. The girls were much better behaved and only a few of them at the dance looked like the wild type. This sort of thing spoils it for all the decent nisei who want normal social recreation. It is too bad that the dance was held under such a bad atmosphere."



Nisei Reaction to News Photos  
Nov. 23, 1943  
Suski

Articles and photographs in the newspapers which tend to discredit the loyalty of the nisei to the United States seem to affect a great many nisei. For a few days after the article or picture appears the nisei feel low and they try to avoid the public as much as possible.

When the news first broke out that the American aviators taken prisoners by Japan and accused of deliberately mowing down civilians and later executed, my sister-in-law, came home with a long face. She said that the Herald American carried a front page story about American aviators being beheaded.

"It's awful," she said. "The Herald American had a big spread about the execution and everybody seemed to be reading it. I couldn't get home fast enough. I feel terrible."

She didn't eat much dinner that night. We got the news over the radio later that evening and she wanted to change the dial to another station. She didn't even want to hear about it. As the papers continued to carry the story for the next few days, my sister-in-law looked very sad and pepleless. Generally she is a very peppy girl.

I saw several nisei girls after that and they all seem to feel the same way. They felt so guilty for what Japan had done. They all seemed to feel that the Caucasians were thinking of them as dirty, sneaky, treacherous snakes who would stoop to the lowest possible level to hit their enemy.

My sister-in-law seemed to get over this blue feeling and was herself again. Then on Oct. 28 came the full-page picture of



a nisei girl embracing a German prisoner. Once more my sister-in-law felt bad again. "Pictures like that make the public think all the nisei are like that. The people are going to think all of us are spies." This was her first reaction.

I tried to comfort her by saying, "The Hearst papers don't like the Japanese and not even the nisei. That picture may have been faked and published in their campaign at race baiting."

My brother said that he didn't think any paper would stoop so low and fake pictures.

I said, "Oh no? Look what the Denver Post did? Didn't they write up a bunch of lies about Heart Mountain, a series of articles about the amount of food stored in the warehouse, enough to feed hundreds of people for two or three years and how we were being pampered? I know that author of the series of stinking articles was in Heart Mountain for only a couple of hours. The greater part of his time was spent in the bar at Cody. He got all those stories from the assistant chief steward who had been fired from Heart Mountain because of inability to do his work. That two-faced writer was all smiles when he came to visit The Sentinel office and introduced to the staff members. If the Denver Post is capable of doing such a low trick, I wouldn't put it past the Hearst papers to do the same thing. The Hearst papers have always hated the Japanese and they'll do anything to blacken the name of the nisei."

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The nisei, at least a large number of girls, feel the same way about movies. If they know a certain picture is about Japanese spies or even about the war in the Pacific, they will not go to see this picture. They would rather go to a theatre further away to



see a picture about German spies.

My sister-in-law always asks, "Is that picture about the war?" before she consents to go to a show. She prefers not to see any kind of war pictures because she says "they are depressing". But it is hard to go to a movie without seeing at least one war picture. However, she would prefer to see a war picture with its setting in Europe.



Free Association:  
Suski  
Nov. 25, 1943

Bob Kuwahara: People in Chicago certainly are indifferent. I walk downtown in the Loop and nobody pays any attention to ~~me~~ me. Nobody stares at me and nobody looks at me twice. Pictures like those in the Herald American don't affect the public very much. A lot of people don't even pay any attention to the pictures, especially when it appears in a Sunday edition. A lot of people just don't read the papers on Sunday. They may look at the comic section and perhaps the front page, but that's about all they see in the Sunday edition. I don't think we have to worry too much about the Dies Committee either. People don't give much credit to that committee anyway.



Comments on Nov. 20 Dance  
Suski  
Nov. 25, 1943

Kuni Yashiro: I went to that nisei dance on Saturday. It wasn't such a hot dance. The orchestra stunk. I met about half a dozen of my friends there. There weren't very many people from Heart Mountain there.

Frank Kumamoto: A fellow by the name of Fujimoto gave that dance alone. Shoda, Dave's cousin, went to the dance. He said so. That Fujimoto guy made lots of money on that dance. It's the drunks who spoil dances. You know the best way to have a good dance and make money is to get a good hall and orchestra. Then hire cops to kick out all drunks. You can get a cop who is off duty that night and ask them if they want to make \$10.00 by watching a dance hall gate for about 3 hours. He's be glad to do it and he can always get another cop to help him. You need at least two cops to kick the drunks out.

Kuni: You know why these nisei drink? It's just to show off. They like to show off that they can drink. Some of them don't know when to stop. That's when they really get drunk. You know, I saw a lot of guys outside the hall who were so drunk they couldn't stand ~~straight~~ up straight and they were cussing the hell out of everything. After the dance I saw couple of guys sitting on the curb just cussing away. A few steps away two young nisei girls who came with these fellows, were just standing around waiting for them to sober up enough to take them home. Poor girls, I bet they had to wait a long time unless somebody else took them home.

Frank: It's no fun going to these dances. There's always too many boys there and half of them are drunk. You don't get to dance with a girl very long because somebody taps you on the shoulder and



cuts in. When I dance I don't want to be cut in after I take about five steps and I want more room when I dance. I can't enjoy myself in a crowded, stuffy old room where the floor is sticky from spit and whiskey. It's just a waste of time to go to these kind of dances.



