

THE JAPANESE IN HAWAII

The editor of The New Republic do not know the facts regarding the loyalty of the Japanese-Americans in Hawaii, which has recently been the subject of sharp debate in the press. We present, however, for its intrinsic interest the article below by a man whose views on the subject are entitled to respectful attention. Mr. Clark, who taught at the University of Hawaii from 1930 until very recently, is the author of the popular book, "Remember Pearl Harbor", in the writing of which he had access to official sources.--The Editors

One of the first things mainlanders ask me is, "What are you people in Hawaii doing with all those Japs out there? Have you got them in concentration camps?"

Judging from the number of times I am asked this, a great many mainland Americans believe that most of the Japanese in Hawaii are hiding around in the canefields, ready at a signal to leap out and stab us in the back. This "news" doubtless accounted for the hasty removal of the Japanese from the West Coast.

The feeling in the mainland United States that the Japanese in Hawaii cannot be trusted is the direct result of the many rumors which came with a whirlwind rush along with the blitz of December 7. "There was a great fifth column in Hawaii! The attacking Japs had wonderful information," it was said. "They knew just where each battleship was to berth. They bombed the useless old Utah mercilessly because the fine air-plane-carrier Lexington was scheduled to be there instead."

"A Hawaiian Japanese fifth columnist cut a briad arrow in a canefield", it was said, "directing enemy pilots straight toward Pearl Harbor!"

"One of the Jap pilots shot down had on a McKinley High School ring."

"Japanese saboteurs stalled old jalopies across the road to Pearl Harbor, blocking traffic, holding up ambulances carrying the wounded, keeping officers and men from reaching their battle stations."

Had our intelligence forces been asleep? Had organization for all these anti-American activities been going on while officials talked of the necessity of trusting local Japanese?

Now let us examine the facts. Pearl Harbor has been exposed to public view for years. You can drive along the public highway or take a hike over the hills behind the harbor and observe at leisure the navy's vital installations and warships. No doubt Japanese consular agents took these jaunts frequently. The navy protested against this situation, but Congress refused to pass legislation condemning property overlooking the harbor.

This failure made it fairly simple for the Japanese consuls stationed in Hawaii to get information about the habits of the fleet.

Admittedly, we do not know just how much information the attacking Japanese had. The truth is that, regardless of what advance knowledge they did have, they needed no fifth column to provide it. A general idea of whether ships were likely to be in the harbor was sufficient. A battleship is a huge object, visible for miles. It is about as difficult to make out as the Chrysler Building would be if it were lying on its side in the Hudson River. Once the Japanese knew where Pearl Harbor is - which any tourist map of Hawaii clearly shows - they did not need to know what berth each battleship normally took. The attackers struck at every battleship in the harbor, regardless of position, size or age.

Corroborating evidence that the Japanese did not approach with the help and direction of fifth columnists has just come to light. The Japanese submarine which was sunk outside Pearl Harbor an hour or more before the attack has now been raised, and the ship's log has been translated. It tells how the submarine entered Pearl Harbor trailing a garbage scow, and cruised about, noting the types and numbers of warships inside. It then left and sent a radio message to the Japanese carriers, relaying the information.

The man cutting the arrow in the canefield was not needed, nor, as a matter of fact, was he there. He was an unconfirmed rumor.

Nor was any special information needed by the Japanese pilots in order to locate the hangars at Hickam Field. I do not know why these hangars were not built back in the mountainside, where they would be hidden from view. But there they lay, not only the biggest objects on all the island, but, furthermore, painted white and gleaming in the tropical sunlight. They were an invitation that the Japanese pilots could see for more than twenty miles. The attacker apparently needed no information that an observant person in the Japanese consulate could not have furnished in one week's time.

The McKinley ring, like the cane-cutter, never materialized. A censor, whose business it was to run down rumor, told me he had checked with every official who had looked through the clothing and possessions of slain Japanese pilots. None had seen a McKinley ring.

If the local Japanese had blocked traffic on the road to Pearl Harbor, they would have committed the most effective sabotage possible that day. This is the obvious kind of sabotage an organized group would commit. The three-lane highway had been a bottleneck of traffic long before the enlarged defense program began two years ago. On December 7 the narrow road was a bedlam of racing emergency ambulances, trucks, taxis and motor-corps cars. By disrupting this traffic, the Japanese could have cut the lifeline of island defense. However, officials found no indications of any such attempt. The rumor soon

died in Hawaii. It was refuted by hundreds of local people who used the road that day. However, it has persisted on the mainland, and a question I am often asked is, "Did they shoot those Japanese who blocked the road to Pearl Harbor?"

In Washington I was told that a navy captain who had been at Pearl Harbor had given this story of the road-blocking to the press. I immediately talked with him. He explained that what had happened was this: He had jumped into his car in Manoa Valley, which is some five miles from the Pearl Harbor highway, and as he drove down Manoa Road he almost collided with a carload of Orientals. They were driving wildly, and seemed excited. The captain told this story to a gathering of newspapermen in response to the repeated question, "Did you see any confusion?" He said that this part of his interview, which was only an incidental recollection, was picked up by several of the newspapers to the exclusion of the rest of his story and given wide publicity as a sabotage story throughout the mainland United States. He did not claim that these Orientals were Japanese or imply that they were sabotaging. They might even volunteer truck drivers rushing to their battle stations. The captain claimed he was sorry he had even mentioned the incident to the reporters.

