

of different sizes were in production at different times, with sizes ranging from nets of 144 square feet to 2160 square feet.

Completed nets were spread in the yard and inspected by the U. S. Engineering personnel for workmanship and adherence to specifications. When accepted, they were reefed into company sizes and transported to the warehouse, compressed into bales, wrapped in watertight paper, strapped with steel bands, stenciled and shipped.

As this was a war contract and items produced are vital to the security of the armed forces, figures on production and information regarding disposition are secret. But it has been recognized that this production of camouflage nets was of vital importance as a wartime project. The net workers, all Japanese Americans confined to barbed-wire enclosed centers, set high records for rate of production. This was a war job that could be done within the camps, and it was done with a will.

Defense Projects

Late in 1943 the R. J. Ederer Company plant in Chicago was awarded the Army-Navy "E" for excellence in production for the armed forces. A plant engaged 100 per cent in war work, it manufactured camouflage nets, commercial fish nets, air cargo nets and sports nets for the armed forces. At that time 33 Japanese-Americans, most of them women, were proud of their firm's record, participating as loyal employees in the company's war award.

Thus in Chicago, in Detroit, in Buffalo and else-

where, such Japanese Americans are contributing their share to the nation's war effort.

The Electronic Mechanics Corporation of Clifton, New Jersey, has been engaged in secret work for the Navy, and numbers among its workers seven Japanese Americans. Ringe Shima, once of Stockton, California, is an engineer in charge of production at one of the company's plants. At the Rutherford, New Jersey, plant, another Nisei, Toshi Hirata, is in charge of research on spark plugs. Another Nisei, Al Funabashi, also at this plant, is president of his local union.

There are many names of Nisei Americans that might be cited for individual contributions to the civilian war effort. There is Min Yamasaki, architect and designer who planned the information room for Time Magazine at the Time and Life Building at Rockefeller Plaza.

Yamasaki helped design and construct army bases in Newfoundland just before the Pearl Harbor attack. After a year on the Newfoundland job, he aided in constructing and designing the site of the Sampson Naval Training base at Geneva, New York. He was one of the first persons there when the site was opened, and one of the last to leave when the job was finished. Nor is his war work finished. He has planned model housing projects for war workers and he is at present drawing plans for airplane test cells.

There was the father-and-son team, Shiro Ebihara and his son Hank, both aliens, both working in Cleveland at Johnston and Jennings Co. Ebihara worked on tank, truck and plane parts, while Hank was engaged mainly in boring gun parts.

Kenneth Sugioka, Nisei, at work on a precision lathe in the defense plant of the Hathaway Instrument Company in Denver, Colorado.

Photo by Parker for WRA



Thomas Oki, Japanese American war worker, shown operating a flame sprayer applying molten metal on a piston head for a P-47 Thunderbolt Fighter at the Neo Mold Company, Cleveland.

Photo by Iwasaki for WRA



Two years ago a letter directed to President Roosevelt and Secretary of War Stimson was given wide publicity. It came from Hank Ebihara, and it declared in part:

"I know you are a very busy man and I hate to bother you like this when you are so busy in more important matters . . . I was very happy when Secretary of War Henry Stimson announced that Nisei Americans would be given a chance to volunteer for active combat duty. But at the same time I was sad—sad because under your present laws I am an enemy alien. I am a 22-year-old boy, American in thought, American in act, as American as any other citizen. My parents brought me to America when I was only two years old. Since coming to America as an infant my whole life was spent in New Mexico.

"At Pearl Harbor my pal, Curly Moppins, was killed outright without a chance to fight back when the Japanese planes swooped down in a treacherous attack. And Dickie Harrell and other boys from my home town came back maimed for life. Then more of my classmates volunteered—Bud Henderson, Bob and Jack Aldridge, etc. They were last heard of as missing in the Philippines. It tears my heart out to think that I could not avenge their deaths.

"The laws of this country bar me from citizenship—because I am an Oriental—because my skin is yellow. This is not a good law and bad laws could be changed.

"But this is not what I want to bring up at this time. As you well know, this is a people's war. The fate of the free people all over the world hangs in the balance. I only ask that I be given a chance to fight to preserve the principles that I have been brought up on and which I will not sacrifice at any cost. Please give me a chance to serve in your armed forces."

Nothing came of his letter at that time, and because Henry Ebihara, 22, could not serve in the Army, he applied immediately for defense work, and he and his father became a father-and-son for defense duo.

