

Y. Okuno

I was born on January 14, 1886, as the first son of Toraji (my father) and Nao (my mother) of the Okuno family at the city of Kurayoshi, Tottori Prefecture, Japan. My family belongs to the Samurai group, and I remember that there were many helmets, swords, spears, etc., in our storeroom when I was a little boy. I remember that I liked to play in the storeroom.

My father came from the Yamase family, another Samurai family. The Okuno family had no boy at that time, my mother, Nao being the eldest of four daughters of my grandparents; and my father, Toraji, was adopted by the Okuno family from the Yamase family, being married to Nao, the first daughter of Okuno family. It is the usage in Japan, when a family has no son, to adopt a son as the family line must be continued, especially in Samurai group. My father has been the principal of the largest primary school in the town since I can remember, for the duration of more than twenty years.

When I was a child, I was physically weak and I remember that my father did everything to make me strong. He took me out hunting up in the mountains or fishing in the rivers very often since I was seven or eight years of age. I remember one day my father took me to a large river to fish and after resting at lunch time, he brought me to the depths of the river to teach me how to swim. He left me alone in the deep water where I sunk and drunk much water. Although he took me out immediately, I can never forget this event. One day we went up to hunt into the mountains/for pheasants. I think I was around ten years old at that time. It was my part to take care of the dog with a chain until the proper moment came. My father left me alone with the dog at a certain mountain ridge with pine tree forest when he heard some pheasants calling to each other and went out to find the exact location of the birds. But later on, the dog which I found to be as strong as myself wanted to go after my father and began to drag me by the chain. We fought each other for a long while, but when my feet slipped at the head of a slope, we, the dog and myself, went down and down the slope, all tangled up as I



still had a firm grip of the chain. I could not help but cry, but my father heard the noise and came back and tied the dog to a tree for me. I have never forgotten this accident as it was pressed hard in my boyish mind.

At seven, I entered the primary school of which my father was the principal. All my life in the primary school may be said to have been devoted to developing my physical strength rather than intellectual because I was rather a weak child as mentioned before. In this period, I learned how to play baseball in which I was so much interested that I forgot dinner time very often, playing until late in the evening. We stayed on the school grounds after the classes. I liked to play the pitcher's role in my class and did pretty well. I was about fourteen years of age when my father was appointed to a county superintendent of education and bought a bicycle as he had to go around all through the county. It was the first time for me to see a bicycle at hand and I was very much interested in handling it. How I wished I could ride it myself, but my father did not allow me to use it until several months later. It was also in this period that I saw a phonograph for the first time in my life. A man who had bought a set of the primitive recording phonograph came around to our district and to our school to make or contract to exhibit it to all the students in our school. All the boys and girls got together to hear a human voice through such a wonderful machine. I still clearly remember my father's voice recorded saying, "Oh, this wonderful machine! It is the flower of civilization." (Aa kano kikai ya burmei no hana narukana) When we heard the same voice coming out of the machine, we thought it was quite a miracle and it was the talk of the town for several days.

During my life in the primary school, the learning (intellectual) was rather secondary, and I was led to emphasize my physical development and Japanese moral, but in rating I always belonged to the group of the class who were above the average. Around fifteen years old, I began to realize certain sex consciousness. I could not be indifferent to the female sex to whom I came in contact.



There began to exist in me a certain desire to be well thought of by the other sex and without noticing it myself, I have taken certain attitudes which may attract the female sex. There came at this time three girls from other families to learn some housewifery and etiquette from my mother and I liked one of them, Masa, best, but it did not develop into a real love as I was too young and went away from the city. At around fifteen years of age, I was attending a special school which taught the philosophy of Confucius and Mencius, and there, while I was more interested in learning Chinese characters, I began to learn the English language too. This school corresponds to the junior high school in this country. Later on, I was admitted in the middle school (high school) which was located about twenty miles from my home.

