

Hung Wai Ching  
Chairman, Morale Committee  
World War II

November 18

This is Eric Sol of the Presidio Army Museum. This is oral history tape #15 with Hung Wai Ching. We're in Honolulu, Hawaii. Today is November 18, 1980, and Mr. Ching was the chairman of the Morale Committee during World War II here in Hawaii.

HWC: Correction: During World War II I was the Corps Director of the Morale Committee of the Office of the Military Governor.

ES: Could you describe what was that committee - what did you do? How was it formed? What did you do?

HWC: I don't want to start arguing with you, but I was born and brought up in Hawaii, educated here in Hawaii, born in 1905, went to the public schools in Hawaii and attended Raoul (?) School, went to McKinley High School, graduated from the University of Hawaii as a civil engineer. At the time I was at McKinley High School, I was one of the first class in the Junior ROTC. As a result of my training at the McKinley High School, when I went up to University of Hawaii, I was selected as a candidate for a commission, and I was very privileged to be commissioned during my junior year at the University of Hawaii and received my final training at Fort Lewis, Portland, Oregon in 1927. I graduated in the class of 1928 and immediately, of course, became a reserve officer in the United States Army, then later on transferred over to the National Guard in Hawaii.

ES: Let me ask you this. You were probably one of the first Chinese Americans in, is it not so, the ROTC program:

HWC: No, I think I graduated in the third University of Hawaii ROTC class, and we had, at that time, predominantly, the makeup of the University student body, I would estimate about 70% non-whites or maybe more. As a result,

the graduating class, my class in ROTC, was a mixture of races. We had Hawaiians and local Caucasians, but I would estimate the class at 50 to 60% Oriental ancestry. I think the only university ROTC that had such a large class of Japanese Americans who were commissioned United States Army. Prior to World War II, a General Heron was in command then, and prior to the commencement of the conflict, General Heron was the first general the Japanese American graduates into the service, to active service. As a result of the attitude of General Heron, the Army in Hawaii, since then, of that period, whenever they graduated from University of Hawaii, most of them were called into service or assigned to the various units of the United States Army. When World War II happened, the cadre of the 100th Infantry and 442nd were made up of University of Hawaii graduates of ROTC.

ES: When was the first Chinese American officer in the US Army. Do you know when he was commissioned? in the regular Army?

HWC: No, I'm sorry I cannot answer that. Probably the records are at the University of Hawaii if you do some study there. There are some. But the bulk of those commissioned to regular service came in World War II. At that time, in 1940, December, 1940, I was requested by then the Chief of the FBI, Mr. Robert Shievers, to meet with him. He organized a committee and asked me to serve as a secretary, which was made up of the Chief of Naval Intelligence, Chief of Army Intelligence and some businessmen (??? bob shoes???) to anticipate a situation that our country may have to confront with Japan. That took place on December 16, 1940. I would like to say that the Service anticipated the attack exactly a year to the day.

ES: December 16th?

HWC: December 16, 1940. I remember distinctly writing the minutes of that

meeting, and that committee's mission was to, in case of a conflict with Japan, what do we do? Our whole mission and whole thrust at that time was to organize our people.

ES: Why were you chosen, do you think?

HWC: I would like to ask you to read the December 7th Edition of . . . . This is 1980, 1979, almost a year ago, either the Honolulu Star Bulletin. There was an article. I'd like you to refer to that, and that will save me a lot of trouble in answering that. At that time, I was interviewed by the Editor of the Star Bulletin, Mr. Bud Smizer, and it will save you a lot of questions. After you read it, you ought to ask me to come back. After you read that, it will save you a lot of time.

ES: Can you trace the chronology, very briefly, from that time, December 16, 1940, 1941, the activities?

HWC: Well, our mission was to organize the . . . . At that time I was with the YMCA, the Norna YMCA. And Norna YMCA is an institution organized specifically for the non-Caucasian groups. So I had been working with youngsters of Japanese ancestry, Filipino ancestry, Korean ancestry, and I guess I was referred to Mr. Shievers of the FBI by a very prominent businessman who was then the Chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, who knew me there in my activities at the University. So I guess that at that time, Mr. Shievers asked for a recommendation, and I was recommended by this Mr. Hemingway, Charles Hemingway, and that's how I account for my being with this specific committee. The whole philosophy of the committee was to work with the peoples in the State of Hawaii in anticipation of a confrontation.

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Our mission was not military; our mission was purely working with people and organizing them into the war effort. if it did come to pass. We then sent people all over the State to organize the different racial groups, made speeches to explain in case of a situation that the organization in Hawaii with the military and the civil government, that the different racial groups are to behave as if nothing had happened and that they would receive instructions for their cooperation to help in the efforts of the war. That was our mission during that one year.

During that period of time there was assigned to Hawaii a Quaker, a very prominent Quaker from Philadelphia, a Philadelphia lawyer. His name was William Morris Meyer. William Morris Meyer had a brother also who was drafted into the Army. There were very active in the Friends, in the Quakers. William Morris Meyer, when he arrived in Honolulu, to do service with the Japanese aliens. That was his mission in Hawaii. During the time of military control, he was asked to meet with the Morale Committee to cooperate in his services to the alien community. At that time Mr. Meyer and I worked together. Through Mr. Meyer I met a Mr. Clarence Pickett, the executive director of the Quakers. I went to Pendle Hill in Philadelphia to meet with the Quakers, and Mr. Clarence Pickett introduced me to Mrs. Roosevelt. Mrs. Roosevelt at that time, the Quakers were her favorite charity, interest. I went to the White House to meet with Mrs. Roosevelt and acquainted her with the problems in Hawaii, particularly with the Japanese Americans. So she said for me to keep her informed. That's why, when I met Mrs. Roosevelt.

ES: What did you tell her at that time?

HWC: I reported to her not to worry about the Japanese Americans in Hawaii, that during an attack, when it came, there was no sabotage, that we had them in complete . . . , they were loyal to America and that to tell the President, or the powers that be, that to have complete confidence in the authorities in Hawaii, the Governor, the General and Admiral Nimintz and the whole group, that we can handle our affairs in Hawaii, not to interfere. And that one of my missions was also to talk to the President of the United States which I had the privilege of talking to President Roosevelt and also to analyze for him that there was no point in concentrating the Japanese or relocating them, that during the . . . .

ES: When was that conversation with him?

HWC: You may read it in the papers that have been published. I can't remember the dates and be accurate.

ES: Could you tell us how did he respond to you? Could you tell? Can you analyze the man.

HWC: Yes, he listened and asked a few questions of me. Before my meeting with the President, Mrs. Roosevelt briefed me on how to discuss this problem with the President.

ES: What did she tell you? How did she tell you to talk to the President?

HWC: Just keep on talking. Don't let the President interfere.

ES: Interrupt, you mean?

HWC: Interrupt.

ES: So you tried to dominate the conversation?

HWC: I tried to.

ES: Did you?

HWC: No! (emphatically). Laughter.

ES: Were you scared going into the Oval Office?

HWC: In the Oval Office, Mrs. Roosevelt took me upstairs to the family quarters and met with the President in his private desk. He was in shirtsleeves, and we were very informal. He wanted me to tell him about the situation in Hawaii. Mrs. Roosevelt briefed me how to discuss this matter with the President, and I rehearsed it with her.