From C.K. Diary  
Nov. 26, 1943

Fay (CH-22) had some interesting comments to make on the nisei dance of November 20th. She started telling me all about it just as I came in and I didn't have to prompt her at all. I am beginning to think that these interviews on such topics as social parties indicate that the majority of the nisei are of this frame of mind. They don't have much to say when you ask them about Tule Lake riots and the Dies investigation. The nisei just are not politically conscious at all. They don't feel that these things affect them very much. But when it comes to talking about social parties, the nisei have all sorts of comments to make. I think this is one of the reasons why I avoid nisei groups. I just don't have much in common to talk to them about. The subject matter is all superficial and I get bored. I wouldn't mind it some of the time, but in a nisei group it is the chief diet and it doesn't agree with me. I rather thought that Fay would be one of the nisei who would be greatly satisfied with these all-nisei parties as she is something of this type. She certainly doesn't have much political consciousness and she is not in the least interested in such things. (See CH-22) However, she thinks that the social life is pretty important. Maybe that is normal, but I think that the nisei over-emphasize it too much to the exclusion of more important problems which they should face right now instead of seeking these superficial escapes. Anyway, Fay had the following comments to make about the dance:

"Last Saturday I went to the nisei dance at the Ashland Auditorium, and I was so disappointed. I said to myself after I was there for five minutes, 'I wish that Charlie was here to see this.'



Oh my gosh, it was the most awful sight I had ever seen. My escort and I didn't stay very long because it wasn't a good dance at all. There were some cops standing there and I thought this was strange. Most of the kids there were zoot suiters. My goodness, what drunkards! There was one fellow there that I felt like kicking and I don't know why I let him disturb me. He was sprawled out all over a chair and sleeping. He was so drunk that he just passed out. Our little party proceeded to the Aragon dance hall after staying at the nisei dance for an hour. We couldn't stand it for any longer than that. There was an American orchestra there and they played more of the jitterbug music.

"Gosh, there were more boys. I would say there were about 300 there altogether. Everybody was jammed together and the air smelled bad. I think there were only about 75 girls there. It was a very small hall. I certainly was disgusted and I didn't enjoy myself at all. I guess many of the couples enjoyed themselves though. The zoot suiters thought they were having fun too. Maybe a lot of girls there had fun too, but I would have enjoyed being pushed around like that.

"I didn't like the crowd at all because it seemed cheap. Oh, I saw some Mexican boys there. They really looked greasy. I don't know why in the world the nisei have to associate with Mexicans. All of the fellows were stag and they were eager to dance but there weren't enough girls. I knew some of the Gila nisei there but there weren't too many of them. The people I saw were mostly the rowdy type. I didn't see any fellow there that looked like they had any ambition. You know what I mean. They were the ordinary type of nisei. It was awful.



"The dance didn't look nice at all and I was thinking that suppose the Mayor of the city saw that group. I wouldn't have looked nice for us. The girls came with dates and they were all pretty young. Some of the girls showed off by jitterbugging but most of the girls were all right. I didn't like the way some of them jitterbugged though with the Mexican fellows because it didn't look decent. Maybe it was the cheap atmosphere of the dance hall that made it this way because I usually don't object to jitterbugging.

"My escort was from Camp Savage and there were three couples in our group. The fellows heard that there was a nisei dance and they wanted to go. I didn't object because I was expecting to see a nice group of nisei there and I thought it would be a nice smooth dance like we had back home. I thought that the dance would be ~~like~~ ~~it~~ done in a calm way and I didn't imagine that it would be like it was.

"I don't think they should have any more of those kind of dances. They should only have small groups ~~of~~ of nisei meet like from the northside or northwest or southside. They shouldn't have it so everyone comes together in one place from all over Chicago. In that way it would be a more friendly group and there wouldn't be those jealousies and bad atmosphere that you had in that large dance. Such awful dances will keep the nisei girls from going and it won't make them feel very good about it. The dance was so bad that we left after one hour.

"Gosh, what a funny crowd. I wonder what other nisei thought about it? I met some old acquaintances there and I'm going to call them up some time and ask them how they felt about the dance. I



don't know who in the world put that dance on. They sold tickets at \$1.50 a couple. It wasn't worth it at all. I'll never go to such an affair again. I like nisei groups, but not that kind. I thought it was going to be so good too. I sure was disappointed. I don't know what makes the nisei boys act that way. They weren't that way before. Maybe they were too eager to meet the girls and they wanted to show off. However, I don't think they came with the purpose of making trouble though. I did hear that some of the stag fellows wanted to make a fight with one fellow who brought a date but I don't know if they really had a fight. I heard that there was a fight afterwards but that may only be a rumor.

"Maybe the reason for the atmosphere was because the nisei were looking for new people to meet. They don't have dances very often out here and the nisei have to get rid of their excess energy. They just work and sleep and eat and they want dances too. It is too bad that it turned out this way. I think the nisei have lost all of their manners. A lot of them looked like they were having fun, but I still think it was a lousy affair. I'm glad that no respectable hakujin saw that crowd. I said to my escort that I thought there was going to be a fight there and sure enough I did hear of one afterwards. The soldiers we went with didn't like it all all. They all noticed the number of zoot suiters and the long hair of the boys but they didn't condemn them too much. They thought that all nisei girls like the zoot suiters. I'd hate to have somebody say they saw me at that dance. It's a funny thing to say but it is true. Until the nisei get more manners, I'm not going to any more of those things. I think it hurts our reputation."



Vogue Tea Dance  
Nov. 21, 1943

The following is Alfred Doi's account of the second tea dance sponsored by the Vogue School of Fashion Art and Interior Decoration specially for the some 30 nisei students enrolled in this school and their friends. It was held at the school located at 116 S. Michigan Ave on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 21, 1943, at 2:30 o'clock.

Sunday afternoon I went to the Vogue tea dance which the nisei girl students put on. It started at 2:30 but I didn't get there until 5 o'clock. It was a small group but it was held in a darn good place.

