

Excerpt from letter of  
Larry Kataoka re Frank Shimada

November 15, 1945

Dear Mr. Collins:

.....

Frank Shimada was a little tot of eight years when one day he dragged his little wagon down a narrow country lane to fetch some empty milk cans for his mother. About a quarter of a mile away from home, where he did his every day shopping, the Government was then building a dike along the Skagit River which flowed by. As Frank was playing, he accidentally discovered some hidden articles underneath an old stump, put there by irresponsible workers after the days work. The job was a government project, but Frank did not know that these little brass articles left around carelessly were what we call "dynamite caps". Possessively and proud as all little boys with a new interest to show, he hurriedly took these objects in his toy wagon all the way home to his father's raspberry patch where dad was working industriously. Unfortunately, neither father or son realized the danger that threatened the very atmosphere and too late he was suddenly terrified by a loud explosion and was found lying on the earth bleeding with blood all over his face and body, shocked to unconsciousness. Frank, eyes dazed, and with his thumb and two fingers of the left hand blown off from the very roots of his knuckles was rushed to the Berlington Hospital where he was nursed back to health by Dr. Cleveland. Caucasian neighbors and friends urged Franks family to sue the government because it was the fault of careless workers and the government project supervisors. They had no reason whatever to have placed such dangerous equipment in such an inconspicuous place where children could play; legally the case was a sure win for the Shimada's but hearing that the fine would have to be paid by the county of their residence they hesitated and declined taking any court action. As a result of the explosion Frank is today illiterate and mentally handicapped; he neither can read or write but only his name and this not well. I have attached to this letter his signature which I was a witness thereof.

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Frank because of his unfortunate accident has also lost normal usage of his eyes; in writing his name he practically has his face on the paper. His parents have tried hard to obtain glasses for him but whether within the W.R.A. clinic or on the outside before evacuation, there were none to be found to fit his serious needs. He has to-date no eye glasses for his comfort. He speaks like a small boy--stuttering and hesitating--and this under mental strain. His physical characteristics are also abnormal. He as well as his other brothers as a result of living among Caucasians for many years are unable to speak Japanese. He can speak English only with difficulty.

I have interviewed Frank personally and I am sure that Frank's renunciation should not have been approved whether legally or on moral grounds regardless of the exception of his two younger brothers Jack, case No. 321; George Case No. 134; and a sister. I have every confidence that this is an exceptional case which will pierce the artificial armament of the Justice Department's renunciation program. To do him justice, Frank Shimada could not have understood the full significance of his renunciation hearing or the consequences thereof. He was not a free agent at the time and also, in his feeble way, was under mental strain and environmental corruption and influence, as well as under Governmental duress. Yet he was sent a notice of acceptance.

The circumstances under which said renunciation form was signed by Frank did not constitute a fair and impartial hearing and was a denial of his constitutional guarantee of due process of law and of legal protection under the law as guaranteed by the constitution of the United States.

If you are interested Mr. Collins I suggest seeing Frank in person or appointing a judge of his mental incompetence. If you insist on further information, I will be more than pleased to accommodate you.

Frank is of course dependent on his younger brothers for support having lost his father years ago.

His brother George, when I told him of the importance of such instances, was surprised but claimed he had no idea as to his brothers case being so significant; thus the mother and the brothers are very grateful.

We have hopes that this case will mean another legal challenge of the renunciation program. Our sympathies are with Frank, please help him if you possibly can.

.....  
Larry L. Kataoka

September 6, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Mr. Ennis:

I am taking this opportunity to ask your office's assistance in regard to a very perplexing problem, which resulted from renunciation of my United States nationality.

I was born in the city of Salt Lake on March 22, 1921, and until my attendance through the second school grade, our family resided in the same city. However, in 1928 our family moved to Los Angeles, and I attended the grammar school called the 37th Street School. Thus, upon my completion of six years of elementary work at this school, I enrolled at the Foishay Jr. High School. However, in 1934 after I completed my final semesters work for the 7th school year, I went to Japan and remained in the land of my ancestors for approximately five years. During my stay in Japan, I attended the girl's high school in the city of Kyoto, as my uncle and aunt resided in that city. Thus, my education consisted partly in this country and partly in Japan. Immediately after my graduation from the girl's high school in Japan, I returned to the United States aboard the SS Tatuta maru on March 26, 1939, entering through the Port of San Pedro, California. I now realize that the period in which I stayed in Japan was during my adolescent years, and my mind was not fully matured to evaluate or compare anything in terms of actual reality. After my return to this country, I attended the Pacific Sewing School, which was located at East First Street in Los Angeles, California. This school was operated by Mrs. Chiyoko Fujii, and she is presently a resident at the Manzanar Relocation Center.

Our family resided at 3483 East 5th Street, Los Angeles, California until our involuntary evacuation into the governmental center. Thus upon the issuance of the order of the Commanding General of the Western Defense Command we were temporarily assembled into the Santa Anita Assembly Center on May 9, 1942.

In facing the actual reality of being removed from one's own home was a new experience and it was a great shock to take, and I knew that we were being deprived of one of the greatest rights and privileges of a free citizen to reside in any part of this country. I fully realized that we were not accorded the full privileges guaranteed to us in the constitution of this country. The famed provisions concerning the "due process clause," the "inalienable rights of all men regardless of color, race, or creed," and other provisions which covered the civil rights were entirely disregarded by the military authorities during the evacuation program.

After our short stay at the Santa Anita Assembly Center, we were again herded together and transferred across the desolate wastes of the continental United States to arrive at a hastily constructed relocation camp in the damp forests of Rohwer, Arkansas. We arrived at this Center on October 4, 1942.

Thus, during my long involuntary confinement at the Rohwer Relocation Center it gave me sufficient opportunities to retrace my experiences in this country and my brief stay in Japan. Also during my confinement it was frequently and it was constantly brought to my attention that we were citizens merely in fictitious terms and not in actual reality. We knew that we were not being accorded the actual protection and privileges of an ordinary citizen of this country, and that the alien Japanese had at least the protecting powers to look after their limited rights.

Although my education in the public schools of this country has been for a very brief period, I was impressed by the chapters within the old history books which mentioned that our forefathers were brave men and fought valiantly to keep our country from tyrannical rule. That it was very difficult for me to comprehend or compare the philosophy of such a teaching to those actually practiced during the evacuation program. We were made to believe many of the old line argument of the race baitist that democratic ~~is~~ form of government could only be practiced by a homogenous population, and cannot be practiced among a diversified racial elements.

Thus in the moment of my confused thoughts, a feeling of despair grasped me, and I tried vainly to find seclusion and sanctuary in the city of Kyoto, where I was accorded the privileges of a normal human being. Thus from this regretful experiences of evacuation of our minority group, our family members ~~xxx~~ except my father requested for repatriation and exchange to Japan on August 2, 1943 at the Rohwer Relocation Center. Whereupon we were subsequently segregated to the Tule Lake Segregation Center on May, 1944, and we have been residing at 8415-I since our arrival into this center.

Upon our arrival into this Center we realized that this center was entirely different from those we originally came from. Until our arrival into this center we did not realize that this center would become a melting pot of all the discontented and disillusioned persons who had lost faith in the democratic process of this government. They were a very desolate lot, and it was partly due to their feeling of bitterness and despair that the November, 1943 incident took place. However, at the outset we were unable to grasp this situation. Also our family was without the guidance of our father to stabilize our thoughts.

Thus when the Hoshi dans and the other affiliated fascistic organizations began their movements, we were swept by their incessant propaganda activities. The movement was especially carried out in great intensity in our ward, as the majority of the people residing in Ward VIII came from Manzanar Relocation Center or from the former San Pedro district. These organizations did not take a great deal of pain to verify any statements which they were propagating, but rather took the initiative to confuse the general public by spreading wanton lies. Whereupon it was not considered very safe to stay aloof from this movement and refrain from becoming a member of this organization. Thus, they beclouded everyone's mind and it made it impossible to evaluate the right and wrong information that was being disseminated.

throughout the camp. Thus in another words there was utter confusion, and no responsible organ to establish or restore a state of stability to comprehend the saneness of one's action. It may appear utterly ridiculous from the general public's view that those persons in this Center who professes to have received an American education should run beserk into taking such an extreme reactionary measure. It is my feeling that it was a release of psychological emotion discharged in a fit of extreme conditions. I feel that the members, who took up the work in the organization was more or less held in a trance like manner, and went about their activities in a very mechanical way. Thus, unknowingly I became a member of the Hokoku Jyoshi-dan, as all of my neighbors and friends belonged to this organization. When the renunciation hearings were conducted in this center-this center was indeed a very unstable place to conduct a hearing. Therefore, when the renunciation hearings were being conducted the members of the dans would proficiently expound the necessity of all persons to renounce their United States nationality or suffer some dire catastrophic consequences.

Upon hearing these statements I became very confused, and I was unable to evaluate the statements provided by these groups. Also during the period of the renunciation hearing it was impressed upon me the ~~gm~~ ugly facts of racial hatred and persecution of our minority group by the rabid race baiters of California. These groups instituted a very vicious campaign to prohibit the return of all persons of Japanese ancestry to their former homes. It was further climaxed by the numerous shootings and dynamiting incidents, and the offender being permitted to go scot free or that the law enforcement agency did not take the interest to track down and prosecute these cases.

Thus the people in this center became further depressed to hear of these conditions in the outside community, and were more or less driven to take a way out of a bad nightmare. I was one of those confused persons, and I went through the mechanical processes of being reviewed by your hearing officer, and I received the notice of the final approval from Mr. Herbert Wechsler on March 22, 1945.

During my stay at the Rohwer Relocation Center, I was employed as a canteen sales clerk at the dry goods department, and was also employed at the mess hall. After being segregated into this center I was originally employed at Mess 84, but from the 15th February, 1945, I have been acting as a counselor for the Social Welfare Office. My supervisors are Mrs. Elizabeth Murphy and Mr. C.B. Wellman, and I feel that they may be able to furnish any information relative to my character.

My father, Sentaro Shibata, has relocated to 6138 South Ingle-side Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, and he was employed in the war industries in that city. Our present plans are to relocate and establish our permanent home in this country. We desire to rejoin our father in Chicago at the earliest possible instant. My father was formerly connected with the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada at Los Angeles, California, since 1928 until the date of our

evacuation. Mr. Clubine the manager of the branch office in Los Angeles may be able to furnish your office with any information relative to my family background.

I shall appreciate your office's assistance in furnishing me any information as to whether it will be possible to withdraw my application for the renunciation of my United States nationality. In event such arrangements is very difficult, I shall appreciate your furnishing me some informations as to whether there are any possible method whereby I may be paroled from this Center. In the final approval received from Mr. Wechsler, it stated that my application for renunciation was approved as it was not found to be contrary to the interests of national defense. Under such circumstances, I feel that your office may be considerate in arranging for me some system of parole procedure. I am very anxious to receive your reply as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Akiko Shibata  
8415-I

7313-F  
Newell, Calif.  
August 28, 1945

Mr. Ernest Besig

Dear Mr. Besig:

May I tell you the reasons for my renunciation and ask if I may leave as a parolee?

The reasons for my renunciation was so that I'll be in the same classification as my alien husband. I feared, if in case there is a separation of aliens from the citizens, I will naturally ~~be~~ be placed separate. I wouldn't mind if it was just myself, but I did not want to bring unhappiness to my little daughter. My husband's status is an excludee. I hope soon he will be classified as free.

We, like some others, lost everything we worked hard for. So we thought, since dad and his family had repatriated to go back we planned to go with them and start over again. We did have a home back there, but the atomic bomb has destroyed everything. All my close relatives, whom we depended on for aid until we got started, are all gone because they lived in the city of Hiroshima. My uncle was a doctor in a big hospital in Hiroshima, and when we looked at the map we knew that everything was destroyed. Our home relatives, and everything that was there is gone. So please let me stay here and go out with my husband and we will start all over again.

My dad's status is free. I presume he and my small sister and brothers will be planning to leave someday. I have two sisters outside, one is married, and has a home in Los Altos, California. My sister has written to us to come out where they are, and they are willing to help us in case of need. I am really depending upon them. My husband has been in laundry business for over 20 years. He likes to follow that line of work again, if possible.

Is there any way you can help me to relocate, so that I may stay with my family? Is there any possibilities, I may regain my citizenship?

Thanking you, I remain,

Very truly yours,

/s/ Elsie Kiyoko Sano

1502-A  
Newell, Calif.  
September 10, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Sir:

At the hearing conducted in this camp, I stated a desire to have my citizenship renounced. I now plead for its cancellation for it was not my true desire. I am hoping that you will understand the predicament which pressed me into committing this act.

Before the outbreak of this war, I was living a peaceful life with my family at a farm in Arcadia, California. I was truly Americanized and got along well at school and with other people in general. I believed with deep faith the principles of Democracy: Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness regardless of Race, Color, or Creed.

When my older brother volunteered for the Army, it was with great pride that I saw him off and firmly believed that I would be following him soon for I also had plenty to fight for then.

December 7, 1941 was the beginning of things which I never dreamed of, things which upset my apple-cart. It was my Junior year in High School, I racked my brains in order to make the grades necessary for the various subjects I was taking which incidentally was "College Prep" with a major in science. I put my soul into Americanism speeches, putting emphasis on cooperation against racial prejudices which I orated at the high school auditorium.

