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8/14/91

**MILITARY INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE LANGUAGE SCHOOL
U. S. ARMY**



FORT SNELLING, MINNESOTA

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FOREWORD

In the summer of 1944, I requested permission to photograph and document the story of Nisei soldiers who were in training for the Pacific Theatre as military intelligence operators. This was a speculative assignment for *Life* magazine. With the approval and cooperation of the War Department, I was able to photograph the Military Intelligence Service Language School, at Fort Snelling, Minnesota; however, the story was never published. One year later, I received a War Department communication releasing the story to the public. Forty-six years later I felt that the American public should know the facts and the sacrifice and contribution of Americans of Japanese ancestry who participated and gave their lives in World War II, Pacific Theatre. Although the identity of each individual soldier is lost in eternity, their images reflect our history of the events. This photographic documentary is dedicated to the patriotic Japanese-American soldiers of all wars.

Stone S. Ishimaru,
Official U.S. Army Photographer
8th Army

Photo Credits

Stone S. Ishimaru
U.S. Army Signal Corp.



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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE LANGUAGE SCHOOL

(Note to Editors: The following releases on the Military Intelligence Service Language School, Nisei Linguists in the Pacific, and Army Japanese Linguists in Training, were released at 12:00 Noon, C.S. T. Monday, October 22, at St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn.).

When the Japanese peace envoys lined up at Nichols Field in the Philippines to meet Major General Charles A. Willoughby, Assistant Chief of Staff in charge of intelligence at General MacArthur's GHQ, they were met by non-handshaking, Japanese speaking Colonel Sidney F. Mashbir, Chief of the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section attached to General MacArthur's headquarters. Included in the official party were two officers of Japanese American ancestry--George K. Kayano of San Francisco and Lieutenant Thomas T. Imada of Hawaii--both graduates of the Military Intelligence Service Language School, at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. This was deserved recognition to the outstanding work which has been performed by Japanese-Americans (usually known as "Nisei") in the intelligence work of the armed forces in the Pacific theaters of operations.

Colonel Mashbir himself has said of Nisei personnel who make up a large part of his Allied Translator and Interpreter Section staff, "Without Nisei, our work during the last three years would have been impossible."

Security and other factors had obliged the Niseis to work in anonymity. Now that hostilities have ended, recognition of their great job of work can be publicly made.

When the complete story of intelligence activities of the American and Allied forces in the Pacific, Burma-India, and China Theaters of war revealed, the record will disclose that American born Japanese linguist broke the veil of secrecy in which the difficulties of the Japanese language had cloaked enemy activity. The record also will disclose that Nisei language personnel were used even in the European Theater of Operations for purposes of obtaining intelligence concerning the Japanese and their liaison with the Germans.

The story of how these Nisei Language personnel became available for field duty is an interesting one. Even in this phase of military intelligence work, the army had set up systematic training system to prepare these Japanese-Americans for their manifold duties as to interrogators, interpreters, translators, radio announcers, propaganda writers, and cave flushers. This training has been carried on at the Military Intelligence Service Language School, situated since May 1942 in the Twin Cities area, first at Camp Savage and later at Fort Snelling where the school is still running at peak load, training language personnel for duties incident to the Occupation of Japan.

The sneak attack on Pearl Harbor found the United States largely unprepared to deliver the full weight of our power against the Japanese. Fortunately, thanks to the foresight of the War Department Intelligence Division, the Fourth Army Intelligence School teaching Japanese Language and combat intelligence work already was operating at the Presidio of San Francisco on Pearl Harbor day. Former language officers in Japan, then on duty with the General Staff, had foreseen that qualified Japanese language personnel would be essential for the successful prosecution of any war against Japan.

The War Department General Staff recognized the gathering clouds of war in the Pacific and knew the difficulties which our Army would face in combatting any enemy whose orders and messages would be in a language which is a complete mystery to the average American Army officer. Japanese officers had boasted that the security of Japanese military documents was no problem at all as Westerners could never learn to read or write Japanese, especially the abbreviated styles of writing known as "gyosho" and "shosho".

These forms are about as similar to the printed Japanese character as a shorthand symbol is to an English word.

American Caucasian personnel of military age qualified in the Japanese language were dishearteningly few. With the crisis rapidly approaching, there was little time to train additional Caucasian personnel. The War Department then made its decision to use Nisei Americans to solve the linguistic problem against Japan. It was admittedly a gamble for the United States for many believed then that the Nisei could not be trusted to stand the acid test of battle employment against their own race and blood. The decision to employ Nisei has proved to be master stroke. The record achievement by Nisei during the prosecuting of the war has been outstanding.

The use of Nisei linguists was not only militarily most shrewd quickly to provide our armed forces with adequate numbers of linguistically qualified personnel but was also politically far-sighted. Out of this group of Japanese-Americans in the army intelligence service has come American Nisei whose loyalty has been proven under fire in every theater in the war.

Notwithstanding the evacuation and other hardships forced upon their relatives and friends in certain areas, they patriotically gave America all they had in her time of crisis. Before the formation of the 100th Infantry Battalion (Nisei) or the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the Nisei engaged in Japanese language work for the Army intelligence were practically the only Nisei members of the armed forces. They were the test case which proved to the Army and the United States not only the loyalty and personal integrity of the Nisei but also the combat value of their linguistic services in the Pacific area.

It was thought at first that there would be enough Japanese-speaking Nisei so that only a few weeks' review in general Japanese vocabulary and a little instruction in military Japanese terminology and combat intelligence would be required to fit them for field duty. These hopes did not materialize. After a survey of the first 3,700 Nisei, it was found that only 3 percent were accomplished linguist, only about 4 percent were proficient, and a further 3 percent could be useful only after a prolonged period of training. The Americanization of the Nisei on the Pacific Coast had advanced more rapidly than the United States public was aware. Japanese language

schools created and encouraged by the Japanese government to maintain ties with the homeland had not achieved the results with which they were credited. It quickly became evident that a special training school would be required to make the Nisei reasonably useful to the armed forces as Japanese linguists. Even Nisei well qualified in general Japanese had to be trained in Japanese military vocabulary and forms of writing.

The mustering of loyal Nisei qualified in the Japanese language became the primary difficulty. The screening of all of the Nisei personnel processed through the Selective Service stationed at the various army units on the Pacific Coast was accomplished. A personal interview and examination was given to each Nisei soldier in service. It was on one of these screening tours that the present Nisei Director of Academic Training at Fort Snelling, Major John F. Aiso, was found in the capacity of "greasemonkey" in Company "D" of the 69th QM Bn (Light Maintenance). On the same screening trip Colonel Kai E. Rasmussen, the present Commandant, located in the 237th CA (AA) Pfc Arthur Kaneko who had had extensive Japanese Language training in Japan. These two were ear-marked as potential instructors. Kaneko ever since has rendered superior service and is now a Lieutenant on duty in Military Intelligence research work.

The Nisei civilian instructors, Mr. Akira Oshida of Berkeley and Mr. Shigeya Kihara of Oakland, were added to the staff. These four Nisei worked feverishly preparing the textbooks and classroom exercises for the Japanese language course.

On November 1, 1941, about six weeks before Pearl Harbor, the Fourth Army Intelligence School had started operations in an abandoned airplane hangar on old Crissey Field adjoining San Francisco Bay at the Presidio of San Francisco. The first course at the school was opened with eight instructors and 60 pupils. Fifty-eight students were Issei and two were Caucasians who had studied Japanese either at the University of California or the University of Washington.

After Pearl Harbor day, it became evident that Japanese Language personnel would be needed as never before, but other currents militated against the use of Nisei personnel. Most of the army personnel of Japanese ancestry not resident at the school were discharged or furloughed to enlisted reserve and relieved from active duty. Then followed the evacuation of all Japanese residents,

aliens and citizens alike, from the Pacific Coast. The task of finding additional instructors or students from civilian life and in the army became more difficult.