They plan to have another party in December and I got an invitation. I'll see if I can get Frank and Michi and invitation because it is a nice sort of party that they could go to. I'll try to get an invitation for Tom and Tomi too.

There were about 60 to 90 people there yesterday; more girls than boys. They were all dressed up and well mannered. I cut up a little bit just for the hell of it.

They gave us coffee and cake for refreshment. The atmosphere was very good and there was a nice lounge there for people to sit in. The school paid for all the expenses.

~~I don't know if I will have a more satisfying life if they have more of these parties. I only went because I knew that Tom would back out at the last minute.~~



Fort Riley Incident  
Suski  
Dec. 2, 1943

PFC Gen Sonoda, formerly of Compton, California, has been in the U.S. Army since March, 1941 and is now stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas. He was there when President Roosevelt visited the camp en route home from a trip to Mexico in 1942.

Ever since he was a child Sonoda had trouble with his vocal cords and his voice changes from his normal low tone to a high, shrill pitch in the middle of a sentence. He is the only member of his family whose voice has been affected this way, the others all speaking normally. Gen has been conscious of the fact that his voice changes and that may have much to do toward his being an introvert. He is small in stature, about 5 feet 2 inches.

It is evident that he does not like the Army and doesn't think there is much chance for advancement for the nisei and consequently does not try very hard. He has been in the Army for two years and nine months and ~~was~~ has attained the rank of a First Class Private. He said that the one time he thought he had a chance for advancement did not result favorably for him so now he has given up hope.

The following ~~is~~ is his account of the incident at Fort Riley:

"Yes, I was one of the sad nisei who were at Fort Riley when President Roosevelt came and reviewed the troops. For several days before the President came we knew that he was due at Fort Riley so we all looked forward to it. Then one afternoon all the nisei soldiers got orders to assemble and get ready for a march. We marched around and finally walked right into a huge garage where the officer said, 'Fall out. Now boys, have a ~~rest and~~ seat and



take it easy.'

"We were kept there for three hours. We didn't know why we were there. We didn't realize that the Caucasian troops were out in review while we were kept behind locked doors. Naturally, when we found out, we got sore. We talked about reporting the matter to the commander of our camp. But we knew that would have to be done through the right channels, which meant court martial for the person who issues the complaint. Nobody wanted to be the 'goat', so we had to drop the matter.

"Most of the boys must have written about this matter to their folks at home. Anyway, the story leaked out. I think it was the JACL\* who was responsible for this matter coming to the attention of the War Department. Anyway, the result of the protest from the outside resulted in the transfer of the officer who gave the order to another camp. He wasn't well liked anyway.

"The incident is a closed matter now. It's too late to do anything about it anyway. But we all felt pretty bad about the whole thing at that time. / Some of us knew that we were getting a raw deal from the Army by not being on equal par with the Caucasian service men. We were given the office jobs and the menial work. We haven't done any drilling or actual practice for combat work at all. We are getting stale. The Caucasian men are being sent out left and right and yet the nisei soldiers are kept there intact. Once we have over 300 nisei soldiers at the camp but not we have less than 200, I think it's close to 150 all together. We have only one nisei staff sergeant, all other nisei staff and technical sergeants have been sent to other camps. There really isn't enough work to keep many sergeants there anyway among the



nisei soldiers. I think we would have to go through a lot of training if we were to go out for combat duty. We haven't carried guns for a long time now.

"I think the next time President Roosevelt visits our camp, things will be different. Now that it's come to the attention of the high officers, the nisei soldiers won't be segregated into closed quarters during inspection. They won't make that kind of mistake again.

"I've been in the Army for two years and nine months already and I'm still a First class private. I guess I'll never be promoted. There isn't much chance for promotion for me or any of the other nisei soldiers. I'll probably remain a first class private until the end of the war. Once I thought I was going to get promoted to a corporal but I was disappointed. I didn't get a promotion so now I guess there's no more chance for me.

"I don't care much for the Army but I guess it's a lot better than being out in a big city trying to make a living where competition is great. I guess I'm lucky to be in the Army even if it doesn't get me anywhere."



Nisei Volunteer  
Dec. 3, 1943  
Suski

Private Frank Shimada, formerly of San Jose, is one of 11 children. He is 27 years old. He was working ~~in~~ in the wholesale produce market prior to the war. At Heart Mountain WRA project he was in the men's athletic department. He is an all-around athlete and a conscientious worker. When he volunteered for the Army, he had quite a time convincing his parents that he did the right thing. He is now the second nisei combat team undergoing training at Camp Shelby.

Private Shimada, who has been in the Army since July, 1943, expressing the belief that the second combat team would get sent abroad for duty around February. When asked whether he believed the men had enough training and were ready for actual combat duty Shimada said, "Yes, I believe I am ready after five months' training. The work of the private isn't hard. All we have to do is to obey orders. It's the sergeants, the lieutenants, captains and the other officers who have the worry. We ~~are~~ buck privates just do what we're told to do.

"The nisei have a good name everywhere except near Shelby. The 100th infantry left ~~and~~ a good impression. Their captain was a good old Joe. The boys from Hawaii bought up everything and spent a lot of money so they were popular with the other soldiers. They resented being called Japs and often got into fights about it. When the captain heard about these fights, he said to ~~be~~ his men, 'Don't come back until you've beaten them up.' So these boys didn't get hell when they got into fights. Consequently they also left a bad name for the nisei soldiers.