I went to school the day after the war started with the determination to pitch in to win the war and to preserve our Democracy and way of living. Upon reaching school however, and during our President's Speech, we Niseis were separated from the other students and was put into a separate room. I was unable to understand all this, I was more bewildered than angry.

Then followed the evacuation, making me leave school and forcing my family to sell everything at disgustingly low prices, sending us into an uncertain future with practically empty pockets, and above all, ~~ixxz~~ making my faith in Americanism falter.

The camps were filled with people like myself who were bitter because of the imprisonment for a crime uncommitted and they were all unable to heal this feeling and extreme bitterness.

Movement to relocation centers followed which to me was like being moved to a permanent internment camp, I felt as though I was being taken further away from everything that meant anything to me.

In the Heart Mountain relocation center I began to have a faint hope once again because we were given temporary passes to work on the outside of the barbed wired fences and away from the ominous guard towers. I went to Nebraska to work on a sheep farm but the

people there were not friendly. I recall stopping off at a town only to have a big Caucasian step up to me and warn me to get out of town. Whenever we visited the town near the farm, we always received stares and had to take abuses. What shocked me most was the time I passed a group of young Caucasians and heard one of them say, "I wish I had a gun, I'd get me that slimy Jap."

So, again I returned to camp, with the spark of hope dead inside me. At the camp I wanted to finish out the remainder of my high school education, but being without money or extra clothing, I decided to work. A few months later, the registration came. Being mad and led by angry people, I signed a double "No" and as a result, was later segregated to Tule Lake Center.

Life in Tule Lake was hectic and tumultuous--with groups allowed to organize and flaunt openly anti-American ideals. These organizations soon reigned with the whip of pressure over the camp and, unwittingly, thousands were forced to do their bidding. Renunciation of one's American citizenship was just what they expected citizens to do and they saw to it that it was done through pressure and propaganda. Cut off from all reality as we are, the effects of pressure, propaganda, and rumor cannot be underestimated. It was thus I applied for the renunciation of my citizenship. At the time I applied for renunciation, I was 20 years old.

A short while later, my brother in the Army went overseas to combat. I began to think of the Nisei soldiers who made such splendid fighting records and realized they must have faith to fight like that. My hopes for the future of America renewed, I was shocked into the realization that I was an American at heart, but without a citizenship.

So it is that I beg of you to restore me as a citizen of the United States or at least to let me relocate on parole. I wish to restore myself and make a good name for the Niseis--Americans.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Jim Y. Sakamoto

5601-E  
Newell, Calif.  
September 6, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Sir:

I was born at Stockton, California, on June 7th, 1913, and have been sent to Japan, the date unknown since my parents have been dead when I was a baby, but about I was three years old. Since then I had been raised in Japan until I came back to the United States in 1934.

In the United States, I went one year to the grammar school for Americanization and also about one year of High School, and some night school.

From December, 1937, I had been working for Mr. C.O. Ritter of 800 Devon Avenue, Los Angeles, California, as house-boy until evacuation law forced me to the Manzanar Camp on 1942.

It was very sad to be forced in the camp like enemy alien though I was entitled to the United States citizenship like other race of the United States Citizens. This act of evacuation of 1942, suddenly upset my mind and since then I doubted my right of the United States Citizenship.

~~It was very sad to be forced in the camp like enemy alien though~~

In Manzanar camp, if anybody express his loyalty to the United States, beaten and abusively blamed by mob and somebodys. These things forced me to Tule Lake Camp.

In Tule Lake Camp, the things were worst than Manzanar. Any careless word of sympathy to the United States may cost one's life.

In those condition with uncertainty of right of Citizenship of the United States, all those surrounding air and confused emotion, I followed what anybody whom I know, has been doing. I thought that was safest way, otherwise I can't stay in the camp with safety.

Also, what we hear about outside the camp on Japanese race were mostly terrible news. Wherever I go in the camp, I have been told all those terrible stories one after another.

That scared me of outside of the camp, and so I wanted to stay in the camp at least until War is over.

But everybody told me, that I must renounce my citizenship of the United States, otherwise I will be forced to outside of the camp & to be murdered.

Believe me, Sir, honest, I was scared and I applied for renouncement of the United States citizenship.

The other day I got letter from Mr. C.P. Ritter, my former employer that he could give me a job. It was so nice of him and I realized that I was misled by the surrounding air.

So will you please cancel my application of the renouncement of the United States Citizenship? If you cannot do this, will you please grant me parole and let me go back to work for Mr. Ritter.

By the way, I was not member of the Hoshidan nor Hokokudan.

Yours very truly,

/s/ Kentaro Morioka

CONFIDENTIAL

September 25, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Mr. Ennis:

I have received your notice of April 17, 1945 that my renunciation of my United States citizenship has been accepted. I feel that I am asking for something almost impossible, but I would like to have all such forms cancelled. If this is impossible may I request for a parole out of this center in order to return to San Fernando, California where I resided prior to evacuation. It is regarding this matter that I am now writing to you. I do not deny that I have applied for renunciation of my citizenship and that you have accepted but I can truthfully say that I did not fully realize the drastic step I was taking. I realize now the worthless step I have taken and if I were in the position where I was able to think and decide for myself, I would never have permitted myself to be involved in such a stupid act as to renounce my rights as a citizen of the United States, the only country I know. I say this because I was coerced and driven into that direction by actual threats of violence so that I was unable to act as a free agent and express myself freely as I am able to do so by this personal letter.

Mr. Ennis, I shudder to think what drastic action I have been coerced to take by no fault of mine. Prior to evacuation I was living a life like any American citizen regardless of my physical features of a Japanese. I never placed any thought to my ancestry and never dreamed that the time would ever come when I would be ~~xxxxi~~ punished as a person of wrong ancestry. I had the greatest faith in the principles upon which this country was established and was fully Americanized as anyone else whose ancestry can be traced back to the group who came to America on the Mayflower. What is bothering me the most now is the fact that I cannot go back to my former friends with whom I have been reared, with whom I attended school and with whom I enjoyed common interest in sports, and model airplane events even though in the event you may make it possible for me to be paroled out of this center. The gap that will exist between our friendship which was caused by that sudden evacuation of Japanese only irregardless of being a citizen or of my devoted loyalty to America, makes me feel that there is no hope for me ever regain my former position if I cannot be permitted to leave this center or to be deported without a clarification of the underlying reasons behind my renunciation which I am attempting to do by this letter. Whatever your records may indicate me to be, I have greatest confidence in your judgment of the predicament I found myself at the time of renunciation conducted by the Justice Department in this center.

Life that I enjoyed since the time of my birth was like say that any Japanese American in California experienced except that my father passed away in 1933 when I was 17 years old, my sister Kimi was 13 years old; brother Jimmy, 10; and George, 7, so mother was the sole supporter of our family of 5 with all of us minors yet of school age. I remember helping mother by working as a farm laborer during week

ends . She worked for a florist in order to support the family. Prior to his death, Father was a truck farmer having come to America in 1905 from Japan. I graduated in 1935 from San Fernando High. There were very few Japanese in our graduating class so I had all the opportunity to become acquainted with Caucasian fellows and learned to think, act and believe that there wasn't such a thing as racial discrimination. I chummed around with William Lawrence Jones whose dad was an engineer for the Southern Pacific Railroad. I was unable to continue my education although I wished so much to graduate from college in mechanical drafting I remember Bill enrolled at the University of California at Los Angeles and became a metal shop teacher.

After graduation from high school, I helped mother by working as farm laborer for a large nursery and prior to evacuation mother and I were sole supporter of our family. During July of 1940, one year prior to the outbreak of this war, my mother and sister went to Japan for a visit. It is a Japanese custom to take the ashes of the deceased to the homeland for a formal burial. Upon completing this mission, my mother returned to America despite the urging of her relatives to remain in Japan. Mother was determined to make her living with the rest of us in America. My sister wished to remain there for about a year or two so Mother returned alone. The following year around November, there were signs of possible Pacific conflict so I attempted to get my sister back to America. Now my sister is still stranded there. Since my sister was the only daughter of the family, my mother naturally was constantly worrying about her. Mother's worries were partly responsible for the fact the family had to come to this unwholesome Tule Lake Concentration camp.

During my mother and sister's absence, on October 16, 1940, I registered for Selective Service just as any loyal American fellow would have done with no feeling that I was of Japanese ancestry. At that time, I was 24 years old but was deferred and reclassified as 3-A because I was the sole supporter of 2 minors, my brother George who was 14 and my brother Jimmy who was 17. As soon as Jimmy graduated from high school and my mother returned from Japan, I was no longer 3-A for Mother and Jimmy were able to work for the rest of the family. Thus, in March of 1942 I was reclassified as 1-A. I did not mind this at all even though since Pacific War had begun, eventual combat assignment was inevitable. I had my pre-induction physical examination which I passed and I waited for the day to receive my induction notice. Then, in April, a month later, evacuation notice was announced and I found myself under orders to move into the Manzanar center so I immediately went to my local draft board and explained my predicament. On April 28, 1942, I, like many others because of wrong ancestry was evacuated with the family to Manzanar center. I recall at the time of our evacuation, my Caucasian friends whom I've known since I was a kid knee-high to a grasshopper; friends who knew the family even before I was born, came to our help. They were sorry to see us go and sincerely expressed their warm wishes to see us back soon. My Caucasian friends who knew how I was awaiting the call to serve for this country thought I was being inducted into the Army and were unaware of the

fact that I was being evacuated as a Jap by a Presidential Proclamation formulated by the President of the United States and executed by the United States Army. I shall never forget that heartache we all suffered at that parting which if it never had occurred would never have placed us in a group to be classified at the end of the war as a "bunch of sad Japs."

After our bewildered trip up into Owens Valley, we came to the improvised concentration camp surrounded by barbed-wire fences and desert. We made the best of the confusion and unrest one can expect when thousands of people are suddenly moved from their homes to face a new type of life shrouded with the atmosphere of a close confinement. Here in the Manzanar center I waited for my induction papers but instead of such forms, I received a reclassification notice late that year of 1942 stating that I was now "4-C"-- the same classification as an alien. This was the second blow to me for I believed myself as a loyal American citizen in spite of the implication of distrust voiced in the evacuation order.

Soon after internment in the Manzanar center, I applied for work as fireman, a job I never dreamed I would ever be doing, and started to work immediately to keep my morale up. I liked this job very well because there was a fire college in connection with the work which enabled me to learn all about fighting fires just as is done in the Los Angeles Fire Department. Since there were so many interesting things to learn and so much to do, I did not place much thought to relocation plans the first year. I was thoroughly wrapped up in my work and so even in the December 6, 1942 riot, known as the Manzanar Riot, I did not witness the incident because I was captain on duty that day and was responsible for all of the men on duty. I kept all of them in the station so none of them received any injuries or became involved in that riot.

While at Manzanar, aside from my work, I took active part in Buddhist church functions. At one party we gave for our parents, we had as our guest, Mr. Galen M. Fisher of the Institute of Pacific Relations. He sat next to me at the head of the table and we chatted and became acquainted. Mr. Fisher later wrote to me from Ogden, Utah thanking me for the pleasant time at the party. I often wonder how he would feel if he ever learned what had happened to that jovial fun-loving group that assembled that night for the special party.

Life at Manzanar had many pleasant memories for I possess that American philosophy of life of enjoying and making the most of what I have. Then suddenly in February of 1943, the question of registration was thrust upon us. The Manzanar Center like the Tule Lake Center, was situated in the excluded area of California where no person of Japanese ancestry can enter. The real purpose of this new issue was not explained clearly. Confusion, suspicion, and distrust came over the whole camp. I was thoroughly taken by surprise when this registration issue came up. Until then I had forgotten all about my reclassification as "4-C" which was not because of my request but registration questions aroused in me that unpleasant 4-C classification. It remained in my mind so when the interviewer approached me the way he did, I was compelled to answer as I did. The interviewer was

Lieutenant Bogard of the United States Army. As soon as I stepped into the room he asked angrily, "Are you loyal?" I said, "No." and also told him I had planned to take Mother to Japan. That was all he asked. He did not ask why I chose to say "no" nor the underlying reason why I had to say Mother wanted to return to Japan. I wanted to tell him my position and feelings but any approach of that sort frightened me to limit my conversation. From then till segregation I was promoted several times from assistant captain to assistant chief then to chief and instructor of the fire college. I must say my stay at Manzanar was a very pleasant one with a feeling that I was acquiring so much in line of education which I was unable to attain on the outside.

Then came February of 1944 when segregation of so-called "disloyals" to Tule Lake Center began. I was classed as "disloyal" merely because I didn't get a fair chance to answer my question a year before. Just before we were leaving Manzanar, our acquaintance of long standing, Mr. Andre, owner of a tire shop back home, came with our belongings which we did not sell at the time of evacuation for we were planning to return soon to our former home. The house in which we lived is still left vacant for our return. We told him we were going to the Tule Lake Segregation Camp. He seemed to lay very little thought to the matter and felt it was our business. If he was surprised at the change two years in camp had made upon us, he did not express it. Mr. Andre was a sincere man who knew us so well. He sponsored our softball team back home. I played catcher on that team for 3 years. It was through him, I learned my friend, Bill Jones, had been promoted to the rank of Captain in the United States Army. A Japanese friend of mine is now back in San Fernando working for Mr. Andre. At our parting then, Mr. Andre asked us to write after we reached the Tule Lake Camp.

