

Development of Gila JACL.

By Charles Kikuchi  
Chicago, Illinois. July, 1943.

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Note: strengthen  
[Capitalize  
JACL  
throughout]

During the Assembly Center Days, the Army restrictions had prevented the formal organization of pre-evacuation Japanese organizations so that no attempt was made in any of the centers to resume chapter activities. In some of the centers, there was much conflict between JACL leaders and other leaders in the center for control of the community. This was particularly true in Tanforan and Puyallup, ~~(quiz Frank for details.)~~

In Tulare, there was little outward conflict of this nature and the JACL was never an issue in community politics, except when Nobu ran for councilman (see Jimmy journal). Interest in the JACL was maintained largely by the circulation of the Pacific Citizen. However, in Tulare, a contact man (Nobu Kawii) devoted all of his time to keep the members prepared for an active status as soon as they reached the WRA center. It was this individual who became the recognized leader of the movement at Gila.

Ken Tashiro

In the meantime, another older Nisei had been mimeographing many articles pertaining to the evacuation and these had been sent out to all JACL leaders in the ASsembly centers from the Fresno chapter. Although this effort had been financed by the Fresno chapter, all of the work was done by Ken Tashiro, a former newspaperman. Tashiro had never been active in the JACL prior to the outbreak of war. Through his close association with Larry Tajiro, the editor of the Pacific Citizen, Tashiro had become convinced that the JACL was the only body which was in a position to help the Nisei cause.

Tashiro laid tentative groundwork for the formal organization as soon as he arrived in Gila during the latter

will write up  
JACL copy  
also, Arthur  
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Walter



part of July 1942. Kawaii arrived in early September and the two soon became acquainted and discovered that they had mutual objectives. During the hectic stages of the Gila center, when general confusion reigned, no active steps were taken to create an organization.

*(See Spencer Report + Kibuchi journal)*  
The cotton picking issue, during mid-September was the impetus which brought to light the need for a formal chapter. At that time, the Pacific Citizen had been urging the Nisei to support this effort so that a favorable public opinion could be created. Tashiro, as the editor of the Gila News took up this crusade. Acting upon instructions from the Nat'l JACL, Tashiro, Kawaii and a few other prominent JACL leaders met informally to push the cotton picking drive.

It was at this initial meeting on Sep't 18 that Kawaii proposed a definite JACL chapter. He argued that the JACL could not take a stand on the cotton picking issue unless there was a large membership to back up these policies. It was suggested that the JACL was in disrepute and therefore it should not involve itself in community issues during the formative stages of organization.

The JACL movement had received a tremendous setback due to the fact that the Nisei were too prone to condemn <sup>it</sup> them for their policy of 100% cooperation with the military authorities. In Gila, the leaders did not feel that the opposition would be too great as there were <sup>only a</sup> few "radicals" in the center. Most of the Nisei at that time either accepted the JACL passively or they had no interest at all. It was largely an ~~unt~~ rural group which had never concerned itself with such problems. To them, the JACL was a social organization. Tashiro recognized that the Gila Nisei were an unsophisticated lot and he felt that the JACL was the only continuing body that could work in



their behalf. Recognizing that the JACL had made mistakes in the past, both Tashiro and Kawaii determined to give it a new lease on life and encourage a liberal leadership.

The National JACL felt that with the lifting of the WCCA restrictions, it would have more freedom of action. It realized that it could not be organized on the old chapter basis so that leaders from the various centers were sounded out on the best method of revitalizing the group. A Nat'l convention had been planned for Nov. 1942 and Tashiro and Kawaii were named as delegates from Gila by the nat'l offices. Organization procedures were left in their hands.

The Gila leaders quickly realized that evacuation eliminated the possibility of reviving all of the former chapters since there was only one community in Gila. The WRA had taken a position of "hands off" in regards to these organizations so that Tashiro and Kawaii felt immediate action should be taken.

In the Sept 18 meeting, Tashiro outlined his organizational plan for the JACL. He pointed out that it would be most practical to establish the JACL as a community wide civic and fraternal body, one for each camp. Its functions were to study the problems arising out of the enforced move into the community, to help improve physical conditions, and to promote civic pride. Because of the antagonisms against the group, Tashiro urged that all effort be made to keep the JACL aloof from the internal politics of the camp. He recognized that it would have to be non-partisan in politics in order to make any progress.

Tashiro stressed the point that the JACL should make no attempt to control the community council either through actual membership or acting in an advisory capacity. He felt that



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stressing jacl leadership as a qualification for office would do irreparable damage to the cause. Tashiro hoped to make the Jacl into more of a fraternal body in order to promote such things as a Jacl credit union, jacl fraternal insurance, jack scholarships for students, and to assist in relocation. He pointed out that the greatest assistance and service that the Gila Jacl could render the community would be to give financial assistance to the development of the recreational program since no funds for this purpose had been allocated by the WRA.

Many of these suggestions had been adopted by the National Jacl office and these had been mimeographed and sent out to the leaders in the various camps. In typical jack style, an *appendix had been attached* addition was made to the circular and this was made the strongest point for reorganization: "And above all, we who still believe in America, and expect to remain in this country can unite even on this one common basis alone. We shall have a difficult and grave responsibility in properly guiding our own children to grow up as American citizens with a proper background so that they may take their place in American communities when they are released from the relocation centers after the termination of the war."

Tashiro felt that a more practical approach was needed, one which could be understood by the average member. He urged that the jacl be established so that it could help the Nisei to keep contacts with the outside world and its problems. "It will build up the confidence of the group so that they will be more objective and foresee the hard time which will face them afterwards. One of the things which they will have to overcome is the tendency to become satisfied with leading a protective <sup>ed</sup> life. This will have a most disastrous



effect on the entire future of the group." (p.725) Tashiro  
 The group present at the Sept 18 meeting concluded that this  
 was a sound program , but they were rather concerned that  
 the Nisei did not give these things serious consideration.  
 (~~discuss Tashiro and Kawaii background here.~~)

After this initial meeting of sept 18, the jac1 movement  
 slumped as most of the leaders were concerned with other  
 immediate community problems such as housing and food. Kawaii  
 and Tashiro, however, were sincere in their efforts and they  
 kept pushing the program, without much success. During mid-  
 october a strong effort was made to gain public support by  
 stressing the importance of the Nisei vote for the California  
 general elections for November. Kawaii managed to reach the  
 ear of Fryer, who was then the acting director of the comm-  
 unity, and an office was granted to the jac1 in block 42  
 (civic block) to assist citizens in the absentee balloting.  
 Forms for this purpose had been obtained from the national  
 office. At the same time, Kawaii had large posters made up  
 showing the various chapters of the jac1 which was represented  
 in the community. They were: Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno,  
 Lompoc, Parlier, Pasadena, San Gabriel, San Luis Obispo,  
 Santa Barbara, Ventruea, Santa Maria, Wolo-Solano, and Los  
 Angeles. The Los Angeles group had arrived in the center on  
 October 19, but there were few jac1 members represented. It  
 was this group which later raised much opposition to the  
 membership drive. Tashiro also printed several articles  
 in the Gila News about absentee balloting, but mention of the  
 Jac1 was only incidental.



There was some fear that the Issei influence would undermine the jacl, particularly in regards to political beliefs. Kawaii attempted to make it known that the Gila jacl would not be controlled by the Issei. Since the operating costs of the chapter was small, ~~xxxxxx~~ there was not a need to rely on the Japanese Association for funds,\* plus that fact that the latter groups had been dissolved with evacuation. Rumors had already gone around in October that the jacl planned to take over the community government. In order to counteract this, Kawaii made a public statement that the group definitely intended to stay out of internal politics. He was also aware of the bad reputation of the LA and SF leaders who had failed miserably in their attempts to take over the community government at Manzanar and Topaz. Kawaii stressed the point that the jacl should not be judged by what a few misguided leaders in other centers attempted. He quite openly intimated that certain of the L.A. jacl leaders had used the organization for selfish purposes in the past.

Kawaii was convinced that the Santa Maria, Pasadena, and Guadalupe chapters, which had a strong former membership, would again support the jacl because the leaders of these groups had been real leaders during the period of evacuation. Kawaii was particularly antagonistic against the conservative jacl leaders who had red-baited against labor unions in the past. He wanted to have a ~~xxx~~ liberal membership which followed the Tajiri-Pacific Citizen line. In the previous informal meetings, only former chapter presidents had been invited. Since this group had not been particularly cooperative Kawaii decided to call a group of representative liberal Nisei together for informal "bull sessions." He felt that this would be the only way to get new blood into the jacl and

\* footnote: jacl  
formerly supported  
by J. Assoc.



break away from the past mistakes. Feeling that Tashiro's plan of organization was not appealing enough, Kawaii suggested that the center jacl should help more on the outside employment program of the WRA, take steps in city beautification, support nat'l more vigorously, and make a directory of all evaueees in the center. He proposed to advance this program to the Nat'l Convention in Nov.

About this time, Kikuchi became interested in the possibilities of a revived jacl. He had never been a member before, in fact, he had actively opposed the group during the evacuation period. However, not being able to find a liberal group in Gila, such as existed at Tanforan, Kikuchi felt that this organization would come closest to his stand on Americanism: Discussion with Kawaii on Oct. 28 records his views: "I thought that one of the first steps would be to take a much firmer stand on Americanism right here in camp instead of merely letting the leaders do a lot of flag waving. The time for straddling the fence is past and there is no two ways about it. If they don't sincerely believe in this country, there is no use in yelling for their rights. The Nisei are still hesitant about the whole thing and they feel that since they have been rejected there is no use in antagonizing the Issei. Although they do believe in America as a whole, they hesitate to come out openly on this point in this place. Nobu agreed that this would be one of the most difficult tasks since the Nisei couldn't be guaranteed that even this would improve their status any." (p 1010)

Kawaii was a trifle impatient that he could not make any headway in the membership drive. He felt that the Church group was going to give the jacl competition. It was his be-



lief that the jacl was the only vehicle through which the Nisei could be heard as Americans. He feared that the religious groups getting control would be harmful because this would be a factor in splitting up the community into Christian and Buddhist factions. He was quite emphatic in his stand that the church should confine itself solely to religious matters. "The Church groups are too inclined to be jelly-like when the chips are down and they will resort to a god that mysteriously is never around at such times." Kawaii approached several of the Christian ministers to get their assurance that they would not become involved in the wider issues which were in the sphere of the jacl. This guarantee was quickly given by the ministers since they did not wish to arouse community antagonisms.

Kawaii and Tashiro decided to take immediate action so a general jacl meeting was called for the first week of Nov. They also wanted to have some sort of showing for the Nat'l conference in order to justify their selection as delegates. Kawaii felt that in order to have a successful drive, the Issei would have to be appeased. He did not want them to have any control over the group, but he did want their confidence. Tashiro was greatly opposed to this playing up to the Issei and he refused to use the newspaper to make an appeal to the Issei. He felt that the jacl was purely an Nisei problem and no concern of the alien group. A compromise was reached when Tashiro managed to obtain a statement from a war veteran and issei citizen saying that the veterans were 100% behind the jacl program. Tashiro and Kikuchi were both opposed to making any concessions towards the issei as "too much of this Issei influence is what made the jacl weak-kneed in the past and the issei group is pretty powerful around here." p. 1042



Prior to the first mass meeting, several of the organizers were approached and warned not to try and organize. These warnings were generally ignored. Kikuchi records (p. 1047) "One of the fellows came up to me and he said that I should not 'stick my neck' about Americanism here, because I would have to live with the Issei here and they could make things very tough for me. I told him that this was my conviction and that I would stand up for it any place. This fellow (a block manager) said that the issei control was strong here and the success of the jacl movement in the camp would depend on the leaders <sup>not</sup> antagonizing the Issei. I told him that the time for these considerations was past and it was up to the Nisei to make their firm stand now and no longer straddle the fence. The block mgr. did not think that the jacl could succeed in this now because the organization already had too many enemies and the support is weak."

In spite of these informal warnings, the general meeting <sup>on nov 4, 1942</sup> proceeded as scheduled. There were only 45 Nisei present at the meeting, one-fourth of the audience were girls. They represented 10 former jacl chapters, but the largest delegation was from the Santa Maria chapter. There was little doubt that many Nisei had been scared away by rumors that there would be violence.

Kawaii in his opening statements mentioned that there were enemies of the jacl that were working against the group for no reason except an emotional dislike. He said that it was very important that unity among the Nisei be achieved in order to protect their own interests. He stressed this point over and over again during the meeting.

Since the Salt Lake convention was rapidly approaching,



the national offices had sent out a letter asking the leaders to sound out the Nisei about attitudes towards the army. The national policy had been to ask for the opening up of the army on a volunteer basis, and it wanted to know how far this would be supported by the people in camp. In this preliminary discussion, very significant arguments (in view of the later developments) were engaged in at the meeting. When the question of volunteering was asked, it was pointed out that it could mean setting up of special class--not on an equal basis with caucasian soldiers. And, it was also pointed out that if enough did not volunteer, the Nisei could be automatically drafted. There was some concern that a draft would take all the able bodied Nisei as there was no allowance for dependency. One Nisei said that the parents were getting old and the young people would not like to leave them. It was from this meeting that the rumor started that the jACL asked for army service on a volunteer basis. Since this was a significant point which later affected the jACL drive for recognition, the discussion on the Army (as taken from ck journal p. 1077 ff) follows in detail: (T<sub>a</sub>shiro and Kawaii ~~and Kikuchi~~ were for volunteering, But the sentiment of the audience was against it.)

"Nobu (Kawaii) wanted to sound out the group present on what estimate of volunteers they would give if the Army opened up its ranks for Nisei volunteers. One fellow got up and he said that this was a touchy question. 'If the Nisei were put on a draft basis they would take all of us. I believe that volunteering would be the better choice, but if only a few Nisei volunteered we would be subject to great criticism, just like they did on the cotton business.'

"Nobu stated that the issue was more im-



"Important than that: 'We are making this program on the basis of equal rights for the Nisei in all respects. It would be a credit to the Nisei if we could get the Army to open up the draft privileges to us. If we were only subject to volunteering, that would put us in a special class. Therefore, we must ask to be placed on an equal basis with the Caucasians. However, if a quota is set up for each center, it may be filled up by volunteers.'

"Another fellow then responded: 'But we still are under the local California draft boards so that the WRA centers would have nothing to do about any quotas for the Nisei.'

Nobu: 'Well, if they won't volunteer, then they could automatically draft us. That would be much better than our present 4c classification.

"X; 'Regardless of that, even the Caucasians cannot volunteer now.' There was a little debate on this point. Another point was then brought up: 'Most of the Nisei in camp are 1-A unless engaged in agricultural pursuits, and the community will be drained of all the young blood. Our parents are getting old, and we just can't leave them flat. Maybe we should all go on the farm project.'

"There was a laugh at this, and somebody proposed that the Farm division start a propaganda program to that effect. One fellow bet that all the Nisei would flock to the farm and net projects then, and he was not so certain that so many Nisei would volunteer for the Army: 'My guess is that the volunteer number from here would be low because we are not eligible for army promotions like other Americans of other stock.'

"Nobu answered: 'The majority of the fellows that went from Pasadena before all got ranking. The Nisei soldier seems to be a little brigher than average! Everyone looked pleased when he said this, except one fellow who said that this was not entirely true because the Nisei were not eligible for Officer's Training. But he friend said that Dr. Furuta in Camp no 1 was supposed to have been drafted just before relocation, and he would have been eligible for a commission. But his father



"died, and his mother was dependedt on him so he had to ask for a change of classification. He said that Furuta would be willing to go into the Army right now.