"I'm among the newest recruits at Shelby. I've had only 8



weeks basic training while the Hawaiian nisei have had 17 weeks so I have no chance for advancement, the other are ahead of me. The basic training was hard for some of the older fellows. It wasn't easy to ~~run~~ cover a 1000 yard course, running 200 yards, stabbing a dummy with our bayonet, ~~and~~ climbing up and down a 20 foot peak without falling off and climbing over a 10 foot wall with all our equipments.

"We have good specimen of men in our combat team. We underwent a four-hour physical test and came out 99.1%. In the proficiency test our men average 80 to 85. The famous 69th infantry of World War I scored 35 to 40.

"The 100th infantry captured a division once out in one of the maneuvers and the officers didn't know how to score it and had to wire to Washington for the information. The infantry had 1000 men and captured a division which had from 10,000 to 15,000 men. The division crossed the bridge and blew up two bridges, making it impossible to cross the river. The 100th infantry swam the river and caught the division unawares.

"When the 100th infantry goes on a four or five day tramping trip, no matter how tired they are, when they march into the camp they march with pride with their heads up. You don't see the hakujin soldiers doing this.

"I had to guard some German prisoners once. We were given orders to point our guns away from the prisoners but ordered to shoot to kill if necessary. About 40 guards watch over 300 prisoners. The German prisoners are healthy and rugged. They are handsome men. They have to march about half a mile to the place where they are put to work chopping trees. The men keep in step



and sing as they march along. They all have good voices. It's just like you see in the movies. The prisoners are both young and old, some of them are grey haired but the majority are good physical specimen and work to keep themselves fit. The guards don't force them to work for the prisoners don't have to work if they don't want to. Down in Alabama the girls whistle at the prisoner as they pass by on a truck.

"When we were on maneuvers we were orders to keep hidden and keep quiet. The mainland nisei follow orders and stay in the shadows and keep quiet but the Hawaii nisei don't care. They talk out loud and do shadow boxing to keep warm and here we are shivering in our hiding places. One time I made a nice fox hole and camouflaged it so well that an officer nearly stepped on me. I sure scared him when I yelled, 'Hey, watch out there!'

"Some times when we ~~practice~~ have target practice, we take turns sitting in a hole and hold up a target. We are told to keep our heads in the hole. The target, which is a picture of a man's body from the hips up, is held up. The bullets generally whiz by about a foot above the hole. Some of these crazy guys hold the target in one hand and stick their heads out of the hole to watch the shooting. They could get killed but they just don't know any better. I found some card board and brushes so I put this over the water and kept warm but one of the poor fellows had to sit in water two feet deep during the whole target practice. After the practice was over I noticed several bullet holes in a card board which was on the ground in front of my hole. So you see, if I had stuck my head out like some other crazy fool, I might have been shot.



"On my furlough I went back to Heart Mountain for a visit. At the railroad station I met a Caucasian ~~soldier~~ sailor who had just come back from the Aleutians. He told me that a lot of the sailors shot each other and that's why so many of them were hurt. He had the experience of having a boat shot under him. All of the soldiers and sailors I've met so far have been very friendly and cordial to me. I get along with them.

"If and when our unit gets sent overseas I believe we will be the spearhead or the delayed action group for the second front. I guess a lot of us will be killed. But I believe I am ready for it."



Nisei Arrested for Violation of Curfew Law  
Suski  
Dec. 3, 1943

En route home to Phoenix, Arizona to visit his mother and two brothers following the end of the chick sexing season in Iowa, May, 1942, Ted Yoshimura had an unfortunate incident at a small town of Holbrook (Arizona), just inside the state of Arizona from New Mexico. Ted has visited friends in Gallup, New Mexico and was urged to stay over night and start off in the morning, however, he was anxious to get home and left ~~in~~<sup>that</sup> the evening. It was during the early part of May, 1942

"Just after I ~~came~~ entered the town of Holbrook I was stopped by a highway patrol man. He accused me of breaking the curfew law when he discovered I was of Japanese ancestry. He also said that I had contraband, meaning my large spot light, attached to the car, and a large lamp in the rear of the car which I explained that I had to use in my work as a chick sexor. Of course he held the upper hand so I had to be nice to him.

"He told me he would have to book me at the jail and wait for an investigation. He left his car on the road and got into my car and drove it to the town of Holbrook, but not until he had put handcuffs on me. At Holbrook he said he would have to stop at his house and see his wife for a few minutes. In front of his house he handcuffed me to the steering wheel while he went into his house. I sure felt like running away then. I knew I could drive even if I was handcuffed to the wheels, but something kept me from doing it.

"When we started toward the jail, he asked me if I wanted to have some breakfast before being booked. I mumbled that I wasn't



hungry when when the officer told me that he hadn't had his breakfast yet and he was hungry, I told him that I would have some coffee. He drove and parked right in front of a restaurant. When I asked whether he was going to take the handcuffs off, he waited until I got out of the car with him. There was a group of men standing in front of the restaurant and naturally when they saw my hands with handcuffs they came around to talk to the officer. I sure felt like a criminal then. Finally the officer took off the handcuffs and we went into the restaurant but I wasn't hungry.

"After he had his breakfast the officer he took me to the jail which was right across the street from the restaurant. While en route to this restaurant the officer talked in a friendly manner, asking me where I was from. When he found out I was from ~~Phoenix~~ Phoenix, he asked me if I knew various stores and I answered in the affirmative. He said he had been in Phoenix a number of times and had seen many Japanese there. His friendly attitude changed when we got to the jail and I was booked for carrying contraband.

"They put me in a cell which had a dirty bed. I didn't even feel like sitting down on it, it was so dirty. The cell hadn't even been cleaned for so long, it sure was stinky. There were three Indians and three Caucasian in the jail. During meal time they brought food from the restaurant across the street but the dishes were dirty so I didn't feel like eating. I lost 10 pounds during the three days I was in jail there.