We were transferred from Manzanar to Tule Lake in February, 1944 after the November Riot which lasted for two months at the Tule Lake Center. The center was far from what I expected! It was in all sense a concentration camp! Never did I dream that so much was going to happen to me as soon as I was locked in this center which was far from anything I had ever experienced. It was surrounded by 2 high fences with guards in many guardtowers placed at supposedly strategic positions as one finds in penal institutions for incorrigibles. In this camp were many minors who had to be with their parents. There were many who can be proven to be nothing but loyal but mere for one reason or other had remained or drifted into this camp. A fence was built to divide the Caucasian people who worked for the WRA from the residents of the center. When we were transferred, the camp situation after the November Riot was asumed to be back to normal. At least that was what I expected but I learned later that the situation was quite on the contrary. There seemed to be a certain powerful group ruling the people of the center and whom everyone feared. They were later called the Hoshi Dan and Hokoku Seinen Dan. I was radically against such an organization being permitted to exist in this congested colony where no one was free to act and think for himself. No one in our family was involved in these organizations until that fatal night of October 1944, which was months before renunciation

procedure was introduced to the colony by the Justice Department. As my friend, my brother and I were on our way to night school, we came upon a man standing between the messhall and a barrack. His motions caused us to stop and investigate. Before I call away my friend, he was slashed by a sharp knife on the left side of his face ! Soon thereafter I learned that the man was influential in the Hoshi Dan and was a resident of the same block as our family! The brutality of the attack placed dreadful fear upon everyone in our block who were not connected with the Hoshi Dan for it was obvious what one may expect if one refused to recognize the organization as my friend, my brother and I had done. Hysteria of terrorism spread to other blocks in the colony and those who were non-members were helplessly driven to submit themselves to the influence of the Hoshi Dan Members for fears of physical injuries. The knifer was soon apprehended but the rest of us were helplessly left in the colony with immediate fears of being the next prey of this merciless group in which this knifer was a member. Despite Mother's pleas to stay out of this knifing case, I went to the trials as a witness of the incident because I felt it was my duty to prosecute the violator and to ~~en~~ enforce peace in our center. I was placed in a dangerous position by acting as witness for I was eyed as an "enu" or informer of all the activities within this camp by the members of this group. Our whole family was wrapped in fears. Mother, who is forty-nine years old, was so nervous and upset about my safety so in the meantime she registered as a member of the Hoshi Dan to save me from possible beating or knifing. It wasn't long before everyone who had no intention at first, were coerced to become a member of the Hoshi Dan for fear of physical violence. We had no other choice for we had no way of moving out or away from terrorism in this fenced-in concentration camp. There were no other ways out because relocation was not permitted in Tule Lake at that time and also in such frenzy it was impossible to even mention the word "relocation." It was just maddening how much power that group was able to exert upon us against our wishes. Even at the trials, I was inhibited to express myself freely for fear of violence upon my immediate family as well as my innocent friends. After he was sentenced he later returned to our block which just added more horrifying mental strain upon us all.

The year ended quietly without another incident for we were superficially members of the organization. We complied by clipping our hair and abiding to the regulations of that organization. I was married in February, 1945 to a girl from the same block as ours whose family were members of the organization for the same reason as we were. Then on the 12th of February, my brother George was interned at Bismarck Internment Camp in North Dakota. At the time of his apprehension, he had just become a member but since he was listed on a membership list which was confiscated by WRA, he was taken. I remember he had his renunciation hearing just before mine. He was eighteen years old then having graduated in December, 1944 from Tri-State High on the project. Since he was only a kid, he was afraid to withdraw from the organization since the pressure placed upon him

was too great. I regret very much that I sent my brother as a member of the Seinen Dan but that was the only way out at that time, for he had sacrificed himself in order to protect our family. He recently wrote that he will attempt to be released from Bismarck and join the family in Tule Lake.

As I recall now, I appeared at the renunciation hearing the first part of March when the camp was livelier than usual by the activities of radical organizations to make us all renounce our citizenship. Their power was augmented by the fervor aroused by periodic removal of these agitators by the Department of Justice. Once a member of the organization, there was no way of withdrawing from that organization and of feeling safe to roam in this colony. It was so bad that those who did not renounce stated in public they had renounced in order to avoid the consequences of a person who did not renounce. During the time hearings were conducted in this center, these organizations were permitted to display their might and power so ostentatiously as though their selfish aim was the intentions of everyone in this camp. It is just disgusting to believe that the Justice Department and the WRA remained on the sideline to watch us all renounce against our wishes when we couldn't act freely and express our true feelings toward this country. It may seem as though the hearing was conducted in privacy; however, when others within the block kept curious watch to see who did or who did not receive letters from the Justice Department, or who did or did not receive special hearing notices, there was no way out unless one renounced for otherwise one would be faced with the sad predicament of being eyed as a doublecrosser. I've never believed that such gangsterism could ever have been tolerated by any law-enforcing body!

Before I appeared at the hearing, I debated about appearing and pondered if there wasn't some way to avoid renunciation. There really was no way out with so much fear harassing me with additional worries over my brother George's apprehension, so I was compelled to appear at that hearing. At my hearing I was unable to express myself thoroughly except to say that I wanted to take mother to Japan so she will be able to join her daughter. I regret that I did not tell you my reasons for renouncing at that time. My hearing was about 2 minutes long. No doubt the Hearing Officer was aggravated by my hair clipped short which was no fault of mine. I avoided wearing regulation sweaters with the rising sun emblem.

You may wonder why I am so freely expressing myself now when I wasn't able to do so before. Now there is no pressure and I am sure you are aware of the blow the unconditional surrender of Japan was to these fanatics of those radical organizations who have quieted down now. Mr. Ennis, does it mean that the laws of the United States does not imply justice upon a person like myself who was compelled to renounce against one's wishes? Mr. Ennis, upon what laws of the United States am I compelled to suffer because of being a person of Japanese ancestry which is no fault of mine? Mr. Ennis, by what laws of the United States was I conficted to be evacuated from my home and my friends? Mr. Ennis, upon what laws of the United States was

subjected to ever be doubted as a "loyal American" when I had once been classified as 1-A? Mr. Ennis, does renunciation after the four years of my confinement signify that I am no longer a subject of the United States just because I was forced to renounce my citizenship?

Mr. Ennis, in spite of my predicament that I am now subject to deportation, I do still have the faith in the discretion of those who execute and enforce the law that there is yet some hope to have a rehearing upon my case ~~am~~ with some consideration of my past experience which I have hastily covered in this letter. I sincerely hope that my case will be considered as well as my two brothers and my wife. I shall be most glad to abide by any regulations set by you in restoring my former status as American citizen.

Sincerely,

Berry Norimasa Tamura

5311-F  
Newell, Calif.  
September 17, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Mr. Ennis:

This is to entreat you a favour, for regaining my United States Nationality. Although I appeared to one of the hearing conducted during the month of January 1945, I have not received an approval as yet. I am hoping it has not been approved for I am anxious to have my renunciation cancelled. I realized that I have made a serious mistake for renouncing my citizenship. But if I explain to you the reasons why I conducted such a drastic act contrary to my belief, I hope you will reconsider my renunciation and grant me a fair decision.

In October 1942, when I was in the Gila River Relocation Center, I received a notification from the Western Defense Commander in San Francisco, stating that my name is on the list of national exchange, which obviously, my mother has appealed to the Japanese government for my return, and I was offered whether I would accept it or not. I declined it because I believed in America and I preferred remaining in the United States. Prior to evacuation, I was a member of the Japanese American Citizen League and I served honorably as an active member in the Washington Township Chapter, Centerville, California. At that time, I sworn an oath of allegiance to America before a notary public which is recorded at the proper authorities in Alameda County. I am sure that will prove my loyalty to America. My feeling at that time was as I pledged myself as to be honor to her at all time and all places, and obey her laws, because I believed in America's institutions, ideals, and traditions, and I trust she believes in me. However, another notification pertaining to same subject was received from the State Department during the month of January 1943, which I was hesitated and could not answered it as promptly as I did on the previous one because I have an aged mother residing in Japan whom I am parting for nearly eight years. At that time, I thought she is worrying about me and thought she is making all efforts to call me back. It was a heart-break decision but I accepted the offer, just to ease my mother's anxiety. Also there was another reason in accepting it. That is in the International law, I understand, that the exchangees are forbidden to fight or work in the defense plant at time when the country is at war. So I thought it will not contradict my belief in American way of life.

In August 1943, I was designated as a repatriate and left Gila Center for Jersey City in order to embark on aboard the Exchange Ship, Gripsolm. However, unfortunately, in the last minutes I was rejected to aboard because of lacking space in the Gripsolm. Then, I waited three days at the Elies Island for an arrangement of a train bounded for Rowher Relocation Center, Arkansas. During that time I realized that I had made a great mistake contrary to my belief.

and I implored one of the officer represented the State Department to relinquish my plan to return to Japan during the ~~be~~ war. He replied that; that is beyond my power, and was told that I am bounding for Rowher Center, Arkansas where I can take a proper step. As soon as I arrived at Rowher I went to Social Welfare and took a proper step to cancel my plan and go back to Gila. Even my uncle, who was living at Gila had arranged my return through W.R.A. but it was failed. As a matter of fact, I have keeping the letters and telegram that my uncle had sent to me during that time which certainly would prove my efforts. Hence, I was brought to Tule Lake Segregation Center pending a next national exchange. Again, I desired to cancel my plan, so I went to the Social Welfare to request to go back to Gila Center, but I again could not fulfilled my desire. I gave up altogether in despair because I had attempted three times to cancel my plan and it were ~~unsuccessful~~ unsuccessful. What could I do? But being repatriated. Then the so-called Tule Lake incident occurred. Being resided in Tule Lake I was thrown into an abnormal situation. Moreover, rumours have constantly spread, and what worse was those fanatical group led this center into more abnormality; and a majority began renouncing their American Citizenship. At that time, I received a letter from my mother through the International Red Cross, stating that she is well and awaiting my return. Just then, a rumour heard-- that the national exchanges will be taking places in the very near future, even the newspaper have printed such in their articles. Simultaneously, a rumour again spread that the Nisei, or Japanese American who have returned to Japan on a previous exchange ship were imprisoned for not renouncing their American Citizenship. Without reconsideration I applied for renunciation which I found out afterward that it was a ~~ungrounded~~ ungrounded rumours.

A hearing was conducted, I did not have a chance to express my sincerity which I am regretting terribly now.

I am pleading for another chance to express my feelings in an environment which really safeguards me to know what I am saying and doing. If it is simply impossible to regain my citizenship, please inform me how I can be paroled out of this center to join my uncle, who is now living in Oakland, California, instead of being deported.

NAME: Minoru Matsumoto  
Family Number: 7352  
Birth Place: Fort Hall, Idaho  
Birthday: February 5, 1920

Your kind attention regarding this matter shall be greatly appreciated.

Yours most sincerely,

*Minoru Matsumoto*

August 10, 1945

My dear Mr. Besig:

This is in further reply to your letters of July 6 and July 17 concerning detentions at Tule Lake for violation of the special project regulations prohibiting Japanese nationalistic activities. We have completed our investigation and in this letter I shall report rather fully our findings and conclusions.

Basically there are, I believe, three points that concern you: (1) The need for and hence the reasonableness of the special project regulations, (2) the apparent lack of any limitations upon the discretion ~~ex gr~~ of the Project Director in enforcing the regulations, and (3) an apparent abuse of authority in imposing certain sentences involving minors. I should like to take up each of these points in turn.

1. When Tule Lake became a segregation center, WRA adopted a policy of permitting evacuees to operate Japanese language schools and engage in Japanese cultural activities, in recognition of the fact that many of the residents sincerely desired repatriation to Japan and that their children should be given an opportunity to become acquainted with Japanese culture. Unfortunately this policy was utilized as an entering wedge by a number of strongly pro-Japanese evacuees for the formation of virulently pro-Japanese nationalistic organizations. These evacuees were motivated chiefly by the desire to attain standing in the eyes of the Japanese government and obtain positions of leadership in the colony. To this end they instituted Japanese-type military drill, mass exercises, bugling, wearing of Japanese insignia, emperor worship ceremonials, pro-Japanese demonstrations, and other purely Japanese nationalistic activities designed not to serve any cultural purposes but to instill in the Tule Lake people a fanatical devotion to the principles of the militarist regime in Japan. By preying on fear of Selective Service they induced parents to exert pressure on their children to join the organizations. In addition they resorted to intimidation, threats of violence and actual violence in coercing residents to join the organizations and participate in their demonstrations. It was primarily due to the pressures of these organizations that over 80 percent of the citizens eligible to do so applied for renunciation of citizenship this past winter. When Department of Justice representatives arrived at Tule Lake to conduct hearings on applications, the organizations stepped up their demonstrations and their pressures on the applicants. Undoubtedly many of the applicants were in the grip of the emotional hysteria created by these organizations or actually acting under fear of violence, in confirming their desire to renounce citizenship during the hearings. The general uniformity of the answers given indicated that the applicants were well coached. These facts are reflected in an increasing volume of cancellation requests from Tule Lake renunciants, who frankly state in many cases that they were acting under compulsion in renouncing their citizenship.