"His friend then answered that a lot of the Nisei would not volunteer if they were denied combat duty. X felt that more would volunteer under such conditions 'because they have more chance of coming out without mangled bodies.' Ken broke in with the information that the first Nisei soldiers to come into Butte was here, but he could not publicize it because the soldier was taking a chance, and he had come in without official permission."

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By this time the audience had grown to about 80 so that Kawaii started the regular meeting. Most of the group were former members of the Santa Maria chapter, a very active jacl group in the pre-evacuation period. Since the proposed membership drive was the main topic of the evening, an estimate of strength of the former chapters in camp was made. It was found that there were almost 800 former chapter membe#s in the two camps--Butte and Canal--which were divided as follows:

From:

	Butte	Canal
Contra Costa	20	80
Yolo-Solano	10	20
Fresno	5	80
Santa Maria	200	--
San Luis Opispo	80	--
Lompoc	30	--
Santa Barbara	7	--
Ventura	100	--
Pasadena	150	--
San Gabriel Valley	20	--
Long Beach, L.A., S.F., etc	50	
	<hr/> 633	<hr/> 180

Kawaii, Pasadena, and Miyake-Mtsunomiya of Santa Maria chapters were very optimistic about potential membership as they felt they could bring in their local chapters intact. Tashiro was less optimistic as most of his following was in Canal. For this reason, he later



appealed that the membership drive should cover both camps instead of merely Putte. This policy was not adopted. why not?

Kawaii then made a stirring speech for all Nisei to support the jacl as it "has sold itself to the American public and they gave confidence in its program. He pointed out that the WRA administration recognized the group also by giving it an office and the promise of a paid secretary. In summing up the work for the Gila jacl, Kawaii stated:

"Most important of all, the Nisei must show a united front. Our problem of resettlement is the most vital question facing us now. There are hostile groups on the coast that want to take our civil rights. Our national office is fighting this with all its power. The Pacific Citizen, through the publicity it gives the Nisei, is doing us more good than any organ has ever done. The Federal officials have great respect for it.

"We must back National to supply them with information and help out in their program, which is for us. This will raise the morale of 'National' when they know that we are backing them. They are in constant contact with governmental officials, and they can only keep going under such difficult conditions if they know that we are vitally interested. A strong chapter here will prove that."

Kawaii then announced that he was going to the Salt Lake Convention to meet with the other leaders and work on the main theme of relocation and resettlement.

According to the Constitution, provisions had been made for a Board of Directors of ten members to act as the steering committee. (Constitution not available). This group would select the Chairman, vice-chairman and other officers of the organization. In addition Kawaii proposed a representative in each block to "push the jacl." He stated that these representatives in the blocks would be unofficial since the administration had frowned on this policy as it felt that the jacl would cause conflict with the self government of the community.



After some discussion on camp politics, it was again stressed that the Jacl would avoid trying to dominate center politics as "this creates frictions and animosity." Kawaii believed that the jacl had a greater purpose than this.

"The community council will take care of all internal affairs. It is our function to concentrate on such things as absentee balloting, job replacement, and contacting the public opinion on the outside."

In order to sign up as many members as possible, it was decided to reduce membership fees from \$2.00 to 50¢. Half of this amount was to be sent to National. There was some fear that the jacl would not get a good response. It was recognized that there was much criticism about past actions of the Jacl. Harry Miyake, Central Block Manager, and destined to be the key political figure in Gila then made an emotional appeal for the Nisei to support the jacl for the sake of their parents future. Miyake was formerly an officer in the Santa Maria chapter and he was respected in the community since he was an older Nisei and a person who did not unnecessarily tread on Issei toes. He said:

"In the Assembly centers, the Jacl was forbidden to organize by the Army. It has been six months since we were first evacuated and many of the Nisei are now dormant. "e are beginning to forget about the advantages we held in the past. Now we feel that we are in a safe home and we tend to forget about the jacl, which is fully aware of the vast implications of our problems. This drifting into a sense of false security is dangerous.

"Gila is one of the first WRA centers to start up again. We should all get behind the ball and get



"it rolling in order to make a showing for the other  
denters. We must not forget that the jacl is also  
working for the safety of our fathers and mothers.

We have many former leaders here, and they will do a lot for us if we support them with confidence. We can only support 'National' with little finances, but we must remember that they are kept going courageously by our attitudes. They are working for the 'whole Japanese people' here. Topaz has told them to stay away from their center, but the jacl will continue to fight for all of us. We should not condemn the organization because of dislike of the leaders in the past. This is petty. We must bear in mind that they are doing much for us right now!"

Ken Utsonomiya, former National Executive Secretary, and one of the strong Nisei leaders in the center followed up this appeal. He said that the Nisei and Issei "bicker" too much.

Now they are trying to tear down years of work because of the personal grudge against the leaders. They forget that the jacl is the only Nisei organization to gain nat'l prominence. We are not trying to make jacl the one and only organization. It is representative of all small organizations and in this way we hope to utilize all the leaders and potential leaders for the good of the Nisei. It would throw overboard 10 years of work if the whole organization were thrown over at this time. The reason for the dislike of the past was due to the lack of coordination. The Los Angeles chapter is a prime example. They failed utterly because the leaders worked at cross purposes. They had the best leaders, but they were always fighting against each other and they never did get together.

"One of our purposes here will be to get the University groups, the Christians, the Buddhists, Scouts and other groups to support and make a unified group. This cannot be done through the churches because of the religious differences. If our policies are wrong, let us change them, and get the right leadership. Do you people here realize that Butte will organize the first jacl chapter in any center?"

With all of this preliminary softening up, the meeting was then turned over to the business of electing the 10 man board of governors. It was suggested that the board be temporary since the full potential membership was not present.

*The chairman*  
He felt that this was essential in order to get the support of the Santa Anita section.



Another proposal was to let the Board members hold office until January 1 and then elect for six month period after that. There was some concern that the Santa Anita group was not represented as their support was necessary in order to unify the center. However, it was discovered that there were only a small handful of jacl members in the Santa Anita group so it was finally decided to elect the Governor's Board for the remainder of the year. At first, it had been decided to elect one man from each former chapter, but this was found to be impractical since some chapters had better qualified leaders than others.

The following 19 were nominated: (details on elected members later)

1. Ken Utsunomiya
2. Tom Hirashima--former officer in Santa Barbara chapter. Organized Forum group. Prominent in Agricultural Division of project.
3. Taki Asakura
4. Nobu Kawiii
5. Harry Miyaki
6. Ken Tashiro
7. Gilbert Kurumatsu. L.A. leader. Organized and heads Gilax Cooperative organization.
8. Frank Tanaka. Leader in Pasadena jacl.
9. Henry Kurubara.
10. James Nakamura. Former officer in San Luis Obispo chapter. Actively interested in camp politics and later editor of Gila News.
11. Izzy Otani. Block manager and former officer in Ventura chapter.
12. Henry Teruzawa; officer of Contra Costa Chapter. Worked in employment office.
13. Charles Kikuchi.
14. Mary Obata. U.C. graduate. Leader in Rec Dep't. former officer of yolo-solano chapter.
15. Dr. Earl Yusa. Dentist from Santa Maria. Later chairman of community council.
16. Verlin Yamamoto.
17. Buichi Umeda--War veteran. LA Issei.
18. Mitsumori
19. Florence Hasagawa; English teacher in Gila H. S.

The following ten were elected. All except Kikuchi were formerly active in jacl work and six of them had been chapter presidents.

1. Harry Miyake--Santa Maria. Central Block manager and key figure



1. in center politics. About 40 and father of 5 children. Born in Hawaii. One of managers of big produce companies in Santa Maria.. Formerly held office in Santa Maria Chapter. reported ~~xxxx~~ that he volunteered into Army, but this needs checking.
2. Ken Tashiro--Fresno, editor of paper. Later volunteered into army. 35
3. Nebu Kawaii--Pasadena. Organizer of movement. Former labor union member. U. of Missouri graduate. 33. Father of child. Later volunteer into army.
4. Ken Utsunomiya. Santa Maria. Former Nat'l Executive sect'y. Head of camouflage committee. 32. Former president of Santa Maria Chapter.
5. Taki Asakura. Organized Santa Barbara chapter. 33. Housing supervisor. Stanford grad.
6. Charles Kikuchi. Hypocrite (U.C. - *Social Welfare Dept Supervisor*)
7. Mary Obata. U.C. grad. Rec. leader. 30 Only woman on board.
8. Verlin Yamamoto. S.F.; church leader; X ray specialist in hospital; active in sf. jacl.
9. Henry Kuwabara--Former San Gabriel chapter president. Block manager. Later went to language school.
10. Nisuike Mitsumori. L.A. Issei war veteran. later went to u. of Michigan to teach. Formerly lawyer.

In Gila, this was the most liberal group in the center, and all of these people were leaders in the community. Although they held key position on the project, they never did stress Jacl connections.

Before ending the meeting assignments were made to write up reports about the center so that Kawaii and Tashiro could make a report to National in the Salt Lake convention. (Several of the reports in Kikuchi diary someplace.) A boy Scout troop was sponsored and the Farm Management program to recruit workers was also supported in order to gain a favorable opinion for the jacl in the community.

On November 7, the first board meeting was called in order to plan the membership drive, but this had to be postponed because of conflicting dates of five board members. The remaining five discussed general Nisei and jacl problems informally. The discussion centered around Nisei apathy and the dilemma of dispersal.

Kawaii was rather disappointed that more interest had not been shown in the jacl as he had tried hard to get the Nisei to



think about their future. Utsunomiya was more optimistic and he thought that the whole Japanese problem would be solved in ten years if they dispersed. It was pointed out to him that "we could not eliminate social and economic conditions no matter what the desire of the Nisei were". Utsunomiya believed that the Japanese problem was special and that "we also had to work for our parents." However, the board members were not sure that dispersal would work since there was the element of social isolation. The discussion then went on to matters of future Jacl policy.

It was decided to avoid a jacl "closed corporation."  
 Draw in college people to get the more liberal Nisei.  
 Avoid tie-up with religious interests.  
 Development of a number of committees so that many people would be active in the jacl program.  
 Have meetings on a "service organization basis"--with programs and other typical Rotary Club events.

An attempt was made to clearly define the stand which should be made in regards to Kibei membership. The Gila Young People's Club (Kibei) were strongly organized by this time with over 250 dues paying members. It was commonly known that they tended to take a pro-Japan stand. Several of the jacl board members did not think it wise to approach the kibei for membership since it was feared that they would sign up as a group and take over the Jacl, to the detriment of the Nisei cause. They felt that this would be harmful for the Americanization program. Kawaii and Tashiro proposed to bring up the issue at the Salt Lake Convention to determine if the national jacl had a policy in regards to this matter. The board members were divided on this question as some felt that the jacl should be neutral in this matter while others thought definite action against the kibei should be taken. In order to publicize the jacl more, it was decided to have a jacl page in the Gila news.



On November 10, 1942 the Executive Board met for the first time. By this time it had become clear that the jacl would only be able to function as a board in order to get anything accomplished as there was not much hope that the general membership would be active. Kawaii was elected as the Chairman of the Board; Utsonomiya, vice-chairman; and Kikuchi, executive secretary; and Yamamoto, Treasurer. Tentative plans for the membership drive were drawn up and for a subscription drive for the Pacific Citizen. In order to have some competition in the drive, each board member was made a team captain. Since Kawaii and Tashiro were shortly leaving for the National Convention, discussion as to what the chapter policy regarding volunteering or draft was started. "It was agreed that this was a most difficult question to answer, therefore Kawaii stated that he would ask that the Nisei be put on the same basis as the rest of the American citizens, without attempting to give any figures on any percentage of this center's Nisei who wanted to volunteer or be drafted.

For the rest of the month there was little activity by ~~the rest of the~~ on the part of the jacl. The movement in Canal died out entirely due to the strong Issei opposition, much stronger than in Butte. The Nisei were very apathetic about the jacl and not interested one way or the other. There was a tendency to withdraw from the realistic things of life by plunging into the daily rounds of their work and their socials. Most of the Nisei were content to live from day to day or else they were afraid to face the possibilities for their future.

In the meantime Kawaii and Tashiro were carrying the load of the chapter and as soon as they left for the convention the



movement to organize the jacl stopped since the other leaders were too busy with other camp interests. At the Salt Lake Meeting, the National Jacl took a stand on the following issues;

(see minutes and discuss.) *Re: membership*

Upon Kawaii and Tashiro's return a board meeting was called immediately for December 1, to hear their report and to get the membership drive underway. The issue of Kibei membership was immediately raised *in view of* ~~to to~~ the Tada beating which occurred that very evening. It was the general opinion that the Kibei would do everything in their power to undermine the Jacl. It was pointed out that the kibei had a strong issei backing and that they would not try to get into the jacl, but the danger would come from their opposition. Uysonomiya believed that they would actively try to undermine the pro-America groups, but that the jacl leaders should not be scared off by their threats. Several of the Board members stated that they had received threats for their Jacl activities. Kawaii announced that he expected to get a beating but that would not make him change his views. He urged the others present to take a similar stand in order to encourage the Nisei to make a strong stand for their rights. The board had been weakened when one of the members departed for the intelligence school. In the ~~coming~~ months that followed the jacl movement suffered seriously by having its leaders drained off by the Army or resettlement. Mas Oji, Assistant Central Block Manager, was appointed to the vacancy. He was formerly connected with the Santa Maria chapter and prominent in the Christian church activities in the center.

It was pointed out that the Kibei won a lot of Issei support by providing talent shows for the Issei and that they were planning to give mochi to each family for New Years. The board members felt that it was their duty to report any Kibei who definitely



engaged in subversive activities. There were several board members who did not believe that the jacl should adopt this measure as an official policy and it would harm the membership drive and open the organization up to charges of spies, and therefore, scaring prospective members away.

The assignment of the teams to definite wards was postponed because all of the board members were reluctant about canvassing the Santa Anita section, which was very anti-jacl (probably due to their antagonism against the L. A. chapter.)

On Sunday December 6, another board meeting was held, this time to definitely proceed with the membership campaign. The districts and potential membership was charted out. It was found that there were 2736 citizens 18 years of age and over in Butte. They were divided as follows:

<u>Block</u>	<u>Total</u>
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(p. 1434 for table.)

On the basis of total citizens, most of the board members were very optimistic about possible membership which could be enlisted during the week of the drive--December 12 to 20. Yamamoto proposed that the quota be 1500. ~~Most of~~ The rest of the board believed that 1000 would be about right. Utsunomiya did not agree with the others and he felt that 750 members would be the absolute maximum because of the general suspicions against the jacl. An oath of loyalty was supposed to ~~have~~ be taken with each new member, but the forms were never provided so that this matter was allowed to drop. A mass meeting was called for December 8 to create public interest in the membership drive.



( p. 1434 ck journal)

<u>Block</u>	<u>Total</u>
28	100
29	73
30	55
31	68
32	71
33	70
34	79
35	76
36	97
40	90
44	76
48	108
47	114
46	77
49	95
51	76
50	66
52	111
55	91
57	48
58	87
59	86
60	76
61	84
63	70
64	93
65	106
66	87
72	72
73	100
74	77
	89

Total           
2,736



During the next few days, the team captains had considerable difficulty in getting Nisei to work on the teams during the drive. The Poston strike and the Manzanar riot which had just been announced over the radio about this time created a mass feeling against pro-America groups and many Nisei were unwilling to face Issei parents while making the rounds for <sup>jacl</sup> ~~Nisei~~ membership. Most of the Nisei approached stated that they were willing to joining the jacl, but "they did not want to stick their necks out by soliciting membership." These Nisei had been staunch jacl followers in the pre-evacuation period. The real reason for refusing to serve on the team was expressed by one of the older Nisei, a councilman: <sup>p 1443</sup> "The jacl was all right on the outside, but it makes a lot of mistakes and the Nisei don't trust it. And you know how the Issei and Kibei feel. We have to live right among them and it's no use in raising their antagonism. They are very definitely against jacl. These people say 'What about evacuation?' and the Nisei can't give them a good enough answer. I'm a councilman and I don't want to make a lot of enemies. I will take out membership, of course, and also spread the work around quietly. All of the young kids have told me that they are against jacl and it would be funny if I went around and tried to sell them on it now."