"The F.B.I. report on me was complete. I had testified that I didn't live in Phoenix but in Iowa and I was just visiting my family there. The report said that I had gone into Arizona several



Nisei Arrested - 3

times and even had the dates. It was conflicting stories that kept me there for three days. My attorney of Phoenix finally got me out after paying ~~a fine of~~ \$150. They didn't even take away my spotlight and lamp after it was declared contraband. Anyway the case against me was dismissed and was I glad to get out of there. I hope that's the first and last time I'll ever be put in jail.



Midland Hotel Dance  
Dec. 25, 1943  
*Sushi*

There were quite a few comments on the Christmas night dance which was held at the Midland Hotel on Dec. 25. An admission of \$2.50 per couple was charged. Alfred Doi, who went late to the dance, was charge half price as it was 11:45. He had the following to say about the dance:

"I went to the Christmas dance late. I got there about 11:45 and got in for half price. I didn't mind paying the full price because I was flushed. I won \$10 in a poker game that night and that's why I was late. I was supposed to pick up my date at 9:30 but it was 11 when I got to her place.

"At the hotel when we were walking up the stairs, there were two drunk guys in the way. One of them said, 'Hi-ya, bright eyes.' My date didn't say anything and I wasn't going to budge for no drunk guy. Then one of them said, 'You want to start something?' I didn't say ~~a word~~ nothing to nobody, especially a drunk guy. Then I heard one of them yell they could beat up anybody. I thought to my self ataran kawari ni kawari nashi (touch nothing and hurt nothing)."

When asked whether he was drunk that night or not, Doi retorted: "How in the hell do you think I could win 10 bucks if I were drunk?"

"The crowd at the dance was very big, about 250 people, I should say. There must have been from 70 to 80 stags there. At the end there were about 50 stags. There were no brawls, not that I know of. They had a six-piece orchestra. It was a good combination. They didn't have any drinks on the same floor but there was a bar in the floor below and I saw lots of guys around there.



But I saw a lot of bottles around the dance floor.

"I saw a lot of stags from Sacramento but I don't know them. I saw boochie guys with keto women. They weren't high class women. There were about three or four of them. I also saw a couple of ainoko guys. There was a distinction in the types of men there, gentlemen and zoot suiters. I noticed five or six real zoot suits.

"I think the crowd had a good time. There were no bouncers as far as I could see. I heard the WRA was publicizing this dance so some guys thought the WRA was sponsoring the dance. Bill Shiota told me he went to the WRA one day and someone there told him to pass the word around to the boys about this dance. I think it was Ben Yoshioka. This dance was much more well organized than the Ashland dance but I'd say they barely made out even because the expenses must have been high.

"What made me decide to go to the dance? I knew no one of you guys would go and I wanted to do you a favor by going and reporting it to you. None of my friends went to the dance because most of them went back to Rohwer for a visit. About 10 or 11 of them took a week off.

"I didn't see any unusual incidents. By the way, your sister (Charlie's) is a good rhumba-ist. The girls there were in-between. It was a rather young crowd.

"I went up to the can and I saw some guys who were sick. A couple of them were puking. When I was going up the stairs, couple of drunk guys ~~bashe~~ brushed me as they came down and one of them said, 'You want to make something of it?' But I didn't say a word, no use fighting with drunk guys.

"The Ashland dance was really crowded compared to this dance.



The stags didn't crowd at this dance. They sat around or stood by the door and watched the people come in. There were a lot of sad looking guys. There was a good cross section of old and young guys. They didn't cut in much.

"The funny thing <sup>that</sup> is/there were mostly couples or double couples here and there. I knew about 10 people there. It was a totally different crowd from that at the Ashland dance. I didn't see many whom I saw at the other dance. The hakujin women I saw looked like B-girls. They weren't real drunk though.

"There wasn't much circulation among the people. I guess they figured that a lot of fellows were drunk and if they cut in on them, they may be nasty about it."

The subject of discussion shifted to the New Year's Eve social activities and centered on the dance for Pacific Northwest nisei at the Hull House. It is a closed affair and open to those from Oregon and Washington.

Doi said, "Yes, a lot of Californians are sore about that dance. They say that they talk about assimilation and then they go ahead and have their own social. Who do they think they are, better than Californians? George Wada and Elmer Yoshi... something or other are different. They said that another Washingtonian guy had something to do with this social. They talk about assimilation and they're jamming things from the beginning. Here in Chicago they have a lot of inaka peis (country hicks). But the Washingtonians like California women because they're better looking."

Charlie: "I like Washington women. They got white complexion."

Tom: Yes, Washington lilies. I heard one guy say, 'Let's go to the Hull House and throw a stink bomb in there. They won't have any big bouncers there.'"



Charlie - "Some boys think they're missing out on something, that's why they want to go to all the socials."

Frank - "The Hull House affair is an invitation to something."

Charlie - "The northerners think the Californians are too cliquish so they're putting on this Hull House affair to meet their own friends."

Doi - "The Washingtonians say we're civilized, look at the zoot suiters."

Charlie - "The sectional stike becomes acute in regard to the boy-girl relations."



NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE: HULL HOUSE

On December 21, we received among our Christmas mail a postcard inviting Michi and myself to a New Year's Eve dance at Hull House. The card read:

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Frank Miyamoto:

Is your big question for New Year's Eve "what to do?" How would seeing in 1944 with your friends at the world-famed Hull-House strike you? Well a group of us from the Northwest are working towards a gala party (dancing, refreshments, and favors) at this location. All we ask from you is an immediate reply (Yes or no) to our query, "can you come?" Your cooperation will make this a rousing success. Won't you come?

