

POSTON II CAMP DAYS

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Over 45 years I have looked forward to this Poston II Reunion since I missed the opportunity to attend the earlier get-togethers. While living in Japan all through these years, the memory of the initial shock of internment and the ensuing years in the camps had not dimmed. The frustration of being uprooted from our home in Watsonville leaving behind worldly possessions, anxiety, of shipment to a weird place and the anguish of incarceration in the scorching desert of Arizona had left an indelible marked imprint. With the graying years, the bitterness had faded and is now overshadowed by a fond remembrance of many new made friends.

I will be attending this reunion with close to half a century of lost years, a legendary "Urashima Taro", with only a faint recollection of people during the camp days. Many changes have taken place during the period of my absence. In the two generations that have passed, there will be only a sprinkling of a few colorful Issei and the Nisei are reaching the graying years. I fret at the thought of not being able to recognize the faces and names of fellow Postonians.

Upon leaving the camps, we have achieved superior accomplishments in many fields of endeavour through hard work, perseverance and tenacity.. For this achievement, we owe much to the wisdom of our over-

worked parents, the Issei, who have nurtured us through the difficult times and set the rudder of our destiny to guide us through troubled and turbulent seas. The Issei came quietly with a hope that the succeeding generation will have a better life than they, enduring much hardship and many setbacks, many have quietly passed on, but leaving behind with us the most valued heritage, "HIGH IDEALS".

It now challenges us, with a responsibility to pass on to our children and grandchildren, our proud heritage and history. To instill upon them that the status which they enjoy today is not gifted on a golden platter. It was hard earned through many years of struggle from oppression, racial discrimination and leading to the interment of the Japanese-American population in this country. These episodes will not be found in history books though they are factual and remains in the heart of every Nikkei.

There may not be very many more Poston II or other interment camp reunions in the future as those who experienced the ordeal become fewer in number. Our following generation should be made fully aware of the gross injustice dealt the Japanese-American during those turbulent times in this country's history.