ES: You actually rehearsed it? How did . . .

HWC: I rehearsed it, yes, and I . . . .

ES: She was very sympathetic; she wanted you to get your point across.

HWC: Get the point across. The whole thrust of my mission is to tell the President to trust, to have confidence in the constituted authority in Hawaii. That we have everything under control, the different racial groups and everything else. That there's no way that we should do anything drastic similar to what's happening on the Pacific Coast.

ES: So she was very sympathetic. Did she mention anything, her feelings about what had happened on the Pacific Coast?

HWC: No, no.

ES: Did you ask her?

HWC: No. That's not my mission. My mission is to transmit to her information about, and analyze for her how we have handled the situation during the most crucial moments of the attack and the subsequent weeks and how the Japanese Americans and aliens behaved in Hawaii.

ES: Would you characterize her attitude as sympathetic to you and what you were trying to do?

HWC: She was very much, very interested. Looking back now, when you asked the question, she didn't get all excited or say "That's great, Mr. Ching" or use

terms of that sort. She just listened to what I said and said Well, tell this message to the President.

ES: Well, getting back to the President. Could you tell by his attitude that he was very interested or that you were just briefing him. Was it something that he was greatly concerned about?

HWC: I would love to be able to answer that question. Now that you ask that question, let me try to step by step bring my memory clear. I was brought in by Mrs. Roosevelt, introduced to the President while he sat at his desk and I sat opposite him. First thing of course he looked across to me, he said, "Mr. Ching. Your name is Ching." I said, "Yes, sir." "You are Chinese, aren't you?" I said, "Chinese American, Sir."

"Where did you go to school?"

I said, "Well, I went to school . . . educated here in Hawaii, went to, like any typical American, elementary, public schools, high school, university, then did some graduate work at Yale." Then he stopped me.

"Oh, you went to Yale."

I said, "Yes, Sir."

He said, "I'm a Yale man."

I said, "No, Sir. You're a Harvard man." Then I just happened to remember an occasion when he visited Hawaii prior to World War II, when the Harvard Club took him to a meeting in Pearl Harbor and had a shindig there. They presented him with a Yale Bowl. I reminded him that he got the Yale Bowl. And the Yale Bowl was the chamberpor with a big Y. So he laughed, we both laughed, so we got along okay then.

ES: Well, he was testing you by asking you if he went to Yale and you caught him on it.

HWC: He say he's a Yale man, and he got an honorary degree from Yale, yes. But he's not a Yale man in the sense that he did his undergraduate work or graduate work.

ES: Where did the conversation go from there?

HWC: We talked about Hawaii and the situation here and so forth. That's about it.

ES: So you would say that he dominated the conversation.

HWC: Yes, sir. I was warned that he would pull me off on another subject. Then he started talking about Southeastern Asia, what he proposed to do after World War, about the developing countries, and I got more nervous because I have no way but I can understand now. He looked at me as a Chinese American representing that part of the world, and he recognized there are tremendous problems in that part of the world, Southeast Asia. So he started making conversation about that part of the world. I said, "Sir, I am not familiar with that particular situation. I was born and brought up in Hawaii, only made trips to the Orient as a tourist and I'm not familiar." So I cut the discussion off on that area.

ES: Did you then get back to the situation in Hawaii?

HWC: Yes, we got back to situation, he asked other questions which I cannot recall.

ES: Was it making him nervous at all, was it something he really wanted to find out about ?

HWC: It was informational what he asked me, about the behavior of our people in Hawaii, basically. How the different races were getting together and how the powers that be are controlling the situation.

ES: Did that make a big enough impact on him, that, in your opinion, that in fact the relocation never took place? Do you think that was a major factor:

HWC: I'd love to say that I had something to do with it. But he didn't say so in so many words to me. I can't answer that. He didn't communicate to me and say I will not do this and thus and I'll do this and following your recommendations. I had no recommendations. My only recommendation is to transmit to him to leave the situation in Hawaii to the constituted authorities.

ES: Did Mrs. Roosevelt ever get back with you ?

HWC: Yes

ES: What did she say?

HWC: Of course she hadn't yet talked to the President. Incidentally, it was getting close to 12 o'clock; there was a luncheon meeting, and guess who was the gentlemen that were supposed to have lunch. I was hoping to be invited. The gentlemen that the President selected to run the internment camps.

ES: Vendessa?

HWC: No, not Vendessa. (emphatic). Civilians.

ES: The war relocation authority director?

HWC: Yeah.

ES: So it might have been very timely your conversation. So that was the topic of that day and probably . . .

HWC: Right. That luncheon meeting was then. And then in fact he hinted to me if I'm interested to work for. He told me that he's having lunch with the gentlemen to talk about who would be running internment camps and asked me if I would like to be associated with the internment camps.

ES: What did you say?

HWC: I said, "Sir, no way I would be a warden for my people."

ES: A what for your people?

HWC: A warden. You know what it means warden?

ES: Yeah, a prison warden.

HWC: Yeah.

ES: You said "my people." Could you elaborate on that?

HWC: I elaborate. My people that I grew up with in Hawaii.

ES: So you were protecting my friends.

HWC: Not protecting. It's a natural, natural reaction, the people that you grew up with.

ES: There's a philosophical question that I'm only asking for opinion, not for historical data. You probably did have some impact on the President. Do you feel that there might not have been or that there weren't enough spokesmen on the mainland for the Japanese Americans.

HWC: I am not familiar to be able answer that. I would say that there was a group in California that I was in constant contact with in my years working here. They were high level businessmen and academic people that I communicated with. I'm pretty sure that they were in contact with Washington, and I think it's uh . . . way out of line for me to say just because I had a meeting with the President and just because Mrs. Roosevelt suggested that I talk to the President that a major decision was caused by that meeting. It's presumptuous.

ES: Were you ever in contact with spokesmen from the mainland who were strongly motivated as you were, in fact, you mentioned they weren't as organized as they were here in Hawaii, the groups for the protection of the rights of the Japanese Americans?

HWC: What was the question you just . . .

ES: In other words, In Hawaii you were a part of a group of very well organized, and the Japanese were a much stronger minority than they were on the mainland and had perhaps the mainland had a group as strongly organized and a spokesman as strong as you perhaps there might not have been a relocation or it would have been better thought or . . . . That's a philosophical question. I'm asking for your opinion.

HWC: As I explained to you, Hawaii is a community that's more integrated, economically, politically and so forth. It's an integrated community for that period. If you use the word integration for what purpose. But anyway, I used the word integrated. So it's easier to be of influence. When you take the State of California with such a large area, large, diverse, large cities, I don't think you can make a comparison. We were fortunate at that period of time that Hawaii was in a sense integrated.

ES: And it was a small insular society in which people knew everybody else, very strongly integrated, strong community ties and a strong Asian unity.

HWC: Now you got me, when you use the word strong Asian community. Now you see of course each racial group had its own - like take the Chinese. The Chinese had its own societies, and the Japanese had their own societies. They had their language school. The Chinese had their language schools. And then there were the first generation and the second generation. The second generation was differently educated than the first generation. Now you're going to open up a Pandora's box, and you will get into an area of sociological and philosophical then we're going to have a whole damn afternoon to find the proper answer. Then you've got to be involved with the social scientists to analyze the situation, to come up with answers.