Place: Hull House, 800 S. Halsted, Bowen Hall,  
Polk St. Entrance.

Time: 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Cordially yours,  
Daiki Miyagawa, Invitation Chairman

Will you act as chaperones?

Servicemen or an out-of-town relative are welcome.

Michi's reaction to the card was, "Isn't that an amateurish invitation card. Why don't nisei learn how to make out invitations properly. That sounds like something put out by a group of high-school youngsters for a high-school dance, but no adult hakujin would send an invitation like that for a dance."

A couple of days later, I ran into Frank Tanabe at the WRA office, and since I knew that he was living at the Maple Manor where Daiki and his group lived, I presumed that he would know something about the proposed New Year's affair, and asked him about it. I did not know then that he was one of the main sponsors of the affair, and he said nothing to indicate his part in promoting



the dance, but when I inquired of the dance, Frank made this comment: "Yah, some of the guys are holding the dance. The Northwest kids feel they don't want to go to an affair with Californians--- you know how rowdy they get---so they decided to have a separate dance." When I told Tom about Frank's comment, his immediate reply was, "Jesus, wait'll the Californians hear about that. There'll be plenty of trouble if they find out the reason for the Northwest guys holding a separate dance." Nor was it long before a great many Californians learned of the attitude of the Northwest resettlers that caused them to hold their affair separately. Doi dropped into the office a few days before the dance, and commenting on what he had heard about the Northwesterners, he said, "Who the hell do they think they are? They talk about the Californians not being assimilated and then they go off and hold a dance all by themselves." If there was any sectional schism among the Chicago resettlers before this, the news of the exclusively Northwest New Year's Dance seemed to aggravate the hostility more than ever. Tom, Charlie, and Doi, reported that some of the California fellows were plenty sore, and they were threatening to crash the affair and make it plenty tough for the "snooty" Northwesterners. In fact, it all seemed to indicate a somewhat unpleasant evening for us as chaperones if the Californians carried out their threat.

We learned that Tom and Rose Okabe had also been asked to attend the dance as chaperones, and since they live in the same apartment building with us, we promised to go together. It turned out that we were somewhat delayed by having to move into our new bedroom which our landlady opened up to us, and Tom and Rose left before us. It was not until about 9:30 or even later that we



boarded the El. Four nisei, a girl and three fellows, dashed on the train right behind us, and sat across from us. It was evident from their conversation that they too were going to the same place. They looked to be about twenty or twenty-one; in any case, we felt they were much younger than we. There were relatively few people on the car going toward the Loop, and the nisei across from us were acting rather gay in a somewhat inhibited manner. The girl pulled out a package of chewing gum, passed it around, and then rolled up the wrapping from her stick and coyly threw it at one of the young fellows sitting next to her. All of them were neatly dressed, and except for their Oriental/<sup>physical</sup> appearance, they might have been just another small group of young Americans. Michi remarked that one of them had a typically Japanese face, of the type that one often sees among college students in Japan, but a second fellow was light complexioned, rosy, and looked cleanly washed behind the ears, while the third young fellow seemed to assume a debonair mien and was apparently the leader of the group. Although I felt that there was nothing especially objectionable in the behavior of these nisei, Michi felt that they were trying to be unnaturally gay and rather objected to them; she particularly disliked their rather puerile behavior, such as the girl tossing the gum wrapping at her escort. It struck me that it was their self consciousness that gave them a rather immature appearance, for it seemed to me apparent from their facial expression that they were trying desperately to look poised and natural.

Hull House is prison-like even in the daytime, but the shadows at night gave it an almost ominously dark appearance, and the silent streets surrounding it with its occasional lurking sha-



dows had all the atmosphere of a alum street at night in the moviees. We walked along Polk St. looking for the dance hall, and although there were some lighted windows, it was impossible to tell from the outside exactly where the hall was. I had carelessly assumed that I knew the Hull House well enough to find the hall, but had not anticipated the difficulties in the dark, and it was only because we ran into a night watchman going his rounds that we found the entrance without further trouble. I noticed, as I entered the inconspicuous doorway, that there was a sign that could be very vaguely made out which said, "DANCE--BOWEN HALL".

Bowen Hall is a gymnasium that is used for various purposes. There is a very short flight of stairs rising from the entrance door to the gym door, and the nisei had a table at the top of the stairway where they were taking admission. Frank Tanabe was among the three or four nisei standing around this table, and, because we were the chaperones, he waved us in without asking admission. There was no check-room, but coats were draped on chairs and tables in an ante-room off the main floor. The hall, which was obviously constructed as a multi-purpose gymnasium, was fairly large and roomy, but it looked old and much used. At the far end, there was a portable platform that jutted quite far out into the floor, and a row of tall Christmas trees were arrayed in the front to hide it from view. Some attempts had been made to decorate the walls with red, white and blue crepe paper, but because of the high ceilinged lights and the generally antiquated appearance of the place, it had evidently been impossible to make the place over into a gay or sophisticated dance hall.