Other attitudes expressed were:

(cite pl444)

From these expressions three reasons for the anti-jacl feeling, ~~plus definite fear of the Issei and Kibei~~, came out.

1. A feeling that the jacl let them down at the time of evacuation.
2. Mistrust of the jacl leaders
3. Fear of the Issei-Kibei strongarm, which appeared to be quite strong.



An older Nisei, married with a child. A former member of

Santa Maria chapter: "I will have to hear what they say tomorrow night at the mass meeting. If the JACL is like what they were in the past, it's no use in joining. They never did tell us what was going on. I realize that the Nisei need a voice, but I want to put my trust in an organization which I am sure about."

A recently married school teacher: "I don't want to serve on the team, but I am willing to give it another try with my membership. In Pasadena I belonged to the Civic League and we joined the JACL as a chapter but that was a big mistake. All we did was to get our pictures taken and keep donating to National. I don't think they used the right approachx to the whole evacuation."

A secretary who married a kibe: "I'm willing to join but I don't think that I can serve on the team. My husband is a Kibe and he is violently against the jac. You should come in and argue with him. I'll even take the Pacific Citizen. But Frank won't join and he would not like it if I served on a team. I've only been married a month and I can't afford to break up my domestic happiness yet."

From these expression three reasons for the anit-jac feeling came out:

- 1) A feeling that the jac let them down at the time of evacuation.
- 2) Mistrust of the jac leaders.
- 3) Fear of the Issei-kibe strongarm, which appeared to be quite strong.



*as follows*

One board member summed up these attitudes thusly: (p 1444)  
 "They are all so damned afraid to face the public and make a stand. They will joint, but they never will play more than a passive role. The time for that kind of stuff is past."

By December 8, all of the team members had not been selected yet, but the first large mass meeting was held anyway. Despite a bitter cold evening over 250 people crowded into the messhall. There had been rumors circulating that the jacl had asked for the Nisei to be put on a <sup>Volunteer</sup> basis for the Army and the large turnout was in response to finding out if this were definitely true or not. The audience felt that Kawaii could give them the inside information since he had just returned from the National Convention in Salt Lake. Kawaii denied the charges and then he went on to give an excellent talk on the future of the jacl and the need to support it. There were only ~~two~~ representatives from the Santa Anita area at this meeting.

In the discussion period that followed, Kawaii made it clear that Issei would not be eligible for associate membership "due to the war situation." He ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ also stressed that the Nisei and the Issei future was in America. "For those Issei who see no future here, they can expatriate, but our stand is firm." There was a general reaction in the audience in favor of this remark, although some of the Nisei present inferred that the jacl should bring the Issei along with them, and they wanted to avoid the issues which would step on Issei toes.

The Internal Security department had heard a rumor that there was going to be a disturbance at the meeting so that two wardens had been stationed in the vicinity. It was learned afterwards that some Kibei had been planted in the meeting in order to start a demonstration, but they lost their nerve when such a large audience turned out. The Community Service Director, Hoffman, was quite disturbed when he found this out as he had believed that he was treating the Kibei Club fairly. This



incident contributed to the later administrative fear that the jacl would cause friction in the community and the WRA staff was a little conservative in giving full recognition to the group.

There was some reaction about the threatened Kibei demonstration by some of the strong jacl leaders. One of them was overheard making the following remarks, which indicates the strong pro-America Nisei attitude: (quote p. 1462 Tosh Kawaii.)

From this time on, the opposition against the jacl broke out into the open. With the rising public sentiment, ~~xxx~~ a number of the membership ~~team~~ people dropped out for fear of harmful repercussions. A proposal was made to postpone the drive until the "feeling died down a little." Heard members were accosted on the streets by Issei who urged that the jacl be discontinued "because it was not working for the whole community since it advocated that the Nisei be drafted." Other issei expressed the sentiment that they were too old to be going out to resettle without the Nisei to help them. The strongest opposition came from those groups who disliked the jacl because they considered that the ~~jacl~~ evacuation <sup>was</sup> due to the organization "advocating" it. This feeling ~~ix~~ of resentment and bitterness mounted rapidly. Issei parents forbade or discouraged their Nisei children ~~to~~ from having any contacts with the jacl, simply because pressure was put on them by other Issei in the block.

(Kibei + Tosh)  
A minority group of the Board of Directors objected to postponement of the drive upon the principle that the Nisei could not afford to give way to intimidation. It was felt that this was the time for the Nisei to stand up for their rights and not be dominated by the Issei any longer. A meeting was held for the Board and all team members on December 10 in order to



(quote p. 1462 Kikuchi Diary)

Tosh Kawaii: "The spineless Nisei! we are lettin a small minority intimidate and scare out the majority because the Nisei won't get up and fight for their principles. Hell, if we get organized, they won't dare try a thing. The Nisei are to apathetic and split up into little cliques so that the Kibei element looks stronger than we are. But if we can get together and firmly stand our ground, it would end all of these troubles of the various camps. Nobu will probably get slugged, but he can take care of himself. The Nisei just do not realize their straght. We should get rid of these gangsters right now... As long as the Nisei do nothing here as a unified body, the agitators are going to get stronger and stronger. Get rid of the leaders and the others will automatically poop out."



On December 11 at the meeting of the team members and the board, the announcement of this letter was instrumental in causing a vote for postponement. Several of the board members had not been able to enlist team members, especially in the Santa Anita area, and they pleaded for more time. The min-



ority of the board who were in favoring of going ahead regardless were voted down. It was decided to postpone the drive for one week. A mass meeting was called for the Santa Anita area on the night prior to the drive to arouse some support from that section of the camp.

As events turned out, it was a mistake to postpone the drive because it gave the opposition an opportunity to solidify their antagonism against the jacl, and to scare off potential members. The representative of the Spanish Consul, De Amat, was a visitor to the center during the week on on the night of December 12, several of the block councils had held meetings to discuss his visit. These were Issei groups who suddenly felt that Japan was not going to let them down and they were hopeful that Japan would work out their future. The discussion in these meetings rapidly turned to a denunciation of the jacl.

It was the opinion of these Issei that the jacl should not be allowed to organize in Gila because it had sold the evacuee down the river. One of the block chairmen made the remark that he had seen a letter which the jacl had sent to De Witt of the Western Defense Command signing an agreement to evacuate. He referred to the resolution stressing cooperation after the evacuation order came out, but the Issei understood it as a letter asking for evacuation.

At the same time, many informal forums were being held around the block fires during the evenings. The general attitude was that the Nisei leaders were only interested in saving the Nisei. Williamson of the Internal Security urged that the drive be postponed until after the New Year since he confidentially informed one of the board members that a roundup of the subversive groups was being contemplated and he wished to avoid having an



open conflict develop between these groups and the jac1. This recommendation was not followed. Williamson was under the mistaken impression that there was some center of subversive activity perhaps in Denver for some other center which sent out instructions to the agents in the various camps. He said that it was no coincidence that the pattern for violence was the same in all of the centers. He stated that he would like to censor the mail if he could.. Apparently Williamson did not recognize that it was similar conditons in each of the camps which caused the unrest, plus the factor of evacuation.

In order to boost the jac1, the Gila News on December 15 had an editorial and news publicity to the coming drive. It was deliberately planned by the editor (Tashiro) to clear up some of the misunderstandings which had been sweeping the community.

(attach Dec 16 Gila News)

A page was devoted to an official release on the Manzanar riots in order to conteract the rumors sweeping the community about the uprising. On the next page, a detailed explanation was given on how the clothing allowance would be distributed. The Tada beating had occured to the general unrest of the people and the belief that only promises and never clothing would be given. A page was also devoted to the opening of the net project in line with the chapter's policy to push pro-America activities. The community was opposed to anything that would help America's war efforts. Another source of unrest was the fear of starvation so that a statement was given on the food supply in the center. It was pointed out that Gila was on food rationing along with the rest of the nation.

the

Finally, a whole editorial page was devoted to the jac1. Titled "JACL works for common cause--Seeks to dispel misunderstanding"



members went along with him for his protection,  
3 wardens were also sent by the Internal Security Dept.  
In this meeting the audience displayed



In the talks before the Hawaiian Club and the University Club, Kawaii was more successful in explaining the jacl policies. These were largely Nisei groups. The Hawaiian Club was a social organization for Nisei born in Hawaii, while the University Club of Canal was composed largely of university students who were interested in intellectual pursuits. Many of the members of the University Club of Canal were former members of the jacl, but they did not make any move to organize a Canal jacl since they felt that their University club was filling the need for a group to discuss Nisei and world problems.

The mass meeting called for the Santa Anita section on the evening of December 16, 1943 was a complete fizzle. After waiting for forty-five minutes over the scheduled time for the meeting to begin, there were only eight people in the audience, five of whom were board members. The board members were sent out to round up the Nisei and finally succeeded in getting 25 Nisei to the meeting. Only four Santa Anitans were in the audience, the others were from the Stockton center and they had been scattered around in the midst of the Santa Anita stronghold. Stockton had had a fairly active jacl in the pre-evacuation days.

It should be noted that there was a considerable resentment against the jacl by the ~~Nisei~~ many Nisei who felt bitter and had concluded that it was the cause of evacuation. This was most strongly manifested in the Santa Anita area of the camp as these people were largely from Los Angeles where the jacl had been in great disrepute even before the outbreak of the war due to the conservatism and even reactionary methods of the old line leaders. This mistrust was intensified and carried over into the relocation center.

The Santa Anita district meeting was an occasion for Nisei to demonstrate their dislike by calling a general meeting of their own



without notice in competition to the jacl meeting called for the same evening. After the evening meal, this group pinned up their own posters over the jacl posters in the area calling for a meeting to organize a Nisei Club. This was to be a social club and Nisei looking for the jacl meeting were directed to the Santa Anita meeting by Nisei who had been posted near the messhall where the jacl meeting had been called. The Santa Anita Nisei Club was never organized even though a crowd of over 100 Nisei attended the meeting. Its purpose was served by openly "stealing" away the prospective jacl audience.

In spite of the opposition and the small audience at the jacl meeting, Kawaii proceeded to give his talk. In the discussion period a Nisei said that other friends of his from that area would have attended the meeting but he feared that he would be ostracized if he were seen mingling with a jacl group. Most of the discussion centered <sup>around</sup> ~~on~~ the point of how much social life the jacl would provide for its members.

On December 17 another article appeared in the Gila News pushing the membership drive which got off to a very inauspicious start on that day. A committee of the Santa Anita block residents, composed of Nisei, sent a letter in to the editor (Tashiro) asking whether the Gila News was being subsidized the JAcl. They were in disagreement with the jacl editorial that had appeared in the previous issue. In discussing the matter over with the board it was decided not to use the newspaper so much in the future if it resulted in consolidating opinion against the aims of the group. Plans for a weekly jacl page were shelved temporarily until the public attitude changed a little.

For the next few evenings, the drive went along fairly smoothly as the team members contacted all of their friends first. In some of the blocks large numbers were signed up, particularly in the



Santa Maria blocks. Since the son of one of the richest produce company ~~of the Santa~~ owners was on the team, he was able to enroll many Nisei by appealing to past friendships.

After December 20, it became evident that there was developing an extreme reluctance to taking out membership. The Kibei element now took an active role in spreading stories which would discredit the jacl. This influenced many of the Issei parents who in turn brought pressure upon their children. The standard argument in almost every refusal to join was the fact that they considered that the jacl was to blame for the evacuation. The team members emphasized the point that the jacl in itself was nothing, but that it had potentialities in becoming a strong pressure group to work for the benefit of all evacuees and that the people who stood on the side lines and criticized could do more by taking an active role ~~xxx~~. There was no attempt to dodge the Kibei as this would give them reason for believing that the jacl was entirely for the Nisei. However, the point was made clear that they would have to take an allegiance oath before they were ~~accepted~~ accepted for membership.

Many of the Nisei refused to take out membership as they did not believe that the jacl was really interested in their future. They felt that it was a scheme to get money out of them which they hinted was ~~xxxx~~ diverted into the pockets of the "leaders." Some stated that they had paid \$2.00 dues just before evacuation and had never received membership cards. They stated that they were highly pressured into taking out membership with the promise that jacl members would get better treatment by being members. Since all evacuees were treated the same by the Army, these Nisei felt quite disgusted that such a false promise had been made to them.

Many of the younger Nisei refused to take out membership because they felt that the Nisei soldiers in the Army were being discrim-



inated against and they also believed that they would all be sent back to Japan after the war anyway so that it was no use in trying to fight it. These individuals believed that there would be great opportunities in all of the territories which Japan had conquered, assuming that Japan would continue to hold all of the area which they have conquered up to the present.

It was quite evident that the emotional dislike of the jacl was growing. There was a general tendency to project all of the problems of evacuation upon the jacl and blame it for their discomforts. Personal dislike for the Gila jacl leaders was another reason for not joining. It was rumored quite freely that Nobu Kawaii had urged all of the people of Pasadena to store all of their things away and only take one grip to the Assembly Center, but when Kawaii evacuated he brought all of his personal effects, including rugs and chairs. This was the basis for the accusation that he was selfish and that the only reason he wanted the jacl was to get personal prestige.

The emotional reaction, combined with the general Nisei apathy, resulted in a slowing down of the membership drive in the week before Christmas. Parental influence became a much stronger factor, to the point where parents would order the team members away from their apartments. In several instances, the parents would make such an issue out of their children joining that Nisei involved cancelled his membership in order to avoid the home conflict.

There was also fear that the jacl was a trouble making organization and that all of the riots in the various camps were due to it. The people felt that the jacl did nothing for them before evacuation and that they could do nothing now but make trouble. Many of the younger Nisei expressed the opinion that they could



not have any "fun" by joining and they would wait to see what their friends did first. This apathy <sup>toward the future</sup> was as common as the emotional dislike for the jacl.

At no time was there a definitely organized pressure movement against the jacl, although the Kibei club opposed it <sup>limited</sup> to a man on an informal basis. It was largely a matter of individual opposition. A specific example of parental pressure was the occasion on which the jacl secretary resigned from the position and dropped out of the jacl because of her mothers fear that harm would result if it became known that she was connected with the organization. This young girl had been the regular secretary for the Pasadena jacl chapter. She stated that her father was quite bitter about the evacuation which he blamed on the jacl and he had forced her to resign.

On December 22, an attempt was made to organize another community club by an Issei who claimed that he had 300 Issei backing him and he stated that his organization would be "better than the jacl, Kibei Club, or any other club in this camp." A mess hall was granted for this meeting which ended up by becoming a forum to denounce the jacl activities. One Issei got up and he said that they should not be too hard on the Nisei because "many of the high Japanese officials had told them to be loyal to America before the war." Yamashiro, the Kibei club president (he was later removed from the community because of the registration issue) then got up and denounced this Issei and he said that the man was only making his statements from his mouth and not his heart and if anyone believed differently, he was a "baka" (dumbbell) ~~when the meeting broke up~~ The audience applauded Yamashiro. From this time on, the Kibei group were quite open in displaying their "Japanesy" spirit. They felt a contempt for the Nisei who could



not speak Japanese well enough to explain the jacl to them. There was an agreement made among themselves to speak only Japanese during the remainder of the time that they were in the center to show where their sentiments lay.