ES: I'm asking you as an individual, somebody who was a part of that prewar and early war and present Hawaiian community. I wouldn't ask you as a representative of this committee but rather as your own personal opinion.

HWC: All right, then what's the specific question now you want me to answer.

ES: There was a strong Asian community on the Islands, there was a dominant (HWC: Correct) and that perhaps was the reason and there were close ties between the communities if not even for the protection the strength of one community would be the strength of another. The Japanese and the Chinese . . . .

HWC: I would like to put it this way. There were different parts in the entire community. There were strong parts. But all these parts made the whole and so therefore when, let's use the word Hawaiian community. There was a strong Japanese community; there were strong social controls among the youngsters. There was no such thing in my time of youth delinquency. Neither among the Chinese. Then you had the Hawaiian community and the newcomers, the Filipino communities that came and took the places on the plantations, the unskilled laborers. Their predecessors were Chinese and Japanese. So, I would say the Oriental community was pretty strong in the sense they had their own organizations, and they participated in the total also. They participated and contributed in the economic welfare. The Japanese, for example, the Chinese controlled most of the small stores. The Japanese were in agricultural for small farming, produce, poultry and so forth. So they were in a sense also participating and integrated into the community so fortunately for Hawaii, our population wasn't too large to say the Caucasians had the dominating part. They controlled the economics, the banking, the finance, the political. In a sense at that period there were

at that period barriers in the social life, but it has broken down subsequently since World War II. It's a question of degree of democracy that was happening in Hawaii. You see, we have more democracy now, and if you say whatever it is democracy, economic democracy, with educational democracy, with political democracy, you have to tell me which one you are asking what question than I can answer for you specifically. But if you generalize the question, I don't know whether I can answer it for you.

ES: You gave me the answer I was looking for. How close were the Japanese in fact on Hawaii with the population to be relocated and in fact would that have been a possibility and what would have the consequences been?

HWC: In the first place, at that period of time, I think a third of the population were of Japanese ancestry. I cannot quote figures as to their number. As I indicated, they were productive people, they were very necessary for the stability of the territory at that time and to evacuate such a large group of people that would depend upon even the construction industry, the carpentry and the food production people, I hate to think what would happen to Hawaii.

ES: Would it have in fact broken the backbone of Hawaii? Many historians said it would have.

HWC: I can use the word, it would be devastating.

ES: Do you think it could have been physically possible to relocate that large of a population.

HWC: Yes, it can, but look at the costs for our government. They were talking about relocating them to the outside islands. Look at the costs of just maintaining and policing and feeding. It was bad enough during that period of time that we were under martial law to import food, and if you have taken them out of production and then import food to feed them, just that area alone, it would just be to think about it.

And it would have caused the progress of our war in the Pacific. It would have been devastating.

ES: So the political decision was as much economic and physical and logistical as it was a decision philosophical. The loyalty of Japanese Americans played a part in the decision.

HWC: Well, I like to think of it this way. I think basically first the Japanese community of both American citizens and aliens. Are they loyal? Would they cooperate with our government. I think that was the basic decision that was made. I like to say it that way first. Then of course they began to realize the economics and the logistic situation, then the paramount, the first question has got to be answered first. Would they hamper our prosecution of the war? And I think they finally decided No. They would not hamper; they will cooperate. There was enough evidence to indicate that they will cooperate.

ES: And in fact what went wrong on the West Coast, I know you weren't there, you don't know but what do you think from your own opinion went wrong? Can you speculate? Again, it's philosophical.

HWC: No, I . . . I think basically what went wrong . . . . I think this way, number one. The attitude of the Caucasians towards the Orientals. They came into the community there, did the work and did well. They were hard workers. They were a threat economically to the powers that be, and they were not involved in the political, but they were a threat in the economic. They were doing well. The youngsters went to school; they worked hard in school; they were moving up. And the parents worked hard in the farms, and they produced. The productivity was far, far greater than the average Caucasian, and I suppose basically then we haven't succeeded at that period of time . . . . Let me speculate then in the belief of our free educational system that the average American can realize that

you put a people of different backgrounds, of color, to the same educational process, the end product were be the same no matter what, whether their reds, white, black or yellows. I don't believe at that time the average American had confidence in our American institutions. Whereas in Hawaii, our people had complete confidence in our American institutions. They were able to . . . . I don't want to put a dirty word, brainwash the children of the immigrants that the American educational system , that the average citizen is a personality. He is a person basically because of our Protestant religion that says we are able to transmit to the sons of the aliens that you are a divine person, a part of God. And they succeeded in doing that. I can be President of the United States one day, no matter if I'm yellow. And we had that, that idealism that they were successful in imbuing (in) us. And that's the reason (for) the success of the 100th Infantry and 442nd.

ES: Let me ask you a philosophical question. Because - Did you have contact with many of the Japanese Americans on the mainland. Did you develop relationships and friendships.

HWC: No. Except during the war years I moved about, met Matsuoka.

ES: Here's a question that I have that I didn't realize as a historian, as a person when I started this project. There is a personality difference between the Mainland Katonk and the Buddhahead. Could you tell me . . .

HWC: The same with the Chinese, too. Let me explain it this way. When I first went to California as a delegate from University of Hawaii in a YMCA conference, and I went to San Francisco. Our people here, we're not in a ghetto. They're is a small Chinatown, but I can move out. We vote. We participate. In California, in San Francisco, the powers that be concentrated the Chinese, and I was amazed.

They went to the University of California, they graduated from the school, but the discrimination was so bad that even a doctor that graduated from the University of California with a PhD couldn't find a job.

ES: What does that do to make the two peoples different.

HWC: Then when I am associated with them, my whole mental attitude, philosophical, is a little bit different. I am mostly closely akin to the average American that went to a public school. Whereas there, they are always defensive..

ES: What does that mean, how do you mean defensive, how is their personality different?

HWC: They recognize they are being discriminated against. I don't have that feeling. Although, despite the fact, when I went to a Christian conference in California, when I wanted to get a haircut, the white man won't cut my hair. I had to go to Chinatown, you see, and suddenly discovered how badly they were discriminated (against). Whereas, I didn't face that problem. I had my uniform on and went to Sutro Baths before I went to the Presidio before I went up to Camp Lewis. When I had my uniform on, I could go swim in the Sutro Baths. Then we went back to camp to change into civilian, went back to have another swim, they threw us out.

ES: So that gives you an inferiority complex. A mainland Oriental . . . .

HWC: They were subjected to worse than I was so naturally they had an inferiority complex. I don't want to use the word inferior, but it gave them a complex. I didn't use the word inferior; I don't know what it is. But we don't think the same at that period. But they're different now. Oh, they're different now. They're like me. r

ES: That's something I noticed that the Hawaiian Buddaheads have confidence, they look you in the eye, they have their own dominant culture . . .

HWC: And they cannot be pushed around either by anybody.

ES: And whereas the Mainland 442nd boys - very quiet, they minded their own business . . .

HWC: They spoke well; our people spoke pidgin.