On January 19, 1945, Mr. John Burling, special representative of the Attorney General conducting renunciation hearings at Tule Lake, addressed a letter to the heads of the two principal organizations setting forth

the position of the department of Justice toward the activities of the organization. A copy of that letter is enclosed (Exhibit I). In that letter Mr. Burling, speaking for the Attorney General, strongly condemned the activities of the organizations and stated that they must stop. Despite this letter, which was widely circulated in the center, the activities of the organizations did not abate. In order to maintain peace and order, protect the Tule Lake residents who were loyal to this country or who disagreed with the aims and objectives of the organizations, and to stop the subversive activities of these groups, two steps were taken. One was the transfer of the known alien leaders of the organizations (including persons who had renounced their citizenship) to internment camps. The other was the adoption of the special project regulations prohibiting the overt demonstrations which were fundamental to the organizations' programs.

As a result of these two steps the organizations have lost much of their prestige. Many evacuees who joined the organizations have notified WRA of their withdrawal from membership. Opposition to the organizations has come out of hiding. Nevertheless the influence of the organizations is still strong, and their activities continue. The Director of the War Relocation Authority believes enforcement of the special project regulations is still necessary in order to maintain law and order at Tule Lake and guarantee to the law-abiding residents the right to live in peace and free from fear of violence and recrimination for failure to assert aggressive loyalty to Japanese war aims. In the light of the facts I am unable to disagree with his conclusion.

2. As you state, the special project regulations assign no definite penalty for the prohibited acts. These regulations were, however, issued under and subject to the provisions of WRA internal security regulations applicable to all centers (Exhibit II). These over-all regulations prescribe procedural safeguards with respect to arrests and prompt arraignment and hearing. The right of the accused to counsel is guaranteed and the Project Director is specifically responsible for seeing that a complete case is fairly presented. The maximum penalty that can be imposed by a Project Director for commission of any one offense is imprisonment for not more than three months. In addition, any evacuee may of course carry his case directly to the Director of the Authority if he believes that he has been unjustly dealt with, and during the course of center operations a number of evacuees have done so.

Our investigation has revealed no departure from these over-all regulations by the Project Director in the enforcement of the special project regulations. While the sentence imposed in a number of cases has exceeded 90 days, this has been because more than one offense was committed. We have found no instance in which the sentence imposed exceeded 90 days on any one count. Out of 454 persons apprehended for open violation of the special project regulations, 424 have been released without further action, after lectures on their behavior. Eleven received sentences ranging from 90 to 270 days. The remainder received sentences of 90 to 360 days, with 60 to 250 days of the sentence suspended on condition that they not violate the regulations after release. It has been the general practice to carry out sentences of imprisonment only in cases where the violator is recalcitrant and states that he will continue to disregard the regulations if released. I believe that these facts reflect sane and considerate handling of this difficult problem.

3. Four recent cases of violation, including the two you mention in your letter of July 6, have involved persons under 18 years of age. Reports on these cases are enclosed (Exhibit III). Despite the youth of the offenders, the facts in the cases do not indicate in my judgment that the sentences imposed were unnecessarily harsh or that the cases could have been handled satisfactorily in some other manner.

None of the four youths involved in these cases has been classified as a detainee by the Western Defense Command or by the Department of Justice. So long as they wish to remain residents of the center they will be required under WRA regulations to serve their sentences. They are, however, free at any time to leave the center even if they are serving a sentence for violation of center regulations. The War Relocation Authority does not maintain that it has power to detain any person who is eligible to leave the center and wishes to do so, even if he is being disciplined for violation of project regulations. Administrative Notice No. 207, which prescribes this policy, is enclosed (Exhibit IV). I should also point out that the Authority could legally expel any such person from a center, although as a matter of policy this power is exercised only in aggravated cases.

In summary, I am unable to conclude on the basis of our investigation that the special project regulations are unnecessary, that the WRA procedures for enforcement of the regulations are unreasonable, or that the Project Director at Tule Lake has exceeded his authority or been other than temperate under the circumstances in enforcing the regulations. I do not, of course, believe that my judgment should interfere with any action that the American Civil Liberties Union might deem appropriate under the circumstances. I should like to point out, however, that action such as you propose will doubtless be widely publicized. Enemies of the evacuees on the West Coast will undoubtedly play up the activities of the pro-Japanese organizations which will be the basis for the Government's defense. So far as the long run interests of persons of Japanese ancestry in this country are concerned, I think that the contemplated action would be a serious mistake.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Abe Fortas

Under Secretary

3118-F  
Newell, Calif.  
August 25, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Honorable Mr. Ennis:

I am asking you to grant me a parole as a regular Issei going out of this camp. Since my application for renouncing of American citizenship has been approved, I am not eligible to go outside and make a living with my brother who is living in Chicago.

I have been a member of the pro-Japan organization, Hokoku Seinen Dan, and was told that unless I renounce my U.S. citizenship by the end of February, the United States army would draft us into the Army by March after W.R.<sup>A</sup> forces us to go outside. I didn't want to be forced to go out for I have no friend except my brother. At that time I couldn't very well depend on my brother for he didn't have established himself in a business field. According to his letter of the recent date, he think ~~y~~ he can support me while I attend American high school.

I am sorry my renunciation has been approved for I knew at a time that the rumor of the pro-Japan organization wasn't to be depended upon, but nevertheless I did.

Since I was told by a block manager that the project attorney made a statement at the block managers' meeting pertaining to the status of those renounced citizenships in the effect they would be treated like any other enemy alien in the center. But I was told that I am a segreguee. This was contrary to my understanding of my status, because if the statement by the project attorney as a truth, I should be treated like any other alien, whose majority is on the free list to go out. Aside from this, I am very sorry that the rumor-like talk by the members of the Hokoku Seinen Dan influenced me to renounce my citizenship.

Especially, after Japan surrenders unconditionally, I am particularly sorry that I had hope in Japan because I thought Japan was a strong country though it was contrary to the fact. Another reason of my wanting to go to Japan was to see my mother, who lived in Hiroshima, but I don't expect to see her alive any longer.

Mr. Ennis, please parole me from the center. I promise you that I will live up to the provisions of parole without failure.

Sincerely yours,

Yoshinori Kubota

September 14, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Sir:

.....  
My husband, Juzo Kawamoto, went to Japan on August, 1940 to visit his parents in Hiroshima City. Thinking that by renouncing the citizenship I may rejoin him sooner, I applied for the renunciation and received my paper. As a result of the fate befallen upon Hiroshima, I am convinced that he is dead. Consequently I have taken the necessary legal steps to annul the marriage through the Project Attorney of the Tule Lake Center. I have two sons, Donald Kenichi, age 10, and Raymond Shizuo, age 7. The children being both the American citizens and Minors, I am responsible for their welfare and feel that their education should be done here. Your humane understanding into this matter will be greatly appreciated. I am eagerly waiting for your favorable assistance and action on my behalf.

Gratefully yours,

/s/ Mrs. Kiyoko Kawamoto

7502-E  
August 28, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Sir:

.....

In April the Evacuation of the Japanese Ancestry started and everything was in turmoil. Peoples feeling started to change toward us, some innocent people got killed without any reason at all. My Caucasian friend tried his best to keep us there but we had to part with regret and sorrow.

My wife being pregnant at that time I wanted to have her near her parents if possible so with the help of my Caucasian friend I went to get a permit but they say, No! My wifes family evacuated May 3, 1942 and my wife was put into the hospital. Parting with her parents in the time of her need and the shock of the whole thing something happened to her after the birth of the baby. I had 3 doctors look at her but they couldn't find what was causing the sharp agonizing pain of the nerve everytime she moved. Before I could keep an appointment with another Dr. who was a nerve specialist we were evacuated to ~~the~~ Turlock Assm. Center. I even had to hire an ambulance to take her to the Center. When we reached Turlock Assm. Center they ~~didn't have a~~ ~~Barrack~~ didn't have a place to put my wife and the baby. For a hospital they had only 1 Barrack in which they had all kinds of patients from communicable disease to broken legs. I protested when they tried to ~~help~~ put my wife and the baby in with those sick patient. With the help of my wife's cousin who was a registered nurse I got another Barrack for my wife and baby. To make matter worse they didn't have any hospital equipment so I asked my Caucasian friend to get me some bed pan, babies tub etc. Leaving my wife as a hopeless case the Drs. didn't even looked at her so I pleaded time and time to send her to some hospital outside so some Nerve Specialist can see her but they said no! I was half crazy with worry and looking after the new born baby was a problem. I thought over and over that if I were not evacuated I could give my wife the best hospital care she can have.

.....

/s/ Takeshi Kosugi

2904-B  
Newell, Calif.  
Sept. 10, 1945

The Attorney General

My dear Attorney General

I wish to appeal to your excellency with regard to my status derived from my frivolous action of renouncing the cherished American citizenship so that I may be able to relocate with the family. I have appealed to Mr. Edward J. Ennis, Director of the Alien Control, Department of Justice, on July 10, 1945 asking my renunciation of citizenship be cancelled. The reply I received was that my renunciation was complete and that there was no way in which it can be undone. Then I have appealed to him again and again with no reply.

Even though the Army Proclamation removed the restriction orders but because of my present status as renuncree prevents me from family relocation.

I have understood through hearsay that one of my status may be able to relocate on parole. Frantic as a drowning man who grasps at the straw I am appealing to your excellency as a last hope changing my status.

I was born in Sacramento, California twenty-five years ago, educated there; never visited Japan, lived as a good citizen in the same locality up to the outbreak of war. Mass evacuation and the confusion that followed the evacuation was a nightmarely experience to my life as I was taught and believe in the Constitution of America. Such great change literally the bolt out of the blue, stupified me. The Center life which I lead among great mass of Japanese people was full of inconsistency and dilemma to my mind as I have become to know them fully. As my center life prolonged, contray to my opinion I cannot help but feel that I was swayed by the opinions of others.

At the time of the denunciation of my citizenship my husband Byron Akitsuki, who as the co-ordinating Committee, and whose efforts and the cooperation with W.R.A. have been instrumental in restoring the order to this center in 1943 riot, has taken gravely ill and confined in hospital. I had no one to consult with confidence on the matter and I was forced to agree and act with other renouncees in order to avoid bodily threats and intimidations. A young wife ~~and~~ ~~with~~ with two babies has no alternative but to follow the crowd. I did not realize the consequence until now. It was at my husband's advice, that I immediately contacted Mr. Edward J. Ennis for cancellation.

My family is contemplating the relocation just as soon as possible. I appeal to your excellency's sympathy and assistance so that I may be able to leave the center with them on whatever the status--- possibly an alien without country. (I did not have Dual Citizenship

Respectfully yours,

Tetsuko Akitsuki

8303-F  
Newell, Calif.  
August 22, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis, Director

Dear sir:

A few months ago I asked for renunciation of my citizenship, but I have not had any answer regarding renunciation. I wish to cancel my application for renunciation which I already sent a telegram to the Attorney General. I have been regretting since the day I appeared at the hearing for I never considered renunciation as the proper step to take for a person like myself who believed in the American way of living. I realize that it may be too late to request cancellation now but I feel I must explain to you the circumstances that forced me to request and to appear at that hearing against my wishes.

Life in this concentration camp has been rough and rugged. Never have I had to live so confined and so suppressed. No one in this camp is permitted to live a free life as one would expect to find in a democratic nation. Thus putred camp as composed of people who were good American citizens and aliens who were law abiding persons prior to evacuation but after being forced to evacuate just because they were "Japs," by a presidential proclamation executed by the United States Army, these people have become embittered and close confinement behind these high fences that one finds in German concentration camp have enhanced their hatred and disgust. They have been shut off from the true American influence and have gradually submitted to believe every rumor that may have the slightest bearing upon them. They have learned to suspect every rule and regulations. They have coerced others who were sympathetic with America regardless of what wrong America had done on them to believe, act and express loyalty to Japan. Such a group ruled this camp at the time of those Justice Dept. hearings. What exasperated me that such an organization was ever permitted to organize in a camp like Tulelake which had blackened the name of every Japanese in America by that "November riot." That organization was permitted to display their might in this camp during those hearing. That organization enhanced their power day by day as the hearings proceeded. They were the ones who instructed us just what to say and what to do at such a hearing. They were the ones who saw to it that we received notices to appear and also saw to it that we left our homes for that dreadful hearing. We were hypnotized to act according to the pattern set by that organization. In my block practically everyone is a member of the Hoshi Dan and Hohkoku Dan. The members all have their hair cut off like a nun and every morning about 6 o'clock they are parading all around the camp, blowing trumpets and making lots of noise. They are just a crazy organization. Persons like myself who were not members were not spared from their pressure and threats. They stared at me and talked about me and my family as spies, because I would not belong to their organization. For non members like me it was hard and dangerous to be walking around when they are assembled. Pretty soon a rumor started that if you do not renounce your citizenship for America something terrible is going to happen. At that time there was lots of

rumor against people who do not renounce. Also there was a rumor that if you are not a member of this crazy group you are a spy and helping America so they said they are going to club us. Many were hit by the members of this group and some had black eyes and others had cuts and bruises. For many days I thought and thought about what was the best step to take but I was so scared of the mean things they do I was driven to send in an application for renunciation. This was not what I wanted to do, for I wanted to keep my American citizenship. People in this camp who were not renouncing went around saying they renounced so that their life would not be endangered. Such person ever shaved off their hair to look like one of the rest and not be suspected as an American sympathizer. Most regrettable fact is that such an important issue as what to do with one's precious American citizenship had to be presented in this dreadful place at a dreadful time when this camp was in the worst condition of its history. At the time the Renunciation Act was presented to the colonist the ban on the west coast was rescinded, so the two was interpreted as the same, this is it was a measure to shove everyone out of camp back into the uncertain environment they were forced to leave three years ago. The newspapers were full of articles of hatred for the Japanese to return to the West Coast. These news article made it clear every Jap. that was seen back in California would be short. With this lovely background and the past embittered experience of the Japanese these organization worked up clever stories why we must all renounce and what was the real reason behind renunciation. First it sounded like rumors but hearing it told by every one, rumors became reality. We were tricked into the camp rumors as the actual truth.