In a word, my primary school education was mainly for my physical development as above mentioned and for the Japanese moral which chiefly teaches loyalty to the emperor and filial piety. Those two doctrines are the backbone of Japanese morals, and both are one and the same after all in Japan, because the emperor is the head of the large family of Japan as a whole, and naturally you cannot be loyal to him unless you have filial piety. When a Japanese says he will give his life to the Emperor, he means to give his life to the head of the family of Japan -- that is, he is giving his life for his country. When I advanced to the middle school, I had to devote my energy to more intellectual learning than such moral training and felt more attraction from learning English language, higher mathematics, botany, etc. In a word, most of the moral training of the Japanese is done during the six or seven years of the primary school. The higher you go up in the schools, the more emphasis is placed in the intellectual learning.

After graduating the primary school at fifteen, I attended a private school which was a kind of a junior high school for two years until I was seventeen years old. Then I moved to the city of Yonago which is located about twenty



miles west of my native town, Kurayoshi. I was away from my parents for the first time in my life. There were only two middle (high) schools in my prefecture at that time, one at the city of Tottori (capital of Tottori prefecture) and the other at the city of Yonago. One of my aunts was at Yonago, so my parents sent me there to live with her family during my high school education. I was admitted to the third grade of the Yonago middle school after an examination. By this time, my family consisted of my grandparents, parents, one sister (eldest), three brothers (all younger than me), and myself, and it was very hard for me to part with my folks for the first time in my life, but I was much attracted by the higher education in the new school and spiritedly departed with my family one day in the April of 1904.

I learned quite a lot during the three years at Yonago besides my school learning. Heretofore, I lived with my family very comfortably, but now I had to live with my aunt, uncle-in-law, and two cousins far away from home. My aunt was very kind to me, but she was cranky very often. I think she was rather a hysterical type. When she was in a good mood, she was so excessively nice to me that I wondered what happened to her, but when she changed, she would never talk to me as long as a day or two. Under such conditions, I was put on the spot very often and my still boyish heart suffered. It is a very uneasy thing to stay with somebody in the same house without talking to each other all day or for two days long. I could not have stood this unless my uncle was a very broadminded man and treated me very nicely all the way through. All these three years taught me more and more of human life and made me appreciate sympathy or fellow-feeling of others. I got many friends in the school, but there were only two best friends. One was called Nakahara and the other was called Okamura. Okamura was my old classmate since the elementary school. At this school I studied pretty hard as the teaching went higher and higher. Among the subjects, however, I liked English best and spent a long time for the preparation of the next day's lesson. We had English almost every day, the schedule being something like this: Monday, reading;



Tuesday, grammar, reading; Wednesday, reading; Thursday, grammar, penmanship; Friday, reading; Saturday, conversation. We had three or four English teachers, but they were all Japanese. There were no English men in the school to teach us. So every Sunday I began to visit a missionary, Miss Sander, an English woman who stayed in Japan for a long time and finally died there later on. Miss Sander had a Bible class every Sunday afternoon at her home especially for the young men of the Yonago middle school, and I was one of the bunch of five or six students. I think this Bible class, although it was only once a week, did much to improve my English. I remember that there were many Sundays all the afternoon of which were spent by Miss Sander in teaching us the spirit of the Bible and Christian hymns. Especially two of the group, Kato and myself, were not Christians while all other boys of the clan were baptised. We two were called for special attention of Miss Sander and had to remain late in Miss Sander's home arguing with her all the time of the necessity and unnecessity of baptism. We always argued against her why baptism is necessary so long as we have firm belief in God, while she advised us of quite a change of mind which baptism will bring to us. After all, however, we were not baptised because of our stubbornness although we fully realized the teachings of God would do us good. There is no doubt that Miss Sander's talk every Sunday helped us to build up our character.

The city of Yonago is by the inland sea, and I have learned to row a boat for the first time in my life there. Very soon I was a member of the crew of our class. We had a regatta twice a year, one in the spring and one in the autumn, and we also had interclass races. After I learned how to row a Japanese boat, I went out fishing in the inland sea with my uncle very often as he liked fishing very much. We enjoyed catching small fish with shrimps as bait, going out two or three miles in the offing on the deep blue water out in the clean air. We never missed holidays to spend in this sport, and I was always the rower of the Japanese boat for my uncle. Even now I remember that our lunch on the boat was so delicious though it was only cold rice with some salted fish and pickles.