ES: Right, and they also tended to not be as social, not be as gregarious as the Islanders.

HWC: They want to be, but they control themselves in such a way to say 'I'll mind my own business. I met with them, I say, Come on, you can shoot your mouth off with me. Tell me. You know, I did. I was in Camp Shelby. One of the problems was that the Army with the 442nd, the Army thought that they had a cadre that were drafted. You see, the US Army when December the 7th came, they also took the guns away from the drafted ones, Katongs if you want to call them that, and they were made into labor battallions and so forth until the 442nd were organized and they were given a chance to volunteer which they did. And then the Army formed the 442nd cadre of noncommissioned officers, the Katonks. And so when I got there my boys came rushing up to me and "Wow, wow." So I got hold of some of those mainland boys, the Katonks, and sat down. I chatted with them. Oh, my heart went out to them.

ES: Tell me what you said and what they said to you.

HWC: Well, they told me "You think you're Hawaiian Japanese were mistreated - What about us? We were kicked around. Our guns were taken away, but we were spread all over the country. Now we're assembled here and all of a sudden we meet you Hawaiian Japanese. Who the hell do you think they are being persecuted?"

What about us?

ES: Did they complain about what happened to their parents?

HWC: Of course.

ES: What did they say?

HWC: My parents in a relocation camp. Your Hawaiian boys are still at home.

ES: Were they resentful?

HWC: How do you interpret resentful when a person explains their whole feelings and loans (?) it to another person. I mean, you're putting words. When you use the word resentful, and I say yes and then you're going to interpret it - Oh, they're antagonistic and all those bad words; I mean the connotation. All I do was listen and felt for them. What else can I do? And all I do is now to bring my own boys together, some of them the leaders, and say, "Look, you guys, come on now, don't - you know, take it easy with them. Get along,. Work together on this situation and eventually they did. And the test of the situation, when they fought together, there were no Katonks or Buddaheads then.

You see, it was not a normal situation, let's put it that way. It's ironical, here they're of same ancestry. And they had to work themselves in the training, and it took a period of give and take and understanding. I think at that time when our boys got into camp, suddently faced with them, naturally there was resistance, but gradually, I'm pretty sure, they had it out, not only vocally, they may have had it out physically, too, but they got it out of their systems and then all of a sudden, I think, they realized they were in a common pot. Their survival depended upon how they were going to work together. I like to think they realized that.

*No  
Katonks  
or  
Buddaheads  
in  
Combat*

ES: They did in fact.

HWC: All right, fine. If they testified, then you got the information better than I did, you see, but the way I like to conjecture is that they had to.

ES: Let me ask you a question, again a philosophical question, not necessarily historical. The Nisei soldier, whether he be the Buddahead from Hawaii or the Katong, they became Japanese American soliders and they worked very hard. Compared and contrasted with other units they fought with in Italy and France, they were always in the thick of it, they were always specifically chosen for the tough jobs because of their tract record. Why did the Japanese American soldier make such a good fighter, other than the fact that we know that he was a commnity - that's a philosophical question.

HWC: I like to say this, now let me, let me not to beat around the question. I tell you the other units that fought in WW II, the Hawaiians that fought down Guadacanal, the Filipino Americans and the Chinese Americans, they all did well. They all came from, as I said at the beginning, they came from a community environment, they were Hawaiians. Let me use another word. They were. . . .

ES: What's an Hawaiian?

HWC: That's funny, isn't it. They grew up there; they care for each other because they went to school together, they played together, they fought together, in athletics. They had an appreciation of each other. But the Japanese American had a better mission because they're parents were locked up. Their father's country, yeah national country were the enemy. So they have a mission to prove, naturally, who are they? They were like the child of the , uh, calvalry, come on, The Charge of the Light Brigade. Who am I to question? So they ordered to

do certain \_\_\_\_\_, who are they to question. They were there to take orders, to do the best possible. And so that to me is simple.

ES: You mean they just simply did it because they had two wars to fight. Did you have any further contact with Mrs. Roosevelt after your meeting with the President of the US?

HWC: Oh, yes, on her trips south, when we go down and when I go to Washington.

ES: Was she still sympathetic? Was she still - did you ever get to see the President again?

HWC: No

ES: Do you think that she was an influence on the President?

HWC: Absolutely. I've seen her subsequently, yes. Again you read that article, what I did on political matters.

ES: We have photographs of her visiting the relocation centers and obviously she's disturbed.

HWC: Of course.

ES: Did she ever tell you, I don't know, not reading the article, did she ever say anything to you about that, being disturbed about that? Did she come in open disagreement with her President/husband?

HWC: No, I am not privileged in her, let me put it this way, in those specific matters, being way down in Hawaii and she's all over the country, the United States. On the occasions that I do have special missions to talk to her, that's the only thing that I discuss with her - nothing else. We were never involved socially, invited me to the White House to have tea. She invited me to have tea, of course, but not to meet other people in the social. We didn't have enough time. She was busy, and I couldn't impose on her anyhow. I didn't take advantage of her.

And they people that knew I have contact kept me away from her.

ES: Who were those people?

HWC: The chief of the FBI.

ES: J. Edgar Hoover?

HWC: No, the guy that handled it here and the Army people. That's not supposed to be recorded. I can understand why. Because they're fearful that I'd be used, I'd be tempted.

ES: How so?

HWC: Ask them.

ES: Okay, getting back to the 442nd 100th Battalion. Your activities with the Morale Committee was instrumental in the War Department actually taking the Hawaiian National Guard, nationalizing them and forming an all Japanese American unit. Could you talk about your activities?

HWC: Well, in the first place, you made a mistake by saying the activity of your committee was responsible. Maybe, I like to think that we had a part to influence the War Department and the activities, I like to put it this way, the activities of the Morale Committee and the different committees, racial committee, the efforts to cooperate with our government at the early period, when the decision makers from Washington came to Hawaii to observe for themselves personally and then went back and convince the powers that be had handled the situation beautifully and it's about time now that we ought to allow the Japanese American to show their loyalty and patriotism. Now, to say that the Morale Committee or any individual is responsible I think is a little bit giving too much credit. I think that the community, all facets of the community,

the leaders in the community, the commercial leaders, the decision makers, the educators, the educational system, the superintendent of public instruction, the leaders in the community, the business leaders in the community, YMCA, the churches that were sympathetic and understand our people, had lots to do, no individual; we just happened to be in the organized part and giving undue credit. I sincerely believe it. In discussing this matter, for example, the Superintendent of Instruction at the time, later became Senator Long, and we talk about the effect of our educational system on our kids. That's the result of our educational system: we produced loyal Americans. We succeeded in imbuing the American idealism to those youngsters. And so they were our participants throughout the community. No one particular segment or one individual. Just the community at large with the people who were interested. I'm seriously saying that. I'd love to take credit. I'd love to have a big medal and say I'm the genius. Those Japanese Americans think so, but hell I have no time to explain to them like I'm explaining to you.

ES: You had some part in it though, but it was a combination of all.

HWC: Yeah, I'm in the right job at the right time, and fortunately they think whatever I said or was able to recommend worked. I didn't get into bad difficulties or suggested something. For example, now I may say so, when General Theuller came and say he was ordered to evacuate all the Japanese around the perimeter, I was called in and brought in some of my Japanese Americans and discussed that. Colonel Theuller refused to evacuate the Japanese. He almost got courtmartialed.