The War Department then decided to place the school under its direct jurisdiction and reestablished it at Camp Savage, Minnesota, as the Military Intelligence Service Language School. The selection of Camp Savage as the site for this school was dictated by several factors: (1) the school was outgrowing its facilities at the Presidio of San Francisco; (2) Japanese evacuation from the Pacific Coast made it necessary to remove both faculty and students inland away from the excluded areas; (3) Japanese language instruction was so specialized that it would be difficult to fit it into the training program of any established military training center; (4) a training center had to be found in a community which would accept the oriental faced Americans for their true worth -- American soldiers fighting with their brains for their native America.

The greatest problem which faced the Military Intelligence Service Language School after its removal of Savage was the recruitment of adequate numbers of students for the school to carry on an expanded program. Evacuation from the West Coast had been completed. The loyal Nisei and pro-Japanese elements were in conflict in various Relocation Centers. When the War Department adopted volunteer recruiting of Nisei language personnel, pessimists freely predicted that the school's quotas would never be met. Pro-Japanese elements apparently dominated the Relocation Centers, and the local Nisei were reluctant to volunteer for army service because they felt that their rights as American citizens had been ignored in placing them and their families in the Relocation Centers which were barbed wire enclosures patrolled armed soldiers.

Eventually, enough students volunteered to meet the school's requirements. In some cases they suffered beatings from pro-Japanese elements in Relocation Centers when they volunteered for language instruction at Camp Savage. Some were disowned by their pro-Japanese Issei (first generation) parents. Nevertheless they reported by the hundreds. Many of the first groups of students were well over thirty, generally well qualified in the Japanese language and burning with desire to vindicate themselves of any suspicions of disloyalty to America. So eager were they to finish their training as early as possible that it became necessary for the duty officer at Camp Savage to search the school area for burning electric lights in

order to prevent students from extra study after lights out at 11:00 P. M. Many succeeded in extra hour study in spite of a long school day of seven hours instruction plus two hours study in the evening in the classrooms. Many requested that their training be accelerated so that they could get into the field as soon as possible "to get their hands on those dirty Japs that caused all the sufferings and hardships of evacuation" (of the Japanese from the West Coast.)

In G-2, War Department it became apparent that the Camp Savage School must be expanded. In August 1944, the school was removed to Fort Snelling, Minnesota, where it is presently located. The school today has a student body of nearly 3,000 composed principally of Nisei students, although there are Caucasian officer candidates, many of who lived in Japan as children or young men, and few enlisted men of Chinese and Korean ancestry. There are 125 classrooms. Besides classroom facilities, there are the usual administration buildings and barracks. To these may be added a very modern short wave radio station where there are facilities for training students to become expert clear text wireless interceptors and radio monitors of Japanese broadcasts and wireless stations. In addition to undergraduate training section, there is also a translation section and research and liaison sections.

The teaching staff of 162 is composed entirely of Nisei Americans born in the United States and the Hawaiian Islands. Twenty-seven of the instructors are Nisei federal civil service employees, but the balance are Japanese-American Master Sergeants, Technical Sergeants, and Staff Sergeants.

From the Military Intelligence Service Language School have gone thousands of Nisei interpreters, interrogators, translators, radio interceptors, censors, radio announcers, and propaganda writers. They have been working quietly with American combat teams at Guadalcanal, Attu, New Georgia, the Philippines, and Okinawa; in Burma, India, and China; and now in Tokyo itself. Their work has saved countless American lives and speeded victory. Many Nisei lie where they fell including Staff Sergeant Hachiya in Leyte, Captain Laffin Burma, and Sergeants Shibata and Fukui on Okinawa. These Japanese-American heroes are alumni of the Military Intelligence Service Language School.

Major General Clayton Bissell, Chief of the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department General Staff, after reviewing the

exploits of the graduates of the MISLS in the field said in effect at a recent commencement of the school. "If you Japanese Americans are ever questioned as to your loyalty, don't even bother to reply. The magnificent work of the graduates of the Military Intelligence Service Language School in the field has been seen by your fellow Americans of many racial extractions. Their testimony to your gallant deeds under fire will speak so loudly that you need not answer."

NISEI LINGUISTS--EYES AND EARS OF ALLIED PACIFIC FORCES

In the crucial battles of the Pacific, the Japanese did not know (nor did thousands of Americans at home) that they were confronted not only by vastly superior American arms and daring Yankee intrepidity, but an enemy who already had much detailed information of the Japanese plans for attack and defense. If the analogy to football to which some of the defeated Japanese warlords have resorted recently is at all relevant, then the Japanese were playing with their signals entirely known by their heavier and harder hitting opponents. But the Japanese didn't know. They had lulled themselves into a self-complacent sense of security. They thought the complexities of the Japanese language in which their plans were written and communicated would be unfathomable to the Westerner.

For thousands of Americans on the fighting fronts knew this was so. They knew, however, that the American-born Japanese (better known as "Nisei") language specialities -- translators, interrogators, radio monitors, and order of battle experts -- were one of the chief means of obtaining intelligence of the enemy and his plans. The American Nisei trained at the Presidio, Camp Savage, and Fort Snelling became the eyes and ears of not only the American fighting forces, but also that of the other allied armies fighting Japan.

These language specialists, working selflessly and in complete anonymity, translated from the Japanese language to English the enemy information concerning his tactical decisions and dispositions. This information greatly assisted our commanders in the field in making decisions, concerning effective maneuvers and avoiding surprise. Never before in history did one army know so much concerning its enemy prior to actual engagement as did the American army during most of the Pacific campaign.

It became almost routine practice for our Japanese-American language units to work so rapidly and accurately that our artillery was dropping shells on enemy command posts and gun emplacements within a few minutes of the time that information was obtained by the language detachment. On many occasions this intelligence helped clear the way for our doughboys slowly moving forward through the jungles.

As one example, the official reports of the American Division disclose that it was the work of the language detachment that largely was responsible for the Divisional Commander knowing well in advance where and approximately at what time and in what strength the Japanese would attack the division along the Torokina River near Bougainville.

Graduate of the Military Intelligence Service Language School translated the entire Japanese battle plans for the naval battle of the Philippines. These plans were captured with Admiral Koga, the Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Japanese Fleets, when the plane in which he was hurrying to join his fleet made forced landing in the Philippines. Slight wonder then that the Japanese suffered practically total annihilation and the worst defeat in naval history in the San Bernardino Straits and off the northeast coast of the Philippines.

Likewise, the complete Japanese plan for the defense of the Philippines also was made known through the work of the language specialists from the Military Intelligence Service Language School long before our forces had landed on Leyte.

Graduates of the Military Intelligence Service Language School included Americans of many racial backgrounds, but roughly 85 percent of the graduates are Nisei Americans. Concerning the work of the Japanese-American language specialists, Joe Rosenthal, AP news-cameraman who won the Pulitzer Award for his spot photo of the raising of the *Stars and Stripes* at the crater rim of Mt. Suribachi, has written:

"Usually they work with headquarters in serving as interpreters. Armed with hand grenades at the entrances to Japanese pillboxes or caves, they often convince the enemy to surrender where other officers, lacking the proper diction of the Japanese Language, would fail. They work so close to the enemy on

these missions that with danger of being killed by Japanese, they run the risk of being shot, unintentionally, by our own marines. Their dungarees soon become ragged in rough country and the similarity of their physical appearance to that of the Japanese enemy makes their job much tougher. Many have paid with their lives, and many more have been wounded. They have done an outstanding job, and their heroism should be recognized. It has been recognized by the marine commanders where I saw them in action at Guam, Peleliu and Iwo."

Two of these Nisei, Technical Sergeant Kazuo Komoto with the 11th Airborne Division, and a Japanese-American Staff Sergeant with the 1st Radio Squadron Mobile, were among the first troops that landed at Atsugi Airfield near Tokyo. Komoto, incidentally, as the first graduate of the Military Intelligence Service Language School to win a purple heart when he was shot by a Japanese sniper on New Georgia Island.

Another graduate, Technical Sergeant Robert Oda, acted as interpreter when our naval forces took over the Japanese naval base at Yokosuka.