Just the day before I left Honolulu, the chief agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Hawaii told me, "You can say without fear of contradiction that there has not been a single act of sabotage—either before December 7, during the day of the attack, or at any time since." Chief Gabrielson of the Honolulu police, which works in close collaboration with the army, told me the same thing. "If the Japanese here had wanted to do damage, December 7 offered them a golden opportunity," he added. "Where were the Japanese on that Sunday if they were not out sabotaging?" you ask the chief of police.

"Hundreds of them were actively defending the territory," he will tell you. "Members of the Oahu Citizens' Defense Committee, most of them Japanese, rushed to their posts as volunteer truck drivers. They stripped a hundred delivery trucks of their contents, inserted into them frames prepared to hold four litters, and went tearing out to Pearl Harbor to aid the wounded. Some of these Japanese got there so promptly that their trucks were hit by flying shrapnel. They proudly display these pieces of steellnow as souvenirs."

When the call came over the radio for blood donors, again the Japanese were among the first to respond, and by the hundreds. They stood in line at Queen's Hospital for hours, waiting to give their blood to save the lives of American soldiers.

At Pearl Harbor, two Japanese boys saw a machine-gunner having some difficulty setting up his gun. They ran to him, helped him steady it for action, and fed him ammunition. Both worked so fast that they had to have emergency treatment for burns at the hospital.

Soon after the litter-bearers arrived at Tripler Hospital with the first wounded, Surgeon King sent out an emergency call for surgical teams. At that moment Japanese surgeons were sitting with other Honolulu doctors, listening to a lecture on war

surgery. They leaped to their feet with the rest and were at Tripler within fifteen minutes. There they stayed, working swiftly and accurately for long hours, saving the lives of their fellow Americans. Many an American mother today owes the life of her son to their skill.

These loyal Americans of Japanese ancestry are on the spot. So far they have been remarkably level-headed. The strain on them is going to become even more intense as the weeks and months go on and the prospect of an attempted invasion of Oahu by the forces of Japan comes nearer. The pressure on them from Americans who distrust them will become greater. This pressure comes from the white man who says, "No matter what a Jap says, don't trust him. Once a Japanese always a Japanese. Just let a Jap make one false move when I'm around!"

This man believes that skin color and race are more powerful than democracy. He is making it difficult for the intelligence forces in the islands to proceed on a basis of fact rather than on a basis of rumor and hysteria. According to the findings of the intelligence services, the fact is that not all Japanese are the same—that the second and third-generation Japanese in Hawaii can be counted upon in any emergency, and that although the grandparent generation contains individuals who are sympathetic to the homeland in a nostalgic sort of way, they are not organized and the potentially dangerous have already been locked up.

The younger people have been grateful to their friends in Hawaii for not turning against them in this crisis. They were very thankful to Mr. Leslie Hicks, prominent Honolulu business man, when he gave a widely broadcast talk in favor of tolerance and fair treatment to the Japanese in Hawaii. He praised them for their fine record in the past and asked the American workers who arrived from the mainland recently to make a distinction between the Japanese imperialist government and the Japanese people living in Hawaii.

The Japanese in Hawaii have found the United States Army absolutely fair and impartial. At first there was a rumor that no Japanese would be taken into the army, and they were afraid that such official discrimination would foster all sorts of anti-Japanese feeling. They were relieved to find themselves drafted. "Now we have a chance to prove our loyalty," they said. They are convinced that they get a square deal in the army. On the day of the blitz a Japanese private, first class, rushed to his battle station, where he set such a good example of alertness and quick thinking that he was promoted to the rank of corporal the following week. This recognition reaffirmed the local Japanese belief in the fairness of the army.

One of the few ancient Japanese customs which has persisted during this conflict is that of giving the drafted youth of the family a farewell send-off to the wars. Every so often, you see in one of the Japanese-language newspapers a little block advertisement, saying something like this:

Mr. and Mrs. K. Harada wish to thank all their friends who participated in last evening's celebration of the glorious

induction of their eldest son, Kazuo, into the United States Army.

And they mean it. The Japanese believe that the son who works hard to become a good soldier will be appreciated by the authorities. They also believe that he will be promoted as fast as any white recruit, depending entirely upon his diligence and ability, regardless of his ancestry. They cannot help celebrating that.

What seems to be the Hawaiian Japanese situation is this: the majority—the second and third generations—are overwhelmingly loyal to the United States. Of the older, first generation, alien Japanese, many favor Japan, but by no means all of them. Nowhere in any of these groups has there been evidence of a fifth column, or of any sort of underground organization. All of the individuals who the intelligence services had reason to believe were potentially dangerous have been interned. The rest have a clean bill of health.

Let us ask ourselves objectively and dispassionately, what is the best way to obtain the continued whole-hearted cooperation of this large group? My belief, based upon the findings of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and upon my own observation during twelve years in Hawaii, is that these people already believe in democracy and want to fight for it. The more we extend democracy to them, the more they will have to fight for. If we take away what freedom and equality they now enjoy as loyal Americans, we abandon them to fascist propaganda and rob them of the incentive to resist fascist ideas.

BY BLAKE CLARK