ES: Based on his conversation with you?

HWC: Based on - he asked my advice. Should I \_\_\_\_\_. I said, Why would you do that? Where are you going to put them? You're going to face the same problem.

Do you realize that right around the perimeter are all those farms, etc.?

Either you trust them or you don't, ~~I-told-you-already~~. Mooch. We told you already.

ES: What did you call him?

HWC: General ?? Fielder. His nickname was "Wooch." He was all-American quarterback from Georgie Tech. W o o c h. Kendall J. Fielder, but his nickname was an all-American player. He was famous football athlete. His nickname was Wooch. We call him Wooch. "We told you already in the beginning and now you got this order, what else? So he said okay and stood by us. Stood by the people. See, General Fielder

ES: Could you describe him, describe him as an individual.

HWC: He was a Southerner. Went to Georgia Tech, Great all-American, fought in World War I, then assigned here as Colonel, was a Captain or whatever it is and became a Lieutenant Colonel, was in Intelligence at that time. I met him the first time, was a great athlete, great golfer, champion Army golfer. But one thing about it, he learned to like us and he trusted us, and the same with this - this is very significant. The three gentlemen that really had control of the destiny, the way I looked at it, during that critical period in Hawaii, were three Southerners. Amazing. One a carpetbagger, Governor Stainback, appointed governor because of the democratic regime. General Fielder, Colonel Fielder from the South, Atlanta, Georgia, and the Chief of the local FBI from Memphis, Tennessee, that's supposed to hate non-whites. Look what happened. Terrific, isn't it? So how you categorize people. Just because they're advised. Later on when Mr. Siva retired, I questioned him myself. I say "How come, down there, you don't like the Blacks?" You keep on telling me, he says, in Hawaii your people have thousands of years of culture. Them blacks are still in the savages down there and yet you allow me to

*3 whites  
from  
Hawaii  
were  
South  
men*

participate with you. I'm not white. But he's same. He says you people you come from a cultured people. I said, "Look, Mr. Sievers, when I was born, I wasn't born with the culture of China. (ES: Yeah) I have to attain it. I was educated and maybe my genes have a little better, my parents have a little better attitude toward education, maybe that. And I took advantage of education. But then I stopped; I didn't want to say anything further. But I wanted to say at that period there were three Southerners had the destiny of this State of Hawaii and here the elements in Hawaii was that the last group of Chinese, the last group of Filipinos and Koreans, the Koreans hate the Japanese guts, the Chinese hate them, too, the Filipinos hate them, but nothing happened. The ingredients when you analyze it and speculate it - ha, hooooooo.

ES: Talk about that some more. I like that theme of three Southerners, three out of town had the destiny of

HWC: If they were race prejudiced, why would they be understanding of handling the non-whites in Hawaii.

ES: It's remarkable paradox, isn't it?

HWC: It says something now for social scientists about education of youngsters. It say something. and opportunities. It may something meaningful to Blacks.

ES: Obviously, you've studied philosophy at one point, and you're a great humanist. Can you describe yourself - How did you become

HWC: It's one part of my life I don't talk too much. You don't publicize it, or what do you do? Just for your benefit?

ES: Just for the oral history.

HWC: Well, you know, I'm third in my family. I was a free soul. And my father was a sea cook. I never had a father. He was always off to sea. So we were a very, very poor family. I was a shoeshine boy, a newsboy. I was the third to be educated. I had an older brother and an older sister only had a 7th grade education,

My oldest brother had to work to take care of me. And when I finished high school - I was first to go to high school. In the early days, they never wanted to educate the children of the immigrants - only had one high school here. To matriculate I had to take ? to go into college. The examiner passed English, math and everything. And I don't know, when I was in the grammar school, I loved to read, loved to read and read every damn thing, loved to read history. When I was in high school, I had good grades in geography, American history, European history. I wanted to go to college. My brother, when I finished high school - I never had high school life. I started to work when in my freshman year. My brother was a telegraph operator in the telephone company. My sister-in-law was telephone operator. I knew the boss. Then my brother put me to work. Every afternoon at 2 o'clock I rode my bicycle down to the telephone company, worked til 5, 6 o'clock - paid 35 cents an hour. Then finally I rebelled in my senior year and told my mother and my brohter - At least give me one year of high school life. So I went to high school during that time, I went out - you wouldn't believe me - but I went out, I was hustled into acting, drama and then I went out for track without any coaching. I don't want to brag about it, I was sensational because all my life, I ran and ran and ran and ran as a newsboy so I was physically conditioned. So I beat anybody, any route, any distance, from half mile, two miles down, sprints, broad jump and everything. So I created quite a sensation in high school. And I got good grades during my final year. So I wanted to go to college. My brother say, "no, go to work." I said, no I want to go to college. I said, Make a deal with you. You let me sleep, you feed me, but I won't cost you a nickel. In those days, there was no tuition. And he made a condition also. He say, "You take up engineering." So I took up engineering.

I hated it, and I graduated during the war years, I mean during the depression years, 1927-28. I loved kids, and my freshman year I was drafted to lead the Boys Club. Every Friday I used to go down to the beach and play basketball, took them camping, and I loved it. I had quite a record with the YMCA as a club leader so when I graduated they offered me a job. When I graduated engineering - when I started engineering, there were 75 in the class, and when I graduated I was number 5 in my class, but I was anchorman - last guy to graduate, almost flunked the last course. Then I went to the Y. I had three jobs. The government offered me a job as a surveyer, \$75 a month; plantation offered me a job, \$60 bucks a month. The YMCA offered me a job to organize the Boys camp for \$125 bucks a month, and so I ran the YMCA. I ran the camp, where any background. So finally after 2 years, so I was interested in work so and I had no liberal arts education so I asked, I got a scholarship to go to a seminary to work for, to be trained as a YMCA secretary. So I went to University of Chicago, and I had to take courses like I read the Bible from Page 1 to the back because I had to take an examination. I'm a Christian illiterate, literally.

ES: Are you a religious man, too?

HWC: At that time I came under the influence of a Presbyterian missionary in town and then later on joined the church. First of my family baptized in the Congregational faith, but I am a Christian illiterate at that time you can imagine. Subsequently, I discovered that. So I tried to pass an exam and just barely passed, the Bible exam. Then I had to take, you wouldn't believe this, I never had liberal arts. I had one year English and one semester of business composition to write engineering descriptions. So I had four years of math, physics, survey and everything else. And so after two years working with the Y, I went to the University of Chicago, I was a graduate student on condition.

ES: What was the condition?