As for the sports in the school, I liked the Japanese fencing best and was one of the best players of the class. There were fencing meetings twice a year in the spring and autumn, same as the regatta, and we invited players from other middle schools in the neighboring prefecture and had quite a hard competition in the meeting. In this way, my physique was much developed during my high school life, and I was even trying to enter the military college, but after my physical examination, I found that I was not qualified because of my strong near-sightedness. So, I had to give up any idea of going into military or naval college while one of my best friends decided to take the entrance examination to this military college. Japan was winning the Russo-Japanese War when I was going to graduate the high school and, at that time, the military and naval colleges were quite popular among our students who were stimulated by heroic stories of soldiers at the front which we read in the newspapers.

My grandfather and my father, both being educational people, wanted me to enter the teacher's college although I myself preferred commercial college. In Japanese high schools, the major worry of the students is the preparation for the higher schools -- colleges -- as the number of higher schools such as Commercial College, Technical College, Army, Navy, Teacher's Colleges, is very small and competition for the entrance examination is very keen. In my time, the rate of students who passed such entrance examinations was ten to twenty per cent of the applicants in some of the well-known colleges. So, we had to study pretty hard in the fourth and fifth grades of high school so that we could pass the examination to the higher schools. Therefore, I found myself to be a very studious boy in the class when we reached the fifth grade, the senior class of our middle school. Especially, we had to study mathematics -- arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and trigonometry -- whether you like it or not so long as you are going to take an entrance examination to any higher schools.

Considering the financial condition of our family in the last semester of my senior year, I decided to take the entrance examination to the Tokyo Teacher's



College (or Tokyo Higher Normal School). There were only two teacher's colleges in Japan at that time, one in Tokyo and the other in Hiroshima of the Hiroshima Prefecture, and those two schools were rated very high scholastically. Both schools were government institutions and no expenses were necessary during the four years of education. This was the most important factor which encouraged me to enter this school, as by this time I was quite aware of my parents having a hard time to raise five children and taking care of my grandparents too. In January of 1906, the last semester of my senior year, I went to Tottori, the capitol of the Tottori Prefecture, where the entrance examination for Tokyo Higher Normal School was held, and went through the examination. I was the first of the class to go through my examination to higher schools. In March of that year, I felt very lucky that I received a notice from the Tokyo Higher Normal School that I had passed the entrance examination and will be admitted to the English Department. My parents were far more happy than I was as they felt that the future of their first son was now promised and unless any unexpected accident may happen, the future of our family thus seemed pretty secure.

The departure from my home on my long trip to Tokyo is one of the events that will never fade in my memory. At that time, the railroad which connected our prefecture to the main body of Japan was not completed, and I had to walk on foot over the mountain road for about twenty miles until we reached the nearest lower-land village where we could hire a rickshaw that could take me to the nearest town, Tsuyama, where we could take a train to Okayama, then change to the main line to Osaka. It was quite an adventure to travel through a strange land for me, and I had to be careful all the time as I was told by my mother not to lose the money I had with me. The most of the money I kept in a long sack which was wound around my body under the underwear, while I had the small money for traveling use in my pocket. It was told by my parents never to talk



with any man who will approach me very friendly while I may be waiting for a train in the station where I have to change trains. However, it was quite interesting to me to note that those people of the different lands speak different dialects to each other. At the end of three days, I reached my destination, Tokyo, where one of my cousins was waiting for me at the station as I had sent a telegram to him. At that time, he was in the senior year of the Tokyo College of Commerce, and he was quite used to the life in the capitol city. It was in the early part of April, and the famous cherry blossoms of Tokyo were in full bloom to the admiring eyes of a country boy like me. As I had a week or so before I entered the school, my cousin took me around the city teaching me all the important which may be useful for me to remember. Also, we spent some time in visiting some of my father's friends who were successful in business in Tokyo. After the busy days of visiting and sight-seeing in the big metropolis, I entered into the boarding house of the Tokyo Higher Normal School. Our boarding house was located at Ochanomiza of Hongo Ward, the Central part of the city, the old site of our school building, while our new school was located at Koishigawa, north-western corner of the city. All the freshmen had to walk almost two miles to go to school from our boarding house. Our names were all arranged according to the order of the Japanese alphabet and <sup>in</sup> our room were Nakamura, Ota, Okigaki, Okuno, and Watanabe, who came from various districts of Japan. Our clan consisted of twenty-one students who came from either high schools or normal schools of various prefectures. Some came from Kyushu Island and some from Hokkaido and it was very interesting to find that they brought with them their different dialects and customs. Japanese dialects are not so distinct as Chinese and can understand each other in most cases, but Kagoshima of Kyushu Island dialect is the hardest to understand. So, for the first time in my life, I came in contact with the different types of people and naturally my view of the world was a little enlarged.

