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- Concession interview

7-31-81

STATEMENT TO THE COMMISSION
ON WARTIME RELOCATION AND INTERNMENT OF CIVILIANS

Submitted by Elaine Black Yoneda

My name is Elaine Black Yoneda. I am a retired office worker residing at [redacted] San Francisco with my husband, Karl, a retired longshoreman. I am a native of New York City and will be 75 years of age in September.

When the bombing of Pearl Harbor occurred, Karl, a Kibei, born in Glendale, California (raised in Hiroshima), and then nearly three-year old son, Tommy, my 14-1/2-year old daughter, Joyce (by a former marriage), and I were living in the San Francisco Fillmore district, on the fringe of Japantown.

Both of us were known activists in labor, civil rights and anti-fascist organizations for many years prior to Pearl Harbor. I was Pacific Coast Vice-President of the International Labor Defense (ILD) and Congressman Vito Marcantonio was its National President. I held the position of Vice-President from 1937 until the evacuation and was the Secretary of the San Francisco International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Ladies Auxiliary. Therefore, hopefully, my written and oral statements will bring out factors and events about pre-evacuation and Manzanar Camp experiences of a more diverse nature than most presented to the Commission.

About 7:45 a.m. on December 8, 1941, three FBI agents came looking for Karl. I let them in without inquiring whether they

had a search warrant; something I would have demanded if Japan's military attack on the United States had not taken place. When I informed them Karl had gone to his longshore job on Pier 45, (he was a member of the ILWU), they were skeptical and had me call the Union Hiring Hall for confirmation.

The agents searched our small upper four-room flat, taking nothing, and made snide remarks as they looked through some Chinese War Relief cards I was addressing for our Christmas and New Year's messages. They called them "a good cover for pro-Japan activity."

I was attempting to cooperate but was irate at that remark, as well as the travesty of their searching for Karl. I told them, "You're barking up the wrong tree looking for Karl as a possible enemy of democracy. You're wasting valuable time which allows fascists in our midst to disappear from the scene or clean up their acts."

Soon after this they left. Later I was informed by two neighbors that additional FBI agents with sub-machine guns had been posted on roofs facing the front and rear entrances to our home.

At noon I learned from a co-worker of his that Karl had been picked up on the dock and taken to the Immigration Detention Center on Silver Avenue. I called the union attorney, George Andersen. He said he would start habeas corpus proceedings within 48 hours if Karl wasn't set free. On the evening of the 9th, he was released. Karl told me about the 100 or so Issei and four Nisei who were also confined in the Center. We immediately went to the Western Union office where he dispatched a telegram to President Roosevelt offering his service to the United States Armed Forces.

He also visited his draft board but to no avail.

Jobs got scarcer for Karl and in February, 1942, the Army ordered "no one of Japanese ancestry be allowed to work on the waterfront." This, despite the fact that the ILWU and others vouched for him as a long-time fighter against Japan militarists, and who had been a union picket captain when ships loading scrap iron for Japan were picketed by thousands of Chinese and other anti-fascists in 1937 through 1939.

Karl and I attended the Tolson Congressional Committee Hearings-- "Problems of Evacuation of Enemy Aliens and Others From Prohibited Military Zones"--held in San Francisco on February 21 and 23, 1942. The hearings went on even though the President had already signed Executive Order 9066 on the 19th. But how many knew about this or what it forebode for the Japanese-American West Coast residents and communities?

The most outstanding testimony at those hearings, I believe, both orally and written, against evacuation, bigotry and racism, was that of Louis Goldblatt, then Secretary of the California State Industrial Union Council (CIO), presently retired ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer. (Committee Proceedings Part 29, pages 11178 through 11186). It is still germane to the temper of the times and the unjust evacuation this Commission is now investigating.

Karl gave a written statement to the Committee, which they titled: "Japanese American Loyalty to the United States."