HWC: I have to pass those courses. I had no philosophy, no logic, nothing. And I couldn't even type. I wrote all my papers in longhand,. I worked my tail off, but I passed. Then I got a scholarship at Yale. I was so dumbfounded. And Yale also had a YMCA school. Then I finished up at the New York School of Social Work. So I got my Master's in boy's work, and during those two periods that my education began, you see, I studied for example, one of the courses - it wasn't too bad then, study one of the great giants - Paul ????, theology. I studied under Macintosh, the great Macintosh. I studied under the great Richard Nebris's brother, Neber, you heard of great Neber, but he was rough on me, and then gradually, it took me years and years before it soaked in and still, I'm still now very much interested. I'm a founder of Religion and Social Change with the Catholic Church. I spent a lot of money, a lot of my money, and my whole theory is that the greatest influence on decision, on our troubles, is our religious background. I contend that the Vietnam War is a religious war. War in the Middle East is stricly a religious war and that decision-making military don't understand it, and we should have pure research in to what makes people tick. And what motivates people is religious. And we have been funded. We didn't get too much success but we still have that in the background. I was involved in the University of Hawaii as a regent, and I'm one of the founders of the Resource Center and also one of the founders of the Harvard Business School Relationship, so I've gone through a lot. I've been a trustee for the Catholic schools, I've been trustee of Hawaiian law, I've been chairman of St. Francis Hospital despite the fact I'm not a Catholic for fifteen years - started with nothing as my greatest feeling of what I've done in the community is with the hospital, the St. Francis.

ES: How much of your Christian background influenced - you felt was an influence on others during those War years?

HWC: Let me put it this way. You know, when you think about a person's personal relationships, when I was working with the Y, I was at the University Y working with kids - college kids, I knew my limitations. So my strong point was (that I) was able to recruit top intellectual leaders to work with my kids - far superior. I was a good organizer in that sense. So when a critical situation came, when you read this article, I'm purported to say when the kids - the University ROTC were inducted into the territorial guards on December the 7th, they were given guns and ammunition and they never even fired a rifle. Scary. That's another story you can read in that December the 9th. Then on January or February the 11th or something, midnight, they took the guns away from those kids. And the kids came crying to me, you know, in my office. Then I was purported to say, you know, now you ask that question, to go the second mile. I said, "What are you sitting on your ass crying for? Get off your ass if you like to go in the service, come here and get off your ass, I can find something for you to do. So that impressed those guys. So they volunteered to the labor battalion. But at that period of time, when you think, now you suppose I'm going to be a preacher or YMCA leader and let my religion - let's put it that way. It seeped out maybe. I said the right thing at the right time. Now you're going to ask me I was deliberately advising the guy because of my Christian background?"

ES: It was something they saw in you? something that your philosophy?

HWC: Maybe. Now, how - yeah, maybe, maybe, it helped. See you understand? It wasn't like a calculated. Now when I recall, now I'm recalling now. The kids purported to be sitting under the tree, and I'm there. No, it was in the office.

And I look at those guys, say "What are you crying for, you bastards, you know.  
I use rough words.

ES: What I'm trying to get at is you were trained as a scientist, as an engineer.  
No philosophy. You rebelled at that to some degree; you became a philosopher;  
you became a religious man which you have enjoyed and you are to this day.

HWC: No, it's not deliberate. I'm still in a sense - I founded my church  
and now my kids watch me, and I become all of a sudden as I grow older and I get  
drunk, I try to talk to God. I say Why all this happening, and I have no  
certainty. I read Job, try to find answer. No answer. All he said is "have  
faith," and I'm not satisfied by having faith. And now I keep my big mouth shut.  
I'm scared to advise kids now. I'm scared to destroy kids' beliefs. I see kids  
now - I look at them in my church - lock, stock and barrel, traditionalists in  
the sense and like you know the moralists. And the parents they sit down and they  
ask me to be participant in so-called brainstorming. I avoid them for fear I  
destroy their faith of my experience.

ES: Because you're not totally convinced yourself.

HWC: I don't know. I don't know whether it's convinced. I don't know what it is.  
I don't want to say I'm a cynic. I have to be a cynic. Maybe I'm a sceptic.

ES: You're the type of person that likes to question and rejuvenate the faith  
moment to moment to moment.

HWC: Not only that, but let them live what they got. Don't ask me, I'm an old man.  
Had successes and failures, tremendous failures. I'm not a perfect man. Now who  
am I just because, I don't want to pose. I'm scared to pose. In fact scared to  
even go, afraid like to hell the minister ask me to preach. I'll probably agonize  
and then I see young preachers - I love to see young preachers preach. I do. And

I say, Hey, I know who influenced you, and you've been mouthing this philosophy. It's not part of you. You know, you know how young preachers seem to come out preaching the biblical. I say why don't you say what you want to say. Use what the authorities. You know, be yourself. I try to convey, you'll be more successful as a preacher by being yourself. You know, try to integrate what you learned through your life and get from your experience and be assured that you're young and that we mature people will be very patient with you, but we want to hear what you think, not to regurgitate what you heard. I love to hear new young minister. And when I see a great minister, a young kid, come out and do something really original from his own life, and use his religious training and make an interpretation ahhh, I say now there, that's a kid I like. I like to watch him mature.

ES: How much of your religious beliefs, your philosophical beliefs - you were trained as an engineer, but you were really a philosopher and that led you in the direction to your work in the . . .

HWC: No, it didn't lead me to work. It's just circumstances. I continue to repeat. I was chosen at the right time, right place.

ES: Do you believe in fate?

HWC: Now, that's an interesting question to ask a Chinese. Most of the Chinese believe in it. Yet, when you say that, fate, how do you understand fate?

Mr. Boxshoes told me - asked How did you get this damn job? You didn't deliberately get the job as FBI manager. He says, "you are right Hung Wai, I turned the corner. I was unhappy. Somebody stopped me - old friend. He say, hey join me. Is that fate?"

ES: What is that?

HWC: I don't know.

ES: You don't think so? What do you think?

HWC: I'd just like to categorize it as life. Unpredictable.

ES: You literally just turned the corner and something

HWC: Something happens. I just read that Time magazine yesterday and read that article about Australian got this gold binge now, and this lady went out and stumbled across a gold nugget. Is that fate? No, this is interesting to me. Lot of reborn Christians. My church has them too - alot of my friends, close friends. Serious illness, very serious illness and then pray recovered, suddenly reborn. And now they're very religious, go out preaching etc. I attend some of the meetings. They invite me there. I like to listen to them. I like to find out why they became that way. And then it suddenly hit me. I said. They said Pray to Jesus. And Jesus came into their lives and change it. I says to them, I says, "How come Jesus picked you? Why didn't he pick another guy? Why did He pick you? What did you do that make Jesus selected you? It really bugs me.

ES: So you don't know.

HWC: Who am I to go up to \_\_\_\_\_ Rose? and say Rose, now that you're so good and go to church now and change your life - How come Jesus chose you? I don't dare ask her that. Why would I . . . In fact, I envy her. She has certainty.

ES: You know what certainty breeds, don't you?

HWC: I don't care. Don;t spoil it for me. She has it anyway.

ES: Yeah, you shouldn't be certain about anything. I agree with you.

