

Sebastopol, Calif.  
February 17, 1943.

Dear Kazuo:

Got your airmail letter yesterday and went to Mrs. Witter's right away as soon as I got through work. As I had anticipated, she would not write anything for these reasons: She says that it is true that the old gent went with her and someone else on Red Cross work two different times, but she doesn't think that would have any bearing on the setup as it now stands and furthermore that she knows that the army would ignore any statement she might make in that connection. In the second place she says that if ever there was one Japanese that she thought was loyal and 100% he was the man, but that he has been proven guilty and she couldn't think of trying to help someone who had proven himself against this country. I am telling you the exact words, harsh as they are because I want you to know that I fulfilled my mission and of course, was in no position to put her on the right track because I am still in the dark about the whole thing and I feel that I know about as much about the case as the average outsider. In other words, I want to say again as I often told Mrs. Ito before you folks left that I have implicit faith in our government and our courts and if they did not have some proof of subversive activities against those that they are holding they would turn them free. I will say this for myself, that I think a good many of those people did not realize they were committing acts against our government, therefore they are innocent in one sense, however, our laws say that 'ignorance of the law is no excuse' so even though it may seem mighty unfair to some of us, that is the way it stands. As I told Mrs. Witter last night blood is always thicker than water and nobody could be so narrow as to hold anything against you or any of his folks for trying in all ways to prove his innocence and I personally cannot see why anyone would refuse to put in ~~me~~ a good word when they have the opportunity but each one sees things their own way and with all the gossip that has been going on around here it is no wonder that an air of mistrust and skepticism prevails. She is a very diplomatic person and I think gathered right off the bat that I had a lot of friends among the Japanese and didn't care what anyone thought of it, so she gave me her reasons for not wanting to do this and then in the course of the conversation began telling me just what the authorities had found - such as a lot of maps and above all '\$40,000 (I mean forty thousand, mind you!) sewed in his clothes. Well, that just about climaxed it for me. I then told her just what I thought about all that bunk and I think set her right on a lot of it. Well, she had been told and so on and on as it goes all around here. Nobody has any proof, but they tell it over and over as though they say everything with their very eyes. I mean to tell you that it is tough trying to make some people see that they are just guessing and probably will never know the truth of any of these suspicions. I hope you won't let this stuff bother you too much. I have to put up with it day in and day out everytime I have to let anybody know that I am watching out for things that belong to Japanese. Wow, the cap is off! Well, it doesn't worry me too much, I still believe I have the true Christian spirit in carrying on the way I do and believe in and to hell with the narrow-minded bigots that can't see beyond their ~~own~~ own noses. I hope for them that the day may never come when they have to depend on someone outside of their own little narrow, almighty high circle for even a small part of their existence. If that time should ever come they will know that it is a nice rule to follow: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you". What do you think? So much for all this, I am naturally a little upset in having to dissappoint you and might just well tell you the truth about existing conditions.

Things are progressing very satisfactorily at the ranch. As I told you Sam found plenty pruners and I saw him Sunday night about putting a couple of them on the brush during these nice days. One of them stopped in

NAVE 2

yesterday morning on his way to get a new tire and he said that Sam had two boys raking brush and two pruning. They should be through in a day or two, but on the other hand, it started to rain today at 3:00 o'clock and the way the weather has been acting it may rain for a week before the sun shows its face again. Joe and I were lucky enough to get a neighbor to help us for four or five days with the spraying and so we started last Saturday and worked Sunday and yesterday then it had to start raining. We would have finished up by Thursday night if this hadn't happened. I already saw Sam about helping us when we go up there which we had planned to do next Monday if the weather had held out. That is why we wanted the brush raked up so we could spray while the weather was right and then move the brush out later on. For that matter, Alfred Hallberg is the only man I know that has finished his spraying and he did his those few good days in early January. Husing has about 25 acres to do around Vine Hill and he was planning to start tomorrow or Thursday. I asked Archie Hull how late he thought it would be safe to put on Elgetol up there and he told me that he didn't expect to start his until the middle of next week and he felt that it was plenty early because the buds were progressing slowly up to now.

I saw Geary since I wrote you, I believe. Anyway, I had to make a business trip in a hurry the other morning and while there I thought I would take the income tax figures to him as he had requested. When I showed them to him and discussed the affair with him he made suggestions and sort of passed the buck to me, I think. He told me to be sure and file separate reports for the two of you and to take out this and that which was permissible. As a matter of fact, I have a book on the tax that told me all those things and so he didn't do much for me but give me the job. Oh well, he probably thinks he is worked to death and I think so, too, so what is the difference? The law says somebody has to file them, they don't care who, as long as the money comes through alright. I think I will make them up and before writing the checks in payment will enlist the aid of the man in charge of the office in Santa Rosa, because I am not positive as to the procedure to follow in the payment. I know there will be a ~~xxxx~~ payment because you are allowed only \$500.00 apiece and without having the figures all assembled up to now, that is, according to the blanks I know offhand that the net income was over the allowable amount. I still haven't done the one for the ranch or our personal one and I have only done one for outsiders up to now. There are about a dozen that have told me they are coming to have me help them, but they are all waiting until the last minute, same as I do.

Got a letter from Bob Herring today - the first one since he left. He is at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia and believes he will be doing some sort of driving or repairing. He is in the engineer division, at any rate. No news from Lloyd since his departure and I think he might have gone farther away than we at first thought.

More news in the dryer deal - a group of growers, some of whom were in it already last year, have incorporated and are going to equip the Kobuke dryer with 10 -3 cup machines, slicers, etc. and intend to operate on a big scale this coming season. I don't blame them a bit, either. Last year Dehlmann had to contract to dry for them and they paid around \$28.45 per ton for Gravensteins. They didn't have any trouble signing up growers for this season and one of the members told me last night that they intend to buy a lot of late stuff either around here or elsewhere and put through a good run. The deal is really being revolutionized, no fooling. It almost scares poor fools like us into giving it up and joiningsomething like that - on the other hand, I think this year will be a tough one for us, but we should come out on top if our equipment works to perfection.

I want to answer Bob while it is raining and I can't get outside so will end this and get busy on his.

Sincerely yours,

Lea Perry