Then on November 25, 1944, the War Department announced that aliens of Japanese ancestry might volunteer for military service. Henry Ebihara was the first to volunteer under this new ruling. He was accepted, and in February, 1945, he was inducted into the U. S. Army, Pvt. Henry Ebihara.

IN DETROIT, MICHIGAN, the wheels of industry are spinning fast, turning out the tanks and guns of war as fast as man and mind can work. The plants that yesterday sent sleek, shiny new cars down the assembly

lines are today turning out sleek and deadly ammunition, ammunition that will one day find the enemy in the Pacific outposts and in Hitler's Germany.

Detroit is a city geared to the war program. Here almost all employment is considered essential or semi-essential. The huge steel mills and the tremendous automobile plants are today converted to war production.

And here hundreds of Japanese Americans have found their place in the war effort. By January 1, 1945, approximately 2300 Japanese Americans had settled in the teeming Detroit district, which includes all of Michigan's lower peninsula and Northern Ohio.

Of these 2300 approximately 80 per cent went directly into war work. They found jobs in the huge steel mills like the Copko, the McLouth, and the Ryerson plants; they went to the Chrysler, Cadillac and Ford industries and other war-production plants like the Guardian Glass Co., U. S. Rubber and Garwood Industries. And they found war jobs to be done at many of the smaller plants.

They were welders, they were mechanics, they were electricians. They worked over draughting boards, and they worked on assembly lines. They riveted, they repaired, they designed.

They were part of America's war effort. In New Jersey there was Jack Sumida, electrical engineer, working in electronics research; there was Kenneth Funabakoshi, machinist in an electrical plant. There was Kiyoshi Nishikawa, chemist in plastics; there was James Akiyama, junior electrical engineer. There was Ichiro Watanabe, designing vital parts, and there was Frank Terasaki, Minoru Kanagaki, Robert Okada—war workers all.

There was Barney Sato in Denver, working at the huge moulds of a vast plant which turns out products for railroads.

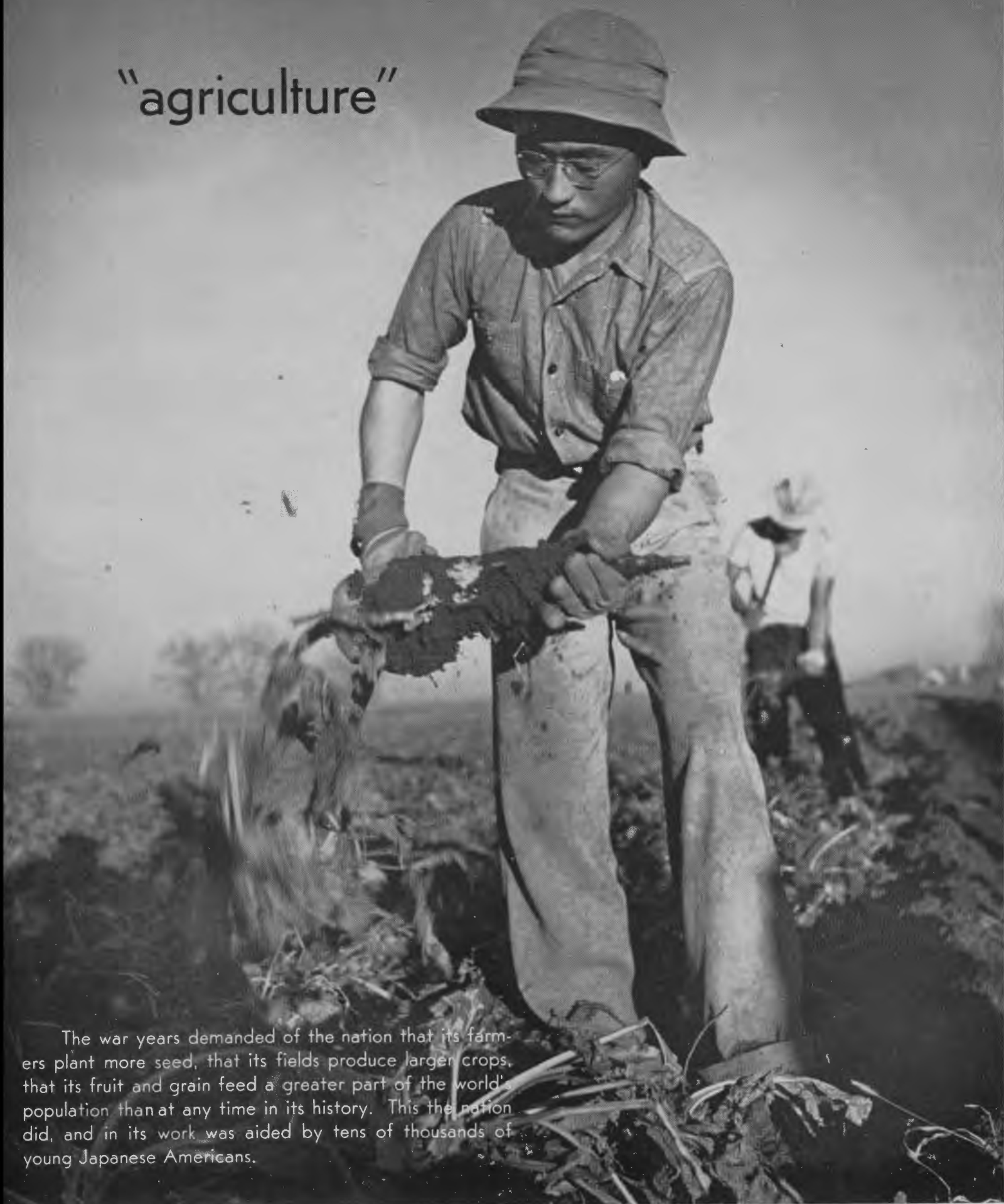
There were John Fujita and Milton Kanatani in Kansas City, industrial designing draftsmen. There was Bill Saito, radio engineer in radar work. There was Don Kozeni, metallurgist, and Harry Yanaga, mechanic.