These language specialists came to the Military Intelligence Service Language School from all walks of life and from various parts of the United States, Hawaii, and Alaska. Among them were dentists, lawyers, PhD's, cooks, farm-hand, gardeners, laundrymen, houseboys, and even a professional gambler. One was a former member of the Territorial Legislature in Hawaii. A good cross section came as volunteers from behind the barbed wire fences of the Relocation Camps in which they had been placed shortly after Pearl Harbor. Some were veterans of World War I, well over 45 years old, and with three or more teen age children. Technician 3rd grade James Yoshinobu who served with the 4th Marine Division on Iwo Jima and Technical Sergeant John Tanikawa, who was awarded a Bronze Star for his work with the 41st Division Leyte, were veterans of World War I.

Nisei language specialists have been with every major unit in every engagement from Guadalcanal and Attu to march into Tokyo. To mention all units with which they served would be to list every major unit that has engaged in combat in the Pacific. The great task of the War Department and the Military Intelligence Service Language School was to supply the demand for these linguists. This

entailed a comprehensive study of the history of practically every Japanese-American male of military age.

A story is told about Lt. General Alexander M. ("Sandy") Patch's reaction to the Nisei. When the first group of Nisei arrived at his command it is reported that he hesitated to use them. It is reported (perhaps apocryphally) that after their first campaign he thought so much of them that he would go personally to the transports and welcome each group as they came off the gangplank. Today, General Patch, who also had under his command the 442nd Regimental Combat Team in the European Theater of Operations (also composed of Nisei), is one of the staunchest Nisei supporters.

From Guadalcanal, Lieutenant Colonel John A. Burden, then Captain in the G-2 Section of the XIV Corp wrote:

"The use of Nisei in the combat area is essential to efficient work. There has been a great deal of prejudice and opposition to the use Nisei in combat areas. The two arguments advanced are: (1) Americans of Japanese ancestry are not be trusted, and (2) the lives of the Nisei would be endangered due to the strong sentiment against Japanese prevailing in the area. Both of these arguments have been thoroughly disproved by experiences on Guadalcanal, and I AM GLAD TO SAY THAT THOSE WHO OPPOSED THE USE OF NISEI THE MOST ARE NOW THEIR MOST ENTHUSIASTIC ADVOCATES. It has been proven that only the Nisei are capable of rapid translation of written orders and diaries, and their use is essential in obtaining the information then contained in them."

Lieutenant Colonel William M. Van Antwerp, in charge of intelligence for the 27th Infantry Division, had this to say:

"The MAKIN operation afforded the first opportunity for the Language Section of this Division to operate in combat. Their actions and the results of their work reflect high credit on them and the Military Intelligence Service Language School."

Major General Ralph C. Smith who commanded the 27th Infantry Division added: "The language section attached to the 27th Division was invaluable in the MAKIN operation."

From the China-Burma-India Theater, Captain Barton Lloyd, a graduate of the Military Intelligence Service Language School wrote:

"I cannot overstate the value that Colonel Stilwell (son of General Stilwell) and his headquarters place on Nisei Language men.

As far as everyone who had had contact with the Nisei is concerned, they are tops -- they are doing a darned good job, much of it under conditions they never expected. Sergeants Matsuno and Mazawa were dropped by parachute deep in Kachin territory to an Office of Strategic Services unit. They have been working in areas behind enemy lines, doing both language and radio intercept work. These two volunteered without any hesitation and took their jumps in fine form although having had no previous training in parachute jumping whatsoever. The paratrooper who gave them instructions and who accompanied them on their jump flight told me that when their turns came to jump, they took off themselves with 'no assistance'."

According to reports from Leyte, General Kreuger repeatedly had congratulated and commended the Nisei language men for their fine work on Leyte.

A Nisei Technical Sergeant wrote from the Marshall Islands, "Incidentally, I was called in by Major General Corlett, the commanding general of the 7th Division, and personally extended his congratulations to our team for the work that the boys did."

Recognition has been given to the work of these Nisei Americans in the field. Although the reports are not complete and the records are only fragmentary, at least 50 Nisei have received direct commissions from the ranks to Second Lieutenants, and another 25 or 30 have been commissioned through the various Officer Candidate Schools in Australia and in the United States. One of these, Masaji Marumoto of Honolulu, has received a commission as First Lieutenant in the Judge Advocate General's Department and was the civil affairs legal officer attached to Military Government in Okinawa when the last report was received.

A number of Nisei have been awarded decorations for intelligence work in combat but complete information in this respect also is lacking. As far as is known at present, 1 Distinguished Service Cross, 2 Legion of Merits, 5 Silver Stars, 1 Soldier's Medal, over 50 Bronze Stars, and 15 Purple Hearts have been received by Nisei intelligence personnel.

Some Japanese-American language specialists have been assigned to the larger headquarters and various stations in the continental limits of the United States and have been denied the opportunity of serving in combat. Most of the honor graduates of

each graduating class were retained as instructors at the Military Intelligence Service Language School to train other students. It has taken considerable discussion to convince these men that they could render more important service in non-combat assignments.

Roy Cummings, *Honolulu Star Bulletin* correspondent has pointed out the non-language side of their roles in the Pacific. He wrote:

"Pocket dictionaries aren't the only articles the men of the school make use of out there. Things happened fast after the landing on Okinawa. One of the language men was on guard the third night that we were there. He challenged a man who came out of the darkness. The man did not halt, and when he came closer, the sergeant saw that it was an enemy soldier, so he cut him down with carbine."

Fourteen Nisei volunteered for service with Merrill's Marauders in Burma. An officer writing of their exploits says: "Throughout, whenever and wherever there was need for any of the boys, they never hesitated. They were not only interpreters but soldiers at the front. They faced danger willingly, whenever called upon. They faced the enemy, fought against him.

Roy Matsumoto, Ben Sugita, Robert Honda and Henry Gosho are credited with about 30 Nips. You can see by that that the boys have been right upon the line.

During battles they crawled up close enough to be able to hear Japanese Officers' commands and to make verbal translations to our soldiers. They tapped lines, listened in on radios, translated documents and papers, made spot translations of messages and field orders, and in numerous other ways made themselves invaluable.

It was in the engagement at Myitkyina that these "Marauder Boys" lost their commanding officer, Captain William Laffin (His mother was Japanese.) when he was strafed by enemy planes. Of the 14 Nisei who started out with General Merrill, six were commissioned as officers for meritorious service in the field, one was decorated with the Legion of Merit, and three received the Bronze Star. All received the Combat Infantryman's Badge and the Presidential Unit Citation.

It is interesting to note that many of the outstandingly daring feats were performed by graduates who were "Kibei" (those born in the United States but sent at an early age to Japan and educated there.) These "Kibei" are mistakenly judged in some quarters as being pro-Japanese elements in the Japanese-American community.

Technical Sergeant Kaz Kozaki, a former non-commissioned officer instructor at the Military Intelligence Service Language School is a "Kibei" and so is Technician Grade 3 Eiichi Sakauye. Kozaki won a Silver Star and a Purple Heart for rescuing an American army officer under fire when they attacked by the Japanese as they were landing on New Guinea from their landing craft. Eiichi Sakauye rescued a wounded British officer under fire in the China-Burma-India Theater and likewise became the recipient of a Silver Star.

Technician 5th Grade Terry Takeshi Doi was an out and out "Kibei". His Japanese was stronger than his command of English. He had been caught as dual-national in Japan and had been forced to serve in the Japanese army, thereby losing his American citizenship. He had been kept at the Military Intelligence Service Language School after graduation before he was cleared as being trustworthy for service in the combat zone.

When Doi appeared before Judge Robert Bell of the U. S. District Court in the Twin Cities for restoration of his American citizenship, a Canadian dancer who also was scheduled to be sworn in as an American citizen requested Judge Bell to swear her separately. As she put it, she refused to be "sworn in with a Jap." Judge Bell denied her request, and she walked out of the court.

Terry Doi was one of the first Nisei to land on Iwo Jima. Several had landed among the first waves, about "H hour plus 45". And from that time on he distinguished himself going into cave after cave with only a flashlight and knife persuading many enemy soldiers to come out and surrender. Wrote Lt. Wesley H. Fishel, Doi's commanding officer, to Judge Bell, "I know you'll be happy to know that Terry did one of the finest piece of work possible. Doi was one of the first GIs to land on Iwo Jima. The limits of censorship prohibit details, but I can say Terry is one of the bravest and most capable men I have seen out here."