Meanwhile, we discussed our future course as a family. With the prospect of no work, car payments on a new Studebaker, plus

rent and food to be met, where and to whom could we turn to help solve our dilemma? Karl heard undercurrents in Japantown that volunteer Japanese American construction workers, for a camp to be built in Manzanar, were being recruited by Los Angeles Maryknoll priests. They were the liaison to the U. S. Army. Without any further questions, we decided to move to Los Angeles. There my children and I could live with my parents while I got war-related work and Karl volunteer for a construction job.

Though we were aware the impending "evacuation" was a violation of constitutional and human rights, we also knew that if it suited the ruling U. S. leaders, they would use the Armed Services and their guns without hesitation to round up all those of Japanese descent, as was done to the Native Americans after passage of the 1830 Indian Removal Act.

Thus, we did not speak out against the edict; nothing must be done by us to impede the war effort. The immediate main task was to defeat the enemy--the fascist Axis (Germany-Italy-Japan) for if they won the war, there would not be a shred of democracy left in this country or anywhere on this earth. We could thrash out the question of rights after victory. That was our rationale as we prepared to go to Los Angeles.

On March 8th, we had the sad duty to attend the funeral of world-renowned labor leader (and our son's godfather), Tom Mooney. Karl was one of the honorary pallbearers and I spoke at the graveside service.

We were able to store most of our furniture, documents and books with union friends. In mid-March, we drove down to my

parents' home. Karl contacted the Maryknoll priests and signed up to go to Manzanar, in Owens Valley. On March 23rd, one thousand men and a few women "volunteer evacuees" of Japanese descent left for Manzanar. 800, including Karl, boarded a train at the Santa Fe depot with whatever belongings they could carry. The other 200 gathered at the Pasadena Rose Bowl, and in a long-car caravan--from an old Ford to a new convertible which were loaded with all sorts of personal possessions--were escorted by Army personnel to the camp.

My parents, Joyce, Tommy and I were at the depot to see Karl off. Newsreel cameras, radio recorders, magazine and news reporters were milling all around, as were the armed military and some Maryknoll priests and nuns. Reams of coverage appeared that afternoon and all the following week. When I have occasion to re-read the LOS ANGELES EVENING HERALD EXPRESS of March 23, 1942 and look at the picture of Karl kissing our son good-bye published therein, the qualms, anguish and uncertainty of that day and the future come to mind.

Karl went with high hopes of helping to build a place livable for those who were to arrive later, at the same time continuing to pressure for acceptance of his enlistment into the U. S. Armed Forces.

The Army personnel and Maryknoll fathers told the volunteers there was no need to worry about personal possessions or holdings they left behind for their families would be the last ones ordered out of Military Area No. 1, allowing for ample time to dispose of

or store belongings.

Suddenly on the evening of Sunday, March 29, the radio blurted out: "Attention, Attention, all those of Japanese ancestry whose breadwinners are in the Manzanar Reception Center: You are hereby ordered to report to the Civil Control Station at 707 South Spring Street tomorrow from 8 a.m. on for processing to leave for Manzanar by noon, April 2nd, or be in violation of General DeWitt's Civilian Exclusion Order No. 3."

I sat stunned in disbelief. Had I heard correctly? What of the promise of the "last ones out" and here it was only six days since their departure? But soon the announcement was repeated. I then immediately called Army Headquarters but was told to call back after 7 p.m. for an answer to my query: "Does General DeWitt's Manzanar order include a three-year old Eurasian child living with his Caucasian mother and grandparents?" When I called again I was given the Maryknoll phone number and told to call there. I do not recall the name of the priest I spoke to. He kept repeating to my one question: " Does DeWitt's order include a three-year old.....?" "You do not have to go, Mrs. Yoneda, nor will you be allowed to go, but your son must go on the basis of the Geneva Accords. That is, the father's ancestry counts and 1/16th or more Japanese blood is the criteria set." I assured him Tommy was at least 50% and that he might even be more Asiatic because my parents came from a region which had been overrun by Genghis Khan and his hordes.

After relating the conversation to my parents, I told them if

Tommy had to go I would go too, come hell or high water, but Joyce would stay with them. They agreed my decision was correct. Tommy, since he was five-weeks old, needed special care because of extreme food and medication allergies and now suffered from asthma as well.