The Board members met the same evening in a laundry room in order to figure out how they could break down this opposition. They were fairly satisfied with the drive as it was going at that time as they felt that the opposition made the work more difficult. In some blocks, not one Nisei took out membership. The board agreed that the parents and the Kibei were the chief obstacles. It was suggested that one of the war veterans be contacted to talk to the parents. Mitsumori was selected since he had considerable prestige among the Issei. He was not successful in changing the Issei opposition much since he was unable to contact any number of them.

~~The~~ At this same time, there was a considerable emotional reaction on the camouflage net project which had just started to recruit workers. The Issei\*Kibei element were unwilling to help the war effort in any way so that there was much agitation against it. One of the deliberate rumors that was started around was that the Jacl had asked for the net project! The general idea was to discredit the net project by emotionally associating it closely with the Jacl which was already unpopular in the camp. It was true that many of the board members had been instrumental in working out the details of the net pay plan, but they had done so as community leaders and not as jacl leaders.

It was decided to continue the public relations work and the board made arrangements for Kawaii to speak to the Teachers Institute which was going to be held over the Christmas holidays. The Board was of the opinion that this was a very important thing to do since many of the caucasian teachers in the Giãa schools



did not know anything about the background of the evacuees.

Kikuchi and Tashiro were appointed to accompany Kawaii to this meeting to assist him in answering questions.

A \$100.00 donation by an <sup>older Hawaiian Nisei</sup> Issei was received during the midst of this opposition which encouraged the jacl leaders to continue on with their membership drive. This donation had been given by a prominent business <sup>man</sup> formerly of Santa Maria. He asked that his name be kept a <sup>anonymous</sup> secret to avoid friction with his block people. This Hawaiian Nisei had arrived penniless in the Santa Maria Valley in 1922. He did not speak English very well and his education had been limited to a few grades in the elementary school in Hawaii. However, he had a keen business sense and one of the richer Issei farmers in the valley financed a modest machine shop for him. Gradually, he expanded until he was appointed the official agency for the Chevrolet company. He bought a lot of property and his investments made him a wealthy man. This man had always been a strong supporter of the jacl. In giving the check, he said that he was "grateful to a country which gave him such a chance and he wanted to do his part in helping the Nisei remain loyal. It was decided not to publicize the story in the Gila News when the editor informed the board that a delegation from the Kibei club approached him and criticized the paper for the space given to the jacl without an equal amount given to their club, which they felt had greater support in the community.

The food situation had not improved much and some of the board members were in favor of investigation Mess Operations for possible graft. Miyake was particularly interested in this since he had received the bulk of the complaints in his capacity as Central Block Manager. The majority of the board members voted this down, pointing out that it was the policy not to become



(p1588) and 1602





Quotes p. 1588

"Gosh, after I hear all that the Issei are saying, I'm not going to join."

"I would join but my parents WOULD OBJECT too much."

"My father said that I could join the Kibei Club, but not the Jacl."

"My father said that I can join (a girl) but my brother can't."

"The parents in this block don't want us to join the jacl."

p1602

"One girl said that it was too late to do anything now. I asked her if she would stop a leak in a dam if she could and she said that the situation was not the same. As far as she is concerned the dam has already burst and everything is lost. I did not argue with her but pointed out that if she were not willing to lift a finger to save herself, who would? She replied, 'Who could now? I may as well have as much fun now while I can. I don't want to go out. They are only trying to shove us now because they are short of workers. After that, they will shut us up again. It's no use at all and I am not going to worry about it because we can't do a thing.'"

A kibei: "Confidentially, I don't give a damn about my American citizenship. I'm for Japan and I know she will win the war. Some American people are good, but I hate the American government. It treats us like dogs and now it wants us to help beat the Japanese people. I'm staying right here until the war is over and then I am going back to Japan. I can't join the jacl because I don't believe in the United States anymore. I hope Japan beats the hell out of all the democracies. It is false anyway."

A Nisei youth; "What's the use in making the Issei get mad at us? I think they know what it is all about. They went through the same things we are going to face after the war. It won't do any good to try to be like the other Americans because they will never accept the Nisei. I think I am an American but they never will. If they had not evacuated me, I would be more than willing to sacrifice anything."



were not concerned about the jacl as such, but merely following the path of least experience.

on the 29th  
Although the date for the membership drive was finished, it was decided to have one final push. An attempt was made to sign up the Hawaiian club en masse because they "were tough fellows and good to have around in case of a brawl." By this time fear of the draft and a difficult and sudden resettlement were the outstanding causes for jacl opposition. An attempt ~~was~~ was made by two kibel to beat up one of the board members on the 23rd, but it had not been successful.

Administrative suspicions of the Jacl was reflected in the attitude taken towards Kawaii when he sought a job relating to resettlement on January 1, 1943. The Leave Officer, Landward, wondered if his jacl activities would ~~infixxxxxxxx~~ be harmful for the position. He believed that Kawaii could handle the work, but because of the antagonisms against the jacl and the fact that Kawaii was so prominent in the organization, Landward had a feeling that this would hurt the WRA outside employment, which was being contemplated. Landward recognized that certain elements in the center would fight the outside resettlement program if connected in any way with the jacl or Nobu. He hinted that the administration was a little fearful of the jacl because it ~~thought~~ felt that trouble would arise as in Manzanar, Tule and Poston if it got strongly organized. ~~He~~ ~~xfal~~Landward felt that there was too much flag waving and he advised Nobu to lay low or unfavorable reactions would develop outside of the camp.

On January 4, another board meeting was held. A tentative date for the first mass meeting was advanced for January 19. It was suggested that either Galen Fisher or Bennett be obtained



as the main speaker. Plans were also made to elect the permanent Board to hold office until July 1943. Several members of the temporary Board had been inactive due to X ray work at the hospital, illness (Valley fever), and lack of interest. Mitsumori, the war veteran member of the board, had to resign as he was leaving for Michigan to take a position as an language instructor.

The main question at this meeting was to discuss the part that the Gila chapter would play in the resettlement work. The National Jacl had been developing plans for a resettlement program. It had sent a circular around proposing that the National office should act as the coordinator for all of the caucasian groups working for resettlement. The Board felt that the Gila chapter did not have the organization to do this important work. It refused to set up a Resettlement Committee in the center which would take all applications and make placements.

Several of the board members suggested that the jacl was only a tiny cog in the resettlement program and that it could not begin to handle the complex problems of getting the people out of the center. They felt that this was a WRA function and that it should remain a government responsibility. Lack of personnel and experience was the basis for this decision. This was the first time that the board had really bucked an ambitious program of the National Headquarters. The National Office went ahead regardless and proceeded to set up a resettlement office. This office has not functioned as it was intended and interest has turned from employment to housing and now to social adjustments. (June).

A more obvious reason why the Board did not wish to establish a resettlement committee was that the jacl was already viewed with suspicion and that if resettlement were connected with it, the people in camp would object to going out on this basis



alone. They already believed that the jacl was responsible for the evacuation. The board felt that its function would be to work on the public opinion more instead of trying to create an independent set-up on the machinery of leaves which would be taken care of by the WRA anyway.

A split in policy came out into the open at this meeting. A minority number of the board felt that the Issei could not longer be brought along with the jacl. They advocated that the future belonged to the Nisei and that the parents would have to come along behind them. They were opposed to the theme that "we are working for all of the Japanese people here." This group felt that they were only working for the "Americans here, regardless of whether they are citizens or not." Under the circumstances this minority felt that it was more advisable to stress the fact that 70% of the evacuees <sup>were</sup> ~~are~~ citizens and that the rest would have to make their choice. They took the stand that there was no more room for fence straddling or apologizing for the Issei-Kibei. They thought that it was not really necessary to do so much flag waving like the National office tended to do.

The board concluded the meeting by revising membership estimations from 1000 to 700 in view of the recent occurrences.

On the 5th of January, a clean up drive for membership was started, but the progress was slow.

It was decided to get started on a new program--that of getting greater membership participation. The Board agreed that most of the emphasis would be on resettlement and to keep up with events on the outside. The board felt that this would dispel some of the administrative suspicion that the jacl was delving into community affairs in violation of its policy.



The jacl movement lagged from then on until the registration issue developed. The January 12 Board meeting was postponed. A large part of the cause for this was that the leaders were involved in other work. Kawaii had kept the movement alive as he devoted all of his time to it, but with the beginning of the New Year, <sup>he</sup> decided to go into the camouflage work. Miyake was busy in getting the cooperative organized; Tashio<sup>o</sup> was busy with the paper; kikuchi with social welfare department; Yamamoto with his X-ray work; Asakura with the stove problem in the housing department, and Utsunomiya with community council politics. A minority group of the Board felt that the National jacl was becoming a satellite of the WRA. ck expresses their sentiment p 1731k

"We are thinking of drawing up a resolution asking National to take a firm stand on the right of the loyal evacuees to go back to California; National will hardly agree with this policy as it is committed to a program of working closely with the WRA. Already it is getting to be a satellite. But the Nat'l leaders do not have a clear understanding of the attitudes of the people in camp. It does not understand that there is a growing opposition towards the resettlement program."

This spit in the Board came out into the open in the January 17 Board meeting. It was a struggle between the minority liberal group and the more conservative members who represented the National Jacl line of thinking. The Gila group gradually swung over to the more liberal view so that a split with National loomed.

The discussion began around the matter of the oath of allegiance which all new members were supposed to take. A few of the board members had signed up some Kibei ~~xxxx~~ although they were not sure whether they would sign such an oath. This point was settled by a compromise. Kawaii stated that he would make it clear at the general meeting scheduled for the January 26



that the jacl had certain principles to uphold and that all members were obligated to uphold them. If they did not, they should not be members.

The discussion brought out the conservative tendencies of ~~some of the board members~~ some of the board members who did not wish to directly come into conflict with some of the elements in the community. It became clearer when the question of supporting the drive going on for the United War Fund in the nation<sup>arose</sup> with it. The purpose of this fund was to divide it among ten nationally approved organizations--USO, United China Relief, Russian War Relief, British War Relief, Greek War Relief, Polish War Relief, War Prisoners Aid, Dutch Relief, and YWCA's Overseas War Emergency. The Ex-Servicemen's Club were willing to undertake the drive for Gila, but they wanted the jacl chapter to work with them. The Board opposed this plan on the basis that the people were too poor to be contributing money. The real reason came out in the statements made by two of the board members:

- 1) "Besides the jacl has a bad name and they ~~won't~~ (community) would oppose it."
- 2) "There's no use in creating further community conflicts. The people don't want to give anything to groups that will help American soldiers that are fighting the Japanese."

Another member of the board stood up in support of the drive, suggesting that the chapter should at least give it token support just to show that it was in favor of such a worthwhile project. It was pointed out that the jacl would always be ineffective if it were continually being governed by the community pressure. "At times we have to uphold some principles even if there are elements who do not agree with our political viewpoints."



It was finally decided to invite the Ex Servicement to the general meeting to make the appeal and that the jacl would not support the drive as a group, but as individuals and that the members would be encouraged to contribute. The Board felt that the jacl should not assume coeresponsibility ~~since~~ for raising funds since it was still in the process of a membership drive and soliciting donations itself. Utsunomiya stated that the Japanese always oversubscribed their quota in the Community Chest drives on they outside, but it was a little different now.

A letter was sent to the directors of the United War Fund Drive for the State of Arizona explaining the poor financial condition of the evacuees, and a small donation was enclosed "to show them that we are not soured and bitter towards the war effort."

Since the general meeting was for the purpose of selecting a new board for the coming six months, the Board attempted to comply a list for nominations. One of the chief criticisms against the jacl in the past had been that the controlling element ~~got~~ to be a self perpetuating clique. The board were eager to develop new leaders, but it <sup>could</sup> only think of eight <sup>potential leader</sup> persons. This in itself is a commentary on the Nisei group which had not developed sufficient leaders even with the crisis of evacuation which called for vigorous leadership. Tashiro felt that if Kawaii dropped out of the organization, the whole movement would fold up due to the general apathy. Kawaii was representative of the minority liberal element of the board, and he did not hesitate to make clear his stand publicially instead of straddling the fence. However, he was a little cautious at times. Kawaii was race conscious to some extent and he wanted to bring the Issei along with the jacl, if possible.

The two following letter reflect the trend of the Gila chapter at this time. A request was made of National to get the Justice



Department to allow the Issei to visit relatives in the internment camps. Kawaii felt that this move would prove to the Issei that the Jacl "worked for all." More important, these letters indicated the growing independence of the Gila group. It felt that National should take a stand that all loyal Japanese should be permitted to return to California. Masoaka, the Nat'l Secretary, however, was not receptive to the idea. He urged compromise and caution on both points. The Gila group wanted to fight for its rights now, whereas National felt that cooperation with the WRA was more essential and that it was better to hope for the best. Masoaka felt that if the Jacl pushed the point that the loyal be allowed to return to California, it would only disrupt the resettlement program. He felt that it was too much to buck the Army at that point. "It is my feeling that we must often compromise ~~rather~~ in order to gain certain concessions for our people at this time....if we stood for principles alone, regardless of their consequences, we would do greater harm for our people than they are now subjected to. They may condemn us now because we do not stand our ground but how much greater that condemnation would be if the situation turned drastically for the worse?."

The Gila Board were quite aroused at Masoaka's views. They felt that this was not the time for compromise and that this view was harmful for the evacuees. To them, it indicated that the Jacl feared to stand alone and it was only showing its short sighted conservatism by following the all out line of "cooperation." with whatever Federal group was in control. The Board felt that it was the Jacl function to be a pressure group to fight the California pressure groups point by point. National had been swinging towards this direction slowly through the efforts of Tajiri, the slightly left editor of the Pacific ~~Express~~ Citizen.



In the discussion that followed the reading of the correspondence between the Board and The National office, the sentiment was expressed that "ational too often spoke for all the Nisei without knowing their true feelings or conditions in the camps. The Board decided to go ahead with its resolutions (in letter that follows) if the members would approve it. It felt that principles should be stood up for immediately without further compromise. "We feel that the time has come when we should stand ~~on~~ our ground as firmly as Ghandi and stand for equal rights today instead of promises for the future. ~~We~~ We don't want only frestricted democracy." (insert letters pps 1761-68 here.)

On the January 24 meeting which met for the purpose of fixing the agenda for the mass meeting on the 26th, a resolution was drawn up to send to National. The Board still felt that it should take a firm stand on demanding that released Nisei be allowed freedom of travel if cleared by the FBI. In view of the recent Gallup poll which indicated that 93% of the Pacific Coast was in favor of justifying evacuation as a military measure, the board thought that it should be a little more subtle in its resolution. Therefore, the resolution requested National to take a stand on getting the Army to allow Nisei soldiers the right to come into the military area. The Nisei soldiers were not permitted to do that so at that time since no soldiers were given a permit to come and visit their parents in the centers located in the restricted area.

The membership drive was official closed at this meeting. Some 750 members had been signed up. The board anticipated an overflow crowd for the first meeting. Despite good publicity, only 60 members appeared. The meeting was ~~xxx~~ publicized as a business meeting which ~~may~~ accounted for the poor showing. The members were not much interested in these matters. Cold and threatening weather also reduced the potential audience.