We had been delayed in our arrival because our elevated train was stalled for almost twenty minutes, and it must have been around 10:30 or 11:00 when we arrived. The party was evidently in a very dull stage when we arrived. A group of about fifty people were lined up in two rows opposite each other near the center of the floor playing games. The master of ceremonies, Koichi Hayashi, who at one time made a small name for himself on the West Coast as the band leader of the Mikado Swing Orchestra, was putting on the glamor personality in an effort to arouse the group, but not with any great success. Part of the attendants were sitting along the sidelines on the chairs that were lined against the walls. At this <sup>time</sup> ~~date~~ there must have been about one hundred people in all present; there were several Caucasians and other nationalities (Indian and Mexican) present among the players. Among these guests were Mr. Brinton and his daughter, who was with her young sailor cousin, Mr. Ballard, the head of Hull House, and his wife, several Mexican boys who were tagging along behind Mr. Ballard, an Indian girl living at the Hull house who passed through the Hall on one occasion, and a few others. But the bulk of those present were very young nisei from the Northwest, probably averaging not much more than twenty years of age.

Presently the games ended, the juke box on the platform was turned on, and all the young people resumed their dancing. The dancing continued for about half an hour, not with any great enthusiasm, and as a few newcomers drifted into the doorway, they seemed to look with some skepticism at the slow tempo of the affair. When the fast music was turned on, only one or two couples



ventured on the floor, and as they danced by themselves they could be seen joking rather embarrassedly about their own boldness. On the slower sweet music, some of the bolder ones would venture on the floor first, and would be gradually joined by others who obviously wanted to dance but seemed unable to find the courage to do so. There were a group of boys gathered on the sidelines near me, and I could see them eyeing the girls as the music began, and excited talking among them as they argued whether to dance or not. Presently they made a dash for the seated girls, and carried them off to the dance floor. This sort of thing went off on for a while, until presently the M.C. announced refreshments, and a line began to form in one corner where the punch and sandwiches were being served. At the same time, the nisei sponsors began passing out paper hats, horns, clagues, and confettis. Before the group had fairly begun eating their refreshments, Koichi Hayashi climbed on the platform, and began calling the group to gather in front of the platform to greet the New Year's in at midnight.

The most impressive aspect of the whole affair to this point was the almost pathetically unexciting atmosphere in the place. There seemed to exist an underlying tension among the people, as if they had come to the dance expecting to release a lot of energy, and yet were inhibited from doing so by the general lack of excitement among the others. Most of those present wore rather passive if not sour countenances as if they were fated to pass the all-important zero hour without the excitement which they undoubtedly had hoped for. It was not in



anything that was said that one gained this impression, but rather in their formal and almost disappointed behavior that this came out. If there was any excitement, it took place in small groups of threes and fours as old friends met again for the first time in Chicago, or some self consciously gay youths gathered for their own merriment.

About ten minutes to twelve, Koichi began shouting from the platform almost frantically indicating that all the people should gather in front of it. A group of us older people present responded, and the others slowly drifted together. Mr. Brinton of the WRA, who lives at Hull House, was in front of the whole group trying to stimulate them to a little more lively response, and he would call off at intervals the minutes as they passed. Other nisei brought out their watches and shouted their corrections of his time, and under this stimulus, a certain amount of din developed in the group. Koichi in the meantime had contacted Michi to ask that she play Auld Lang Syne at the piano, and he was shouting instructions to the audience that they should let go with everything at the indicated moment, and that they should join in a chorus of Auld Lang Syne. He could hardly make himself heard over the laughter and conversation that was now going on. Some of the people began throwing their streamers and confetti before midnight, and there was some confusion as various people shouted out different times. At midnight and for several minutes thereafter, there was much noisemaking as people tooted their horns loudly, and the fellows playfully draped the girls with streamers.



Small groups of friends went through the conventional forms of hand-shaking and shouting "Happy New Years!" at each ~~to~~ other, tooting their horns in each other's faces as they did so. Then Michi was asked to play Auld Lang Syne, and the crowd joined in rather dismally. This was followed with a chorus of "Bow Down to Washington" at Hayashi's suggestion, and the singing ended with a more rousing "Hail, Hail, the Gangs all here!"

After a certain amount of this festivity, the juke box was again turned on, and the dancing was resumed with a lot more spirit than had existed previously. The hall was by this time fairly well littered with colorful paper and confetti, and the appearance of the hall had been sufficiently disturbed to give a more informal and dance-like atmosphere. Little groups continued to drift in to join the dancers on the floor, and by the time Michi and I left, there must have been close to 150 people present. There were others who had come and gone, while there was also a scattering who merely looked in at the doorway to see what the goings on were.

Before this dancing was resumed, however, there was an announcement and a speech made. Daiki Miyagawa came up to Michi and asked that she and Rose Okabe participate in handing Mr. Ballard, the head of the Hull House, the net profit of fifteen dollars which the sponsors had made on the dance. Mr. Ballard then asked for one minute to make a little speech, something which he had had in mind all evening since he previously mentioned to me that there was something he wanted to say to the group. The speech was in the nature of extending greetings from Ambassador Grew who had learned about the nisei New Year's Affair from one of



the trustees of Hull House. The trustee had transmitted the message to Mr. Ballard, and Mr. Ballard was extending on this message, which he considered of great importance to the nisei, through this dance. Mr. Grew had expressed his regret that he could not personally extend his greetings to the group on this New Year, but he was required to be on his way. However, in his speeches in the country, he was trying to explain to the American people that it is only the military clique in Japan that this nation should be concerned to defeat, and that the Japanese in America, particularly the citizens, should not be made the objects of their hatred. Mr. Ballard emphasized the importance of this message from Mr. Brew, and it was evident that he was seeking for words to express most sincerely and emphatically the significance of Mr. Grew's talks in this country. The nisei audience listened politely, and <sup>though</sup> clapped politely/with some enthusiasms.