I have a nisei wife and child who are American citizens. My father-in-law and mother-in-law and also their children are all loyal to America. My father-in-law came to America as a little boy and has been here for ever forty years. My sister-in-law is working as a teacher at the grammar school. My wife's cousin is outside relocated and is employed as a mechanics. The things and answers I have done until now are not things I wanted to do but was made to do by this crazy group. All my neighbors are members of this group.

I have a house and ranch at a place called French Camp in San Joaquin county. On the way up to Tulalake from Manzanar I wanted to jump from the train to my home. My home is situated right near the train tracks. I even wished the train would break down as it passed my ranch so that I can at lease lay my body once more on my own soil. I want to get my citizenship back right away, and rush back to my ranch as soon as possible.

I have graduated from Stockton High School and my teacher could tell you more about me. My former teacher is Miss Elizabeth M. Humberger; Stockton High School; Stockton, Calif.

My next door neighbors were:

Mrs. A. McKesson  
1520 N. El Dorado St.  
Stockton, Calif.

Mrs. J. Morris  
1548 So. California St.  
Stockton, Calif.

The enclosed letter is from my friend to whom I wrote concerning jobs outside while still at Manzanar.

The other two letters are my wife's who corresponds with her former teacher, Miss Anne L. Harris.

I volunteered and signed up for fruit, hop and grain harvesting in Oregon, but this was canceled by the Oregon Company. When I signed up for this, I was planning to stay outside and not come back to camp anymore. The sad part was when they told me that the work was canceled. This was in 1942; this episode and the other one disappointed me very much for I wanted to go out very badly to help serve the country.

This time, I hope, I will be able to go out for good for I know I am a good loyal American citizen.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Hidenori Asano

Shimao Miyamoto  
2001-D  
Newell, Calif.  
August 22, 1945

Mr. Ernest Besig

Dear Sir:

.....

I never wished to renounce my citizenship but to stop my parents pleading and sobbing I went to an interview for renunciation and said I am renouncing because my parents wished to take me to the old country ever since I was about 13 or 14 years old.

.....

Sincerely,

Shimao Miyamoto

September 5, 1945

Edward J. Ennis, Director

Dear Sir:

On March 22, 1945, I asked for the renunciation of my United States Citizenship and on May 17, 1945, I received the approval but at this time will you please forgive my hasty decision and return my citizenship once more?

May I plead to you to listen to the true reason why I had asked for my citizenship renunciation and why I would like to have it returned once more.

I was called upon twice once to the Army hearing of the Question No. 28 and the other for the renunciation of my citizenship and at both of those time I was not able to tell my real story for I did not want any misunderstanding due to my poor English but at this time I wish to make my true statement to you as clearly as possible.

With my heart full of happiness and desire to see my dear birth place once again, I landed at San Pedro, California, on May, 1934 - only to find disappointments one after another. The voice of the racial discrimination was loud everywhere I happened to go. When I went to seek for a rent of a house there would be a sign like this, "White people only." It was the same at the nice restaurants and at the dance halls. I thought it was done to me just because I could not speak fluent English but I heard from many Niseis that they had been treated the same.

One of my friend, while dancing at Santa Monica Pier dance hall was kicked out suddenly just because he was a "Jap." Also, many of us Niseis (many of them university graduates) could not get a job at the American firms just because of their race and colors - only the fortunate ones were able to obtain positions through the Civil Service Examinations.

These incidents had made my heart burn with fury because these doings were against the Constitution of the United States, and yet there were no penalties given to these so called "High Classed Americans." It had made me think, "Is there such a thing as "All men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; etc. But since I was born in the United States I firmly made up my mind to become a good citizen of the United States and do my part as a loyal citizen of the United States.

Hence I had joined the organization called the Japanese American Citizen's League and did my share at the time of the elections of President, Governor, etc. Shortly a division for the Kibeis had been organized within the Japanese American Citizen's League so that the Kibeis could learn the ways of the American life and language. I

joined the division in 1935, the year it had been established and when I had become the president of that division in 1941 - we started an English class for the benefit of the Kibeis and hired a teacher and formed a class specially to study the United States Constitution. Also in order to Americanize these Kibeis we opened many social affairs.

Meanwhile a Japanese Communistic newspaper called the "Doko" wrote many false rumors and untrue statements about our organization and its members beside myself that we were being pro-Japanese. They had written such trash just because we had chased them out of our organization for causing much disturbance with their communistic ideas. We did not do anything nor formed anything which was anti-Americanistic. We were not pro-Japanese we wanted to be a good American citizen and that is why we had organized the Kibei Japanese American Citizen's League within the J.A.C.L.

Then the war, "the JapaneseAmerican War" which we most dreaded had started and although this is a private matter my father's store which he had struggled and established 39 years ago (today) was frozen and also our account in the bank had been blocked from December 8, 1941.

Due to these circumstances our means of living had been stopped. Although we pleaded to have the store opened once more the United States Government did not answer to this plea until only a week before the evacuation and as the curfew had been put on we could not sell our merchandise to the customers but sell them at almost a total loss to the Jews.

Then after we had evacuated to the Manzanar Center I heard many rumors about the Kibeis being hunted by the F.B.I's., and being questioned. To my surprise, they too, had looked me up and questioned me with all sorts of questions.

Also as soon as the war had started the law abiding Isseis were stripped off of everything they had (those Isseis who had struggled and worked hard to build up their little foundations) and was forced into the relocation camps - many of them penniless and even the Niseis, citizens of the United States had been forced into the camps while the Germans and the Italians went free.

Here to my utter disgust and a disappointment I was forced to think "What does the Democracy of the United States really mean?" It showed nothing but a pure racial discrimination.

Just before December 7, 1941, I believe it was around September of the same year, when things began to look bad between the United States and Japan, Mr. G. Nakamura, president of the Central Japanese Association (Cluo Nippon Jin Kai) and one of the members of the Japanese American Citizens League visited many of the prominent leaders of the United States asking them to aid the Isseis (who had resided in the United States for more than 40 years and who had been good and peaceful people as any good American citizen) in the event

of the Japanese American War. These outstanding leaders readily promised to help the Japanese for they knew that the Japanese were peaceful loving people without hardly ever crimes committed in this country; that they will not treat the Japanese as an enemy alien and throw them into the camp. But when the war really had been declared - what did they do to help us Japanese? Nothing! They never kept their promise but threw us directly into the camps without any time to settle or store our possessions.

It truly had burned me to think that these prominent people of the United States would have lied. I could not trust the Americans nor the United States "democracy" any more.

I, therefore, made my decision to come to the Tule Lake Center. When I came here I decided to renunciate my useless United States citizenship. I certainly thought and firmly believed that this unrationalistic democracy could not possibly win the war but to my very surprise! it had won the war in Europe and now have defeated Japan. This I couldn't have believed it unless my friends out in Colorado, Chicago, Iowa and in Pennsylvania had written to me many times how nice and cultured the Caucasians were out there - no racial prejudice - in fact, they treated you like one of them.

Now I am beginning to understand that I had been wrong about the United States Democracy. My point of view had been wrong. It was only about one tenth of this great United States (California and other Pacific Coast States) that had the cruel racial discrimination against the Japanese and the citizens of the Japanese ancestry.

Now I understand what real Democracy means in a big sense and I truly regret that I had been narrow minded and had asked for the renunciation of my citizenship.

Please believe me I had renunciated because of the rash racial discrimination against us Japanese - toward us citizens of the United States also and had turned them into the camps without giving them any chance to store their valuable possessions or properties while the Germans and the Italians were free and as we at the Tule Lake center were disloyal citizens of the United States, I did not want to be greedy enough to keep my United States citizenship and use it when necessary - when necessity claimed me. Since I was disloyal to the United States I wanted to be honest about it but now I deeply regret that I was too narrow minded and if you will please forgive me and give me another chance I would like to go on to the eastern states and see for myself what real Americans are as my friends had said.

Won't you please give back my citizenship rights once again and let me go out to the Eastern States - especially for the sake of my dear little baby boy who was born on July 11, 1945. I wish to make him a good broadminded citizen of the United States and let him live in this great democratic country among the cultured people out in the East. I promise we will be a good citizen.

Very truly yours,  
/s/ Kiyoshi Hori

5817-A  
Newell, Calif.  
August 22, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis, Director

Dear Sir:

Perhaps I do not deserve to have your attention to this matter, but I hope you will be kind enough to let me explain why I applied for the renunciation of my citizenship when I did.

I regret very much that I let pressure and rumors get the best of me at that time.

When the Renunciation Bill was passed by Congress and it became effective, the Hokoku Seinen Dan, Hoshi Dan and the Joshi Dan were already formed here in the Tule Lake Center. They rejoiced to learn that the Renunciation Bill had been passed and began putting pressure on everyone.

Although I was never a member of the said organizations, I was reminded by it's members of the horrifying three weeks I had spent at the Immigration Station before being interned in the Sand Island Detention Camp in Hawaii; of the United States citizens of Italian and German descent enjoying the freedom as any other American citizen while we lived an abnormal camp life; of the statement made by General DeWitt, "once a Jap, always a Jap"; of how little interest the United States government seemed to have in us as citizens; and of the terrorism throughout California to the returning Japanese Americans.

It was easy to see their side of the story after three years of abnormal camp life.

Then there were all sorts of rumors being spread during this time. There was a rumor to the effect that everyone, except the isseis and those who had renounced their citizenship, would be forced to relocate. Since I was interned in Hawaii, and transferred over to the mainland, it was, and is my desire to return to the Territory of Hawaii. If at that time there were possibilities for me to return to Hawaii, I am sure I would not have applied for renunciation. I did not wish to be relocated within the United States the place of where I know nothing and no one.

With the foregoing pressures and rumors pressing my mind, I finally put in my application for the renunciation.

I regret very much the mistake I have made in applying for this renunciation and if it is possible will you please reconsider my case.

I will deeply appreciate your kind attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,  
/s/ Yoshimi Kamei

If there are no possibilities of cancelling the renunciation of my citizenship, will you kindly inform me as to how I can apply for parol. Please acknowledge the enclosed cancellation form of my repatriation.

August 10, 1945

Mr. Norito Kajikawa  
7407-D  
Newell, California

Dear Mr. Kajikawa:

I have read with great regret your letter of July 20 concerning the situation faced by your family as the result of your wife's renunciation of American citizenship. Apparently you and your wife, particularly your wife, regard the situation as hopeless. May I suggest to you that although a satisfactory final solution does not seem available at the moment, subsequent developments may relieve your situation materially.

In the meantime, there is no reason why you and your family should not continue to reside at Tule Lake in a law abiding manner and thereby lay the basis for your plans after the war. Even though your wife may have achieved alien status, you will recall that thousands of aliens have lived very peacefully in the United States for many years. Please remember also that the war has raised many difficult problems for all of us. Not only persons of Japanese ancestry, but nearly all people in the United States, and for that matter, most of the people in the principal countries of the world have had to face many soul testing situations as a consequence of the war. Usually a final satisfactory answer to problems of this type is not available immediately and much hard work, and sometimes a considerable period of time are required before the difficulties can be wholly resolved. The War Relocation Authority has attempted to help work out the problems of the evacuees as rapidly as possible and as long as it is in existence, will continue to do so. Although the action of your wife of course has vastly complicated the problem in your own case, my suggestion is that you avoid taking any further rash action which would complicate your situation still more. I am asking Mr. Best, Project Director at Tule Lake, to consult with you in order that the most satisfactory solution possible may be found.

Sincerely,

/s/ D.S. Myer

Director

Marienne Haruye Iriye  
8014-H Tule Lake  
Newell, Calif.  
December 20, 1945

Mr. Wayne M. Collins

Dear Mr. Collins:

I have no words to express my gratefulness to you. You have done so much for me that I don't know how I can ever thank you enough.

After the immigration had received your telephone call I was called to the office and was told that I was released to go back. But I did not know that the deadline for this coming boat was on the 15th. If I did know this I would not have written you my last letter. Therefore I was supposed to have had your permission by then, but because I did not know this I thought that I was able to go on this boat if only I received your permission. There is no since (sic) of my going on the next boat when my parents are leaving on this one, that I have cancelled everything. If I can not go with my parents I don't see any reason of my going later since I was going because of them.

You see, I always wanted to be a real good nurse, and since they'll be needing so much in Japan I thought that I can be of some help there, but since I won't be going anymore I want to be a great helper to the people of America.

My parents were very understanding about my not getting to go. As you know I have tried my best. My only hope now is that they'll be healthy and await my visit to Japan.

Mr. Collins, am I out of your case now? After all the trouble I have caused you, I don't really deserve your kindness, but if it's possible do you think that I can be added to your list again?

Thanking you again and again for everything.

Yours very truly

/s/ Marienne Iriye

702-B  
Newell, California  
August 31, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis, Director

Dear Sir:

.....