There were men and women in the aircraft industry, designers and draughtsmen and mechanics. There was Riyo Sato, petite Japanese American artist who turned her talents to war work in a New York plane plant following Pearl Harbor.

In Hammond, Indiana, there were a large number of Japanese Americans at the Metals Refining Company plant. The plant produces copper, iron and lead powders, copper and lead oxides, lead and type metals—all items used directly in the production of the implements of war. Despite severe labor shortages, this company has won the coveted Army-Navy "E" for excellence in war production, as well as an additional star to mark continued excellence. A great deal of credit for this record was given to the hard-working Nisei employed at the plant. Most of the Nisei were formerly farmers, students and businessmen. They had had no direct contact with industrial work, but they were anxious to do their part.

Their names are Japanese, but they are Americans all.

"agriculture"



The war years demanded of the nation that its farmers plant more seed, that its fields produce larger crops, that its fruit and grain feed a greater part of the world's population than at any time in its history. This the nation did, and in its work was aided by tens of thousands of young Japanese Americans.

THE FARM'S HARVEST: A MAJOR REQUISITE OF A NATION AT WAR

FOOD FOR FREEDOM

EARLY IN 1942 a small caravan of cars and farm trucks made its slow way from California, across the bleak deserts of Nevada on into Utah. The passengers were all Japanese Americans, men and women and children.

They stopped, finally, at Keetley, Utah, and immediately they erected a huge billboard on the highway. "Food For Freedom," it said.

The ground behind the billboard stretched out rocky, hard with frost and covered with sagebrush. Drifts of snow lay against the buildings, and the white tops of the surrounding mountain ranges sent down sharp blasts of winter wind.

But within a few weeks the sagebrush coat was gone, the boulders in the ground had been taken out, and the soil was turned and ready for planting. A handful of Japanese Americans led by Fred Wada had turned 3000 acres of unwanted land into acreage ready to produce for victory. New seed went into the ground early that year, seed to produce lettuce, cabbage, peas and meadow hay. The men worked 16 hours a day and more. Keetley, Utah, 6300 feet above sea level, has a short planting season, and the settlers felt the urgency of planting and harvesting before another winter covered the ground with snow.

Keetley, Utah, did produce food for freedom that year as it has produced in the seasons since 1942. What was done there is typical of what Japanese American farmers have done ever since the start of war to help the nation's food supply.

Literally thousands of young men and women have labored in fields throughout the midwest and the east, some on their own fields and others as farm workers.

The first major call to farm work for masses of Japanese Americans came in 1942, when they were called into the staple cotton fields of the southwest. Huge acreages of this vital war material were in desperate need of picking, and Japanese Americans came out from neighboring evacuee camps to help in this critical situation. From that time on they were called on again and again to provide manpower for the agricultural industry.

In 1942 the huge sugar beet industry, sorely tried by an acute labor shortage, asked for volunteer evacuee help. Eight thousand answered, one thousand coming

from the Heart Mountain Relocation Center alone. The response from the Minidoka center in Idaho was so tremendous that the center felt an acute labor shortage of its own and women were drafted to carry on with heavy duties around the camp.