Another Caucasian officer graduate of the Military Intelligence Service Language School, Lieutenant Squire wrote:

"There was nothing but praise for the Nisei boys, particularly a boy by the name of Doi . . . There is a story about him people tell which goes something like this. He was continually going into caves with a knife and flashlight and hollering to the enemy to "get the hell out or else". Mr . Doi's middle name is now "Guts"."

Technician Grade 3 Kenji Yasui is another "Kibei" who has won for himself the title of the "Nisei Sergeant York." Yasui, because of his schooling in Tokyo (middle school graduate and college division graduate of Waseda University) and his command of the Japanese language was sent to the Office of War Information in India to work on propaganda leaflets to be dropped over enemy lines. Masquerading as Colonel Yamamoto, a local Japanese Commander, he brought in single handed a dozen Japanese prisoners of war. John Emerson, State Department Political Advisor to the Theater commander, and himself a former State Department language officer in Tokyo, wrote Colonel Rassmussen as follows:

"I don't know whether you have heard yet that one them, Kenji Yasui has been recommended for a citation (Yasui received the Silver Star) for his courageous performance in bringing in 13 Japanese prisoners during this mopping-up operation in Myitkyina. Kenji and two others volunteered to go out to an island in the river to round up a bunch of Japanese. He swam out, got a cramp halfway across and almost drowned, shouted to the Japanese to come out, and finally got 13 together. Two had to be killed and one tried to blow Yasui and himself up with a grenade. Kenji luckily escaped that. He announced that he was a Colonel and made them line up and execute close order drill. Then he made them get in the river and swim across pushing a raft on which he stood with a carbine aimed at them. Afterwards he learned the Japanese had 20 rounds each and had a bead on him when he came ashore. Only because he started shouting military commands in Japanese did they hold fire."

Technician 3rd grade Shigeto Mazawa served with the KACHIN RANGERS (native Burmese levies) and took part in daring raid against the enemy in Burma. Much to his surprise, he found himself a temporary Captain in the British Army commanding a whole company of KACHIN RANGERS.

Several have reported none too amusing incidents -- that of being captured by Chinese troops and being mistaken for Japanese soldiers. They have reported that they never talked so fast with sign

language and wrote so many "Kanji" (Chinese characters used in the Japanese language) in all their lives to explain that they were "Minkuo" (American) soldiers. They have described their complexion as having remained a pale green for the next three months or more.

Sergeant Vic Nishijima was on Ie Jima (Ie Island west of Okinawa) on the morning that Ernie Pyle, the GI's favorite correspondent, was killed by a Japanese machine gun ambush. Writing to his friends at Fort Snelling, Nishijima wrote:

"I had to give war scribe Ernie Pyle hell for trying to cross a mine field. Also wound up in a newsreel with him but didn't know who the 'elderly private' was until next morning."

Technician 4th Grade Seiyu Higashi was born in Los Angeles, but was taken back to the town of Naha in Okinawa because of his knowledge of the Okinawa dialect. Upon reaching the town of Naha, he accidentally ran into his father whom he had not seen for eight years.

Like all troops in the combat zone, some of these Nisei language specialists will never return to the country they fought for. Many have given their lives in the service of their country. Ten were killed in an airplane accident in Okinawa a day before VJ-Day. Others have been killed by enemy action.

Technician 3rd Grade Frank T. Hachiya was born in Hood River, Oregon, the place where the local American Legion post erased the names of 16 Americans of Japanese ancestry from the county memorial honor roll. After basic training at Camp Roberts in California, Frank was assigned to the Military Intelligence Service Language School at Camp Savage. At the time of his death, he was a veteran of the Kwajalein and Eniwetok campaigns. He had been sent out as a special replacement to the language team working with the Sixth Army Headquarters on Leyte. He was scheduled to fly back to Honolulu the following day. His father was in a Relocation Camp, but his mother was in Japan.

Hachiya volunteered to cross an enemy infested valley to question a prisoner of war who had been captured by friendly units on an adjacent ridge. Lieutenant Howard M. Moss, his commanding officer, said, "It was essential to get the information from the prisoner of war immediately as some of our units were in a bad spot. . . . When they reached the bottom of the valley, a Japanese sniper let

them have it a close range when he started hollering to the Japanese in the valley in Japanese. Frank emptied his gun into the sniper. Then he walked back up the hill where he as given plasma. . . At the hospital he was given every possible care, but the bullet had gone through his liver."

Others like Sergeant Omura in New Guinea, Staff Sergeant Shoichi Nakahara, Technician 3rd Grade Eddie Fukui, Technician 4th Grade Mitsuru Shibata, Technician 4th Grade Ben Satoshi Kurokawa, and Technician 4th Grade Sunichi Bill Imoto on Okinawa also have lost their lives in service of their country. However, the circumstances surrounding the death of Sergeant George I. Nakamura, who was killed in action in the Philippines deserve special mention.

George was the son of a Japanese alien who was seized shortly after Pearl Harbor in Watsonville, California, for possessing "rockets and other signal equipment." His father was taken into custody, but was exonerated and is living Rockford, Illinois today. His son did not hesitate to give his life or the United States in which he was boon. Lieutenant James Hoyt, his commanding officer, describing the circumstances of his death wrote:

"Nakamura was on temporary duty with the 63rd Infantry Regiment of the 6th Infantry Division and participated in an engagement near Palawan. With heroic intrepidity, he exposed himself to enemy fire in order to issue an oral ultimatum of surrender to several isolated enemy units."

There also was Technical Sergeant Yukita Mizutari who was killed in New Guinea and who received the Silver Star posthumously. This non-commissioned officer language team leader went to the rescue of his subordinates who had been fired upon by enemy infiltrating into their positions. Colonel Mashbir, Chief of the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section of General MacArthur's Headquarters wrote:

"The loss of Technical Sergeant Mizutari is considered with the deepest regret since this soldier was a soldier in every sense of the word and while serving with various language units in the field as well as at the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section, his contribution in fidelity and devotion to duty was outstanding. His record serves to exemplify the great work of the Nisei for their country to which cause he as given his life."

By their invaluable language work in the field, thousands of American lives have been saved. The job of the Nisei was primarily that of language technicians but they have demonstrated that they could be soldiers as well. As one First Sergeant at Fort McClellan, where a large group of the men from the Military Intelligence Service Language School went for basic training, wrote to one of the graduates who has seen service in the Philippines: "If all American-Japanese or I might say 'democratic Japanese' feel like you fellows did, things are "on the ball" and this old 'democratic way of life' is worth fighting for."

These Nisei eyes and ears of the Allied Forces that greatly assisted in bringing Japan to her knees in unprecedented defeat have vindicated in their way the faith which President Roosevelt, our great wartime president and commander-in-chief, placed in them when he said "Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry" . . . Every loyal American citizen should be given the opportunity to serve this country wherever his skills will make the greatest contribution . . . " In military Japanese language work, the nisei Language specialists have done just that.

ARMY JAPANESE LINGUISTS IN TRAINING

For most army organization, VJ-Day meant the beginning of curtailment of activities and a slackening of peace time tempo. For the Military Intelligence Service Language School, it spelled just the opposite--heavier loads and a faster gait. The Military Intelligence Service Language School under the direct jurisdiction of the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department, better known in military circles as the "MISLS" is located at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. The MISLS has been the only "language factory" which has turned out Japanese language specialists on mass production basis for the various allied military, air, marine, and naval units engaged in fighting the Japanese. Practically every army officer or army non-commissioned officer engaged in Japanese language work today has been at one time or another a student at MISLS.

During the Japanese war, the graduates of the MISLS were vital cogs in the comb at intelligence and psychologic warfare work. Today, they are in Japan serving as equally important links in communication between General MacArthur's occupation army and

the Japanese people. Most of these linguists are Japanese-Americans holding non-commissioned officer status. Most of them have been overseas long enough to be eligible for return home under the army point and age system. Initially these linguists were declared "critical" and hence debarred from release under the point system. Now they are being discharged on the same basis as any other GI.