Being deprived of privileges and civil rights; being isolated from society for three years within a barb-wired-fence camp, it is only natural for one to suffer physically and mentally. The Renunciation Bill passed by Congress found me in just such a state of mind. At that time, my issei parents believed that all aliens here would be deported to Japan, while all the citizens would be forced to remain here. We were therefore confronted with the problem of preventing family separation.

Being an only child, I felt that it was only right for me to go wherever my parents went. Although I have never been to Japan, nor was very familiar with their language, to express filial piety to my parents and also with the help of strong camp pressure at the time, it seemed that the only alternative was to apply for renunciation of citizenship, as many have so thoughtlessly done.

.....

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Kayo Iida

Kayo Iida

D. of J. Alien Enemy Control Unit

August 22, 1945.

AIRMAIL

Dear Mr. Besig:

I have for reply your two letters of August 7, 1945 and your letter of August 11, 1945 relating to the detention as alien enemies of persons of Japanese ancestry who were formerly United States citizens but who renounced their citizenship pursuant to Section 401(i) of the Nationality Act of 1940 as amended. In reply to these letters I shall also refer to your letter to the Attorney General of July 24, 1945. It is evident from all of these communications that you are not familiar with the considerations of policy which led this Department to recommend the enactment of the amendment to the Nationality Act permitting voluntary renunciation of citizenship nor with the subsequent problems and considerations associated with the administration of the new statute. Because of your interest in this important public question I shall furnish you with a statement concerning the Act and concerning the legal questions which you now raise.

In the fall of 1943, following the disorders at Tule Lake on the first and fourth of November, a great deal of thought was given to the entire problem presented at Tule Lake by persons of Japanese ancestry, both citizens and aliens, who freely asserted their loyalty to Japan. It was found that there was at Tule Lake an inner group numbering well over a thousand young American citizens who were militantly loyal to Japan and who asserted the hope to return to Japan to fight for the Emperor and the desire to make all possible trouble for the United States. As a practical matter, it clearly would not have been possible to expel this group from the camp and to permit its members to be at large on the West Coast. As a legal matter, however, since they were born in the United States, there was no doubt that they were United States citizens, whatever their loyalty might be. It was Attorney General Biddle's opinion that the constitutionality of detaining American citizens not charged with crime on the ground that they had been administratively determined to be disloyal was, to say the least, extremely doubtful. He thought it not unlikely that, if a writ of habeas corpus were brought and pressed, such detention would be held unconstitutional. If there was ever a case where the practical necessity of the situation was such, however, that the court might be driven to diminish the historic liberties of American citizens by permitting such detention, a habeas corpus case brought on behalf of avowedly disloyal persons of Japanese ancestry during the war most certainly would have been that case.

The answer to the apparent dilemma appeared to lie in the fact that the very degree of disloyalty which prevailed among the fanatical group at Tule Lake would in all probability induce the members of the group to renounce their citizenship if given an opportunity to do so. This it was believed would permit the detention of that group which clearly had to be detained in the real and demonstrable interests of national safety while at the same time avoiding the detention of American citizens. I believe that it was Mr. Biddle's view that such a program would serve the purpose both of national defense and of safeguarding civil liberties.

Accordingly the Attorney General recommended an amendment to the

Nationality & Law to permit a citizen voluntarily to renounce his citizenship. Because it appeared that during the war some renunciation of citizenship, not necessarily associated with the problems of Japanese-Americans, might be injurious to national defense, it was recommended that the right to renounce citizenship be limited by the power of the Attorney General to reject the renunciation if he found it contrary to the interests of national defense. The legislation was enacted by Congress in the form recommended by the Attorney General, and now every American citizen in time of war has an absolute right to renounce his citizenship limited only by the power of the Attorney General to disapprove it if the Attorney General finds the renunciation contrary to the interests of national defense. Neither the Attorney General nor any one else has any authority or discretion to reject renunciations of citizenship on any other ground.

It is also to be observed that at the time of the Attorney General's recommendation of this legislation to Congress there had been introduced in Congress at least a dozen bills providing for some form of involuntary loss of citizenship such as on the basis of a negative answer to question 28 of the so-called Loyalty Questionnaire of February 1943 or on the basis of any written or spoken statement of disloyalty to the United States. The danger which such legislation presents to civil liberties is apparent and it is believed that the enactment of the voluntary renunciation of citizenship bill was effective in preventing the passage of involuntary expatriation bills.

Precisely because it was foreseen that pressure might be brought to bear on citizens at Tule Lake to renounce and because it was feared that duress in the legal sense might be employed, every practicable measure was taken to make sure that each renunciant was not under immediate duress and understood the legal consequences of his act. Under the statute it would have been possible and easy to have appointed a group of clerks at Tule Lake and to permit those desiring renunciation merely to file past and sign a renunciation form. Instead, the Attorney General promulgated regulations requiring each person desiring renunciation individually to write to the Department asking for an application form. The application form itself then had to be sent to Washington and subsequently an individual hearing was held.

Inasmuch as the only issues which the Hearing Officers could legally consider were (1) whether the applicant understood the nature and consequences of his act and was voluntarily renouncing his citizenship, and (2) whether the renunciation would be detrimental to the interests of national defense, the hearings went far beyond what was legally necessary. They were under the general supervision of my assistant John L. Burling who has been working on problems concerning the Japanese-American group since several months before the evacuation and who is keenly sensitive to the civil liberties aspects of the problem. He conducted the first hearings himself and set up the pattern. All of the Hearing Officers were sent out from the Department in Washington and were either attorneys or other professionals of high standing. They were all given instruction as to the background of the evacuation and as to the group at Tule Lake. The form of the hearings themselves went as far as possible toward

minimizing the possibility of duress. Each applicant was heard alone in a closed room with no other person of Japanese ancestry present. This necessitated the use of Caucasian interpreters which was difficult from the standpoint of personnel. A full stenographic transcript was made of each hearing and each hearing continued until the Hearing Officer was satisfied that the applicant understood that the signing of the paper would constitute an abandonment of all rights as an American citizen and until he was satisfied that the applicant desired to sign the renunciation form. In endeavoring to make sure that the renunciation was voluntary the Hearing Officers frequently asked questions such as concerning the applicant's experiences and loyalties before the outbreak of the war, his reasons for not considering himself an American and his attitudes toward Japan and the Japanese Emperor. In almost every case the applicant responded with a determined effort to paint himself as being fanatically loyal to Japan and as believing that the Emperor Hirohito is the living god, for whom he would willingly die. Since the applicant was alone, except for the Government officials, during the course of these hearings, it would have been possible for him, in the event that he feared injury if he did not renounce his citizenship, to have told the Hearing Officer and for him to have left the hearing without signing the renunciation form and without his failure to renounce being known to any person of Japanese ancestry except himself. On several occasions this was done.

It is true that the number of renunciations was several times larger than the number anticipated. I do not, however, attribute this to the existence of a great number of persons who did not desire to renounce their citizenship but who were forced to do so because of fear of reprisal. I do attribute it to a great wave of pro-Japanese feeling which reached its high point in the late autumn of 1944 and the early months of 1945. At the time the hearings were started there were two organizations at Tule Lake having very large memberships which were openly carrying on pro-Japanese activities. One of these, the Hokoku Seinen Dan, was made up of young men. Nearly two thousand of these men were getting up in the morning, putting on a kind of uniform which included a rising sun embroidered on a sweatshirt and were marching in military formation and taking part in Japanese patriotic observances. These rites were accompanied by a well-trained bugle corps. Members of this organization shaved their heads so that they might more closely resemble Japanese soldiers. The purpose of this organization was to train these men so that they would be ready to fight in the Japanese Army if they should be returned to Japan. Their elders were less noisy but equally fervent. Their organization openly published a Japanese language paper containing Japanese propaganda. A Greater East Asia School was flourishing.

What stimulated this wave of pro-Japanese feeling is a matter for conjecture and need not be gone into here. Its existence, however, is beyond dispute. It appears furthermore that at least to some extent the number of renunciations was also increased by the opinion, which may or may not have been correct, among citizen-residents of the Tule Lake Center that renunciation was necessary to avoid compulsory relocation before the end of the year 1945. In any event, whether the residents of the Tule Lake Center renounced because they felt loyal to Japan and thought that the renunciation of American citizenship would serve as an indication of

allegiance to the Emperor upon their return, or whether they renounced because they believed that this would make sure that they would be kept in detention during the war, or whether they renounced because they wanted to be in the same legal status as their parents or brothers, the fact is pretty clearly established that they understood what renunciation meant and that they wanted to go through the process. Whether they were wise or intelligent in making that decision is, of course, another matter entirely. I am satisfied, however, that in substantially every case the renunciation was accomplished as an exercise of the renunciant's free will.

The situation in which the various persons who have written to your organization asking your assistance in helping them restore their citizenship is that of persons who voluntarily made a change in their legal status and who now regret their action. As I have written several of these people, I have sympathy for them; but I am at a loss to understand how the Department's policy can be criticized. It is difficult to see in general why any citizen should not have the right to renounce his citizenship if he wishes to do so and it is also difficult to see what the Government should do in such cases beyond making sure that the act is understood and is not coerced. I do not perceive how any Government official could be asked to go further and to undertake to decide for the particular applicant that, notwithstanding his professed desire to renounce his citizenship, renunciation would not be in accord with his best interests.

It must be admitted that it is unfortunate that as a result of their own folly some 5,000 American citizens have thrown their citizenship away. On the other hand, it must be admitted that important public benefits have also been achieved as a result of the renunciation program. Following the decision of the Supreme Court in Ex parte Endo, the constitutionality of the detention of American citizens on the ground of disloyalty became even more dubious and at the same time it would have been, as a practical matter, impossible to release the 2,000 young men in the Hokoku Seinen Dan who asserted their desire to die fighting for the Emperor of Japan and who were already organized in semi-military formations. Due to the renunciation program, however, the problem was never posed and, in fact, shortly before he left office Attorney General Biddle informed the War Department that he did not believe that the detention of American citizens on the ground of disloyalty was then constitutional and the War Department and the Western Defense Command accepted his opinion and removed all citizens from the detention lists. Military officials have made it clear that the renunciation program was an important factor in leading them to accept this view. Had the Japanese war gone on longer the importance of this victory for civil liberties would, of course, have been greater, but even as it is every American citizen of Japanese ancestry (except those involved in criminal proceedings) was free of detention for some time prior to the cessation of hostilities.

Coming to the specific criticisms raised by your letters, I have already dealt to some extent with the question of pressure and renunciation. I have no doubt that there were many cases in which pressure was put on citizen children by alien parents. In every case, however, the child was given full opportunity to make a statement in the absence of his parents and, if he decided to do as his parents wished, it was his own choice and

there was no means by which the law could step in and forbid him to do so. The hearings were in no sense perfunctory and were far more careful than was necessary as a technical legal matter to determine whether the subject was acting voluntarily. In no case was duress a factor since that term refers to an act committed in immediate fear of bodily injury and since the renunciant in every case was alone at the time of the hearing and could not have been in immediate danger of any sort of physical injury from another person of Japanese ancestry.

As I have indicated, the Attorney General is without authority to disapprove renunciations unless he finds that such disapproval would be contrary to the interests of national defense. There is no case arising at Tule Lake in which the interests of national defense would be injured by approval of the renunciation. It follows, therefore, that the Attorney General is, as a matter of law, required to approve the renunciations (I am not now discussing the somewhat difficult question of whether a renunciant may withdraw his renunciation prior to the Attorney General's approval) unless he should find it to have been involuntary.

It is the present intention of this Department to keep in detention all renunciants and, therefore, Shigeru Kawano, to whom you refer in your letter of August 7, will not be permitted to leave the Tule Lake Center. The authority under which this detention is ordered is to be found in Section 21 of Title 50 of the United States Code and the Presidential Proclamation of December 7, 1941 delegating to the Attorney General the power to detain aliens of enemy nationality. You are correct in believing that no Presidential Warrant has been served upon Kawano. This, however, in no wise affects the legality of his detention.

Legally speaking, no warrant whatever is necessary to apprehend an alien enemy and the term "Presidential Warrant" is merely one which we in the Department of Justice have come to use for an order from the Attorney General to the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation instructing him to apprehend a particular alien enemy. It came to be called a Presidential Warrant, for no legal reason, in the early days of the Alien Enemy Control Program because it was analogous to a warrant and was based upon authority delegated by the President. It is, however, entirely intra-departmental. Since the Tule Lake Center is maintained by another department of the Government, the Attorney General has not sent an order to the Department of the Interior but has accomplished the same purpose by authorizing a letter to be written to the Department of the Interior requesting that that Department detain renunciants whose names appear on lists supplied to it. The name of every renunciant at Tule Lake appears on such lists.

Individual renunciants have not been informed that they are to be detained because the War Relocation Authority, I believe correctly, feared that if it became generally known in War Relocation Authority Centers that every renunciant would be detained that might lead to a fresh wave of renunciation in other Centers by persons who were loyal to the United States but who, because of economic fears, were unwilling to leave the Centers and who might renounce their citizenship as a means of insuring their continued detention in a camp. For this reason only such renunciants at

Tule Lake as have indicated a desire to leave have been told that they are in detention. For the reason just given I feel that you would be performing a grave disservice and would be inviting thousands of additional renunciants if you were to inform your clients that the order is a general one.