The evening also had several block parties, temporary council meeting, and several club meetings which ~~also~~ competed with the jacl. The most probable explanation for the poor attendance (out of 750 total membership) was the indifference and general apathy of the Nisei. This large group was not very much concerned about the implications of all the recent developments in regards to the evacuee's status in America.

The chapter had received word that the Committee for Fair Play to the American born and Alien Japanese were trying to get organized on a wider basis. They were meeting in San Francisco about that time in order to join forces between the Southern California and Northern California Group. This committee sent the following letter to the Senate Military Affairs Committee pleading for racial tolerance. The protest was against Senators Chandler, Johnson, and Wallgren who were known to be prejudiced against colored minority groups in this country. (insert p.1850 here.) The chapter sent the following telegram to show that the Nisei were aware of the efforts of the Fair Play committee on their behalf; "1000 members of jacl appreciate expansion program of Fair Play Committee. As loyal citizens we pledge our whole hearted support in fighting for equal rights."

A memorial to President Roosevelt was also passed--asking for a statement ~~in~~ regarding Nisei loyalty. It was felt that such a statement would lift the Nisei morals and show them that high government officials had faith in them. Up to that time, no public statement had been made by high officials which showed the Nisei in a more favorable light. One of the members stood up and stated that the Nisei should not demand a statement on loyalty on the basis that ~~the y~~ were a distinct class of Americans, but on the basis that they were Americans insisting upon their Civil rights. He insisted that the jacl ~~should~~ member-



ship should take a firm stand and quit taking a middle course. Another member backed this up by saying that every member should take the oath of loyalty and that they should speak out more often, even in the face of the Issei-kibei opposition. There was some reaction by the audience against such a strong ~~new~~ stand, but they gradually agreed to the idea.

This was followed up by a discussion on the policy of the chapter, which was neatly dodged by Kawaii. The question was asked by one of the board members "Should the Butte Jacl follow National jacl policies all the way down the line?" This was an attempt to get a solid backing of the membership so that the minority element of the board could obtain the balance of power. This question was followed up with a general statement: "From my observations it seems that National is following a policy of cooperation and there is every indication that it will become a satellite of the WRA. It compromises on some fundamental issues in the hopes that future promises will materialize. On the other hand, the Butte chapter is in a mood to fight for our principles right now without compromising. There have been charges in the past that the jacl officials did not consult the membership enough on issues and that it tended to leave the majority of the members in the dark. If we are going to have a solid democratic organization, we should avoid this past mistake at all costs. I would like to ask, 'Just what is going to be the stand of the Butte chapter in relation to National if there is a difference on important policies?'" (p 1869)

Kawaii fearing that the jacl would be disrupted before it had a chance to get organized neatly dodged the issue by stating that National was composed of an emergency board and sometimes it had to act without consulting the members simply as a matter of expediency. "In war times, certain dictatorial powers are acceptable



in order to take immediate action on points that cannot wait until every member is sounded out." This was a reversal of Kawaii's opinion that the Nisei should take a firm stand like Ghandi of India. Later he admitted that he had not committed himself at the meeting because he wanted to feel his way cautiously and bring the members along gradually without antagonizing them.

Despite the small attendance, the nominations and elections for the new board was held. Almost one third of the group nominated were formerly members of the Santa Maria chapter. Although the audience took a strong interest in the nominations, it was clear that they were proceeding on the basis of getting their "home town" chapter leaders into office. All of the temporary board was re-nominated. Following is the list of nominees. (p. 1870)

The final results revealed that five Santa Marians were elected. All of them wanted to resign so that claims would not be made that the Santa Maria Chapter was trying to run things, but the membership present at the meeting voted this down. The elected Board (to serve until July 1943) (p. 1871)

The five which received the highest number of votes were carry overs from the old board. The plea for "new blood" had been a failure due to the lack of interest by the members. In the past, jacl leaders had held office perpetually simply because of this failure on the part of the Nisei to take a greater interest in their future.

The following day (Jan 25) the Gila News in reporting the meeting played up the jacl resolution which requested that Nisei soldiers be ~~allowed~~ permitted free movement in the military zone. This editorial was the basis for ~~new~~ fresh rumors about the jacl when the Stimpsons announcement about volunteering came out on the 28th.



By February 4, the rumor that the Jacl "requested" the volunteer status was sweeping the center. In order to put a stop to it, the Board held a special meeting that evening to get the true facts~~x~~ and to call for a special<sup>meeting</sup> meeting to discuss re-settlement. The <sup>Board</sup> meeting was postponed to the next <sup>evening</sup> meeting since the notice had not been delivered to all of the board members. The only decision that was made that evening was that the Jacl should sponsor a "Buy War Bonds" campaign since the net workers were making so much money.

On February 5, 11 board members made their appearance, the most that had ever met together at any one time.~~xxxxixmx~~ It was decided to call a mass meeting for the following Tuesday (Feb 9). Project Direct Bennett and Leave Officer Landward had already agreed to appear. Bennett was asked to speak on resettlement, but he also promised to bring the Army officials for the registration with him if possible in order to explain the program.

The discussion then turned to the attitudes towards the Army combat unit which was contemplated for the Nisei. All of the members of the board were of the opinion that it was not the most desirable thing. Bennett had told the members of the board that the Army officials decided upon a separate unit because the Nisei would probably not fight in the South Pacific. He stated that if the Nisei were scattered around in various regiments, they would probably not be sent out with any division that went to the Pacific battlefronts. He said that the Army did not think that this was desirable because there would be an added danger that the Caucasian soldiers would shoot them by mistake. The board did not believe that this was a very good reason. The general reasoning was "If the Nisei are willing to go into the



Army, they are also willing to take their chances with the other American boys." The board felt that the combat ~~unit~~ unit proposal made service an obligation and not a privilege, which put <sup>Board</sup> the ~~Nisei~~ on the spot if it argued against ~~the~~ a separate unit. The board felt that all of these things should be openly discussed at the mass meeting. ~~x~~ and ~~x~~ an overflow crowd was anticipated because of the timely subject.

During the excitement of the next few days, the board took an all out ~~supp~~~~port~~~~ing~~ position in support of the Nisei combat unit. On the 9th, the meeting which had been intended to emphasize resettlement ~~had~~~~been~~~~switched~~ was switched by the administration to stress the volunteering. The Kibei at this time made its strongest bid for political leadership in the community by attempt to exert pressure on the administration. They insisted that the Army officials should be presented before the Kibei group instead of the jacl since they were not sure about what the registration meant and they wanted an explanation. They were informed that the jacl meeting had been scheduled first. This meeting <sup>with Army officials</sup> was the only mass meeting held which was not sponsored by the administration.

The mass jacl meeting was jammed. About 600 Nisei were inside and an overflow crowd of over 400 were outside. Public speakers had been set up outside for their benefit. The crowd was predominantly male, although a large ~~unn~~ number of women were also there. The Kibei club had called off their meeting and they attended en masse. The jacl was ~~not~~ obviously not the drawing card. The crowd was interested in the highly controversial topic which had suddenly been sprung upon them and there was a great deal of confusion over what it was all about. Word had gone out that all the Nisei would be subject to the draft and all the young fellows came to find out ~~officially~~ if this was true from off-



cial sources. The outstanding atmosphere of the gathering was one of definite cynicism. The jacl board had previously decided to dispense with the regular jacl business, recognizing that the audience was there for a different purpose. (A discussion of this meeting should be included in the report on registration.)

The meeting revealed that the community was rapidly reaching a crisis point. Since the jacl had sponsored the meeting, the rumor began to spread that all of the volunteering trouble was due to this group. However the emotional opposition of the community was directed more against the government policy of registration and volunteering rather than the jacl as such.

The registration issue was the supreme test for the jacl. It was the first time that the Nisei as a whole had an opportunity to support a principle through the organization. The membership did not meet the test and from this time on the jacl was a fizzle with only a large paper membership but no active body, with the exception of the board. The board, more or less, had to commit themselves to a definite stand since it was on the spot.

<sup>Some</sup> ~~Most~~ <sup>leaders</sup> of the members would have liked to remain on the fence in order to pacify the community sentiment, but they were forced to declare their stand because of the important issue involved. Surprisingly enough, all members of the board took an active role ~~in the registration~~ during this period of the registration.

In small groups, they made a canvas of every apartment in some of the more agitating blocks (such as the Turlock area) in order to explain the whole registration to the Issei parents. In some cases the argument was used that they should answer ~~favorable~~ for the sake of their personal safety, the point being made that the Army may take over if any demonstrations occurred. <sup>It was impressed upon</sup> Many of the parents had ~~impressed upon them~~ that they should do nothing that



would jeopardize the future of their children. This was probably the most effective appeal. On the whole, the contacts made by these board members (who acted in their capacity as community leaders) was instrumental in calming many of the ~~xxx~~ emotionally disturbed Issei down.

This action by the board members was not received favorably by the several of the groups in the community, notably the Kyowa ~~Kaw~~ Kai. <sup>(Issei Club)</sup> Some of the hotheads in the group openly announced that they would "get" Nobu Kawaii and Ken Tashiro because it was their activities that "got them into all this mess." Several threatening letters were sent to the ~~families~~ homes of Kawaii and Tashiro. The two leaders became worried about the safety of their parents so that they reported the matter to the Internal Security office. They were given protection by wardens who were stationed near their homes at nights. It did not affect their pro-America attitudes any.

Two leaders of the kyowa Kai, feeling that the group was getting out of control, sought to wash their hands of all responsibility in case of violence by reporting to the administration that they were withdrawing from the organization. They stated that the organization was not acting as a body so that it should not be blamed for any trouble that occurred. Privately, they informed Tashiro and Kawaii that they should get out of camp before harm came to them "like to Kiho." The two Kyowa Kai leaders were later picked up by the FBI in the general roundup of the disturbing individuals in the community.

Tashiro, Kawaii, Terazawa, <sup>Miyake</sup> and Miyake (not certain of him) of the board followed through with their stand on the registration and Army issue by volunteering into the combat unit. Tashiro and Kawaii kept their volunteering a secret for the protection of



their families. Tashiro let the news out that he was going to Cincinnati for an outside job so that his family would not be ill treated after he left. He had a wife and two children. Tashiro stated that he did not enlist to escape the wrath of the community. He felt that he had everything to gain by Army Service. "Not only will it guarantee a future for my son, but it will also give me a chance to fight for something I believe in. Hell, I'll never be able to give my family \$10,000 for three years of work if I didn't go into the Army." He was referring to the Army War Risk Life Insurance policy, and presuming that he would be killed in action. *Left in month. Induced in April.*

Kawaii's aged father became extremely ill about this time. During his visits to the hospital, various issei would go to his house to scare his mother and wife by saying that something was going to happen to him if he did not stop his jacl activities. Rumors began to circulate that he was hiding in the hospital because of fear of the community and that he had been beaten to death. It was widely believed that the jacl had compiled the list for the roundup which occurred on February 16. Kawaii, having good reason to believe that his family would not be safe if they remained in Gila, had his wife and family transferred to Heart Mountain before he was inducted in April.



On March 11, the Board met in an attempt to keep the jacl from entirely dissolving. The Board members were the only ones who were concerned in an active way with many of the problems which related to the evacuees. The members were not interested in the organization and they continued on their passive ways. (don't know how many jacl members joined army, but I may be able to check later when I go through the list of volunteers.)

There were only four members present at the board meeting. Tashiro took the view that a small active group was more desirable since a large group was too unwieldy to handle. He had tried to get the people in Canal camp active, but they refused to take any initiative so that membership plans for that camp were dropped. Tashiro wanted to start a new drive to get every Nisei <sup>who</sup> ~~that~~ volunteered into the organization as members. He felt that this was necessary in order to keep the prestige of the jacl up since he believed that there would be a continued need for the group to protect Nisei rights even after the war. The board did not feel that a drive for membership would be acceptable in view of the furor raised over the registration issue. The board felt that it had made some headway, notably in the changes in the National policy which had recently created a Civil Rights Committee that would definitely take an active interest in the test cases appearing before the courts. This was in line with the view that the Nisei rights should be fought for immediately. The board felt that it had been of some influence in this change of National policy. (The Santa Maria Chapter in June contributed \$1000 from its treasury to National with the request that it be used for this purpose.) The National office denied that this was a reversal of the policy of "cooperation" with the government since it actually constituted an affirmation of the policy that the cooperation was done under protest and without admitting its constitutionality.



The National jacl felt that there would be no hampering of the war effort to test the constitutionality of evacuation at this time since evacuation was an accomplished fact. It did feel that it would determine once and for all the basic right of minority groups under the constitution. The National office itself was in the process of a rather crucial reorganization at that time since several of the leaders were going into the Army. An emergency circular had been sent out to the Gila chapter to submit names for replacement. The board did not have any suggestions. One of the members suggested that it was perhaps a good thingx if the jacl would die a natural death instead of being choked out of existence, but the rest of of board did not agree as they felt that the jacl was needed as long as there was a "japanese problem."

(insert p 2213-17)

(look up diary notes on this meeting.)

In order to take an active part in the volunteering, the chairman ~~suggested~~ asked for opinions of the board in regard to the participation of the Butte Chapter in sponsoring or in coope r-ating with other orgnaizations in sponsoring a Send-off party for the volunteers. The board finally decided that "at this time it would be most advisable that the Butte Chapter Not publicly take part in any such activity!" Miyake suggest that the chapter could perhaps extend a token to the volunteers. This suggest-  
ion received favorable comment, but it was decided tha t, since the volunteers were expected to leave within the following week, such a plan could not be successfully carried out. This indicated that the board now felt it was a in a very precarious position and in fear of losing its entire membership if they were not cautious.

The chairman then asked for opinions on the extent to which the chapter should participate in community activities. "Miyake



stated that National is doing a tremendous amount of work; but in the centers, if the residents are going to continue accusing the jacl of its stand and of its activities, the individual chapters will not be able to do much." The chairman then stated that he recognized the fact that most of the leaders of the jacl were entering the armed forces which would leave it without much leadership. However, he felt that it was important the the jacl should continue as an organization "because it is the only one of its kind for Japanese in America."

In order to combat some of the feeling against the jacl it was felt that there should be a wide distribution of the pamphlet "What are we fighting for?" He thought that better individual support could be obtained if the members and others in the community knew what the jacl stood for. He requested the board to supply names of all members, names of anti-jacl Nisei, and names of Nisei in the armed forces so that this pamphlet could be sent to them. Kawaii then continued on, saying that there "will be much publicity from both the War Department and the jacl nat'l offices on the Nisei Combat Unit and people will criticize the jacl for its stand on the reinstating of the Selective Service to the Nisei, but in years to come, those who condemned will praise the Jacl." He Concluded "Active duty will give the Nisei the opportunity to regain their rights as well as the right of all Japanese who have adopted this country. We cannot forget the sacrifices these fellows are making; we must pledge ourselves to keep going on in spite of criticism."

Another board member then proposed that the Butte chapter should hold regular jacl meeting with prominent guest speakers to show the center residents that the jacl was still in existence and also to give a good accounting of the membership dues. There had



been no general mass meeting since February 9, a month previous. The question then arose as to what would happen to the jacl after resettlement. It was concluded that although the various chapters <sup>would</sup> ~~may~~ not be able to do very much as a group, individual members should keep in contact with their chapters and "cooperate as much as possible."

The meeting was closed with a discussion on the registration. Miyake felt that the Issei should not be condemned for their opposition as they were in a very difficult position. "We Nisei are also in a peculiar circumstance. If we prove loyal to this country, we would more or less be disloyal to our parents. Many parents are broad-minded but many are sensitive, and this barrier makes it much more difficult for the Nisei to volunteer. Miyake had been called to testify before the Chandler Investigating Committee during the week.