The occupation of Japan from the linguistic standpoint presents many problems. With many of the NCO linguists being returned to the United States, the problem of their replacements is a very serious one for the Army. That is why the MISLS is operating today under a peak load with around 3,000 students under instruction and hundreds of other still to be trained to replace veterans who will be returned.

While the Commandant and administrative staff of the school is composed largely of Caucasian personnel, both the language training staff and the student body are predominantly Nisei. The school originally was housed in temporary barracks at Camp Savage, Minnesota, but for the last year it has been located at Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

The army Japanese language neophyte comes from varying backgrounds. Most are Nisei whose homes are in Hawaii or the Pacific Coast. However, there are enrolled at MISLS a few Nisei born in Connecticut, or Texas, or Michigan and elsewhere. Some of the officer students were Reserve Officers called up to active duty who had studied the Japanese language at some one of our very few universities -- California, Washington, Columbia, or Harvard -- that taught the Japanese language before Pearl Harbor. Others are AUS officers who had lived in Japan and who possessed varying degrees of ability in the Japanese language. Still others are Caucasian officer candidates who are graduates of the preparation course of one year given at the Army Intensive Japanese Language School, University of Michigan, which also is under the direct supervision of the Military Intelligence division of the War Department General Staff.

Upon arriving at the MISLS, the new student is assigned to one of the student companies which make up the "School Regiment" of 10 companies. He is attached to a company merely for housing, messing, administration, and minimum basic military training. All language training is done under the jurisdiction of the Academic and Military Training Sections.

The typical daily routine for students at the MISLS starts at 6:00 with School Call at 7:30. Except for a lunch period from 11:45 to 1:30 the student is engaged in language instruction from 7:30 to 4:20 in the afternoon. There is a period for exercise and dinner, after which "Joe Language Student" marches back for supervised evening study from 7:00 until 9:00 P.M. Voluntary study is permitted only until 10:30. Most of the students must prepare intensively for the recitations and quizzes of the day school sessions. At 11:00, all lights are out, and "Joe Language Student" has well earned a good night's rest. He has put in a long, hard day's work. Necessity forces a heavy workload and a fast tempo. The student may not have been able to complete all of this preparation for the next day. He may not have had time to write to his family or his girl friend at home. Like all GI Joes, he complains that his instructors and officers are most inhumane.....but he is tired and he dozes off dreaming of weird distortions of the 50 to 200 new "Kanji" (Chinese characters employed in Japanese) he has tried to learn that day.

This with the usual inspections and fatigue is the routine, except for Wednesdays and Saturdays when schoolwork terminates at 11:45. On Wednesday afternoons "Joe Language Student" is not at liberty. He is given "military training" -- quite often a good long stiff cross-country march of from five to ten miles.

Practically all of the classroom hours are spent in Japanese language or Japanese intelligence training involving the usage of Japanese language such as prisoner of war interrogation, the translation of captured documents, Japanese radio and wireless messages clear test interception and monitoring. Two hours of the week are scheduled for theoretical military science and tactics courses.

On the language training side, the student is given an examination of four hours' length upon arrival at school to determine his proficiency in Japanese. This is necessary for grouping the students into sections of equal ability.

Many of the Nisei at Fort Snelling have had to teach or study with anxious hearts. Many had relatives in Relocation Camps in the Western States. After the Japanese were permitted to return from the Relocation Camps to the West Coast, incidents that caused much anxiety occurred. The following article from the *Minneapolis*

Morning Tribute reports one of these incidents: Three Japanese-American soldiers stationed at Fort Snelling, Wednesday expressed dismay at treatment their parents, recently returned to their homes in California are receiving."

"On Tuesday at Auburn, California, a jury acquitted three men "charged with attempted dynamiting of the home of Mr. & Mrs. Sumio Doi. Their son, Pvt. Karl Doi, also is a member of the school battalion. Another son, Cpl. Shigeyuki Doi, fought with American forces who rescued the trapped American battalion at Bastogne during the German's last large scale counter-attack."

The training staff and student body composed of Japanese Americans are grateful to the citizens of the Twin Cities. Nisei both at the school and in the combat theaters are unanimous in praising the friendly treatment which the people of the Twin Cities accorded them during the troubled war years. The Twin Cities and people of the Twin Cities greeted and treatment them as American citizens. They furnished entertainment that made their load lighter and their life more comfortable. Some of the principal organization were the Minneapolis and St. Paul USO's, the Minneapolis YMCA and YWCA, the Minneapolis Defence Council, The Red Cross Camp and Hospital Council Service Committees of Hennipin and Ramsey Counties, the St. Paul Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Council of Jewish Women. The Bar Association of Hennipin and Ramsey Counties donated prizes to honor outstanding students at graduation exercises as did the city newspapers. Many churches and numerous citizens took many of the Nisei servicemen into their homes as guests on weekends and on holidays. Nowhere has the press been so solidly behind the Nisei, and nowhere has greater fairness and understanding been encountered than in the Twin Cities area.

In appreciation of the attitude of the People of the Twin Cities, the students at the MISLS also have shouldered their civic responsibilities. In every War Bond Drive, they have gone over the top. The school has always stood near the top of the units in the Seventh Service Command. Harris L. Romerein, Field Director of the Red Cross War Fund Drive during 1944 wrote:

"In the tabulation of the final results in the recent Red Cross War Fund Drive, we find that on a per capita basis, the voluntary contributions of the men and officers at Camp Savage (MISLS) exceeded that of all other stations in our jurisdiction."

In their Red Cross blood donations, the students of MISLS have set an enviable record over several years. On May 8, 1945, Mrs. William Quist, Special Assistant in charge of Mobile Unit, wrote Colonel Rasmussen, the Commandant:

"The Red Cross Blood Donor Service, and in particular the Minneapolis Center and its Mobile Unit, are deeply appreciative of the contribution you and the men and officers under your command have made to the Blood Donor Service. Every visit to your group, both at Camp Savage and at Fort Snelling, have resulted in whatever quota we requested, and several emergency visits arranged on short notice to fill in cancellations maintained our quota."

Earlier in January, 1945, she had written: "For each of the visits to your group, the productions have been limited by our office, and we have only the highest praise for the manner in which your men responded to this service."

When Mayor McDonough of St. Paul appealed for help to Colonel Harry J. Keeley, post commander of Fort Snelling, for aid to the hard-pressed Twin Cities Coal and Coke Companies which were unable to make adequate deliveries to Twin Cities homes because of a cold wave and lack of manpower, many of the Japanese-Americans went to work driving trucks and delivering coal in subzero weather. Many of these volunteers had only shortly arrived from the balmy climate of the Hawaiian Islands.

Despite the rigorousness of their training, the students of MISLS have distinguished themselves as soldiers. Their rate of AWOL's and venereal disease is very much lower than that of the average military garrison. In recognition of their outstanding records, the chief of the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department awarded the school cadre the "Meritorious Service Unit Plaque." This award is based on achievement and maintenance of a high standard of discipline, superior military courtesy, superior appearance of personnel, installations, and equipment, and enthusiastic execution of orders. Other factors also considered in making the award are the number of AWOL's, venereal disease rates, court martials and other punishments.