Coming to the question of whether some of these renunciants are stateless, as you suggest, or are nationals of Japan, you are correct in believing that this Department is of the opinion that every renunciant may be presumed to be a Japanese national. The basis of this presumption is that under Japanese law a child born in the United States of Japanese citizen parents may himself acquire Japanese citizenship. Prior to a date in 1924 citizenship automatically attached to the child unless the parents went to the Japanese Consulate and filled out a form rejecting it on behalf of the child. After that date Japanese citizenship attached to the child if the parents registered his birth with the Japanese Consulate. The question of which American-born have Japanese citizenship therefore, is a question of fact depending upon formalities before the Japanese Consuls. The records of the Consulates, however, have been destroyed and no evidence as to this question of fact would appear to be available except perhaps in some cases the testimony of the parents. The authorities are clear, however, that if an alien is detained as an alien enemy under Section 21, Title 50, U.S.C. the burden of persuasion is upon him to prove that he is not of enemy nationality. In this situation, however, the Department is not relying upon the legal circumstances that the renunciant is unable to sustain the burden of persuasion but relies upon the additional evidence of the subject's adherence to Japan in time of war. In almost every case the subjects told Hearing Officers that they were dual nationals or that they considered themselves as being Japanese. For example, George Fumio Tsuetaki, who you state advised you that he has never held dual citizenship, made these responses in the course of the hearing:

"Q Why don't you hold your citizenship?

A Well, I can't have both at one time.

Q Why not?

A No, I think I have to make up my mind one way or the other.

Q Don't you think it would be better if you held on to your citizenship and then went to Japan and if you didn't like it, come back?

A I don't think they will stand for that either, because I am pretty sure they want me to be definite and I don't think this country would want a person like me if I weren't definite.

.....

Q Why don't you retain your citizenship?

A If I go back, it is the only way I have to be definite you know. I appreciate all the help you people are giving me.

Q Do you understand if you give up your citizenship and go to Japan, you can never come back here again and if you hold on to your citizenship, you can go to Japan and if you don't like it you can come back here?

A I don't think that's right though."

In addition, in an overwhelming majority of the cases the renunciants assured the Hearing Officers that they keenly felt allegiance to Japan and rejected any allegiance to the United States. In the light of these circumstances it appears to me that it is reasonable to presume that a person born in the United States of Japanese parents who during a war between the United States and Japan voluntarily renounces his United States citizenship and declares his allegiance to Japan is, in fact, a national of Japan.

It may be, of course, that there are some cases in which the renunciant can obtain evidence sufficient to carry the burden of persuading the court that, notwithstanding his rejection of United States citizenship and his assertions of loyalty to Japan, he is nevertheless not a Japanese national but is merely stateless. If you find such particular cases, it would be appropriate either to bring the facts to the attention of this Department or to institute habeas corpus proceedings since it will be conceded that persons born in the United States who become stateless are not subject to internment under the existing statute. In view of the persuasiveness of the reasoning that the children of enemy aliens who renounce their citizenship in time of war are in fact nationals of the enemy country, I do not believe, however, that evidence of bare assertions by the renunciant and his parents that Japanese nationality was rejected or that the birth was not registered at the Japanese Consulate will be sufficient.

You next ask how it is possible for persons born in the United States to be interned. As I have already indicated, the internment is under the Authority of the alien enemy act which authorizes the internment of any citizen of an enemy state. The significance of birth within the United States is that such birth confers citizenship. Once the citizenship is renounced the protection acquired by birth here disappears and the enemy national may be interned like any other alien enemy. In passing, I may say there is nothing peculiar to persons of Japanese origin about this. There are probably several million citizens of German or Italian origin who could be interned if they renounced their citizenship since both Germany and Italy recognize jus sanguinis.

You indicate that your branch of the American Civil Liberties Union contemplates litigation to compel the restoration of citizenship in some cases and to test the validity of detention in others. I certainly do not wish to prevent you from seeking to safeguard what you deem to be essential rights of American citizens or of stateless aliens residing in this country. On the other hand, I feel that I should point out to you that it would be necessary for the Government in defending such suits to make the arguments which I have just advanced here. I feel that you should consider carefully whether the prospects of success in the ~~lit~~ litigation are such as to make it in the public interest at this time to litigate issues such as these ad

*Eunis*

418-C Newell Br.,  
Tule Lake, Calif.  
August 20, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Mr. Ennis

Upon receipt of your reply to my letter of July 23, 1945, I immediately wrote you another letter of inquiry concerning many vital matters. Up-to-date I still have not received any reply to the letter of August 10, 1945.

As we are very interested on returning to our former place in Sacramento County in the State of California, we went to the Leave Office. It seems as though we are on the Stop List by the Dept. of Justice because of our renunciation. We regret very deeply that we took such action without any knowledge of its consequences. Prior to the hearings we were daily, everywhere we went, told and forced by the pressure group to say what we did at the hearing. Within the block and the hospital dining room where I am working, there were those who demanded that we renounce our citizen. There were threats, fights, restlessness and complications over this issue. There existed wild rumors that persons not taking such measure will be immediately forced out of the camp without any advance notice to unknown destination; and we would be outcasted by the people and our innocent children mistreated. If only there were round table discussion, lectures, debate, etc. on this matter of renunciation, no doubt we would not have made such a grave error. There were no "pro" and "con" on this matter. Since the Dept. of Justice have interned leaders and members of this group, the "hokoku-Hoshi dan", we were relived and were allowed to think this matter seriously without any opposition, but alas it was late because we had already put our signatures on the request for renunciation. Within our hearts, we are very loyal to the United States as any other "John Doe, American". For instance when a rotten apple is put aside a good one, and as time elapses, the latter will gradually spoil because it was in contact with the spoiling one. We were just like that. Living in camp like this, we are in close contact with one another, and when rumors begins to fly there is no limit. It was just like an epidemic. The disease of renunciation got hold of us before we realized the extent of damage, and it was already beyond cure.

I was inducted into the United States Army after my graduation from Rio Vista High School. I served very faithfully and proudly for the country I dearly loved and the only ~~country~~ country I really knew, because I never set foot on another country. To me Japan means nothing, as I never have seen it. Just because of accident of birth I am called Japanese by my color and race. After being Honorably Discharged from the armed services, I was immediately sent to this camp. At first I was indignant to think "Was I not an loyal American who also did his part when the country called me?" I served Uncle Sam so we Americans could preserve the "rights of freedom of the

of the press, freedom of the speech and religion," and the right to live freely wherever he desires, but we were put in this camp where freedom is deprived.

Now, we are the parents of two son, Dennis, 2 years, and Ronald 10 months. For their sake we wish very much to relocate to our former place where we know and rear and educate them in this democratic country where one can think freely and speak freely instead of the militaristic, and imperialistic Japan. We do not want them to make any grave errors like us. We are Nisei, who do not speak or write Japanese fluently, and do not and have not belong to any Japanese society or club. Our views and thinking are American. We are very grateful and give thanks to God that we were born and reared in the U.S. and glad our children can call U.S. their home.

It is our desire that we relocate and work honestly and diligently and loyally. What do you mean when you said that we are exposed to legal consequences?

Can't we become naturalized American citizens? We have no criminal or any other bad records.

As we would like to relocate, your immediate reply and aid on above matter will be very much appreciated. We have requested a hearing from the Western Defense Command. Can you also give us a hearing?

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Tom Isamu Akune

Helen Ayako Akune

Bldg. 4715-F  
Newell, Calif.  
August 27, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Mr. Ennis

To date we have not received your answer to our application. Thus, we are under the impression that our citizenship status is still intact. Today, we are in better position to realize the course of action that we took. So will you kindly spare a minute or so of your precious time to read my letter and help us out as it means so much to us.

About six months ago through confusion, pressure and rumors I applied to renounce my citizenship which was the greatest mistake I ever did in my life and I regret it very much.

At that time this center was controlled by Hoshi-Dan and its pressure group and they said that anyone who didn't renounce would be chased out and the aliens deported. Thus, the families will be split up. We were also informed that in order to have our citizenship removed we have to answer all the questions so that it would be opposing this U.S. Government. Since evacuation, I have lost my father and my only sister within a six months period which was a very great shock to my mother. It took her a long time to get over it. Then, this pressure group and the rumors started to come up which said that ~~citizens~~ and aliens will be split up. After seeing how much my mother had gone through, confusion and pressure I applied for renunciation not realizing what the outcome would be.

We wanted to leave Tule Lake many times before this but with this group working against the people and the things they said about the people leaving the centers made us stick it out till now.

I am married and have a boy two years old and my wife is expecting another baby by the end of the year. Through cowardly acts of myself I have stayed in here and it has brought so much misery and heartaches to rest of the family and also jeopardizing the whole future of my children.

As I see my little boy playing innocently beside our barrack not knowing what the outside world looks like and to think that I'm the one who has deprived him of all this privilege of being a free-person I felt so bad that I don't know what to do.

I have never been to Japan and I do not have dual citizenship. I have never joined Hoshi-Dan or other organization.

Mr. Ennis, will you kindly cancel my renunciation for the sake of my little boy? If that cannot be done by the "Law of the Congress" we would appreciate it very much if we could leave this camp on parole.

Very truly yours,  
/s/ Tadasu Fukushima

13169C  
Newell, Calif.  
Oct. 7, 1945

Edward J. Ennis

Dear Sir:

I am writing this letter in support of the previous one which was in regards to my sincere desire to withdraw my application of renunciation.

Your reply to the same was very unfortunately to me for obvious reasons. But since you have mentioned the fact that my letter would be on file in the event a re-examination of my case is in order, my intention is to convince you that without influence my loyalty to America is without doubt. To this statement I am sure all my friends outside will testify. Then you will ask me why I renounced. There are many factors that probably contributed to this; some of them I have mentioned before and some I wish to amplify now. But surely all that I may write or say will not have summed up conclusively all the factors that brought about my hasty action. I further wish to emphasize the fact that without being in my shoes so to speak, it is almost impossible to understand and recognize my state of mind at that time under such environment confronting me.

When the subject of renunciation came up I prayed to the utmost, that no opportunity be offered to me lest I would be persuaded away from my true way of thinking. I was very much afraid that I would fall into these same hands. Unfortunately this was my case.

I was somewhat persuaded to join the "Hoshidan" and the "Seinendan" but this I refused instantly when I learned that they were doing things contrary to the American ideals. I am very sorry to hear that they were the ones that pleaded that hearing officials be sent whereby renunciation could be possible. If the W.R.A. had been able to break this organization up completely in its early stages, I am sure this renunciation would have been another matter.

I had no knowledge of the true consequence in renouncing; just as it is still indefinite. Before I went to hearing I understood that if I renounced I would be treated just like my parents, as a alien and I would be permitted to go out anytime; therefore I did not take it seriously. By renouncing I had the impression that I would be just another alien hence would not be compelled to part from my parents who are also aliens.

My parents also minimized the true facts or interpreted it in a manner of their own whereby they could persuade me to do as I did for their only desire was to keep us together with them.

"Follow the crowd" slogan was another cause which barred me from thinking straight. As I have said before it is beyond me to bring every detail crystal clear before you but may I cite another

of my foolishness. Tsuneo Moriki who is one of my best friend, and I were brought up together from our early childhood. We were very good friends and entered camp together. When I asked him about this matter, he told me he had sent for his papers and was soon to renounce. Hearing this and considering other factors such as false statements, lies, persuasions, rumors and what not, which they made me believe, I immediately sent for my papers and appeared before the hearing officials. My mind was such that all I had in mind was to renounce. Whether the question set before me were against my will or not was a different problem altogether. I guess under those circumstances whatever they may have asked would have made no difference. It was not a hearing in the real sense of the word but in reality it was a matter of signing to renounce.

Under more favorable circumstance whereby I could have acted upon my own will without influence from mob psychology I am positive this matter would have been beyond my imagination. Just recently I found out that Tsuneo Moriki had cancelled his renunciation and had relocated to Philadelphia, Penn. I have made a serious move under the most unfortunate circumstances and I wish to rectify it. If you will carefully re-examine my case I have pointed out to you that loyalty was not involved in this case within my heart.

According to your letter no official of the government has the right to reconsider my case whereby I may reclaim my citizenship. Due to this fact, I am seeking parole whereby I may resettle and reside in this country. I mentioned this fact in my former letter but I wish to emphasize and tell in full my conduct as a citizen and my pledge to abide with the laws of the United States. First of all I have never joined any organization subversive to the American ideals. I have obeyed all regulations set before me in this camp. I have never been questioned or tried on any account here or any other place. If you will recall the incident of Nov. 4, 1943 when martial law was declared and everybody went on a strike by declaring "status quo" no one was allowed to work except the mess hall workers. Otherwise you were looking for trouble. At that time I was working at the turkey farm. If I should have quit work like the rest, the turkeys would have been a total loss to the government. Mr. Smith, then head of the farm division pleaded for me to work. Realizing my responsibilities I worked outside the guarded fence despite threats from people who declared "status quo." Concerning my conduct during these crucial time and my sense of responsibility I am listing Mr. Smith then head of the Agriculture Department as reference.

"Obey thy father and mother" one of the commandments is another factor which can not be overlooked. In our family of ten only my older brother and I have renounced. We had every consideration for the family since we were the oldest and were more dependent upon. To refuse would have meant feud within our family. My younger brother who has no consideration for them refused. Now I regret that I had obeyed my parents. My parents are now admitting their mistake. They are sorry to have put me in such a predicament but at the same time they are more than proud of us to think we were loyal to them. I

believe when one gets old it means a lot to them to know that their sons have great respect for them. On my part it was not a matter of loyalty or disloyalty I wish you can see my point of view.