But during the first season in sugar beet work the 8,000 volunteers harvested 915,000 tons of beets, enough to produce 265 million pounds of sugar. In September, 1942, Selvoy J. Boyer, chairman of the Utah State Labor Committee reported that evacuee labor had saved much of the vital beet crop in Utah and Idaho, major sugar-beet states. Had it not been for this help, said Boyer, a large part of the crop in both states would have had to be plowed under. This sentiment was echoed by the Twin Falls, Idaho, Chamber of Commerce, which noted on April 2, 1943, that "a great amount of crops would have gone unharvested in this area last fall if it had not been for the Japanese evacuee labor. You can be assured therefore that the public is grateful." And the Preston, Idaho, Chamber of Commerce reported: "It has been conceded by our people that had it not been for . . . the Japanese American boys, the beet harvest in Franklin County could not have been accomplished."

Throughout 1943 and 1944 the relocation centers continued to send out large numbers of workers as the country's farm labor situation became increasingly acute. In 1944 the relocation center at McGehee, Arkansas, provided 532 workers. Topaz, the central Utah camp, sent out 1032 workers during the same year. Seven hundred and seven of these placements were made for the War Food Administration and three hundred and twenty-five for the War Manpower Commission for canning and poultry work.

In industries allied to food production, too, the evacuees have been doing work of importance. Hundreds have been employed in canning and processing plants from Utah to the eastern coast. The major number of workers at a packing plant in Utah, which processes poultry for the U. S. armed forces, was said to be of Japanese ancestry in press reports in February, 1945. Large numbers of Nisei have been working at the Seabrook Farms in New Jersey, a community devoted to processing food for army troops. In other cities and

ABOVE RIGHT: George Shintaku, 26, helps manage a poultry farm at Arlington Heights, Illinois. **LOWER RIGHT:** Yasaburo Akinagawa wears a miner's lamp as he inspects mushrooms at the Illinois Mushroom Company, Naperville, Illinois.





Photo by Iwasaki for WRA

ABOVE: George Shoji, Japanese American, produces food for victory on a 120-acre farm near Elkhorn, Wisconsin.

towns where the farm's harvest is preserved for future use, Japanese Americans have been doing their share, and in Spanish Fork, Utah, when the California Packing Corporation received its 1943 Army- Navy "E" award, thirty Japanese American workers shared in the honor.

A dozen aliens of Japanese ancestry have been aiding in the war effort of the N. S. Koos & Son Co. of Kenosha, Wisconsin. Edward Koos, president of this firm which supplies agricultural needs declared of his Japanese American workers: "Their being here makes it possible for us not only to supply the fertilizer needs of Midwestern farmers but to accept orders from the U. S. Army as well."

Japanese American Farmers

Prior to the war thousands of Japanese American farmers in California, Washington and Oregon had tilled the soil. They harvested crops in green Washington's farm country, they gave tender care to fruit orchards in central California, and they struggled with the wind and sun and desert in California's barren Imperial Valley, and they made that desert bloom.

They were farmers and they loved the soil. And when the war started, they wanted to keep on producing. Today there are Nisei farmers in the sunny fields of the midwest, in the truck garden farms of New Jersey and the broad ranches of Idaho. There are the Jack Itos and the Tom Miyoshis and the Jim Sagamis in Mazomanie, Wisconsin; the Kishidas in south central Utah, who produced 80 acres of vital sugar beets; the Takagis who planted near Omaha, Nebraska; and the Furutas of Milford Center, Ohio. They are one with all farmers in America in producing food for freedom.

The Nakadas of Azusa, California, living in the Gila River relocation center, sent their seven sons into the U. S. Army, and then went home to Azusa to raise crops for these khaki-clad sons of America.

Large farmers and small, they are part of the American food production program.



Photo by S. R. Boswell

Food For Freedom

Food For Lend-Lease

Among the more spectacular farm ventures of Japanese Americans is the onion-seed project of the Tachikis who began operating 800 acres of farmland near Elberta, Utah, in the "dust bowl of Utah County." The land in Utah County is dry and flat, and powdery white dust covers the ground. The summers are hot and heavy, and the winters are hard. In this region, in 1943, the Tachiki brothers planned a new experimental project, a plan to raise vegetable seeds and to produce for Lend-Lease at the same time.

The experiment, new in the state of Utah, was watched with interest by surrounding farmers, agricultural experts and farm bureau officials of the state. Seventy-six acres of land went into onions, twenty acres into lettuce, and fifteen acres into radishes—all to be grown for seed. The rest of the acreage was put into sugar beets, a vital war crop.