(to be completed)



THE BONENKAI

The month of December for Japanese is the month in which many parties are held in the community. The parties are called the Bonenkai, meaning "Forget the year party" in its literal translation, in which all the close friends get together for merry-making to forget all the hardships they may have had all through the year. This is a very popular social custom in Japan. The new year is just around the corner and we try to forget all about the past year to prepare ourselves to face the coming new year full heartedly without any prejudice.

Most of the cases, however, are drinking parties just for merry making, excepting those Bonenkai of religious organizations, and they drink the health of each other until late in the night. In the camp here, most of the Issei people do not forget this usage in Japan and also in this country before the evacuation and they have their Bonenkai parties at each block, though they are not able to drink their health by the camp regulation. Some of the blocks considering the situation not feasible for so many parties at this extraordinary time are planning to put together all those parties in this month so that we may have only one party on the Christmas day or somewhere near that time.

Our block #61 also has decided to have Christmas parties instead of the Bonenkai and carried out two party plan, one on the Christmas eve and other on the Christmas day. The first party is mostly for the sake of the Nisei people and the smaller children and the latter party is for the Issei people mostly.

Well on the Christmas eve, Mr. Albert Ikeda and Miss Emy Morooka presided the party and carried on the program very well. Miss Morooka is a good singer herself and picked up a group of small children to sing many songs which all the people, the Issei and Nisei, present enjoyed very much. Indeed, those little girls and boys were very cute and it was very pleasant to watch them. At this moment any way we forgot all about the war and our hard situation in the camp. Mr. Ikeda made a nice program of plays and some of the older people, including



myself, joined those children to play various games. Later on, all the names of the children under the age of 16 were called one by one and the Christmas present was given, all the people clapping their hands each time. The party was a great success and I appreciate very much the effort of the Nisei people of our block who took much time in decorating our Mess Hall for the purpose.

We held the other party on the evening of the Christmas day right after the dinner. The big dinner started at 4:30 P.M. Indeed, we did not expect at all to have such a great dinner at this time of the crisis. The menu was as follows:

Soup  
Beef Boullion

Cocktail  
California Fruit Cocktail

Entree  
Roast turkey with cranberry  
sauce and dressing

Vegetable  
Candied sweet potatoes  
Creamed cauliflower  
Green peas

Hot biscuits

Desert  
Pumpkin pies

Coffee and milk  
Bread & butter

After the dinner I was asked to make an opening speech for the party and I spoke something like this:

Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Our happy days in California are gone now. Maybe they are lost for us forever. Specially it is very unfortunate that all of the Nisei people had to be evacuated, together with the Issei people who are the enemy aliens. There will be legitimate arguments about this situation which may be well understood by some of the American people when they will be cooled down, but it is no use now to argue under the present circumstance. We can just take it without much complaint, when



we think of those young people of the world who are giving their lives to their native countries in the battlefields of Europe, Africa, and the Pacific.

Let us remember that our duty now as human beings is to stand any difficulties which confront us for our survival -- the survival of families, survival of nations and survival of races. This is why we quietly endure whatever may happen in our way.

Ladies and gentlemen: I greatly appreciate that all the members of our block #61 are quick to realize such a situation and cooperate with each other in every manner to make all the evacuees in the camp happy under the circumstances and let me say that I am proud of being one of the members.

Tonight we have many interesting programs after this unexpectedly great dinner and I hope that every one of you will make yourselves comfortable and enjoy all through this evening.