HWC: But she has certainty. She knows where she's going. She's going to love people; she's going to do- she's going to do, she's going to expand, she's going to contribute. The whole gang. I envy them. I literally envy them. I'm in many ways a religious coward. They surrendered their lives to God and to Christ. I won't do it. (laughs) Not that I won't but I don't know. I rationalize. I say, God, you made a terrific mistake on me. You gave me free will. Everything

is black, I'm going to tell you it's still white. You got to do something to me to kill me to change my mind to say that. Just my youngsters. I've seen my little grandchildren, and I try to talk to them. They keep on saying, "Why, Grandpa, WHY, grandpa?" See the simple mind. I don't say simple. I never - I told my daughter-in-law, "Don't you ever treat your children as being infants. The mine is a relative thing, even with a babies. I've seen adults got infantile mind. I've seen youngsters with so-called mature minds, but advanced minds. That's a better term I like to use. God created - the day youngster is born - immediately he's a person. God endowed - unless there is congenial disease of the mind, but normally developed mind - free will. You say no to the ? terms or times? and to God, too. Know why?

ES: You don't know? I'd like to find out more. I know I've asked this before but how your religious feelings made you so

HWC: I fluctuate back and forth. I go to church and just like I'm brainwashed, militarily speaking, I still have a terrific emotional feeling when they play the Star Spangled Banner or something. I still do. I still Wait now, let me transmit it. Compare with it. When I go to church and then after the reading of the Bible, then we stand up and sing "Glory be to Go, you know, Father, Son & Holy Ghost," I stand at attention and look at the cross. And yet I'm having problems.

ES: Yeah, in other words, worshipping a nation state.

HWC: No, I'm worshipping God. The cross symbolizes my Christianity and yet I find, I find, when that th ing hits, I'm using the analogy of the Star Spangled Banner, the flag, mylove for the country, and it suddently hit me - All right, are you going to stand at attention now, sing, and I force myself to do it despite my sceptism, cynicism. In other words, I'm not consistent. You understand now?

All of a sudden now, when a (dude?) stand up and look at it and really sing, "Glory be to the Father, Son and ----- I can't explain it. Someday I will go back to the seminary, some of my grauate class, one of them is a top professor at Yale. I'm going to be there with him and get a bottle of gin and whiskey and say, "I'm going to your house, help me." I going to say "Now you're a professor, you teaching kids. I haven't taught kids on this side of it yet except when we sit down together and yack. And I try to make my contribution. Now you explain to me before my mind becomes senile. It'll be interesting. I'm looking forward to it. My classmates got their PhDs in philosophy and theology, trained in Europe.

ES: Were you that same way during World War II as you are now? Were you a little more convinced then?

HWC: I don't think so. I don't think I'm same because I think as life progresses and get experiences and being with people, when you go through traumatic events, it has an effect on you I think. I don't think anybody is the same. It's a question of degree.

ES: We're trying to make the book a human book, and the book will be a story of people, not of tactics, not of weapons.

HWC: I think that's your strong point. What the hell you wasting your time on this. So much has been written already. Go and talk to the kids that went through battle.

ES: I already have.

HWC: You know what I mean. One time I got letters from some of the boys on the frong line. Talking about heroes. Of course they pay me a compliment. It says you gu ys that fight for social justice are greater heroes than we are. They were in the front. Then we come back; we talking about what are heroes. They say the guy that dropped, when a grenade comes and instantly drop and sacrifice his life you know for the sake of - instantaneous decision. And that guy start thinking.

He say what is a hero? Interesting. Now you go and see them. They went through fight for the preservation of their life. I didn't. There to me is somebody that can be more in your line what you need. They went through really agonizing, really thinking.

ES: Tell me more about that.

HWC: They did. I'm talking about the average kid now, at university. Some of them only sophmores when they went to the 442nd, and they went through that whole thing and then went back to school. They are the ones that you should interview. They're the special ones. Now they're matured. Some of them, like one kid, now, one youngster, highly intelligent. One of the brilliant kids. Sophmore year he volunteered. He was working in the, first job he got when he got in the 442nd, I mean as the labor bataillon, the \_\_\_\_\_ victory volunteers. They sign him up in the rock quarry. Like a convict. Little guy. And he became, he was professor of educational philosophy today at Unversity of Hawaii and became Superintendent of Public Instruction. He was one of my favorite kids. All the time he needed money, I always scrounged to give him a scholarship. He cost me the most money to get his doctorate. In those days to get a doctorate of philosophy and education was not easy. That's the kind of kid you interview. See, he fought and then got a commission. He went in as a buck private, came out as an officer. Then pursued his education. Then, you know, and he had a terrific effect on kids because he was an educator and teachers. Of course, I'm not going to mention his name now. Later on, later, because being the senior among them and then he had control of all the educational system. I won't name you all of them. I said, "You bastart, you failed. You had control of the whole educational system; you boys failed. Why don't you sit down and write down for the sake of guys come after you - where did you guys fail? You got all the education; you were not able to inspire. I was looking forward to you guys becoming terrific with your experience and background - war,

living in Hawaii, second generation, and here you have opportunity to control the fate of education in Hawaii and you failed! I'm the only guy that talked to them that way. They listen. I said Why don't you guys get together around table and why did we fail? Were we too much politicians? Did we fail in transmitting our philosophy of education to the others what we believe in and the fashion that we can excite them? And they're actually not doing it.

ES: I want to get back to something I've already asked you, and I realize, I understand why you did what you did. There should be no question of why a person would stand up for another person, philosophically, morally, religiously. I know why you did it. I didn't know when I first came here. I do now.

HWC: Yeah, why did I do it. You answer me now. I'm curious.

ES: Cause you love people. It was humanity.

HWC: Yeah, that's correct.

ES: Now, I know that, but the people who are going to read the book don't know that because I've met you. Now could you explain for our readers, many of whom are the Buddaheads who absolutely insisted I interview you, and some of whom know you and some of whom said I can't leave Hawaii until I talk to you. Could you tell them and their kids and their kids and their kids, if the book does well enough, like I hope it will, why you did what you did?

HWC: Save it. The connotation of a job to do as an obligation. I didn't have that attitude.

ES: It was there, like a mountain.

HWC: Well, whatever it is. I trained myself, my kids, everybody. A situation comes up like I don't know you, I already had that mind set, I'm not going to waste my time with you and so forth. Then you're going to ask questions, I'm getting going. I deal with every situation as it comes, and if I find myself able to do it, I continue to do it. Or if a kid comes in and just happened that he needs my

services, if I react to it, fine. If I don't react to it, I can't understand why I didn't react to it. Then maybe I did a bad thing, then I want to kick myself in the fanny. Now who is to say at every situation, you do the right thing?

ES: Well, I have a feeling you do.

HWC: Well, good for you, thank you, but in many situations I'm ashamed of myself. Many situations.

ES: There was a problem in World War II.

HWC: Okay, now we proceed again.

ES: There was a situation where a great tragedy could have happened (HWC: uh, huh) There were circumstances that were probably beyond your control. You turned the corner, and you were confronted by the problem. You took care of the problem, not because the problem was there but because it was something that you didn't have to do, your mind didn't question, it was just simply your nature to do it, regardless. That's my understanding. And you're very complex individual, and I'm trying for the - when I frame the story for the book and the Japanese American soldiers see you as being instrumental in the creation of their one chance to fight as soldiers and as part of that story were to come back as heroes would see you as a hero for giving them a chance and as being an outsider, being Chinese, you were able to give them that little push. So that's the reason why I'm here today, and I'd like you to address what you did and why you did. I know you did it for unselfish reasons, and it wasn't - I know what your getting at - you're coming from a very Christian standpoint like it was - You don't analyze why you do something, you simply do it. (HWC: I said that already) And you don't expect a reward and you don't expect to be - It's like, if I were to say it from a Christian standpoint,

the things you do on earth for other people are the things you gather when you die or when you go.