In the post-midnight dancing, there was much more enthusiasm than had been noticeable at any time previously during the evening. There was no cutting in, but the fellows were regularly walking up to girls sitting along the sidelines to take them onto the dance floor. Some fellows were sitting with girls, but more frequently, groups of girls sat among themselves waiting to be called for by the fellows, while the fellows gathered in the darker corners of the room to scan the sidelines and pick out their victims. There was no drinking of any kind in evidence, and Mr. Brinton's daughter, whom I danced with once, apologized saying, "Oh, I hope I don't smell like a liquor store. I took my cousin across the street for one glass of beer---I thought he deserved that much since he had to go back tonight from his



furlough---, but you know how beer is, it smells more than anything else. At this kind of a dance, I didn't want to seem as if I'd been drinking." Even George Taki mentioned that he hadn't had a drop. I noticed one fellow on the dance floor once wearing a long overcoat as he danced, and he seemed peculiarly out of place among this group. "Pachook" haircuts were notable for their absence, and Bob Kinoshita's long hair and sideburns were prominent because of its uniqueness. In fact, some of the Northwesterners immediately singled him out as that Los Angeles fellow although it's unlikely that very many of them knew who he was. Occasionally, a jitterbug tune was turned on, but except for a possible three or four couples who were doing the jitterbug, there were very few who deviated from the conventional shuffle of the fox trot. Bob Kinoshita and Aileen Nagatomi, in fact, were the only ones approximating the fancy jitterbug steps I'd seen among the Sacramento young people in Tule Lake, and the two or three others that were attempting it were very evidently new at this form of dancing. When the jitterbug tunes were on, the bulk of the dancers stayed off the floor and watched Bob and Aileen as if they were a floor show by themselves.

The dance was to end at 1:00 according to the schedule announced in their invitation, but Mr. Ballard allowed them to extend the time, and it continued on until about 2:00 a.m. We left about 1:30 a.m. while the dancing was still going on vigorously. We later heard from Satchi Fujimoto that Charlie's sister Mariko led the whole group in dancing the Conga. She said that everyone joined in at Mariko's encouragement and had a good time



dancing the Congo. "She was the girl in a red dress with George Taki," was the way Sachi described her. "Oh, is that Mariko Kikuchi? She's an awfully attractive girl, isn't she." Fellows like Bob Kinoshita and girls like Mariko rather stood out in the crowd at this dance.

I talked to Frank Tanabe, one of the sponsors, in the refreshment line a little before midnight. Frank volunteered the information that, "I don't know how we're going to come out financially. We haven't counted up the money yet, but we're afraid that we may go into the hole. Some of the fellows have been making remarks already that we're making money off this thing, but that's not the idea with which we started it. It's pretty expensive holding a dance of this kind because it's hard to get the refreshments with rationing on. We didn't have enough ration points to get meat for the sandwiches, so we had to go to the caterers and have them make up the sandwiches for us. That way, the sandwiches run up into quite a bit of money." Frank looked rather tired and worried. It later turned out that they had made fifteen dollars beyond their expenses, and were even able to present ~~the~~ the profit to the Hull House.

I went over to Daiki to ask him a few questions about the dance. Daiki remarked, "Boy, I'm tired. I don't feel like dancing. It was Frank Tanabe who got the idea of holding this thing. A bunch of us Northwest kids were at the hotel one day talking about socials and they suggested that it would be a good idea if the Northwest group had a dance of their own New Year's Eve. Frank pushed the idea, and I was the one who discouraged it; but in the end, I helped out too. That's the way it always is. Frank is



always thinking up these socials, but I don't think it's a good idea to have too many nisei gatherings so I try to prevent him from carrying out his ideas. But you know how it is, the nisei want to get together, and I figure that this being New Years and the nisei don't have very many places to go so that it doesn't hurt once in a while. Bunch of the kids at our place worked on it. There are a couple of Portland kids, and some of us Seattle fellows. We've been here since three o'clock this afternoon, getting the place ready. Mr. Ballard's been swell; he's been with us all the time, and he even helped us put up some of the decoration. When we were getting the refreshments, he went after the water and ice; oh, he's helped us a lot."

"We got the idea of the dance quite a while ago, so we went around to Bill McKee to ask his suggestion for a dance hall. He told us we might try the Hull House, so Frank and I come here and after seeing this hall, took it right away and didn't try anywhere else. The Hull House asked only fifteen dollars for their expenses, which was very reasonable. The main expense was for the refreshments because we couldn't make the sandwiches ourselves, and we had to have some caterers do it for us."

"Some of the guys have already been saying that we're trying to make a profit off this thing. That wasn't our idea at all. They come up to us and say, 'You guys must be making a pile of dough on this,' or 'How about a rake-off' and all that sort of thing. We'd hoped that we'd make enough so that we could make a contribution to the Hull House, but we weren't sure for a while that we'd clear anything. After all, I think it makes a good



impression if we can help out an organization of this kind. Some of these guys jump to conclusions when they see the money in the cash box."

"It's been a little slow getting started; I guess the Northwest kids are just naturally quiet; but I guess the people are enjoying themselves quite well. Some of the California kids came over from the Skyline Club dance, and they were saying that it was lousey over there and that ours is better. I'm glad it's going over, anyway."

The threatened "intrusion" by the California group didn't materialize, and everything ended quietly. Mr. Ballard had asked a policeman to be in attendance, and he was standing around for a part of the evening. The whole affair was a typically Northwest affair, "dull", I would say, and rather unexciting. Part of the difficulty was that the people present didn't seem to know each other too well although they were mostly from the same section of the Northwest. There was a certain number from the older age group---perhaps, I was the oldest nisei present---, but the bulk of them were scattered anywhere between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. Stags were relatively few in numbers, or, perhaps, there must have been a fair sprinkling of stagettes, but in any case the sex ratio was fairly well proportioned etc. etc.