This second party consisted of Japanese songs from mostly older people some slight of hand and jokes, etc., and all the people enjoyed listening or playing themselves by turns. We have closed the meeting very successfully at around 10 p.m.

Y. Okuno



## BUTTE BON ODORI

The bon odori festival at Butte was held the evening of August 22, having been postponed from the previous Sunday due to a heavy rain and wind storm. The festival was extremely well attended; the audience and participants must have included well over five thousand people. Many persons came over from Canal.

Bennett addressed the assemblage before the festivities began. His speech, was certainly an extremely difficult one to make, was as good or perhaps a little better than could be expected. He hoped that those who would soon be leaving would carry the memory of this evening with them. He hoped that they would remember that some of their life here had been enjoyable and they they would not think too badly of life here. He remarked that though there were some present who did not appreciate the freedom of democracy, he would like all to carry one thought with them: that here at Gila they had seen an expression of freedom of religion not surpassed anywhere on the globe. He received very weak but polite applause and the ceremony proceeded immediately.

Due to being surrounded by bored Caucasians I was not able to remain for the entire ceremony. As much as I saw of the dances was identical to the performance at Canal.

Considering the difference in the size of the communities the participation was about equal; however, I recognized several Canalites dancing enthusiastically. Not nearly so many boys participated as at Canal. As the dance proceeded so many persons joined that the circles became too crowded.

The two drummers who spelled each other drummed away with elaborateness of gestures which had been quite lacking at the first ceremony. One was dressed with extreme formality a heavy ornate costume. After the first dance he shed his outer coat but was still most voluminously clothed. (It was a very warm evening.)

One boy who danced smoking a cigarette, caused considerable comment among the Caucasians.



I had gone to considerable trouble to get a young Buddhist fellow to attend the dance with Brown and myself to answer occasional questions. Brown, however, let himself be led astray by the drink desiring Caucasians so as far as I was concerned the evening ended on a dismal and unprofitable tone.



Y. Okuno

PROS AND CONS OF OUR PRESENT SITUATION  
(RE: DRAFTING OF THE NISEI)

One opinion of Issei who belongs to Seicho No Ie group.

Seicho No Ie has a tendency toward naturalism. Their way of thinking is that there is no sin nor sickness in the world at all. It is the people himself who creates all kinds of vices and sicknesses. If he throws away all the concepts of the sin and sicknesses, there will be nothing of the kind in the world.

With such teachings in their daily life, his attitude towards the present draft situation of the Nisei is very broad minded. That is, he tries to follow the natural power, the natural development of the situation. So long as the Nisei people are born in the United States and educated in the United States and are citizens therein, the natural thing for the Nisei to do is to be loyal to this country and had better answer "Yes" to such questions as #27 or #28.

There is nothing wrong that all the Nisei are willing to serve this country with utmost loyalty and the people in Japan will rather respect such attitude of the Nisei, while they will not welcome such people who have shown disloyalty to their native country, the United States of America. The above was the opinion of one of my friends who is one of the strongest believers of the Seicho No Ie, the doctrine of which somewhat resembles Christian Science.

One Opinion of Issei who belongs to Christian Group.

He proposes to the Nisei his idea of perfect loyalty to the United States of America. America is a great country and so far all the Japanese people have benefited by residing in this country for a long time -- so long as thirty or forty years -- and now it is their turn to do their part through our Nisei to benefit this country. There is no doubt that all the Nisei people should be loyal to this country.



If you will answer "No" to the questions #27 and #28, you may lose your citizenship very soon and will become like a nomad, wandering from place to place without your native country.

It is most proper for the Nisei to forget all the hardship under which they have been unduly subjected and now show their true loyalty to this country to insure their future citizenship and happiness and prosperity of their following generations.

Make no argument now, but just adjust yourselves to the confronting situation adequately, because you can argue the matter of the evacuation of the Nisei under the light of the American democracy, when the war will be over and the American public will be able to listen to you with much more calm attitude.

One Opinion of the Issei who belongs to Buddhist group.