This is the sketchy pen picture of the army Japanese linguist as he underwent training before being shipped out to join the combat forces in the Pacific. Necessary changes have been made in the schedules and courses for predecessors who are now undergoing

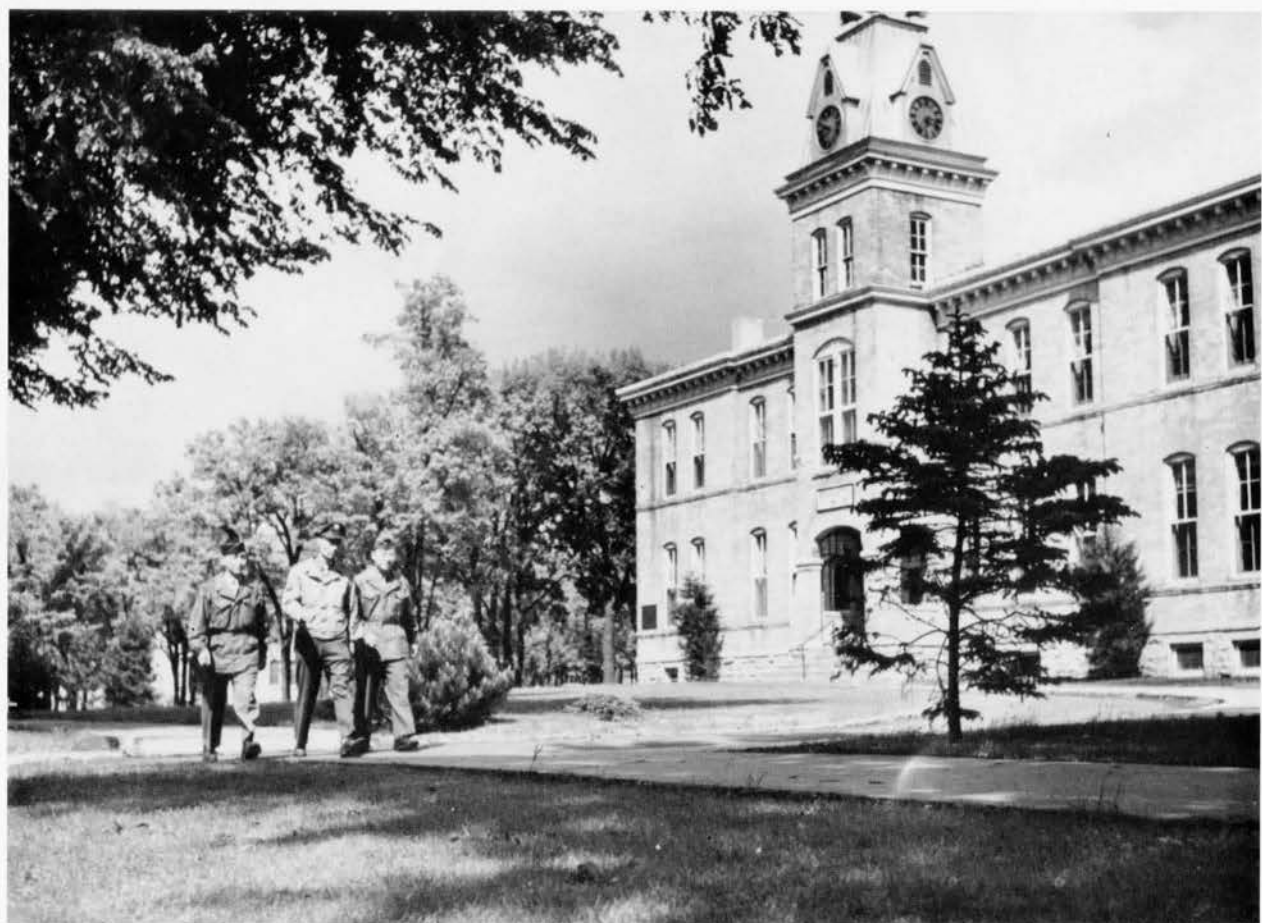
training for Japanese language duties in the American Army of Occupation in Japan. The demands for qualified Japanese language personnel are greater than ever and the work load and tempo instruction remain essentially unchanged. The student must be a good soldier and good linguist. He is driven hard to prepare him for the heavy task in the minimum time allowed. He gripes like all GIs, but he still takes everything in stride, does his duty well, and never fails in his mission.





**MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE
LANGUAGE SCHOOL
U. S. ARMY**

FORT SNELLING, MINNESOTA



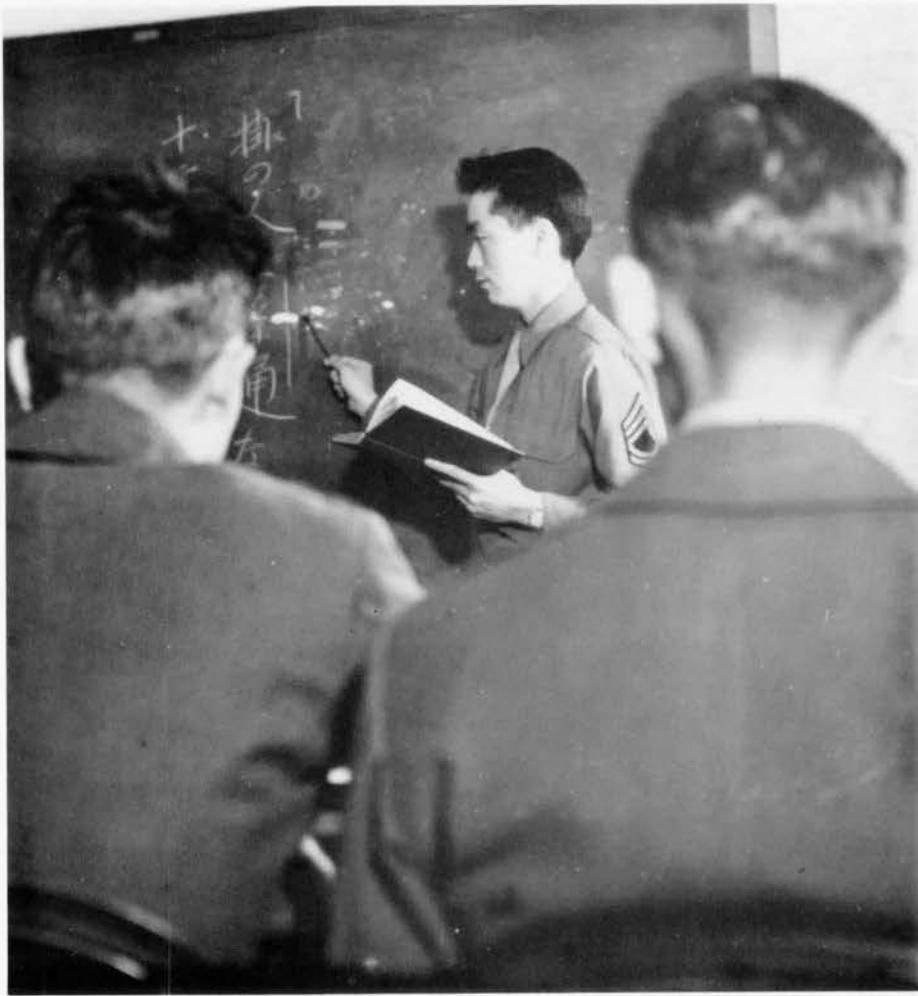






































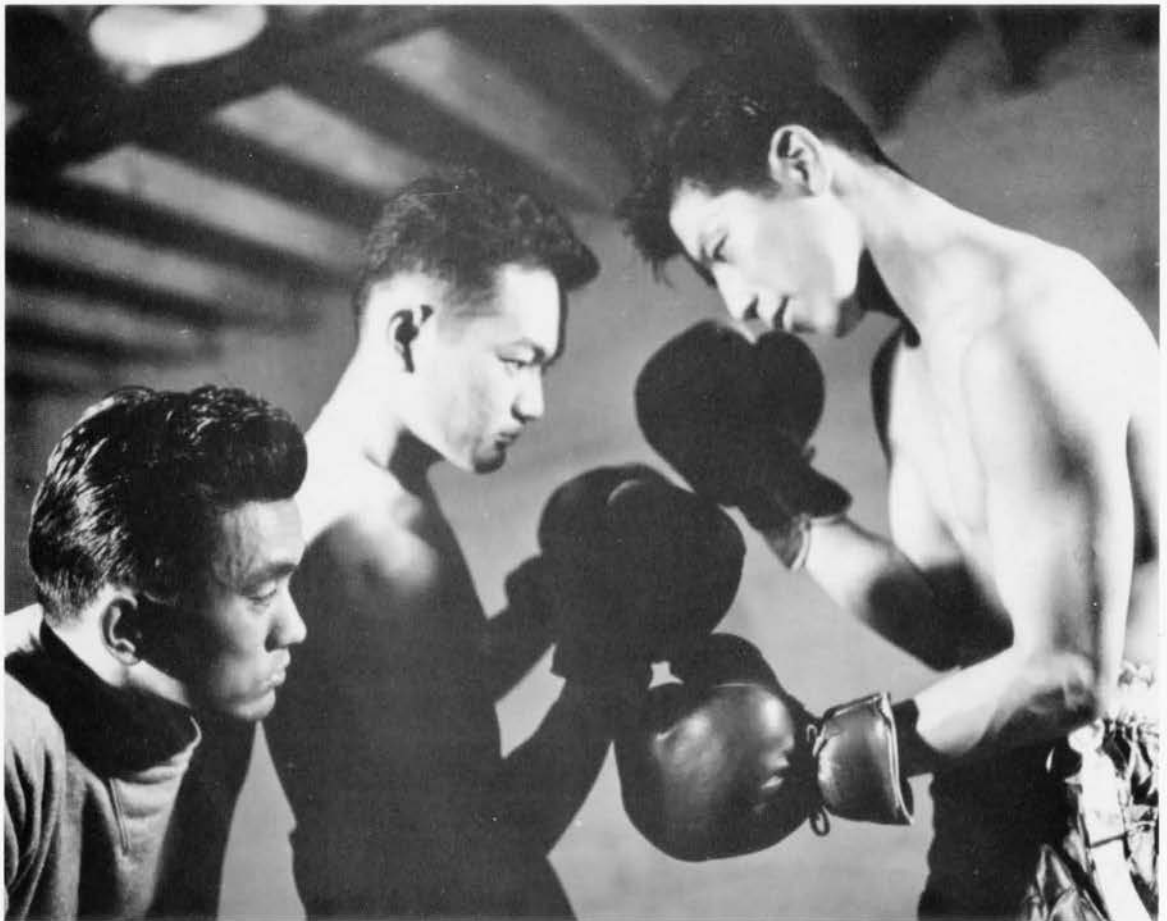
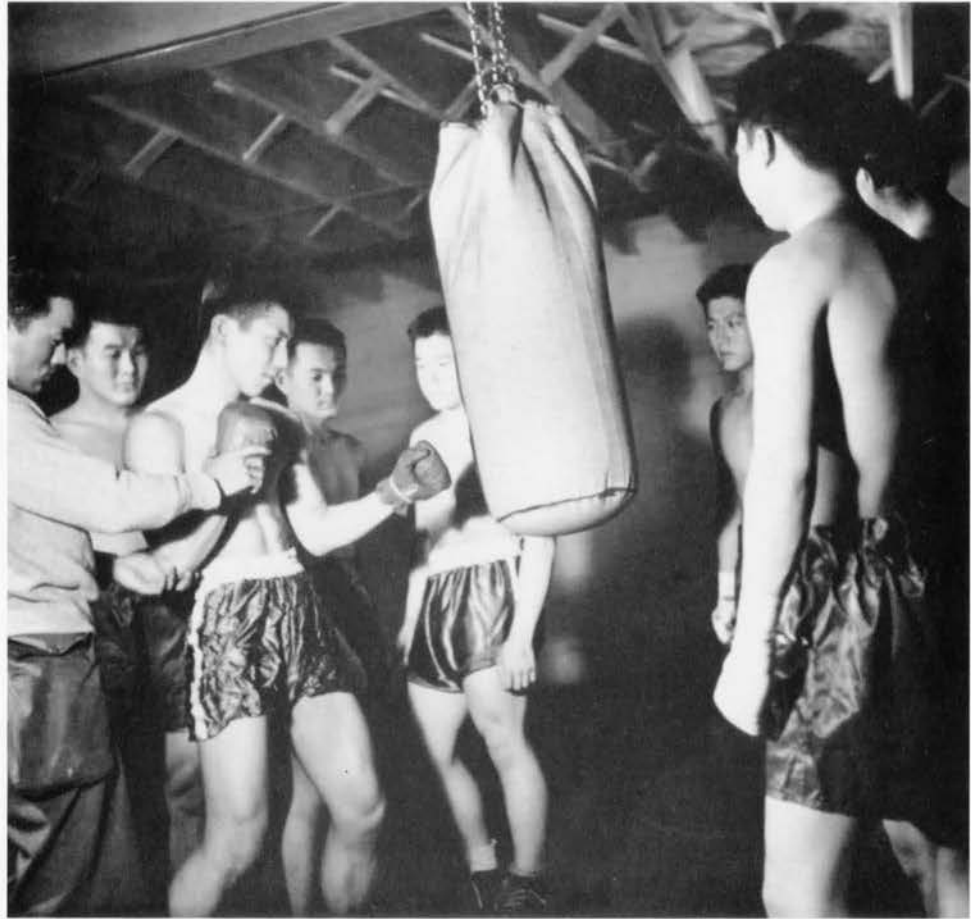




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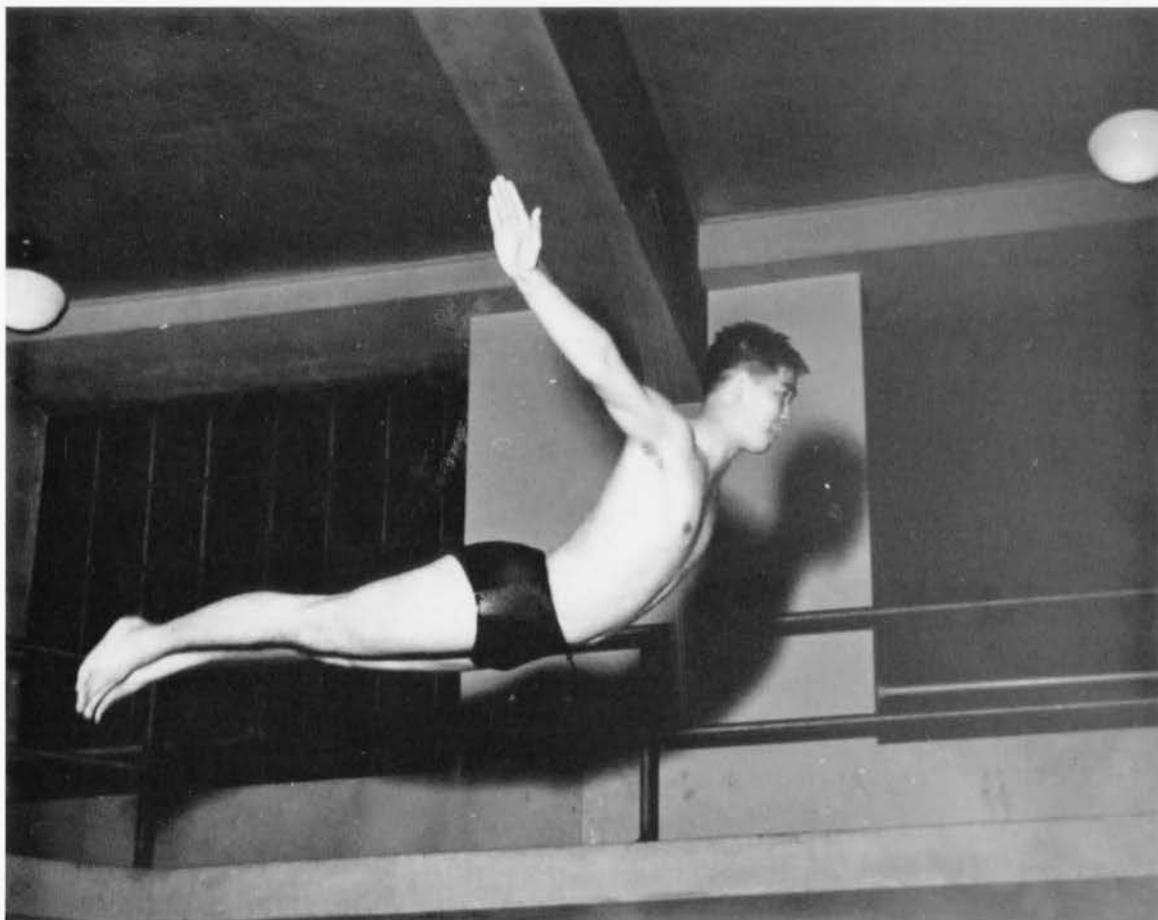