.....

Respectfully yours

Hideo Furukawa

September 28, 1946

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Mr. Ennis:

My wife and I are writing to you in connection with a problem arising from our renunciation of United States nationality.

I was born at San Gabriel, California, on December 11, 1915, and during my early childhood I was a resident at Torrance, California. Until I became 12 years of age, I was attending the Torrance Grammar School and upon my completion of the sixth school year, I went to Japan with my folks. I remained in Japan approximately seven years and returned to this country in 1934. During my residence in Japan, I attended the grammar school but I always felt that my home was in America and this is the reason why I returned to this country in 1934.

Upon my return to this country I was working in the vicinity of San Gabriel in a drive-in market until 1940 when I made my second trip to Japan to study chick sexing. I returned to this country in 1941 after the completion of this course and was working in the vicinity of Pasadena and made an annual trip to Pennsylvania for the purpose of chick sexing. Just prior to evacuation I was residing at Pasadena, California, and upon the issuance of the Presidential Order, I voluntarily evacuated from the military area designated No. 1 to the White Zone at Newcastle, California. However, due to various circumstances, this area was also designated as Military Area No. 1 and I was evacuated direct into the Tule Lake Center in July of 1942.

I was very much annoyed by the treatment I received in that I was always under the impression that I may not have to evacuate from the area designated as Military Area No. 2. In fact, the evacuation has always been a disturbing factor in making a reasonable presumption in answering the loyalty question. Through bitterness and anger, I replied in double negative and for this reason I remained through the segregation period in this center.

After the segregation I noticed that this center became a hodge-podge of many diversified people and interests. There were constant troubles and turmoil within this center and within it the contingents of hotbeds. It finally ended in the November incident in 1943. Through the outburst of this incident arose a very semi-militaristic organization referred to as the Hoshi-Dan. In our block were two leaders of this organization, Masao Sakamoto and Tohara, who were propagating tremendously the virtues of the organization and they had even gone to the extreme of threatening me if I did not join said organization. They made numerous visits to my home and attempted to coerce me to join the movement. Although I did not join said organization I was scared into thinking that if I did not renounce they would carry out their threats. Due to this fact my wife and I went through the process of being heard by your hearing officer in February of 1945.

My wife, Shizue Hatakeyama, was born on January 23, 1921, at Newcastle, California. She went to Japan at the age of 2 years and returned to this country sometime in 1941. We have one child by our marriage, who is two years of age, and we were married at Los Angeles, California.

The reason for my wife's renunciation was due to the fact that undue pressure was exerted upon me and my wife, and she took this action due to the fact that I went through the process of being heard by your hearing officer. Our original intentions were that we did not wish to return to Japan and it was through the bitter experiences we witnessed through the evacuation days and the undue pressure and threats made by the Hoshi-Dan leaders that we took this step.

There by, we shall appreciate your kind assistance in granting us some consideration whereby we may be paroled from this x center and lead a normal life in America.

Yours very truly,

/s/ Fumio Hatakeyama

Shizue Hatakeyama

5115-C

7301-E  
Newell, Calif.  
July 6, 1945

Mr. Edward J. Ennis

Dear Sir:

This is in reply to your letter of June 26. In it you write as follows:

- (1) That you are replying to my letters to the Attorney General which I wrote on May 25 and May 31 asking that my renunciation be canceled.
- (2) That I had a hearing and executed the renunciation on February 15, 1945.
- (3) That someone, --you say the Attorney General,--approved this on March 22, 1945.
- (4) That I was given a careful hearing and asked whether I understood what I was doing at the time.
- (5) That I said I did and it was my own wish to do this.

Mr. Ennis, in spite of these five statements you make, I repeat that I would do anything to get my citizenship back. I was born in this country. Both my sister and my brother who were born here have not renounced. My sister has relocated and my parents are thinking of doing the same. I would do anything to get my citizenship back. You probably wonder why I say these things repeatedly. It is because your five statements do not state the real truth of this case and my desire to remain an American citizen is so strong that I would contest your arguments to the end of my days.

Permit me to correct the five points in the following way. The first point is right, for I do not think my renunciation should ever have been approved and I wrote this to you twice before. Yes, I had a hearing on February 15. But on February 15 when I had my hearing, I was so upset I did not know what I was doing. Suppose some people came to the hearing in a trembling rage because of the rumors in the camp as some friends of mine said they did. They were not in their right mind about this hearing, Mr. Ennis. There was no one at the hearings to check this, as you know. Let me remind you that there were five or six thousand hearings in a few weeks ground out in about ten minutes apiece for losing citizenship forever. I did not arrive at the hearing in an angry mood. But I had heard rumors all through the camp for weeks that if any of us did not renounce, we would be forced on the outside with our families to face an uncertain future which I was not then prepared to do. Pressure of friends who believed these rumors unbalanced my view so I could not really understand what I was doing clearly. I know for a fact that some of my friends were under personal terror and were threatened to do this thing. Others saw that everyone was swept along to renounce and they thought they had better do it too. I know many Nisei and Kibei who were so upset that they were not acting of their free will, and they now regret this action. I write now because I can see it all clearly at this time and looking back, understand my true feelings. I am sure others will see things more clearly as the pressures, and the

excitement in their minds dies down and they will no doubt write their true feelings as time goes on. You would not be so heartless as to disregard all these statements and say that the fears and grief and unbalanced minds were good and proper hearings.

Then you say the Attorney General approved this on March 22. I do not know who approved it, but I am sure he did not understand the mental state I was in and that my ten minutes hearing was not the type to show it. It is also said he approve it "as not contrary to the interests of national defense," I consider the charge ridiculous. I am only 21 years old and I just graduated American High school at the age of 20. I was eighteen when I came into Relocation camps. I had no skills at eighteen, no military training and I guess I was pretty much like any other Nisei fellow coming out of San Francisco. I was slightly better than average in school, and I guess I'd be as lousy at sabotage as any other high school kid. Am I then a danger because I renounced like practically all the fellows and girls at Tule Lake my age, some because their parents swallowed the rumors some because a minority group threatened them, and some like myself because we couldn't in the least see or understand then what those ten minutes meant to our lives? I want to make one other point about this. If I or anyone else had gone to the hearing from a normal home in a normal community on the outside, our mind would have been normal and practically no one would have renounced. Anyway, this is true in my case. I don't think whoever approved these hearings ever lived inside the three manproof fences around Tule Lake and ever lived in barracks from the ages of 17 to 20.

In the 4th place, you state I had a careful hearing. I remember it was short, I'd guess about ten minutes. The hearing officer was a woman I'd never seen before. She didn't ask me anything about myself except the routine questions they asked thousands of young people here. I thought I was going back behind the fence or be put out of Tule Lake. This is what kept my answers on the road of confusion which I now regret. You can ask a man blinded by confusion if he understands what he is doing. The answer proves nothing as in my case.

Camp pressures, rumors, the unwise advice of friends were the reasons for my state of unbalance. It was not my personal wish or choice after consideration to do anything other than retain my citizenship. I hoped I would not lose it. The relocation office where I applied tells me now that the action was approved. The only appropriate question now is how to get real consideration of my individual case. Under the law, ten minutes of folly has destroyed all my plans for a future in this country and holds me a prisoner at Tule Lake in an environment I detest.

Finally, you say you regret the "tragic consequences" of this earlier act, but the "renunciation procedure is surrounded as much as possible by safeguards to make sure that renunciants understand what they are doing." My whole point is that these safeguards were not adequate in the picture of Tule Lake, they failed in my case even to show the mental state I was in for the stenographer overlooked such things and the hearing officer made no inquiries. The

safeguards were not enough in other cases where terrorizing or parents' unwise advice or rumors made young, unworldly simple people do what they did. If the law contains such weak spots and if Tule Lake is different from any climate on earth, hurting people's ideas and common sense, then this law to be just not only to me but to hundreds and perhaps thousands of other high school aged children, should have a provision to appeal such cases or have a re-hearing when sense strikes home and there is no blinding confusion. In American law, I do not think youth have their futures and lives shaped by ten minutes from behind the barbed-wire fences and for the words and blindness of youth receive a sentence to the end of their lives which holds them from their families, from freedom, from their country and does this for youth in wholesale lots of thousands of careers. Or does this law allow such things. The question is not mine. The hearing is now yours.

Sincerely,

/s/ Minoru Kiyota

715-D  
Tule Lake Center  
Newell, California  
September 13, 1945

Herbert Wechsler

Dear Mr. Wechsler:

I am one of those person who does not wish to be deported i.e. if you are planning to start deportation proceedings against me.

The reason why I have not written sooner is because I am a defeatist. But if you are going to start deportation proceedings against me just because your department thinks I was disloyal or just because I renounced my citizenship then, I have something to say to that. If not, it won't be necessary to read any further.

Here are the facts which you can check one by one to prove my statement that I never was disloyal.

First of all, before evacuation I was a law-abiding mild-mannered with maybe a little too much inferiority complex but nevertheless a hard working farmer. I have never been to Japan.

When I submitted my answers on the Selective Service Form No. 304A, you will find that I have answered Question No. 28 with an unqualified "yes". Although I have answered question No. 27 with a "no", in all probability I would not have been accepted by the Army even if I had answered "yes" and volunteered for combat duty because I am not physically fit. This statement can be readily proven because I went to take my pre-induction physical examination at the Base Hospital here in Tule Lake on May 2, 1944. I received my classification as 4-f.

The next day, May 3, 1944, I was taken to the Administration Building and questioned by the FBI in regards to the Selective Service because many of them did not show up for their physicals. You will find that when I was questioned, I stated that I would take arms and defend the United States if ever She was attacked by the enemy.

Now the, as for my stating that I still had dual citizenship at the time of my renunciation hearing on March 8, 1945. If the hearing officer had my birth certificate in front of him, he could have shot this question, "Why is it that you applied for a duplicate copy of your birth certificate on December 9, 1941 at the Hall of Records in San Jose, California?" I would have been stuck for an answer because the reason is quite obvious that I had relinquished my original birth certificate in order to cancel my dual citizenship with Japan.

You can also check at the California Department of Public Health, Registrar of Vital Statistics, Sacramento, California and find that on January 8, 1945, they made a photostatic copy of my birth certificate because I had requested it. Now I ask you if you don't think a person who cherishes his birth certificate was not under pressure to renounce his American citizenship?

This letter is not an appeal to have my renunciation canceled but it burns me up to hear about deportation when some educated bastards who tried to get me into the HokoKu Dan; who had influence and acted so cold towards me when I did not believe or listen to them when they expounded how Japan had already won the War. These fellows who will be free to roam around again in the United States while us suckers who yielded to pressure are to be deported, one a chemical engineer, one a dentist just to mention a few who were aliens in the first place, well, all I can say is "that beats all." "This one really takes the cake!"

Yours truly,

/s/ George Minoru Harada

October 29

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The following article appeared in the Rocky Shimpo on  
October 23. It was written in Japanese by Shinituro Nomura.

Let's Not Miss the Bus

Since the outbreak of the war, the number of publications

Rocky  
Shimpo

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on Japan and the Japan-U. S. war are surprisingly abundant. Publications concerning the Japanese in the United States are not scarce either. For instance, DeWitt's Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, Japan in Fortune magazine, or Cary McWilliams' new book, Prejudice: Japanese Americans, Symbol of Racial Intolerance ---- these are good examples.

"Americans are too ignorant of Japan" --- this statement is becoming obsolete. If we are not careful, such a time might come when the Americans will know a lot more about Japan than we do. Unless we do something quickly, we will "miss the bus".

Among the publications treating the Japanese problems in the camps, Kibei Nisei by Dr. Spicer, the chief of the Community Analysis Section, is a valuable contribution. It is something no Japanese in the United States could accomplish. It is a work of surprisingly thorough researches.

For long, the Japanese liked to read. To prove this point, I can cite the annual rates of publications (although these figures are those of some years ago). The number of publications for the year in Japan was more than 23, 000; in Soviet Russia, 38,000; in Germany, 24,000. Japan was the third in the world. The figure for the United States was unknown, but it said that Japan was far in advance of the United States as to the number of publications.

Because of circumstances, the Japanese in the United States did not have much opportunities to read books. Now with the advent of the war, they were denied of new publications from Japan. At present they are reading books <sup>in</sup> ~~at~~ the libraries in the centers. These are the books which had not been burned (RN: The Japanese <sup>were</sup> ~~are~~ afraid to possess books in Japanese after

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Pearl Harbor.) and collected in the libraries. But this is a golden opportunity for the Japanese. For Japanese books are scarce, they are forced to read English books whether they like or not.

To this office there come many inquiries asking the names and the publishers of new books. Most of these are for war books. Why is it that we don't have <sup>many</sup> inquiries for books on political science, economics, diplomatic history, etc.? Now that we have been denied to have books from Japan, this is a good opportunity to study the history and the political organization of the United States.

I wonder if it wouldn't be a good idea for the Adult Education Departments of the Relocation Centers to begin courses on the United States --- not for political reasons but for academic purpose? It is a great shame not to know the United States when we live in the United States. I, too, am ashamed of it.

The camp life is unlike the busy life of the outside. They have opportunities to study in every way. To know the real condition of the United States will be useful when we go out on the outside.