The experiment with vegetable seeds proved successful, and an experimental station was established there by the Utah State Agricultural College.

And of major importance, the entire crop of vegetable seeds was sent overseas for America's Lend-Lease program.

PRODUCTION FOR LEND LEASE: On the ranch above Roy Tachiki introduced a new industry, the raising of onions for seed, to the state of Utah. His entire 1944 production went toward Lend-Lease.

In the Relocation Centers

It must not be forgotten that while outside farm activities were the major contribution of Japanese American farmers to the war effort, many persons in the relocation centers should be credited with turning thousands of acres of land into food-producing farms of great value. The centers were, without exception, set on undeveloped, uncultivated soil, but willing hands and long hours of toil made the land productive, and this year ten thousand acres of cultivated land at Topaz were put on public sale.

In addition, the centers produced their own farm needs, thus cutting down on the cost of food and sparing that part of the nation's food supply that would have been necessary for the center residents. The Topaz center, by way of example, planted in 1944 approximately 400 acres of vegetables, which produced food valued at more than \$30,000. They planted 724 acres of grain—wheat, barley and oats. They supplied in addition all of the beef, pork, poultry and eggs necessary for the center's vast population, a worthy record for persons behind barbed wire.

"Government service"

WHEN WAR CAME TO THESE UNITED STATES, the Japanese language—the language of the enemy—became a weapon in our own hands, and those Nisei Americans who were able to speak and write that language became frontline fighters in the world of secret warfare.

Their story has not been told, nor can it be told wholly until the victory is won and the time and need for secrecy are over. They must in the meantime toil in anonymity, receiving no public avowal of their important work. Their only reward lies in the inner knowledge that theirs is work that must be done and that is invaluable in the prosecution of the war.

In government offices throughout the land these Nisei Americans are engaged in research studies, in monitoring, in translating and editing. They are teaching the Japanese language to thousands of young men in the Army and in the Navy. They make transcriptions for broadcast in the battle of psychological warfare. They make maps of enemy territory. They monitor broadcasts from Japan. Twenty-one translators and announcers in San Francisco send programs to Japan for nine hours every day.

The war brought on a crying need for hundreds of men and woman who could teach others the Japanese language. The Nisei took on this difficult task and are today secure in the knowledge that their students are making valuable use of their training. In February, 1945, after a long period of secrecy, the War Department announced that the University of Michigan has carried on such a training program under Dr. Joseph Yamagiwa.

When the Navy's Japanese Language School at Boulder, Colorado, graduated "the largest class of Caucasians ever to learn Japanese," it also signalled out for honor its Japanese American instructors, who comprised 90 percent of the teachers. Each of the instructors was given an engraved certificate for "outstanding faithfulness and diligence."

Later Captain F. H. Roberts, commanding officer of the school, wrote concerning these instructors: "Their work has been outstanding and a direct contribution of the highest importance toward winning of the war. The genuine endeavors of patriotic Nisei cannot be stressed too much during these trying days of war. The part being played by American citizens of Japanese descent in preserving freedom and opportunity in America will in time become known to and gain the grateful appreciation of all citizens of the United States of America."

Japanese Americans are also serving with the Office of War Information in Washington, Denver and San



Photo by Aoyama for WRA

Rose Yokomizo, native of Scottsbluff, Neb., takes dictation from Major William A. Kutzke, post engineer at the Sioux Ordnance Depot, Nebraska.

Francisco; with the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service; with the Office of Strategic Services; the War Production Board; the Federal Communications Commission; and the Office of Censorship.

Many of these offices have clamped a close censorship upon their activities. The Office of Strategic Services, for example, exerts an almost complete blackout on information concerning Nisei employees and the nature of their duties. This in itself is indicative of the vital and confidential character of the services rendered by the Nisei. However, of their work, Edwin M. Martin, acting chief of the Far East Division, has written: "The Far East Division of the Office of Strategic Services has employed several Japanese Americans as translators and their work has been of real value to us. Through their translating efforts a great deal of valuable material has been made available to the War Agencies in Washington."

In the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service are more Nisei, again vitally a part of the important war work of that organization. On January 8, 1945, Edwin Hurlinger, assistant director, said of the Japanese American employees:

"Our Japanese translators have done an outstanding job. All have proved themselves efficient as language craftsmen and fine as human beings. Our Portland staffmen are veterans in the organization, most having been in the FBIS almost since Pearl Harbor. One of them, _____, helped organize our Hawaiian Listening Post and is now planning to return to