By the evacuation of all the people of Japanese ancestry the properties and the business interests of all the Japanese (both Issei and Nisei) are rooted out. Specially, all the farmers who so dearly adhered to their land are devoid of their beloved earth now. They cannot forget this day and night. If only the United States had allowed the Nisei, the citizens, to stay out to take care of their properties and the business interests, all the Japanese people would be quite willing to serve this country without any complaint.

To the contrary, the United States denied all the right of citizenship to the Nisei and compelled them to evacuate with the Issei people who are the enemy aliens. This fact entirely contradicts with the spirit of democracy which, we understand, America is now fighting for.

The Government of the United States should straighten out this unfortunate mistake before they may request the Nisei to be fully heartily loyal to this country.

There is no nation which will deny the right of the citizenship to any people from whom it will request the perfect loyalty.



One opinion from the Nisei who has never been in Japan:  
He is a good friend of mine, but he pure Nisei.

Quotation from him as follows:

WILL I VOLUNTEER FOR SERVICE ABROAD? Before this question can be answered, there are many things I must consider.

1. WHAT DOES AMERICA MEAN TO ME?

America means to me, DEMOCRACY: Democracy to me means Justice: Justice to me means equal rights and liberties to everyone regardless of his race or creed of the United States of America in which we live, and were educated to uphold, supposedly, the guaranteed CIVIL LIBERTIES and the BILL OF RIGHTS of the constitution of the United States of America.

2. WHAT IS THE WAR AIM OF THE UNITED STATES?

The leaders of the United Nations are firmly convinced and I believe they are sincere that the people they represent wholeheartedly support their fight for the FOUR FREEDOMS. Whether the FOUR FREEDOMS are to be applied to all peoples of the world must be clearly defined by the people supporting the United Nations leaders. The attitude of many citizens in this country does not express the earnest conviction that the FOUR FREEDOMS apply to all people, regardless of race, color or creed. RACIAL INEQUALITIES still exist to taint Democracy and show it has nothing to do with the present world-wide struggle. The Negro population resents discrimination and economic inequalities even during wartime crisis here in America.

3. ARE THE FOUR FREEDOMS ASSURED AT HOME?

This war for the FOUR FREEDOMS MUST BE BROUGHT CLOSER TO THE COMMON PEOPLE'S CONSCIOUSNESS. (A) As it is now, the release from the relocation centers does not insure American of Japanese descent that they will get a favorable reception from the American public. Many communities consider the resident Japanese as a problem, and their influx is regarded as a serious menace to the economic structure. (b) Frantic efforts are being made in California to close the door permanently to the evacuated Japanese even after the duration. (c) In provincial areas of this



country, the people, it seems, are worried over the Japanese influx into their state of community because of the "danger of becoming permanent residents." Regardless of how ridiculous the charges may be, the public will be swayed greatly by wartime hysteria in denouncing loyal Americans as dangerous enemies because their faces happen to be yellow.

#### 4. THE EXCLUSION ACT.

IN ORDER TO PROVE TO THE WORLD THAT WE ARE FIGHTING FOR THE FOUR FREEDOMS, MAKING IT POSSIBLE SO THAT EVERY MAN CAN LIVE ACCORDING TO HIS FREE WILL: America must do away with the EXCLUSION ACT. This Exclusion Act proves without any reservation that we Americans of Oriental extraction are not recognized as equals with the Caucasian Americans, moreover to stigmatize us that we are inferior kind of people as compared with the other races which make up the American Commonwealth is the law WHICH PROHIBITS THE NATURALIZATION OF OUR ORIENTALPARENTS, when this right of naturalization was given to every other alien of this country regardless of their races.

The above-mentioned problems are just a few which I must consider and which must be met squarely and rectified by the government promptly. AS THIS WAR TO BRING AN END TO INTOLERANCE SEEMS ONLY TO BE BREEDING MORE INTOLERANCE. We, the Americans of Oriental extraction cannot but help being skeptical of the promises given us by the Army and the government unless the undemocratic laws are erased from the records of the United States.

IF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES RECOGNIZES THAT THE ABOVE MENTIONED ACTS, LAWS, AND PRINCIPLES INVOLVING THE MASSES WHICH COMPROMISE THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES ARE UNDEMOCRATIC, THEY MY SUPPORT IS ALL YOURS.