On Monday morning Tommy and I took our places in the long line already formed outside the station. Suddenly an Army officer and a priest came running to where we stood, telling us to "go right in, not to wait in line." I protested but was ushered inside anyway. There the captain refused to give me two application forms and the Maryknoll father kept saying: "We will have a Children's Village where our well-trained sisters (nuns) will take care of your son. You needn't, nor will you be allowed to go. It will be too hard for you." This made me irate and my determination to go became stronger. I turned to the officer with my voice rising and said: "As sure as we are standing here, my husband will be in a khaki uniform like yours before the year is out and I'll be there with our son to see him off." Then turning to the priest, I exclaimed loudly: "Father, for all you know I may be an atheist, but I took an oath to love, honor and cherish, NOT OBEY, for better or worse, and that means something to me. I'll be with my child and husband and never mind the too-hard bit."

After again demanding two forms, they were handed to me. I completed the applications and was given a typhus shot, but I would not allow Tommy to get one; that would have to wait until a doctor was in attendance because of a possible reaction. I also informed them we would take the first train on April Fool's

Day.

The first letter from Karl, a special delivery, came Tuesday, March 31st. In it he implored I not attempt to visit him yet. The barren barracks with unpaned windows, lack of toilet facilities and the harsh gravelly dust storms all would have bad affects on Tommy. Visits could wait awhile though he sorely missed us. He also wrote that work was not what had been promised, nor did he yet know what the wage scale would be. He also mentioned some "characters" among the volunteers. A couple were very unsavory, die-hard, pro-military, emperor-lovers.

On Wednesday, April 1st, at 6:45 a.m., we reported to the railway station. There was much suppressed excitement, bewildered old and young men and women, babes in arms and small children running around. Tommy was exuberant at the thought of seeing his daddy, jumping up and down repeating to my parents, Joyce and me: "I'm going to see my daddy again." Maryknoll personnel were there as well as armed soldiers posted all around.

When the soldiers lined up at each car step, we knew it was time to go aboard with only the baggage we could carry. Some, women especially, had very little with them because of the child(ren) they had to carry. I managed two suitcases and Tommy carried a few toys in a bag. We all seemed determined to refrain from crying as good-byes were bid to relatives and friends. When and where would we see each other again? The train pulled out at 9:30 and arrived in Lone Pine toward sunset. There we were transferred to buses for the eight-mile ride to Manzanar.

What chaos when the buses pulled inside the barbed wire. A number of the early evacuees, including Karl, had volunteered to help arriving families, presumably from Bainbridge, Washington, when lo and behold they discovered some of their own families among the arrivals.

Karl at first demanded to know: "Why have you disregarded my plea not to visit yet--do you want to make Tommy sick?" I merely pulled out a copy of DeWitt's Order No. 3 and handed it to him. (Copy attached.)

After stuffing straw into three mattress tuckings, we were put into Block 4, Barrack 4, in a room with six other people. Though there were already watchtowers with searchlights manned by armed Military Police, there were no toilet or washing facilities--only one cold water faucet at the east end of each barrack and at the west end of the block were six portable toilets, actually for use by the construction crews. Incidentally, the construction crews were all white men; Karl and other volunteers were refused construction helper jobs as promised by the Maryknoll personnel.

Tommy was happy, jumping around and hugging his daddy. After reading Order No. 3, Karl's remorse at the way he had greeted me was intense. We had a good, silent cry in each other's arms. Both of us, with a shot-induced, swollen, feverish arm, spent a most restless night.

The next morning upon going outside we found the faucets frozen. For hours we were unable to brush our teeth or wash our

hands, even after use of the portables. It had been a cold night and it took until noon for the faucets to thaw out. This situation went on for a week. In the meantime, quarters were reassigned. If you were a family of four or more you could bunk together up to seven persons in a so-called "apartment"--a room 20 x 25 feet. We, being only three, were assigned to Block 4, Building 2, Apartment 2, to share with a 75-year old blind man and his 15-year old nephew, the overflow from Apartment 1, where the other 7 members of the Nishimura family were housed.