HWC: You know, I never thought about it. Like in the Biblical, say you cast your bread on waters, they come back. Those things don't enter my mind. (ES: I know that.) You answered already. You asked the question you answered for me.

(ES: Really?) Yeah. Oh, I'm sorry

ES: Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to.

HWC: No that's good. I'm glad you did.

ES: But you didn't do it for reward though?

HWC: I didn't do it for a reward - never dawned on me.

ES: And that was a product of your education, of philosophy? And you don't wish to accept any credit.

HWC: If credit comes, you give me a medal, I'll take it. No, I get invited to all the affairs. I'm human. I'm happy to be recognized; I'm happy to be invited, and I'm happy to have people come and talk to me. I'm not human if I don't so there's no baloney about it. After all, I live with people and people is people, people-people relationships. The happiest people \_\_\_\_\_ people that like you, mutually respectful. That's all. It's wonderful to be able to go. I'm looking forward every year when they have the big dinner, I get drunk with them. That's all.

ES: We can do it this way. I'm going to go back and do my homework on the Committee. Could you describe some more of the players who were involved.

HWC: Yes! Sure. I'm not alone on this and interestingly enough, my closest advisors were Japanese-Americans. For example, I think you already interviewed Shugari Yoshida. You better write it down. He was a school teacher at the University he was my schoolmate. Yoshida, Shugari Yoshida, is a great thinker, a great

writer and educator. (Y O S H I D A). He's retired now, and you better catch him before he gets too old. He's around, retired school teacher.

ES: Now he was your coach. Who was your

HWC: No, my coach \_\_\_\_\_ passed away. Charles Loomis.

ES: Can you describe him?

HWC: Yes, he is a real Caucasian Christian. He came to Hawaii as a great idealist, YMCA man, educator and always interested in the welfare of people and always interested in justice. That's how I categorize him. And I have complete trust in him and then when I was

ES: Where was he from?

HWC: He was from uh, he came here many years as the YMCA secretary and then gradually became an educator and was the director of the International Institute - it's a sort of a think tank in Hawaii. I forgot the name. So we got pretty close. So when the situation arose to having somebody that I feel can work together in this situation, I ask him to serve with me, and he gladly did it. And the other member of the trio is Shigari Yoshida. Now Shigari Yoshida was the schoolteacher, Japanese, educator; he can write well. (ES: Did you choose him too?) Yes! I had the job of choosing them and so we three actually became the Morale Committee of the military governor.

ES: Who came up with that title?

HWC: Damned if I know. (laughter) I like to find out too. But we serve under the military governor although I never met the military governor. Actually, we work under General Fielder and Mr. Shivers, the FBI man. We took our orders from them, and you should interview him. Mr. Yoshida. He was a great writer, and for example, it's a known fact, for example, when the attack came on December the 7th

I reported to my post and of course Yoshida had to stay home being Japanese, all right you get shot. I was ordered to write a speech for the General to be broadcast. I couldn't write so Yoshida wrote it. Yoshida came to my home. I had to send my wife to the hospital because the bombing caused my second son to be born ahead of time. So I couldn't get Yoshida up so I called the General up to have to send a staff car up to the house, way up in the hills I was living. I kept him all night. He wrote the speech. Now if the people knew a Japanese American, an alien, wrote the speech for the General that was broadcast . . . Amazing, isn't it? You see, Yoshida wrote the speech, a Japanese American. It was delivered on December the 9th. Now you go interview him. Tell him I asked you to interview him.

ES: Has that been known before?

HWC: Very few people know that.

ES: Could you describe your relationship with the General? You never met the Governor?

HWC: Oh, I met the - in charge - of course the General in control, he was the military governor. The General assigned a colonel on the powers to do the day-to-day running of the martial law, implementing the martial law. Of course, he's so damn busy that allocation was given to General Fielder in the Intelligence Department and Mr. Shivers - Wait now. Let me put it correctly. Mr. Shivers had the complete confidence of Admiral Nimitz. He's the #1 guy. That's the reason why you got to read the December the 7th article too. That was published last year. It spells out everything. I wanted, before I die, I wanted to show the American public the FBI was the agency, one of the most important agencies, that stabilized Hawaii. And because the FBI being catching it all over the country

that's one, at least in Hawaii during the most critical moment, FBI was responsible. And Mr. Shivers had complete confidence of Admiral Nimintz. He had control; he can pick up 10,000 Japanese - he didn't.

ES: You and the other two were . . .

HWC: We'd never barge in. We'd only go in when the boss wants us.

ES: But he had confidence in you. He asked you and he believed.

HWC: Yeah, otherwise I wouldn't be working for him.

ES: Could you describe Mr. Shivers more in detail?

HWC: You know it's 1:30; I got an appointment.

ES: Okay, I've only got about 3 minutes on tape.

HWC: That's another story. Why don't you read that first, then you stick around, I'll be happy to talk to you one more time.

ES: Is there any other questions that I should have asked you?

HWC: Aw, you keep on thinking. You ask.

ES: I'm going to have to leave myself Thursday, but I may be back, and I'll read the information or I may give you a call.

HWC: All right. Look, let me tell you something. Are you going to send me a letter that asks me to answer questions? NO WAY.

ES: I'll call. I'm like you I can't answer letters; I'm too busy.

HWC: You understand, now. I hate to write.

ES: Yeah, me too. I wouldn't. I don't even have time.

HWC: Okay, if you wish for further interview, I'd be delighted because your approach is different from the others, like the (? Day ho's? \_\_\_\_\_) writing historical things. I like your approach.

ES: Philosophical. Men, they're human beings.

HWC: Too much is written already. You don't want to do a reportorial job.

ES: One more question. (HWC: Okay.) How would you like the 442nd and the 100th

Battalion to be remembered in history?

HWC: Let me think about and then we'll talk about it. Those things - it never occurred to me.

ES: Okay. They were the heroes when they came back.

HWC: And our people owe a lot to them.

ES: And they really changed Hawaiian society.

HWC: Absolutely. Well, when you say change, yes they were influence in the reshaping of society. When you say change completely, no. I mean, they were responsible - they made tremendous contributions, let's put it that way.

ES: And there's no other unit in the history of the United States that was that small that would have that much of an influence on any society.

HWC: Well, I'm not an historical authority so I really can't answer you that. I'm pretty sure . . . .

ES: How about philosophically - for Asians?

HWC: All right, let's - the forming of our country, Bunker Hill, only a small group. All right during the Civil War, a bunch of kids down South in the college, when the rebels ordered them out - I think there are many instances in our country that groups of people, soldiers. What about lots of things there have been written about the reopening of the West by our courageous soldiers, huh? No, and what about the - I think everything is relative. I think everybody participated in the making of our country. No racial group. I think the Germans, the Poles, the Jewish people, all made America great. It's - I think it's too much to say one particular group change the course of our nation.

ES: We're at the end of the tape, and I'd like to thank you very much for the interview, and if you'd like, we'll be sending you a transcript of what we write on this. Thank you.