Another board member, Oji, who had supervised the registration procedure expressed his opinion that the Army would have obtained a better response in its volunteer enlistment program if the period of time for volunteering were made longer and if it had granted an extension of time before induction. He added that if the Army had publicly clarified such matters as the privilege of volunteers to effect an immediate transfer of members of their families to other centers, a better response would have resulted.

One more board meeting was held before the jacl chapter became practically defunct. An emergency meeting was called for March 16, but little ~~xxxx~~ reorganization was accomplished. With the board left in the hands of the more conservative members, ~~the board decided to~~ there was a tendency to drift along after the more liberal leaders left the center shortly following this meeting.



In the March 16 meeting the problem of the degree of participation in community activities of the chapter was again brought up and thoroughly discussed. It was stated that at the formation of the chapter, it had been decided that the jacl would not be too active with the center. The chairmean reminded the group that with more and more boys leaving from time to time for the Army, the feeling towards America on the part of the Issei would become better, so with the departure of the first group of volunteers from the center, the jacl should come to the front by cooperating with the Ex Servicemen to watch movement of antagonism against the parents of the volunteers. ~~xxxxxxx~~ He pointed out that many of the parents of the volunteers for the Intelligence school experiences much discomfort. He felt that it would be a good idea to work closely with the Ex Servicemen since they did not hesitate to take a strong stand upon Americanism. Another board member felt that it was the time for the chapter to come forward and make a strong public stand so that the pro-Japan forces would never again be ~~such~~ in such a strong position as a pressure group as it was during the registration period. With the 700 membership, the board felt strong enough to do this if it could <sup>not</sup> succeed in unifying the <sup>entire</sup> Nisei group which for the most part were apathetic about the future and anti-jacl in large numbers. The board felt that it would do a good service as well as show its hand by working for an Honor Roll of some kind to be placed near the Administration building. This would reveal to both the people and the visitors that the Nisei were playing a definite part in the war effort. On the Honor Roll, it was proposed to place all the names of Nisei who were drafted before Pearl Harbor and who had parents in Gila; Nisei who volunteered for the Intelligence school, and the Nisei who were volunteering into the combat unit.



From April on to ~~xxxxxx~~ July, the Gila jacl has been inactive. Nominally, it is still in existence, but its only activity is in following the National jacl line, which is also in a bad way now. The Gila ~~gxxxxx~~ board has not met formally in the last two months ~~sxxxxatx~~ (according to sect'g who just came out here.) The registrati n issue was the crisis point around which the membership could have been solidified, but due to the general apathy, the jacl has become a weak political influence in the center since then. The more vigorous leaders have all left the communitiy for the army or resettlement. Although the Gila jacl is dying a natural death, it cannot be concluded that it was not a significant pressure group in the community during its career.



5 pencils  
Dawell

## MINUTES

### J.A.C.L. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

The first meeting of the new executive board was called to order by chairman, Nobu Kawai, at 8:00 p.m., Thursday evening, February 4, 1943, at 58-1-D, Rivers, Arizona.

Those members of the board present were: James Ezaki, Ken Kitasako, Nobu Kawai, Harry Miyake, Ken Utsunomiya, Charles Kikuchi, Mas Oji, George Aratani, Tom Hirashima. John Morooka was absent.

Being the first meeting of a new board, an election of a chairman was to be held but was postponed until a future meeting when all members of the board could be present.

The new secretary for the Butte Chapter, Merry Otomo, employed under the Community Services Division of the War Relocation Authority, was introduced and her duties were defined and clarified by the chairman. The hours between 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. were established as office hours and approved by the board. Arrangements were to be made by Mr. Harry Miyake to move the JACL office from the Civic Block to the Community Activities Section Building, Recreation Hall 51.

Mr. Charles Kikuchi suggested that the membership drive be left open for another week and the blocks 71, 72, 73, and 74 be declared open territory. This suggestion was carried through by general consent of the members present. Mr. Nobu Kawai stated that the membership books already collected would be sent to the National Headquarters so that members may receive their cards. Nominations were then made for those persons on the various teams of the membership drive campaign whose efforts were thought to be most deserving of JACL pins, previously designated as prizes. Nominations were as follows:

Team "B" -- Teddy Osaki, Charles Mayeda  
Team "C" -- Harry Kamiya, Mrs. Kamiya, Faye Nakagawa  
Team "D" -- John Morooka, Ken Kitasako, Ben Fujiwaki,  
Henry Yamagata  
Team "E" -- Masayuki Goto  
Team "F" -- George Aratani, Harold Shimizu, Mac Yaki  
Team "G" -- Henry Terazawa, Bill Yukawa  
Team "H" -- Richard Enseki, Bob Toyoda

After due deliberation, the following twelve of these seventeen nominees were selected: Teddy Osaki, Charles Mayeda, Mrs. Kamiya, Faye Nakagawa, Ben Fujiwaki, Masayuki Goto, Harold Shimizu, Mac Yaki, Henry Terazawa, Bill Yukawa, Richard Enseki, and Bob Toyoda. Since only ten of the JACL pins had been set aside as prizes, a motion was made by Mas Oji that additional pins (2) be purchased by the treasury. It was unanimously carried.

Mr. Nobu Kawai read a letter from Larry Tajiri acknowledging receipt of two Pacific Citizen subscriptions and informing the Butte Chapter



that they are first with 110 subscriptions of all relocation centers with the closest rival being Tule Lake with 46 subscriptions. He also commended the Butte Chapter on its fine work.

Chairman Nobu Kawai read a letter from Mike Masaoka in answer to a petition from this center regarding rights of the Nisei in the armed forces. Mr. Masaoka also made an appeal for JACL members for field work in the national office in his letter. The chairman stated that if any board member or friends were interested, to contact Mr. Masaoka.

Because of the many problems and questions confronting the young people concerned with the recent orders from the War Department regarding registration of all citizens from 18 to 38 years of age and the setting up of a separate battalion for Nisei volunteers, Mr. Mas Oji moved that the Butte Chapter sponsor a mass meeting with Mr. Bennett, Mr. Landward, and Army officials as speakers. This motion was passed unanimously. Since registration was to begin on Wednesday, February 10, the date and the time of the mass meeting was set for Tuesday, February 9, 7:30 p.m., and the place was set tentatively for Mess Hall 52. Arrangements were to be made by Mr. Harry Miyake for an interview with Project Director Bennett for the executive board on Saturday. A motion was made by Mr. George Aratani to appoint Mr. Ken Utsunomiya as program chairman for Tuesday's meeting. The motion was seconded and carried. A short discussion then followed on the segregation of Nisei volunteers into a separate combat unit, its advantages, disadvantages, and general effects.

Mr. Ken Utsunomiya suggested that a War Bond campaign be undertaken by the Butte Chapter since earnings by camouflage workers could afford some purchase of Bonds.

It was also suggested that a credit union or some form of banking facility be established by the Butte Chapter. However, the chairman stated that it would be more advisable for the JACL to cooperate with such credit union or bank when it was formed by the WRA than to undertake one itself.

Fire insurance for the Gila Relocation Center was mentioned, but it was decided that such mutual benefits are based on a long-term policy and would not apply to relocation centers.

Mr. Charles Kikuchi asked if Canal residents were eligible for membership in the Butte Chapter since a Canal Chapter had not been formed. The chairman stated that no serious effort had been made to form such a chapter in Canal because of strong opposition, but advised Mr. Kikuchi to discuss this matter with interested Canal residents and to contact Canal's University Club. Mention of several former JACL leaders residing in the Canal Community was made.

The members of the board were reminded of their next regular meeting, the first Tuesday of the next month. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary, Butte Chapter JACL



## MINUTES

### J.A.C.L. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

#### Butte Chapter

The second meeting of the Executive Board was called to order by Chairman Nobu Kawai at 8:00 p.m., Thursday evening, March 11, 1943, in the Block 58 Laundry Room, Rivers, Arizona. Members present were: Mas Oji, Harry Miyake, Charles Mayeda, and Nobu Kawai.

The Chairman stated that the election of a new Chairman of the Board was postponed at the first meeting, and because of the absence of the majority of the members at this second meeting, it will be postponed again. Mr. Mas Oji moved that Mr. Kawai continue on in his present capacity as Chairman of the Board. Both Mr. Miyake and Mr. Mayeda agreed to this motion, and it was thus unanimously carried.

Mr. Nobu Kawai asked for opinions of the Board in regard to the participation of the Butte Chapter in sponsoring or in cooperating with other organizations in sponsoring a Send-Off party for the volunteers. It was decided that at this time it would be most advisable that the Butte Chapter not publicly take part in any such activity. Mr. Harry Miyake suggested that perhaps the Chapter could extend a token to the volunteers. This suggestion received favorable comment, but it was decided that since the volunteers were expected to leave within the following week, such a plan could not be successfully carried out.

The Chairman then asked for opinions on the extent to which the Butte Chapter should participate in community activities. Mr. Miyake stated that National is doing a tremendous amount of work, but in the centers, if the residents are going to continue accusing the JACL of its stand and of its activities, the individual chapters will not be able to do much. Mr. Kawai stated that most of the leaders of the JACL are entering the armed forces, leaving National without leadership, but it is important that the JACL continue on as an organization because it is the only one of its kind for Japanese in America.

Chairman Nobu Kawai read a bulletin from the pamphlet, "What Are We Fighting For?", on the need for strong individual support and which requested of each chapter: (1) names of all members, (2) names of Japanese-Americans including anti-JACL persons, and (3) names and addresses of all Nisei in the armed forces. The bulletin also announced that pamphlets on documentary case histories on evacuation and of the minutes of the national convention of November, 1942, are still available to 1943 members. Mr. Kawai then continued on, saying that there will be much publicity from both the WAR Department and the JACL National Office on the Nisei Combat Unit and people will criticize the JACL for its stand on the reinstating of the Selective Service to the Nisei, but in years to come, those who condemned will praise the JACL. "Active duty will give the Nisei the opportunity to regain their rights as well as the rights of all Japanese who have adopted this country. We cannot forget the sacrifice these fellows are making; we must pledge ourselves to keep going on in spite of criticism....."

Mr. Mas Oji suggested that the Butte Chapter hold regular JACL meetings with prominent guest speakers to show the Center residents that the JACL is in existence and also to give a good accounting of the membership dues.



Mr. Charles Mayeda asked, "What will happen to the JAOL after resettlement?" Mr. Oji stated that although the various chapters may not as a group be able to do very much, individual members should keep in contact with their chapters and cooperate as much as possible.

Mr. Miyake then gave a report on a meeting with the Senate Investigative Committee, bringing up the point that a question was raised as to whether in a court of law those persons between the ages of 17 and 20 who gave negative answers to the loyalty question on the questionnaire will be held liable. He reported that the majority of the negative answers were expressed by this group and, also, that the parents of these boys had answered the question requesting obedience to the laws of the United States and not to hinder the war effort in the affirmative. Mr. Miyake, in conclusion, said, "We Nisei are in a peculiar circumstance. If we prove loyal to this country, we would more or less be unloyal to our parents. Many parents are broad-minded but many are sensitive, and this barrier makes it much more difficult for the Nisei to volunteer."

Mr. Oji expressed his opinion that the Army would get a better response in its volunteer enlistment program if the period of time for volunteering were made longer and if it were to grant an extension of time before induction to the volunteers. Chairman Nobu Kawai added that if the Army would publicly clarify such matters as the privilege of volunteers to effect an immediate transfer of members of their families to other centers, a better response could be expected.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary, Butte Chapter JAOL



## MINUTES

### J.A.C.L. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

*March 10*

A special meeting of the Executive Board was called to order at 8:00 o'clock, Tuesday evening, at the Block 58 Manager's Office, by Chairman Nobu Kawai. Members present were James Nakamura, Charles Kikuchi, John Morooka, Harry Miyake, Charles Mayeda, and Nobu Kawai. Mr. Tep Ishimaru from Poston was also present.

Chairman Nobu Kawai presented the problem facing the Butte Chapter by stating that with the departure of various cabinet members for the Army and for resettlement, there will be a need for many new Board members. In order to rebuild the Executive Board, the Chairman suggested that some of the older Nisei, such as members of the Ex-Servicemen's Organization, be considered, and that an election of officers take place as soon as possible.

John Morooka was appointed by the Chairman as temporary Treasurer and all treasury reports were handed over to him at this meeting.

Nobu Kawai then requested the Secretary to send the membership pins which were designated as prizes in the membership drive to those members of the various teams who were selected as most deserving recipients of these pins at a previous meeting of the Board.

The Chairman informed Mr. Harry Miyake that National was forwarding to him one thousand copies of the pamphlet, "What We Are Fighting For", to be distributed to the entire Butte Chapter membership and to interested friends throughout the United States.

The problem of the degree of participation in community activities of this chapter was again brought up and discussed. It was stated that at the formation of this chapter, it was decided that the JAOL would not be too active within the center. The Chairman said that with more boys leaving from time to time for the Army, the feeling towards America on the part of the Issei will become better, so with the departure of the first group of volunteers from this center, the JAOL should come to the front by cooperating with the Veteran's Association to watch movements of antagonism against the parents of the volunteers such as those which the parents of the volunteers for the Intelligence School experienced and to erect an Honor Roll in conjunction with the Veterans Association. Nobu Kawai stated that the JAOL should openly support the Veterans Association. He also said that the people in the community must become aware of the war and that with the erection of the Honor Roll in a prominent place, listing the names of boys who were drafted prior to evacuation, volunteers to Camp Savage, and volunteers for the A. J. Combat Unit, it would make the residents more conscious of the war and the sacrifice their sons and brothers are making as well as to impress Caucasians and visitors with the contribution which this center is making toward the war effort.

The Chairman then introduced Mr. Tep Ishimaru from Poston by commending him for his active interest in the welfare of the Japanese in the relocation centers and of his efforts to improve their physical conditions. Mr. Ishimaru gave an interesting report on conditions in Poston and of various other experiences.



Chairman Nobu Kawai suggested that the Cabinet invite other JACL leaders to build up the Executive Board and also to have a joint meeting with the Veterans Association in the near future.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Merry Otomo, Secretary  
Butte Chapter, J.A.C.L.



analytical  
Summary of JACL. in Gila

The JACL in Gila, throughout its history, was attempting to become a strong pressure group in the community as vigorous supporters of the Pro-American view. As in all of the other ~~assembly~~ relocation centers, the repercussions of the evacuation upon the lives of the Japanese and their American born children resulted in a significant split in community organization. The basis for this split was, of course ideological, <sup>pro Japan vs. pro America</sup> Spencer in his paper on political pressure groups in the community has pointed out that this split between the generations was the cause <sup>of</sup> ~~for~~ friction and discontent. In his paper he has given a full account of the various pressure groups.

It becomes clear that the pro-Japan element was largely represented by the Issei-Kibei element. The role of the JACL was to represent the pro-America group. It has been indicated that the Nisei were not all united on this basis. However, the JACL was large enough to create vigorous opposition to the disgruntled pro-Japan element which saw no future in this country. It was the only united Nisei organization which could take an active stand in expressing Nisei opinion. For this reason, the JACL was significant in the political development of the community.

*see back of page* → The Issei-Kibei thinking had its roots in the Japanese philosophy. Throughout their residence in this country, these groups had come face to face with many discriminatory actions imposed upon them. They had come to believe that democracy was not applicable to them and that the yellow man had no place in the white man's scheme of things.

Fear and insecurity of evacuation had thrown these elements into



Our meaning of the terms "pro-America" and  
"pro-Japan" is best illustrated <sup>indicating</sup> by the opposed  
views which developed between the Kisei and  
Issai-Kibei on various issues.