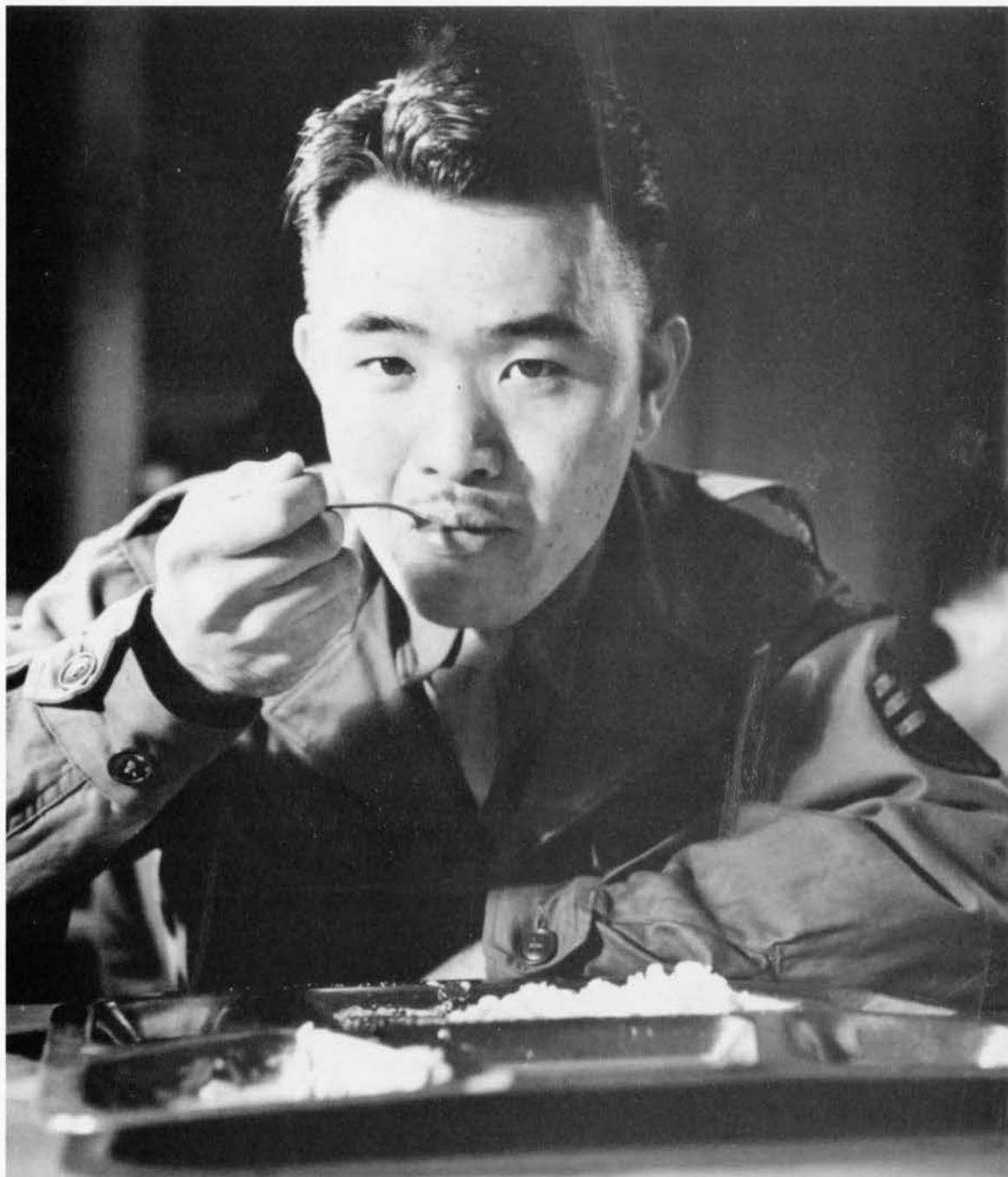


























































































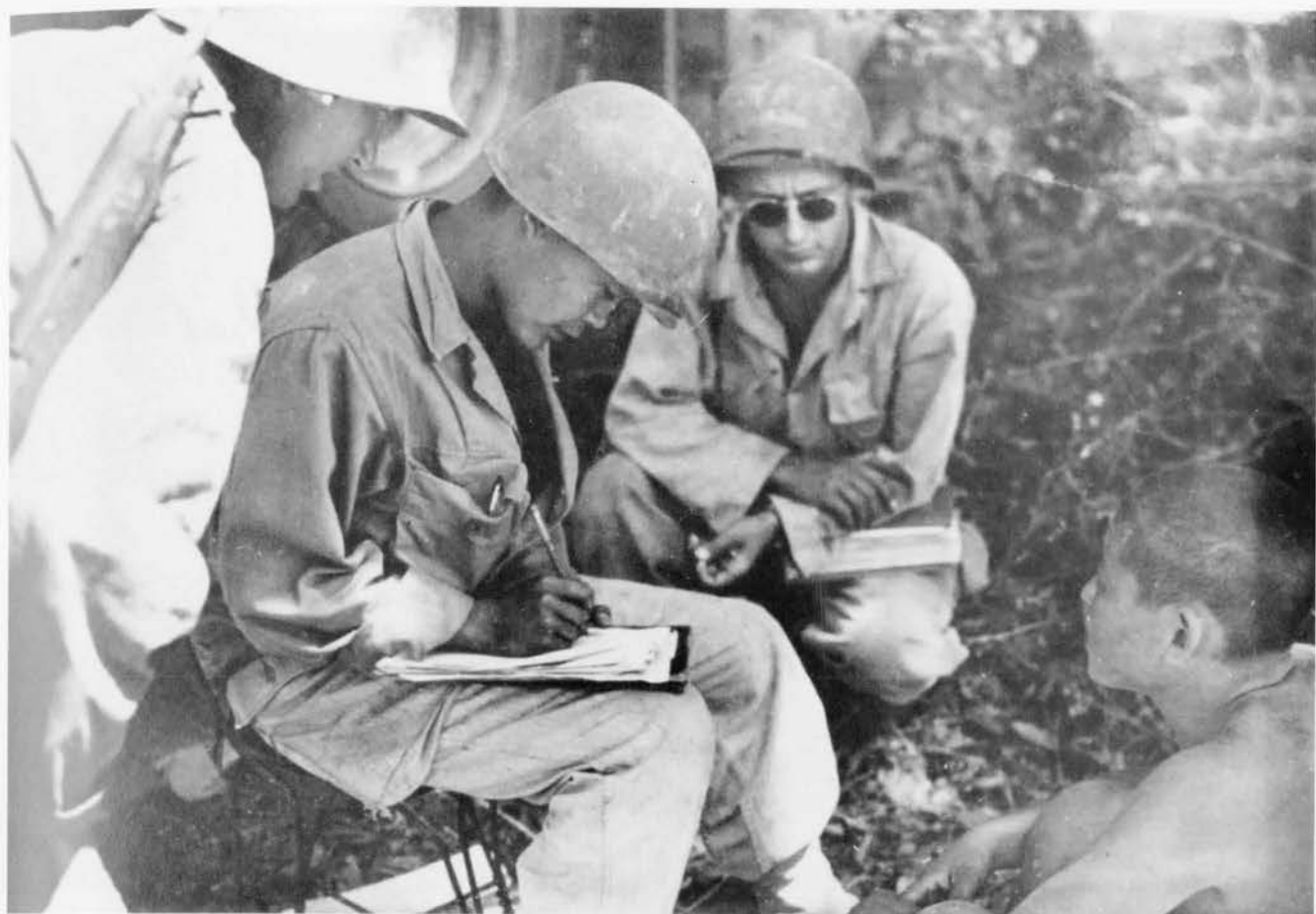
PACIFIC THEATER OF OPERATIONS

















OCCUPATION OF JAPAN











































