

[Hikida mss]
Gila

I
MY FUTURE AND REPATRIATION

While I was detained at Fort Missoula, Montana, on June, 1942, I have applied for repatriation to Japan, for two reasons. First reason was that assuming I will be ordered to be interned for duration, I thought I will be better off to return to Japan rather than spend duration of the war behind the barbed wire of internment camp. The second reason was my future life that is should a place of my future activity be America or Japan? On August of last year I have been paroled and came to this relocation center as a result of which first reason of my application for repatriation to Japan had been nullified.

On or about October last year, a notice had been sent to me from Colonel Benedeson asking for my desire to be repatriated to Japan or decline it. At that time there was no sign of immediate possibility for exchange ship to be negotiated between Japan and this country. And further-more, being paroled and able to live with family in the relocation center under normal living condition I had no particular desire to go to Japan. Therefore, in reply to Mr. Beneditson's inquiry I notified of my declination. It should be understand that my past as well as present had been based on a principle of good, desirable, law abiding resident of the United States. I have lived in America with this principle always and I have preached this to my people through my associations with them. I have always devoted myself to be a worthy alien Japanese resident of this country. I am proud to say that I have continued love and devotion to the United States. Even if I am one of those unfortunates to be confined to this camp life at present time I have no complaint to make whatsoever. On the other hand I am grateful of fair and human treatment which we are receiving at this time of crisis. No matter what will be my future, America shall always remain in mind as a fatherly nation of my life.

Today, I am in receipt of a notice from Washington office of W. R. A. handed to me by Mr. Landward, which original is attached herewith. Since receipt of this notice, I began to be concerned so much about my future career, just as I was once concerned so much when I applied it first at Fort Missoula, Montana. It is one of most difficult and puzzling problem of my life. It is not because of my love to the country

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of which I am subject or national but it is only because of the circumstance under which I will be in post war period, the future of my career. I am now on the cross road to choose between two ways; one is to live in democratic America with no citizenship right and with a certain social discrimination. Being born and lived my younger years in Japan, I consider myself far from being average Nisei.

IV
IMPRESSION OF MR. SMITH'S SPEECH AND REACTION

Mr. Roy Smith who returned to this country from Japan, August last year, by the exchange ship, GRIPSHOLM, spoke to the Japanese evacuees in Gila Relocation Center, on January 30th, at the center's amphitheater. Mr. Smith, while living in Japan for more than 30 years, was a professor of English at Kobe Higher Commercial College. Because of his long residence in Japan and of his experience there during first six months of present war following the Pearl Harbor attack, his appearance as a speaker in this center attracted a large number of audience, particularly the Isseis. According to my estimation, there must have been more than one thousand people gathered at the amphitheater to hear his speech. The speech was delivered in English and translated into the Japanese by Rev. Tashima of Episcopal Church.

The writer wishes to present herewith his personal opinion of the speech as he heard and also the opinion of and general reaction of the evacuees audience as this writer obtained through direct contact with them on ensuing days of his speech. The writer intends to make his report on the subject as simple as possible and unbiased. However, it must be understood that in order to arrive fair conclusion of this subject, such question as kinds of audience and their psychological attitude should be taken into consideration because the effect and value of any speech must be judged by such relative merit of speaker and audience and their mental attitude.

More than ninety percent of the audience were composed of so called Isseis who came to America from Japan and lived more than 30 or 40 years in this country, yet they are not citizens of this country. The outbreak of war between Japan and America brought them into the status of enemy aliens and because of it they were subjected under strict military order and forced to evacuate from their long lived California, their community and business being completely upset. Their long years of residence in America and their sons' service in the armed force of the United States did not help them any, and they were classed as most dangerous enemy aliens of all the Axis nationals in this country for which they had been compelled to evacuate from the Pacific coast. They had been placed into a very peculiar circumstance. They are denied to become naturalized citizen of the United States, so, Japan to them is a country under which they are subject of,