This element felt that the pro-~~Japanese~~ American element were too young and inexperienced to fully realize that there was <sup>how empty is</sup> no future in this country for the Nisei. At first they attempted to "guide" them along the correct line of thinking. When a few of the Nisei leaders refused to adopt this defeatist attitude, a vigorous propaganda procedure was adopted in order to swing the majority of the community to their line of thinking. Conflict was inevitable. The Issei-Kibei forces made emotional appeals, particularly stressing the amount of prejudice in this country, in the attempt to win the Nisei over. They promised a glowing future in the Orient for those Nisei who would reject the American ideals. When <sup>argument</sup> persuasion failed,



force was threatened in many instances.

The pro-America group, represented in this instance ~~x~~ by the jacl, took an equally vigorous view by holding up America as the only hope for the future. <sup>It was</sup> ~~They were~~ not so interested in ~~co~~verting the Issei and Kibei, but ~~they~~ it was determined to prevent the bulk of apathetic Nisei from being swayed by these emotional appeals. It took the view that evacuation was a military necessity and that there was no use in becoming ~~b~~etter and frustrated by looking at the past since there still was a future in this country for the Nisei and the loyal Japanese. It recognized the fact that fascists forces in California were attempting to strip them of their rights, but it believed that these rights would be protected by the Constitution. The jacl felt that these rights would have to be fought for vigorously in order not to get snowed under.

By cooperating with the WRA and the United States Government, the pro-America forces felt that progress could be made for their future adjustments. They felt that race prejudice was not inherent and it could be overcome, but that it was up to them to prove themselves as loyal Americans. They did not feel that any future adjustments could be worked out if the Nisei remained apathetic and looked to the Orient for their future.

The development of the Gila jacl well illustrates this process of generational conflict. As soon as the leaders arrived in the Butte Center, steps were taken to organize a jacl chapter. The Issei-Kibei groups desiring to contest the jacl ~~and~~ on seeing the organization beginning to grow took steps to prevent its development. This



conflict in general followed the generational lines and it has its basis in ideological differences. The Kibei element with its Japanese way of thinking <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ particularly vigorous since the jacl was a threat to <sup>its</sup> ~~their~~ leadership and it took a most active part in attempting to prevent the jacl organization. ~~since it was considered~~ They felt that they would lead the community in the right direction. The combined Issei-Kibei forces made numerous appeals to the bulk of the apathetic Nisei who were caught wavering in the middle, and who were unwilling to cast their lot definitely. It was the struggle to win over this large group that was characteristic of the conflict between the pro-America and pro-Japan forces.

The Jacl had not had a perfect record in the past so that accusations that the leaders were selfish, that the organization was politically rotten, and other devices of this nature were used by the opposition to great effect. There was no recognition of the fact that the jacl had changed with the impact of the evacuation. All of this had its effect. The discussion of the membership drive previously indicates the extent of this conflict.

In order to gain as many members as possible, the jacl leaders determined upon a policy of a short intensive and organized drive. Ten team leaders were appointed who believed strongly in the jacl. It was up to each of the ten to appoint nine others to serve with him in the designated area for the drive. The criteria for the selection of the team members in almost every instance was on the basis of former friendships in the pre-evacuation chapter. The nature

Also to influence  
the parents by  
these marginal  
Nisei



of this selection was, of course, one in which Nisei were selected. There was no attempt to select Kibei members for the team membership because of the antagonism against this group which was a continuation of the pre-evacuation feeling. It was a recognition of the fact that the Kibei also differed in his ideological thinking and the pro-America board members were determined to discourage this sort of membership. However, there was a recognition that there were <sup>some</sup> pro America Issei citizens and Kibei in the center. An effort was made to bring them into the jacl folds through the selection of an Issei Ex-serviceman to serve as a team leader. It was his function to propagandize for the jacl among the Issei-Kibei elements who would be more inclined to fall in with the pro-America line of thinking. This effort was not very successful.

There were many reasons why the bulk of the Nisei were <sup>inclined</sup> favorably or antagonistic towards ~~jacl~~ the jacl. Some indication of this has been given in previous discussions. Aside from those Nisei who held strong pro-American feelings, the bulk of the members were not too interested in the jacl as a political force. They were chiefly interested in the opportunity of creating a large Nisei social group like many of the chapters were in the past. Many were aware that their future <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ at state, but they were contented to play a passive role and let others take the lead.

The antagonism of the Nisei towards the jacl appeared to have its roots chiefly on an emotional level, with the brunt of the criticism made <sup>against</sup> ~~on~~ personalities. Accusations were made about former graft and corruption, selfish interest of the leaders, etc.



More significant in the failure of the Nisei to join was the influence of the Issei-kibei pressures. A large majority who were on the border followed the path of least resistance by adopting the Issei-Kibei arguments. A few who decided to join were later forced to cancel membership because of parental pressure. In many cases, parental pressure was sufficient to antagonize the Nisei against the Jacl. Rumors played an important part in working up the feelings of the people.

It can not be concluded that the large majority of Nisei refrained from joining the Jacl because they were in agreement with the ideological beliefs of the active opposition groups. As a group the Nisei did not have an esprit de corps as among the Kibei group. The Nisei had a variety of other interest, mostly superficial, with which they were primarily concerned. Because of this, the Nisei had no real common purpose for joining. It has been pointed out that there were many reasons for joining. Under such a condition, it was almost impossible to get the bulk of the Nisei to work towards a common goal. This did not contribute towards group unity. The Nisei were only concerned when his individual interests were threatened. They had not done enough thinking to be overly concerned with the implications of all the developments among the reactionary forces of California, which were threatening their very existence.

The result had been a development of a sort of hopelessness and growing despair among many of the younger Nisei, who attempted to escape by plunging into social activities. A combination of circumstances plus the



Issei-Kibei pressures had much to do with this attitude. When they did become concerned with the future, it was invariably on a personal level, indicating the growing feeling of economic insecurity for the future. They were more interested in <sup>such questions as</sup> what became of their property, would their money be frozen, can they go back to California, etc, rather than on the more fundamental issues of citizenship rights.

Because they could not find any answer to these perplexing questions, the majority of the Nisei sought to avoid them by plunging into other activities. This solution was most unsatisfactory in view of the abnormal social life within the camp.

It may be well to give some description of a representative group of Nisei at this point to get an understanding as to their general apathy and indifference. The young Nisei had a fairly good educational achievement level. Most of those in their late teens and early twenties had graduated from high school or gone to college. Since this group was largely rural, the number of college graduates was not as great as in some of the other camps, particularly Topaz. The Gila group did not have the same opportunity to continue on into college as the urban group so that they were not as "socially" conscious. It is a fairly safe generalization to state that the urban Nisei as a group were better educated, more Americanized, less bound by the Japanese cultural traditions, and the bulk of the Christian group were to be found among them.



There was little indication that the majority of the young Nisei (19-30) at Gila had gone much beyond the limits of their formal education. Although they were aware of the problems brought about by the evacuation, their thinking was more in terms of personal injustices. Thus, the attitude of self pity was very general.

As a group, the Nisei were indifferent about the fact that they were Americans. There was a definite tendency to refer to themselves as Japanese and the Caucasians as Americans. At best, they considered themselves as second class citizens and they were more than willing to rationalize that their racial background was almost an insurmountable barrier. In Gila, the number of outspoken "Americans" were few and the majority were in doubt that they were really an integral part of the American scene. X

The youth of the Nisei group was a strong factor which contributed to the confusion in thinking. The number of older Nisei who were willing to pave the way were too few. The position of the older Nisei in Gila was a little contradictory. This group had had a longer period of time to assimilate themselves into the American scene. However, the opposite tendency apparently had taken place. The explanation for this development <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ traceable back to the pre-evacuation Japanese community.

With the great gap in age between generations, it was natural for the older Nisei to gradually replace the Issei who were nearing the retirement age. But these Nisei were never in sufficient number to "come into their own." The Issei element dominated and molded them in spite of repeated attempts to assert themselves. Progress was made,



but not enough. The Issei, holding the economic purse strings, were successful in perpetuating a great deal of the Japanese culture. In many instances, they were not successful and had to give ground. But the fact remained that they were a potent force. This factor may have been one of the contributing ~~fact~~ causes for the weakness of many of the pre-evacuation jacl chapters. The older Nisei who were the leaders were not willing to directly oppose the Issei for fear of being ostracized by the Japanese community. Since their livelihood was dependant upon the community, they thought twice before making any drastic moves.

The economic basis of these pre-evacuation Japanese communities was not one of self-sufficiency. In time the great numbers of Nisei coming into maturity exceeded the number of Issei who were ready for retirement. The labor ~~in~~ pool in the Japanese community thus became glutted and the younger Nisei were forced to seek an economic outlet in the wider American community. Evacuation disrupted this movement so that the young Nisei were thrown into great doubt. The camp life and the public attitude towards the Japanese had decidedly shaken their confidence and they were in a quandary. They had not found themselves yet so that they did not know what course to take. Although the Issei had lost their <sup>complete</sup> economic dominance they still retained a strong measure of control because the young Nisei had never had a firm economic footing and the prospects for future security ~~xxx~~ appeared slim to them. Thus, there was a tendency to turn backwards towards the Issei point of view. The Issei with their limited education were more



dogmatic in their viewpoints and it had a devastating effect upon the Nisei morale and mind, throwing him into still greater confusion.

The older Nisei (30-40) thus had a peculiar position in the camp. <sup>For many years</sup> Prior to evacuation they were economically <sup>and they were often deeply influenced by this association.</sup> dependent upon the Issei. Thus, they tended to be more conservative in their views. The fact that many of them had families contributed to this conservatism. Although they were the logical leaders of the Nisei group many of these older Nisei had vacillated in their outlook. ~~Many~~ <sup>They</sup> often compromised and tried to bridge the gap between the young Nisei and <sup>the</sup> Issei. For this reason they tried to bring all the "Japanese" together with the reins of leadership in their hands. Resettlement to the ~~middle~~ West was not as appealing to them as to the young Nisei with fewer ties.

Although the older group saw a future only in America, they were a little hesitant. They preferred to return to the pre-evacuation status quo. It was among this group that the cry, "~~to~~ Return to California," was the loudest. In working towards this end they felt that they could not afford to cast aside the Issei, since the Issei were a potent force in the pre-evacuation Japanese economic life.

The result of all this <sup>was to leave</sup> left the young Nisei in doubt. Their natural leaders would not take a firm stand, <sup>but preferred</sup> and they compromised. Without an adequate background to these problems, the young Nisei floundered around and waited for a Nisei to lead them. They did not place full confidence in the Issei. The easiest escape was therefore to forget about their passing problems as much as possible and seek release in other areas.



Of course, the young Nisei differed in degree. There was a large group that buried themselves in church activities., chiefly as a social outlet. There were even some who found solace in a spiritual way. Others sought escape by thinking of a future in school. Their primary purpose was to seek a way to get out to college. This group saw a future more in individual terms so that their outlook was a little limited. Only a few had considered the possibilities of a future after college. ~~For this reason~~ The majority of the student group had no interest in the Jacl. They were surprisingly unaware of the anti-Japanese forces in California which was gathering momentum with each passing day.

Under such ~~an~~ existing conditions it was ~~lxxxxxxxmder~~ not surprising that only a small number of leaders developed. A small advance group had gone to the leadership ranks, but the social environment of the camp had not been conducive to the development of new leadership in the political field. There was too much working at cross purposes and there ~~existed~~ was a lot of personal jealousies in existence.

The followers of the Jacl were not much beyond the general level of the non-member. Among them, the large majority were passive. There was a prevailing interest in social activities, which may explain why the girls were in larger numbers than the males at the meetings. At the general mass meetings, there was a reluctance on the part of the members to speak up and give their views on the issues which were discussed by the board. Few were willing to stand alone and give positive statements. When certain resolutions had been sent around for signatures, all of the members would sigh ~~without~~ many without even



reading the contents. They expressed a reluctance to raise any community antagonism. Most were willing to follow the leader along, but when a crisis developed they deserted in large numbers. The leaders were never sure of how much support they would receive. As long as things ran along without incident the members were willing to be passive and fall in line.

Because of this background, the membership failed to stand up for their position during the biggest crisis in the camp development--that of registration. They did not have such strong convictions that they would be willing to stand up against the Issei-Kibei opposition.

The jacl leaders recognized this situation from the very beginning. They had made some plans for getting greater membership participation, but they quickly realized that this was <sup>nearly an</sup> ~~a near~~ impossible job in view of the general apathy. For this reason most of the important issues and policies were determined in the Board meetings. The only way the membership <sup>was</sup> ~~were with~~ an influence in jacl policies was in a negative way. Leaders like Kawaii and Tashiro had to hold themselves in check in order to bring the group with them. If given a free hand, they would have been much more pro-America in their approach. Kawaii recognized that the membership had to be brought along slowly so that he attempted to avoid the raising of any controversial issues in the general meetings.

The formation of cliques followed several general patterns. The membership was loosely held together as a social group; whereas the Board had common ideological goals, which differed in degree. The members tended to become



cliques on the basis of their pre-evacuation chapter. There were even attempts made to select their former officer to the Gila Board regardless of qualification in order to get their particular group represented. The Santa Maria chapter was the strongest. It was fortunate that they had some strong leaders.

An example of this cliqueishness was the attempt of both the Pasadena and Santa Maria chapter to sponsor a Boy Scout troop rather than have them sponsored by the Gila jacl chapter. The Santa Maria chapter was strongly organized enough to win this point and have a scout troop apart from the one which the Gila chapter sponsored as a group.

In matters of finances this clique feeling manifested itself very strongly. None of the chapters represented in the Gila chapter were willing to turn over their treasuries to the Gila group. The idea behind this was that they hoped to go back to California intact and start their individual chapters over again.

On a larger scale, there appeared to be a general grouping of the Tulare group versus the Turlock group. This feeling did not play such an important part in the jacl development since the majority of the members were from the Tulare Center. There were only scattered members from the Fresno, Stockton and Sant Anita Centers.

In general, the cliques did not play an important role among the membership of the jacl, except for the attempt to get chapter officers into the Gila Board. The social cliques never had an opportunity to develop since there were only a few general members held.



It was ~~among the leaders~~ the strong leadership which was chiefly responsible for the jacl development and this group dominated the scene right through to the end. They were primarily interested in pushing the pro-America program and this common goal held the board together. There was a good working relationship throughout. Kawaii and Tashiro carried the bulk of the burden. To a lesser degree Miyake, Utsunomiya and Kikuchi were the leaders. These five were instrumental in the development of the jacl. The other board members were more in the nature of supporters although they did take an active part in the membership drive.

Kawaii was tall for a Nisei, <sup>6</sup> six footer. He presented a very commanding figure during his public speeches. About 35 years of age, he is married and has a child. The Kawaii family came from Pasadena; <sup>and</sup> An older brother was the first temporary chairman of the community council; another brother was in charge of outside employment; a third brother was in charge of mess hall deliveries. They were all prominent in community affairs <sup>at Gilman</sup>

Kawaii is a graduate of the U. of Missouri where he majored in journalism. For the past ten years ~~he had~~ prior to evacuation he had worked himself up to a fairly responsible position in a Caucasian dairy. He was the president of the Pasadena jacl chapter. At one time he was quite active in labor organizations. The Pasadena group were opposed to the jacl almost up to Pearl Harbor. They did not take out a charter until August 1942 when Kawaii decided that more progress could be made if the various groups got together to solve some of the problems facing the Nisei. He played an active jacl role prior to evacuation.