Our apartment contained five old iron Army cots, five straw mattresses without sheets, and only two scratchy Army blankets each. Two beds were placed near the entrance wall, three at the other end, and an oil heater. There were no chairs, nothing to use for partitions nor closets. Dust from windstorms covered us, coming in through the knotholes. We soon named our quarters "Tommy's Dust-Out-Inn." We were often kept awake by the uncle scratching open sores on his legs but he wouldn't go to a doctor.

When the latrines were opened, they consisted of five toilet bowls in a row with another five back to back--no partitions or doors. One corner was to have some shower heads installed and another corner had five washbasins. Their green lumber walls had many "peeping tom" holes until covered with tar paper.

I began encountering frustrated, horrified faces, primarily among teen-aged girls, as they came into the latrine, especially if Tommy was with me. Some would run away crying. Did they have the Manzanar runs or their menstrual periods? I wondered.

A couple of days of this convinced me something had to be done. After discussing this with Karl, I went to the Administration Building on April 10. There I saw Mr. J. M. Kidwell, Service Division Director, to whom I related the situation, demanding that doors, partitions and shower curtains be provided. He shrugged his shoulders and said, "It is Army specifications." Pounding his desk I replied, "To hell with specifications. If you don't do something soon, there might be mass hysteria and maybe even some suicides!"

On April 18 hot water for the showers and the laundry room became a reality. Soon there were shower curtains, partitions and doors for the toilets.

Karl was appointed Block 4 Leader. "Blockhead" was the expression commonly used by most "evacuees." Wages were at the semi-skilled rate of \$16.00 per month for a 48-hour work week.

On May 8 I went to work as an assistant librarian and recreation overseer in the Block 12 Library and Recreation Building. Wages started at \$12.00 per month, the unskilled pay for the same number of hours, but was soon upgraded to \$16.00 because of library work experience I had in the late 1920's. The extra income was needed to purchase special food and vitamins prescribed by the Stanford Hospital Clinic for Tommy and to buy his corrective shoes which wore out frequently due to the gravelly ground. The soy-bean and corn or rice flour bread cost \$.75 per loaf, the cookies \$1.00 per pound, plus postage from San Francisco. In July we had to stop the order for the baked goods. It was coming in moldy due to the extreme heat--over 100 degrees in the shade for days

on end--and it took four days for delivery.

My parents sent us some bed sheets for use on our cots and for curtains around them. They also sent blankets, a two-burner electric plate and a garden hose. The stove was to prepare other special food purchased from Lone Pine or the camp store, when it opened, if the camp menu was too far off Tommy's diet. The hose was to wash down our room to keep it as dust-free as possible and for the lawn, between Building 1 and 2, which we started from seed sent to us by a friend. The lawn thrived once we could water it regularly.

Karl picked up four empty nail kegs for seats and every scrap piece of lumber and bent, discarded nails he could find was used to build some shelves, a table and chest. Tommy's bouts with severe asthma and other illnesses caused many visits and confinements to and from the camp hospital. The doctor ordered our straw mattresses be thrown out. These were replaced by three Army quilts.

My parents and daughter came on May 9 to visit us. At first we could only meet at the camp guardhouse. After a couple of months of protest to the administration, they could come to our "apartment", and even stay overnight after notifying the Admin. Office of the date and approximate time of arrival. Their car had to be left near the guardhouse. Later, many of our friends also visited us with cameras and took pictures without any restrictions.

Early in May a small group of a dozen or so men calling them-

selves the "Manzanar Black Dragons" appeared. They were mostly Kibei, working as scavengers or repair crews, riding around on a trash truck, displaying a pirate flag: a black cloth with a white painted skull and crossbones and another enscribed in Japanese, "Manzanar Black Dragon Association."