#### My Own Opinion:

There were many cases in which brothers or fathers and the son fought each other in our age of Civil War before the Tokugawa Dynasty. I am sorry that I cannot give real examples, as I am not devoid of all such Japanese historical literature, but it is quite certain that there were several instances of this kind in old Japan. One of the sons being adopted by the war lord of the neighboring



province, when they were in peaceful terms, the brothers or the father and the son had to fight each other, when the peace was broken between the two provinces. Of course, there may have been some treacherous cases in which the adopted son may have acted as a spy for his native province, but in the light of the Japanese Bushido the adopted son in this case should give his life for the side of the adopted parents and most of the cases they do. This is the true spirit of the old Samurai.

We find that we are in the same situation now, excepting that the scale is a little larger than the above-mentioned cases. It was the war between provinces and the parties involved were brothers or father and son, while now it is the war between the nations and the parties involved are numbered by thousands.

However, the spirit must be the same and from the standpoint of our Bushido, I wish all the Nisei will bravely fight for their native country, the United States of America, to whomever they may face, Germans in Africa or Japanese in South Pacific.

THIS IS MY BUSHIDO.

Y. Okuno

2/16/43



Y. OKUNO - Two Cases of Kibei Nisei

(Note:- Mr. Okuno has submitted some very astute observations in regard to the present program of enlistment. There follow here similar observations of a worthwhile nature.)

One of the Kibei Nisei who is a good friend of mine came to me and told the following story: (He was married with a Kibei Nisei girl and is the father of two little children.)

"I was sent over to Japan when I was a small boy and was educated there until I graduated a high school. I really stayed in Japan over ten years. But when I reached to the military age, I came back to the United States so that I may avoid the military enlistment in Japan.

"Unfortunately, the war broke out between this country and Japan and we all Japanese had to evacuate regardless of their being Issei or Nisei. Now I am confronting the matter of enlistment in this country. Once I have avoided the conscription in Japan and this fact hungs on my conscience always and I have been struggling mentally for a long time. If I avoid the enlistment here again and say "NO" to the questions #27 and 28, what value will there be in me as a ~~K~~ human being?

"I talked it over with my wife day and night and she quite agree with me that we have to live honorable life to whatever hardship we may have to face. Finally, I decided to answer "YES" to those questions.

"Now the registration is over and we (my wife and myself) are very glad that we can live in our peaceful mind hereafter."



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There is another Kibei who is a friend of my close friend. I saw him first time at my friend's home and he told me as follows:

"The registration problem is very bad on us all the Kibei Nisei, because the most of Kibei have somewhat Issei feeling toward Japan, but most of them escaped from the military enlistment in the Japanese army by virtue of certain Japanese law which allows them to delay the enlistment while they stay abroad. (ed. or while enrolled in an institution of higher learning) In this respect, we all Kibei have very complicated feeling in the matter of the enlistment in this country. When the registration began, I decided to answer "yes" to the questions #27 and 28. So, when our turn came to register, I went to see the officer and I signed the paper answering "yes" to those questions. When I came home that night, I found so many of my friends in our block answered "NO" and began to feel myself a little uneasy. Talking with those my friends who answered "NO", it seemed to me that I was mistaken in answering "yes".

"The next morning, I went to the office to see the officer and told him that I had changed my mind and I wanted to correct my answers to #27 and #28 to "NO". The officer said "all right", and changed the answers for me. Coming back home, there was something unsettled in myself, some sort of pending feeling from which I could not get away.

"That night I could not sleep all along, thinking over the matter from various angles, but finally in the morning, I have reached to the conclusion that I was wrong in answering "NO", as I had decided to become an honest American citizen when I left



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Japan, and it will be quite cowardly to try to avoid the enlistment here again.

"That morning I went to see the army officer again (this was the third time) and asked him if I may change my answer once more. This same officer said good-naturedly "Yes, you may". Now in my third visit to the office, I answered definitely "YES" to those two questions which were stumbling block to me and to other Niseis and I am now very happy that all is over and that I am not a coward after all and will not go back to the office the fourth time.

Y. OKUNO  
2/24/43