and America, on the other hand, is a country which they adopted and owe many things for their better living, yet they are not the citizens of America. They can be called "Men without country" in the sense that they are forgotten nationals of Japan and unwelcomed and denied citizens of America. Should they repatriate the citizenship of Japan, there is no country which they can become citizen or national thereof. The war between Japan and America, also, made Mr. Smith, a speaker an enemy alien of Japan. His experience in Japan was similar to that of evacuee audience. He and audience, in other word, stand in common footing, the status of enemy aliens, war as their enemy and peace as their ally. Their circumstance and relation being so common there is no doubt that speech of Mr. Smith appealed so much to the audience. Mr. Smith, in his speech did not touch upon delicate subject of war itself, certain acts of Japan which have not been approved in America as treacherous. Taking into consideration of kind of audience and ultimate objective of his speech, it is the opinion of this writer, that speaker was not so unwise to bring such delicate matter as that and fail to achieve the aim of his speech. That aim of his speech, I believe, was the winning of final victory, the peace. His speech from start to finish was based on humanitarian principle.

Mr. Smith, in his speech, first, brought an exampleshowing how friendly were these two countries in first patt of twentieth century. The Pearl Harbor attack on December 8th, in Japan, and the declazation of war between these two countries, he said, cut him into two. What he means by cut into two, I understand, that his body had been cut into two, one part of which is his unrepressable love to the Japanese people which was created in his heart during his long residence in Japan, and other half is his loyalty to his mother country, the United States. He brought several examples by which he illustrated the extreme hardship which people in Japan had to meet in past years, especially since the start of present war. The audience were greatly impressed with this remark and could not help but feel that they must be content with present condition of their living in America. They must have realized, I am quite certain, that they are far less unfortunate than many others with the effect of war. He touched upon the subject of internees in Japan and how they are treated there.

He spoke on this subject rather favorably and I believe it is true. I do not believe such favorable remark by the speaker any way did create in the minds of the audience the thought of comparative treatment of internees in Japan and in America. The speaker also touched upon how certain missionary was maltreated in Japan. He brought several examples how his relation with Japanese people was so cordial and friendly even in time of war. He left with the audience an impression that a strong human love, no matter under what circumstance they are, war or peace, must not be molested but must always be the guiding principle of his or her life and it is the only way the peace on earth can be established. His speech was based on humanitarian principle and was not any way nationalistic or patriotic speech. The audience were greatly impressed to realize that final victory is a peace between Japan and America. Of course, audience as well as I can understand that when Mr. Smith stressed upon the peace between Japan and America, that he did not mean to state that a peace with Japanese militarist is a final victory of ours. He certainly must have meant that a peace with people of Japan and not with the militarists. Another impression of his speech was how fortunate to be in America with better living condition in comparison with such hardship that people of Japan have to face these days. Therefore, audience must have realized that dissensions or dissatisfaction even in the center ^{pfo} ~~where the evacuees are~~ ^{where the evacuees are} ~~under the~~ ^{under} limited freedom must not be the voice of the evacuees in all. This impression which was left in the minds of audience, as I observed, did so much good in upholding good moral of the center. On following days after his speech, I heard on several occasions the frank opinions of the evacuees who unanimously stated that they were greatly impressed with his talk. They all said that they must be thankful for their well being at present. Of course, his speech being very simple can be criticized by some one other than evacuees, as appeasing speech. It must be understood that with kind of audience to whom speaker is speaking, the appeasing speech may be, it will serve as proper method of obtaining ultimate aim and objective of his speech and on the other hand, though a speech may be a strong, point to point talk, it may turn out to be the failure in achieving his ultimate aim and objective of the speech.

Community Activity and Proposed Baseball League.

