

My Future in the Post-War America by Jogi Yamaguchi

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Jogi Yamaguchi
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After the actual entering into the war by the United States, we Americans of Japanese blood are in a "tight spot," and did not know which road to take in the near future after we leave the centers in which we are now living.

Many of us have signed or are going to sign-up for repatriation and even expatriation.

Of course this is up to the person himself, but for those who are staying in the United States, they must also face the hardship and sorrows which our fathers and mothers faced when they first came here forty or fifty years ago. This times it will not be the lack of the language or costumes of the people, but of the land and different people.

I have very little hopes of ever seeing or going back to Los Angeles since the Pacific coast states will offer very little or no chance for those of us who are of Japanese ancestry, after the war. So we must forget or leave most of our homes and business, which most of us did.

We must lose the homes which our parents built up in half a century with sweat and tears, and start again all new, in a new state or even maybe in a different country, or forever stay in Manzanar as part of its dirt.

I had many plans made, which I wanted very much to carry out but the war took all of these hopes away from me at least for the duration. The main hope of mine was to become a commercial radio telegraph operator of a ship. Ever since I was a small boy I always hoped that I could sail the seas and see all the different countries and places of interest in the world.

I wanted to be on a tramp or a cargo ship but after taking this and that out it more or less boiled down to a fishing boat. These fishing boat or tuna clipper are those which employ regular wireless operator and offered what I wanted to see even if it wasn't the whole world, for they traveled up and down the pacific coast down south from Panama to up north as high as the Aleutian Islands.

These things are now in possible so I try not to think about them.

After coming to Manzanar, I haven't given much thought about my future because I thought I was going to stay here for the duration, but now the Army and the government have given us some hope of at least a chance to go out of camp and showing we really can do something for this country and for the world.

The following is a part of the Nisei Creed, written by a Nisei of Utah, which I try to follow, ever since the out-break of war between Japan and the United States.

"Although some individuals may discriminate against me, I shall never become bitter or lose faith for I know that such persons are not representative of the majority of the American people. True, I shall do all in my power to discourage such practices, but I shall do it in the American way: above board, in the open, through courts of law, by education, by proving myself to be worthy of equal treatment and consideration.

I am firm in my belief that American sportsmanship and patriotism on the basis of action and achievement, and not on the basis of physical characteristics."

I still try to follow this but the action of the United States government as a whole does not follow in this line, and many true Americans have joined with the others. But I think it is best to stay in America because we know it better than any other country in this world.

Many disagree with me on this point and say we will never have a chance here, I believe that sometimes for I have seen the great unjust done by the United States in taking all the male none-citizens into camps far away even without giving them time to get enough cloth for the cold, and than forcing the women and childrens to move from their homes because the army thought them too dangerous to leave in a certain place.

I think the greatest influence and their reaction to the current problem of the Army questions are directly due to the action the Army took and reported of the incident of December 6, 1942. I personally think it a great unjust to the boys who died to be blamed of not obeying the order not to advance and being shot in the back.

I know the reports made of the incident were almost one-hundred percent false because I was sitting on top of the engine of the police car parked across the street and saw nothing of anybody advancing. The fact that everybody was running away from the tear gas can be plainly seen, for all, yes every one who had a bullet in him had it enter from the back. And not because they were shot but of the false claims many people became bitter against the United States government and will not believe the government which promised to give them freedom and good treatment by giving them a chance to go out of camp and making a decent living.

Of course the evidence are there and very strong so we cannot say too much for this country to the older folks. But my hopes in the future is to relocate somewhere in the mid-western or eastern states and work on a farm which could grow all the food needed for comfortable living even after the war ends

and if we do not have a depression which I hope we wouldn't have we ca live without depending on the city for supply too much.

There is more money working in a defense plant of some kind but the chances are very slim and after the war is over I believe there will be less chance for us.

I cannot hope for too much now, and will have to let time prove itself and make my plans as the need comes up.

I'll really be a happier person if I could even have a slight hint of what to expect in the future.