Kawaii was very sincere in his efforts to organize the jacl and he turned out to be a very good leader. He was not typical of the old line jacl leaders. Intensely pro-America, he ~~felt~~ that the jacl could accomplish much just as soon as it broke away from Issei domination. He honestly believed that the jacl was the only vehicle through which the Nisei could be heard. He was definitely a liberal person who followed the Tajiri line of thinking. The Pacific Citizen had much to do with the policies of the Gila chapter. It often went much further than the old National Jacl leaders were willing to go since it advocated principle rather than compromise. Kawaii volunteered into the Army.

Tashiro was the deeper thinker of the two and in a way he was the "brains" behind the Gila chapter. It was his influence on Kawaii which kept the jacl along the strong, *liberal* pro-America line. He was 36 years old, married with two children. He was the editor of the center newspaper. For a number of years he had worked as a newspaperman. He turned from this to be a representative for a large produce firm. Tashiro was in close contact with Tajiri of the Pacific Citizen, which was a little more liberal in policy than the rest of the jacl.

Tashiro had been trying to get into the Army since the war broke out so that this was an important issue. He was in favor of opening up the Army to the Nisei on a volunteer basis. It was this Army issue which later created a great deal of ill feeling against both him and the jacl chapter. His philosophy about the camp was not to "gripe and mope about the place; let's get things done."



Tashiro was not an active member of the jacl prior to evacuation. "I was only a dues-paying member before the war, but after it started, I did a lot of mimeographing work of important magazine articles for the Fresno Loyalty League and sent them out so that the Nisei would be aware of the forces for and against them. On the way down, xHere, I passed out some of those Friends Service bulletins and the MP's accused me of being an agitator. When a lot of these Nisei start moaning to me about their rights I asked them if they had sent for their absentee ballots. Half of the time, they say 'no' and then I tell them that they should not yell for their rights unless they exercise them." Tashiro became active in the Gila jacl because he hoped to get the Nisei more politically conscious.

Tashiro was born in New England and he never spoke any Japanese until after he was out of high school. " Out of the necessity of earning a living I was forced to learn it." (p676)  
 He had one year of <sup>college</sup> ~~university~~ work at the University of Washington. He comes from one of the better known Japanese families in this country. His uncle is a professor of biochemistry at the U. of Cincinnati and he is one of the few Japanese in "Who's Who." His brother is a graduate of U. of Cincinnati in architecture. A brother-in-law is a practicing physician in that city also. Another brother was a college student who volunteered into the Army on Dec 17, 1941. A sister was a concert pianist. Another brother is a brain surgeon at the Cincinnati General Hospital. Another sister was once chased out of Japan for not being sympathetic with the Japanese government. A cousin played with the Harvard freshman football team.



Tashiro felt that his mission in the center was to get the Nisei in the right frame of mind so that they would not get totally disillusioned. "We are in the hands of God. Don't put reliance in peanut politics to guarantee your rights in the war. It will be the Nisei Colin Kelleys-- if the war produces any--that in the long run will prove to America that we've a right to be called Yankees too, that our hearts are here, that the skeptics were wrong."

Throughout the development ~~Tashiro~~ of the Gila jail, Tashiro was consistent in pushing a strong pro-America policy. He was strongly opposed to any compromising with the Issai-kibei group. At times he tended to present a slightly ~~arrogant~~ arrogant and intolerent attitude towards these groups. Tashiro was ~~not~~ quiet and tended to be taciturn so that he did not express himself much in public meetings. Kawaii was the organ. It was these two, along with Kikuchi, who were the most outspoken pro-America elements in the jail board. Their backgrounds would indicate some of the reasons for this. They had been more assimilated into the American scene than most Nisei and therefore were inclined to be slightly extreme in their pro-America views.

Miyake was an older Nisei who was more conservative in his approach. He was born in Hawaii, about 40 years old, and the father of 5 children. Prior to the war he had been a manager for one of the largest Japanese produce companys in the Santa Maria Valley. Since his livelihood was dependent upon the Issei group, he had more or less followed a middle of the line course. He identified himself with the "Japanese people" ~~xxxx~~ and he was slightly race conscious. Although



he believed strongly in America, he felt that a large part of the jacl work was to protect the rights of the Issei who were non-citizens. Miyake was full of energy and he put his heart into working for the community development. He was not too profound so that the immediate community problems were more important to him than the long range issues propounded by the jacl. However, he ~~was not~~ played an active jacl role. The former president of the Santa Maria jacl chapter, he had a large following. In the camp, he held the key political position as the Central Block Manager. He served on many committees in the center and he was an "unofficial member" of the Temporary Council as well as a member of the Advisory Board, which was composed mostly of Issei.

Miyake was primarily interested in getting the whole community support behind the jacl. He was not ambitious to become the head of the organization since he had so many other activities to fulfill. His policy of compromise caused several rifts with the minority element of the Board. Miyake swung along more with the old line National jacl leaders. He was the "voice" of the five Santa Maria members of the board. These tensions on the board never reached a serious split since Miyake was willing that Kawaii take the leadership. He did not want Kawaii to be too outspoken for fear of arousing community antagonism. However, when the important issue of registration came along, Miyake made a firm stand and it was his support that helped the community through this crisis. He was very active in going from door to door to talk to the Issei and to explain the registration to them. He did this not so much



as a jacl leader as a community leader.

Utsunomiya was the fifth leader on the board of the jacl. He was also an older married Nisei. At one time he had been the National executive secretary for the jacl. He was a former Santa Maria chapter president and he had a large following. He worked closely with Miyake. Utsunomiya was a Stanford graduate. In his political thinking, he was closer to the Kawaii-Tashiro line, but he tended to string along with Miyake ~~throughout~~ because of his former personal friendship. Utsunomiya had also been employed by one of the large produce companies in the Santa Maria valley.

In the community he played an important role. He was the chairman of the camouflage net committee which had to work out the difficult details for wage payments and to get the community to accept the project, which had been rejected by the Issei-kibei element because of their emotional dislike of the US cause. Utsunomiya also played an important role in his block council. It was one of the few blocks at Gila where the Nisei took an active interest. In Utsunomiya's block there were a number of older Nisei who went to the meetings and they prevented the Issei from dominating and getting complete control. Utsunomiya was sincere in his pro-America attitudes and he also made a firm stand at the time of registration.

It was this group of leaders that formulated most of the jacl policy. They had a unity of purpose which differed only in degree. The other members of the board did not play such an active role, but they gave strong support to these policies. It was the group which represented a strong pro-America stand. Not all were as willing to



publicly proclaim their positions as Kawaii and Tashiro, as they still felt the Issei influence to some degree. The strongest unity was achieved during the registration issue when the board members individually advocated the registration. All of the board members are now in the Army or resettled.

Throughout its development, the Gila jacl was fairly consistent in following through with its general policies. From the beginning the group attempted to stay clear of internal politics in order not to throw themselves open to the accusation that the jacl was attempting to take over the community government. Its primary purpose was to promote Americanism. There was an awareness that the Nisei should be guided to participate more in American life. Since the leaders recognized that the future was only in this country, a strong attempt was made to get full participation through resettlement, the war effort, voting and other things of this nature. One of its main activities was the attempt to get the members to quit the fence straddling and to take a firm stand for America.

The Gila jacl felt that the chapter could defend the Nisei rights by making the national organization the organ through which the Nisei could be heard and recognized. It felt that no other Nisei organization could be in a position to do this important piece of work. Kawaii felt that the jacl was the last Nisei "pipeline to Washington." The leaders were interested in achieving an equality of opportunity for the Nisei in the American life.

The accusation that the jacl was a selfish organiz a-



tion was to some degree justified. There were some members of the board who openly declared that the policy should be for the Nisei alone. The community as a whole felt that the jacl was mainly a Nisei concern. This was most noticeable in the case of the Kibei groups.

There is little doubt that a large part of the jacl activities was to promote general Nisei opposition to the Issei-Kibei ~~group~~ pressures. The leaders felt that this was necessary for self defense. In some instances ~~that~~ Nisei were just as intolerant as the Issei-kibei. In following this policy, the jacl did not succeed in rallying all of the Nisei around its banners. All of the Nisei groups did not unite under the jacl banner to give the Nisei movement strength as it was hoped.

The jacl did not oppose the Issei-kibei on all issues however. It only took action when its in-group strength was threatened. It would gladly have welcomed the above groups if it felt that a greater Nisei support would be achieved. There was a considerable attempt to gain the community approval with this very purpose in mind. During the Thanksgiving holidays a float was entered in order to support the community agricultural program. It also sought to gain community acceptability by promoting civic activities and looking after the general evacuee welfare without entering into competition with any other group wholly concerned with internal problems. The jacl was inconsistent in that it was willing to engage in internal problems as long as it was not in competition with any of the established camp groups. It wanted to avoid any criticism.



The number of actual activities that the jacl entered into were not many. It took almost five months to get organized. During this period it was faced with many of the community crises and in most cases the jacl was put on the defensive and it was accused of instigating such things as the camouflage net problem, the enlistment of Nisei for *Camp* Savage, the cotton picking program, etc.

It was true that the jacl did enter the camouflage net ~~problem~~ conflict as one of its activities. It supported the project on the basis that it was good for the war effort. The board members who were also on the net committee were encouraged to push the program through so that the community would accept it. The jacl felt that the net project would be good testimony for Nisei loyalty, and a definite contribution for the war.

The Gila jacl, through its delegates Kawaii and Tashiro, took an active part in the Salt Lake Convention; and in promoting the sale of the Pacific Citizen, the official organ of the National JACL. In Salt Lake, <sup>U</sup>Kawaii and Tashiro gave a full report on the Gila conditions and submitted problems on which the National Body could work. Kawaii was instrumental in getting the National Office to adopt his plan for jacl organization in the centers. (see supplement #16 of Emergency National Conference.) Kawaii played an important part in the discussions at this conference as the Minutes of the meetings will disclose.

In the United War Fund Drive, the Gila jacl fell down. Although it was in full support of the purpose behind the drive, it felt that it should not antagonize the community further by becoming officially connected with the drive. It



was during this period that the chapter was also on its membership and Pacific Citizen drive.

Other activities included sending out protests against the Chandler committee, sending telegrams to National in regards to its stand on civil rights, and a great deal of other pro-American propaganda (largely through the speeches that Kawaii and Tashiro made before camp organizations.). It also was active in encouraging resettlement and student relocation.

The greatest activity of the jacl was during the registration period when the Nisei were encouraged to signify loyalty to this country. The leaders set the pace by volunteering themselves. Its final act was to discuss a plaque which could be set up honoring the boys who had gone from the camp into the Army. These activities have all been described previously.

These activities all indicate that the jacl was pushing its policy of pro-Americanism in opposition to the other elements of the center. In every case the activity was related to the policy of keeping the Nisei faith in America. Throughout its whole history, the jacl was struggling to become a strong political force in the community. Most of its activity was directed to becoming a pro-American force and to some degree the jacl succeeded. ~~The~~ In the previous discussions of the formal and informal meetings of the jacl, it becomes clear that the main topic of concern was in finding ways to push their pro-American policies. The concern, pre-occupation, the unexpressed hopes and anxieties were all related to the question of the Nisei future in this country. Almost any means was used



in the attempt to keep these goals from becoming frustrated. The Army volunteerism was the climax and the leaders attempted to bring as many ~~as~~ Nisei as possible into the combat team with them to prove to themselves that there was still a great deal of hope.

In spite of this strong and liberal leadership, the jacl never did have strong group solidarity. It was never able to become a powerful group in Gila because of the lack of unity among the members. They had joined with many divergent interests so that a common goal did not exist. These factors contributed to the instability of the group.

The opposition to the formation of the jacl had much to do with the later instability. The opposition was primarily because of ideological differences. To some extent the jacl drive created the pressure groups on the other side within the community as Spencer has pointed out in his paper on pressure groups.

The methods of opposition which the Issei-Kibei groups used was largely emotional in nature. To some extent threats and intimidation were used. These were chiefly on individuals although at one time all of the board members were on a blacklist. Other ways in which opposition was created was by holding other meetings on the same night as the jacl meeting, spreading propaganda among parents, attempts to beat up ~~and~~ scare away team members, and actually interfering with the jacl meetings by attempted demonstrations. The vigorous Issei-Kibei propaganda playing on the feelings of insecurity and fear for the future was probably the most effective device in slowing down the jacl activity. The jacl was able to persist in the face



of all this opposition only because of the strong liberal leadership which refused to be intimidated. There were many followers who backed them up fully in the important issues, although the majority became passive except when they were personally involved as in the registration.

The jacl would have had some stability if the Nisei had not been so passive and if they had been willing to support the jacl to a greater degree. The bulk of the Nisei were indefinite about their political future and therefore they were not sure that they should take such a strong pro-America view as the leaders. The majority of the Nisei, when he did think about these questions, wasn't sure of whether he was going to remain in the United States or whether his future was in Japan. He felt that he would be forced out of this country by the reactionary groups, and many of them had become disillusioned. There was also a great deal of conflict with the older generation, particularly the parents. The Nisei did not know whether he should buck their ideological views or string along with them. The Nisei had not grown up yet; they were still dominated by their parents. This and the experiences of the Japanese in California caused a great deal of confusion in Nisei thinking. They vacillated from one view to another and it was almost impossible for them to state their purpose in life. They just did not want to take a stand one way or another so sought escape in other directions.

The Issei pressure on the Nisei contributed to this



general apathy. Largely through emotional appeals, arguments were convincing in many cases which tended to create a ~~hop~~ feeling of hopelessness towards the American views. The Issei parents would illustrate from their own experience without being able to discriminate that it was only a small force in this country ~~that~~ who were intolerant. The young Nisei often got the impression that the whole country was the same. The argument which clinched the whole thing was the appeal to family loyalty. It was presented in such a way that the Nisei who advocated a strong pro-American stand was accused of betraying his own family.

In the isolated center life, the community only received the news of the anti-Japanese forces which was played up prominently in the newspapers. The Nisei were not fully aware that there were many liberal forces in this country who recognized the injustices of the evacuation process and who were attempting to remedy it. The bulk of the community received a distorted picture of the reactionary forces in California and they were given credit for being more powerful than they actually were.

Even the Gila board of governors did not enjoy full unity with the national office. The Nisei had not developed sufficient leaders so that many of the old conservative pre war leaders were still in control. There was some confusion in the minds of these leaders in trying to determine which was the best course to follow in policy. Fortunately, the Gila chapter had liberal leaders who believed that principles should be fought for first. The national leaders followed more of a compromise and cooperation line. Several times this almost caused a split between the local and national offices.



In the national office itself, this split was also evident--Old Guard versus liberal Pacific Citizen. The liberal forces appears to have won the upper hand temporarily with Larry Tajiri assuming leadership for the national office after the departure of Masaoka for the Army. In Gila, the liberal forces have all left and no replacement has been found with the result that the chapter is very inactive and all indications point to the fact that it will continue to be inactive. The national office is also in a critical stage at the present time. Either through the effects of the Dies Committee or because of lack of funds, there is a strong possibility that the jac1 may pass out of existence in the near future.

*There is a growing belief that*  
The jac1 has a definite place if it limited itself to fighting for principles. It is inevitably doomed to failure if it continues its attempts to function as a group in resettling the evacuees. It has neither the personnel or the finances to handle such a hard job. There has been some opinion expressed by a few of the more liberal Nisei that the day of the JACL is definitely passed and that there is no longer a need for an organization with a membership determined according to racial lines. They feel that this transitional period is past and the future lies in greater integration and assimilation into the wider American scene.