In pre-evacuation day, the baseball games were most popular sports among Japanese people in State of California. Baseball players were mostly Niseis while fans were mostly Isseis and teams were supported by Isseis in general. In view of this fact, base ball, undoubtedly will become most active and popular sport of evacuees in this Gila Relocation Center. Already, there are growing interests among evacuee residents of this sport. Because, men and women, young and old, perhaps, community as a whole soon will be dragged into this baseball fever, the administration through Community Activity Section should be well prepared to meet the demand of this interest as well as establishing a definite policy in assisting satisfactory developement of this type of recreation. Already, a plan is pregressing among enthusiasts of forming the baseball league and in view of this, the relation between Community Activity Section and proposed baseball league should be made clear once and for all and such relation must always be harmonious. It must be so, for simple reason that a breach of faith on one against another will mean the serious injury to the welfare of the community as a whole. With this serious concern, I shall review the present situation of baseball enthusiasts and their attitude toward Community Activity Section.

In Gila Relocation Center, there are three local group of people who are known to be most enthusiastic baseball fans of Japanese community in pre-evacuation days and they are the people from Fresno, Stockton and Guardalupe. From these group come two outstanding baseball leaders, namely; Ken Zenimura and Zuke Tanaka, both of whom were outstanding players in 1920 to 1930. They have organized baseball teams, the all star California Japanese Baseball Team which toured Japan several times. Teams now being organized in the center are followers of these two men. In other words, as far as baseball interests are concerned, it is safe to judge, that these two men have solid control of the situation.

Because of the ability of these men and with view that baseball will become most popular games among evacuees soon, I have suggested Ken Zenimura as a successor to Harry Ota, our former Athletic Director when latter resigned from that position. It was early January, I interview said Ken Zenimura who indicated his interest in

taking up the position of baseball directorship and not the athletic directorship for his interest was only in baseball. His immediate concern was opening of baseball ground. He drew up the plan in blue print the proposed baseball grounds for the center and gave it to our acting athletic director, Toshi Odano. Ken and Toshi, after several conference, started working on baseball ground east side of Block 28. Everything went smoothly, once when I met Ken on the street, he told me that Toshi Odano is giving him fine cooperation in getting necessary equipment for leveling grounds and etc. Until last Sunday, I was under the impression that C. A. S. and Ken Zenimura were working together in development of baseball grounds and that soon he will take up the directorship of baseball under Community Activity.

On Sunday, February 28th, first baseball games were held in the center at the ground near Block 28, and afternoon game between Stockton and Guardalupe drew the crowd of more than 4 thousands people. On that same evening, I heard a rumor that a sharp criticism against C. A. S. was voiced by spectators at the game for C. A. S. not cooperating with the demand of the evacuees on various recreational facilities. It was said that some went so far as expressing their unwillingness to support any recreational activities which come under C. A. S. All the activities of this kind, hereafter, should sever relation with Community Activity Section and operate entirely upon independent basis. Upon hearing such remarks, though I thought to be a mere rumor, I began to be concerned very much. I have presented the matter to the executive committee of the council and to Mr. Hoffman for ~~the~~ possible adjustment of this problem.

Realizing the seriousness of the case, more particularly in future not only in baseball activities but in all other activities of this department, I decided to call on Ken Zenimura and discuss with him this whole question of C. A. S. and proposed baseball league. I have known Ken for more than twenty years and fortunately our discussion was more cordial one. But from his first word to his last word, he was so mad about Community Activity Section that he said no one baseball team in the center will never work together harmoniously with Community Activity Section. He said that if C. A. S. try to call the meeting in order to form baseball league, then there will be no one to attend that meeting because all the baseball players know

the trouble of C. A. S. and its incompetency. I was so surprised to find such change in his attitude toward C. A. S. It was only few weeks ago that he told me he is willing to cooperate with C. A. S. that he is working very harmoniously with Toshi Odano. In order to find out the reason for his such ill feeling toward C. A. S. I asked him what was the reason for such attitude. He told me that first, if he waits C. A. S. to supply facilities, the baseball season will be over because C. A. S. is very slow; second, that in spite of many handicaps and difficulties he with the cooperation of Issei baseball fans, fixed baseball ground for the teams to play and public to enjoy. He said that all the facilities were obtained through direct negotiation with departments because C. A. S. was not dependable. In spite of this fact, he went on, two boys from C. A. S. came to see him other day and accused him stealing materials for the certain facilities. It is so unfortunate that whoever want to see him from our C. A. S. did not employ better method of approaching the people. Ken told me that if these boys only approached him with lit tle appreciation for the WORK they have accomplished, then he would have gladly turned over the ground to C. A. S. and work together with C. A. S. ~~for~~ for after all it is for the community. I had very lengthy discussion with Ken and tried my best to re-establish better relation with him and with baseball interests. He is so convinced that baseball should not be under C. A. S. because its activities are so big that under present set up of C. A. S. it will never develope into satisfactory league games. In view of his strong conviction and nature of activity which will involve with great amount of expense to run the league, I recommend following steps to be taken by C. A. S.

1. Immediate action on additional baseball grounds.
 - a. one at below Butte, one at 66, and one at 33.
 - b. Leveling the ground and installation of necessary water system for above grounds.
2. Placement of four care takers at each of above grounds, namely, Butte, 66, 33 and at Block 28.
3. Representation of C. A. S. ~~in~~ in Board of Directors of Baseball League.
4. Give assistance within possible limit, such as limited number of supplies.
5. Finally, it should be prepared to approve the placement of few officials of baseball league on pay roll.

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Suggestions for future Community Activity developements.

I. Better cooperation and coordination between Community Activity Section and other departments;

1. Community Activity and Engineering Dept.

- a. Establishment of standard basis upon which supplies for different recreational facilities will be issued and installed. For example; installation of adequate water pipe lines for basket ball and base ball grounds; issuing lumbers for back-stops and etc.
- b. Better and quicker action on above requisitions and prevention of further sneak-way method of issuing and securing supplies and facilities.

* According to my observation during past few months, one of the most serious set back of the Community Activity in the center is this matter of obtaining necessary supplies and facilities for recreational needs. In most cases, requisitions through proper channel are not acted upon. Mean while, enthusiasm on that line of activity becomes intense and come to certain stage that they will not wait any longer. They complain that C. A. S. is slow and through C. A. S. they do not get any result. Group of people, in most cases in blocks, organize and doing everything in their power to obtain such supplies and facilities. The method of obtaining these supplies and facilities range from stealing to direct negotiation with department in charges of, often strong words are used and results are obtained. The immediate consequence is disregard of C. A. S. and installations of basket ball courts in almost every block and perhaps individual installations of several baseball grounds. Lumbers and pipes and other materials do not come from outside but origin ~~of~~ or source of such material is one, that is W. R. A. project.

2. Community Activity and Supply Department.

- a. Definite policy in issuing different supplies to C. A. S. and policy of C. A. S. in supplying these to different recreational groups.

* Relation between C. A. S. and other departments seems to be satisfactory.

II Re-organization of different departments and re-classification of personnels.

1. Through check up of each member on payroll staff.
2. Policy in placing the worker on pay-roll for different activities.

III Coordination between centralized activities and block base activities.

1. Avoid duplication of activities.

IV. Assignments of recreation halls.

1. Appointment of supervisor of recreation halls.
2. Greater and better use of recreation halls.
3. Improvement of recreation halls.

V. Financial problem of C. A. S.

1. Community Enterprise and its profits.
2. Temporary method of raising funds.

March 15, 1943.

COMPARATIVE POPULARITY OF J. A. C. L. AND
GILA YOUNG PEOPLES ASS'N. IN THE RIVERS
COMMUNITY AND RELATIVE STANDING OF TWO GROUPS
IN JAPANESE COMMUNITY IN PREEVACUATION DAYS.

This observer attempts to bring up through this report the relative standing of J. A. C. L. and Kibei organization as he observed in pre-evacuation days in the Japanese community and comparative popularity of these two organizations in the Rivers community at present time.

In pre-evacuation days, in the Japanese communities of the pacific coast, two of the most powerful organizations were Japanese Associations and Japanese American Citizens League, former had been organized more than thirty years ago and was identified as representative organization of Isseis, the latter had been organized twenty years ago, under the name of American Loyalty League and was identified as representative organization for Niseis. The American Loyalty League, after more than five years of survive, had been re-organized and its name had been changed to Japanese American Citizens League. With such re-organization and its new name, this organization had begun to be very active amongs Niseis and had been recognized by both Isseis and Niseis as most powerful organization of younger generation. In the minds of Japanese people on the Pacific coast, there was no doubt as to qualification of this organization to succeed the Japanese Ass'n. as only representative organization of Japanese community. It was thought that such change in the social standing of these two organizations was matter of only few years. To be sure of it, in 1940, at the annual convention of National J. A. C. L. representatives, it was voted to raise a fund amounting to \$100. 000, with the hope that this new and fast growing organization may effect long waited Americanization program as well as such campaign as "UNITY OF JAPANESE AMERICANS". For more than one year, the drive had not begun but during summer of 1941, through the support of Isseis organized as J. A. C. L. supporters Ass'n. of San Francisco, the initial campaign was started. The campaign, first started in San Francisco, and although at first, a little obstacle entered into due to lack of understanding, the final campaign was more than expected. Some of the Isseis expressed that with growing power of younger generation in the community and decrepitude of Isseis, more support should be given to J. A. C. L. than to the Japanese Association. During this period, the relation between Japan and America in its diplomacy was in critical situation and in the minds of general public of the community, there was a fear of their status in the event of war between these

two countries. It was general opinion of the Japanese community that in the event of war between America and Japan, their sons and daughters who are American citizens through such organization as J. A. C. L. can protect them and general public defied such organization as Japanese Association being not able to assist them in their time of crisis. With such attitude of the community, the J. A. C. L. utilized the trend of public opinion and through organization's propaganda channel announced time and again that J. A. C. L. is the only organization is back of the community and willing to fight for the right of Japanese in America, that no other organization is qualified, that they have secured the cooperation of the Nisei attorneys through out Pacific coast to defend the Japanese in America, legally. Majority of Isseis depended solely upon this organization and supported the fund raising drive. J. A. C. L. was in the height of its popularity. The Kibeis on the other hand, had no identity during this period. Their organization though organized under the name of Kibei Young People's Ass'n. had never reached the stage of general recognition by the public. It was placed on similar footing with Kenjin Kai.

The outbreak of war between America and Japan, on December 8th, 1941, brought complete change of this condition. The reputation of J. A. C. L. fell, at first when mass apprehension of Japanese was made by F. B. I. The general public of the Japanese Community directed their criticism against this organization for their cooperation with F. B. I. in giving false information to the government of the United States by accusing their parents as subversive elements while in reality they have contributed so much toward this country industrially, socially and morally. They went further than that and said that some J. A. C. L. official misrepresented the Japanese in America to the U. S. government which can be proved, by the past experience and facts that not single case of spy or fifth-column^a found among Japanese. In some cases, they criticized, the officials of J. A. C. L. had turned in the names of innocent people and tried to protect the close friends or relatives of theirs irrespective of their past connections with Japan. As this writer presented in his previous reports, it is said that the incidents which have occurred in Poston and Manzanar centers recently are the direct results of this feeling on the part of evacuees against the leaders of the J. A. C. L. Another criticism against J. A. C. L. which had been voiced by the Isseis mostly ~~is~~ is stand of J. A. C. L. against mass evacuation of Japanese from the Pacific coast. It is said that J. A. C. L. at the hearing on eva-