James Oda, a Los Angeles active union member and outspoken anti-fascist was their first known beating victim. They also tried to ram the truck into wooden steps where Karl and Tokie Slocum (a well-known U. S. World War I hero) were sitting. Luckily, they were able to jump aside. The steps were demolished. Complaints were lodged with the Admin. staff, but they did nothing, not even having the culprits remove the obnoxious pro-Japan Black Dragon flags from government property. In fact, Ned Campbell, Assistant Camp Manager, told Karl: "You are all Japanese and will have to live together."

Karl and I had requested and received San Francisco primary election ballots, which we completed and returned to the San Francisco Registrar of Voters on June 5th.

In June a new work project was established in Manzanar. It was war-connected, producing camouflage nets, and only U. S. citizens could work on them. Taking a leave of absence from the library, I started work on the nets on June 22nd. It was hot, smelly work in a wall-less, barrack-length shed. Workers had to wear nose and mouth masks and take salt pills. When a dust storm started, we had to leave the area. There were no shelters available. Again, I started at the \$12.00 rate but soon became a

pattern maker, and the pay increased to \$16.00.

Leaflets dated June 24, 1942, in Japanese and signed by the "Patriotic Suicide Corps" (probably the Black Dragons using another name), and another dated June 26, signed by the "Manzanar Black Dragons" were tacked inside the doors of the men's latrines, urging Nisei not to be fools, to stop working on war equipment, etc. (Copies of the originals which we have in our files are attached at the end of this statement).

The Black Dragons rode around on the truck, still displaying the distasteful flags, urging Issei not to permit their children to work on the nets. From time to time, Ben Kishi, Kibei Black Dragon leader, goaded youngsters to throw rocks at the net workers. I went home with bruised legs a few times.

On July 15, Karl's 36th birthday, he sent off a letter to the ILWU about the possibility of enlistment into the "Dock Battalion" which he had read about in the union newspaper. This also proved fruitless. The following week he and Koji Ariyoshi decided to circulate a petition to President Roosevelt urging the opening of a second front and allowing Nisei to volunteer and/or be drafted into all U. S. Armed Forces. (Ariyoshi was a Hawaiian Nisei "strandee" in San Francisco on December 7th as he awaited a berth home on a merchant ship. He had just obtained his Master's degree in Journalism from the University of Georgia and had come to Manzanar as Karl's cousin). I typed the stencil which was run off at the Manzanar Free Press office. They circulated it and on August 5th forwarded it to President Roosevelt with an accompanying open

letter. This action made headlines and editorials which appeared in many U. S. newspapers, but brought no response from the White House. (We understand the petition and cover letter repose in the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Hyde Park Memorial Library).

On July 31st I had to take what became a 17-day leave from work because of a painful rash and swollen arms due to the dyes used in the net strips. About 16 others also had reactions.

Rumors of all sorts were circulating including one that the Black Dragons had prepared a "death list." When I returned to the net project, I found one of the "unsavory, pro-Japan characters" Karl had written about in his March letter, working there. His last name was Uyemoto but he was known throughout the camp as "General Araki" because for months, he wore his mustache fashioned after Japan War Minister General Araki's. "Why was he there?" I asked myself. A couple of days later, he came to work with it trimmed into a Hitler-style mustache. I observed him talking to four teen-aged boys. They then walked over to my station and "playfully" threw rocks at me. A bloody forehead was the result. After the August 20th stoning, Karl and I went to the front office to report the names of the instigator and attackers that I knew. Ned Campbell was in the office and he informed us Camp Manager Nash was in San Francisco. We left the information with him and we hoped that Nash would return with a new policy on the growing Black Dragon menace. We also sent a letter to the FBI asking them to clean out the handful of fanatics who were making life more miserable than it already was and hindering the U. S. war support

efforts as well.

Election for Block Leader was held August 21 and Karl was defeated. He continued on a night checking job. That day we received a telegram from my father--my 15-year old daughter had run away and my mother had gone to San Francisco in search of her. Could I get a leave to help? I went to the Admin. Office and arrangements were made for a two-to-three-week leave with a ride on Monday or Tuesday with an Admin. employee-couple who were driving to Los Angeles.

On August 23rd, there was a knock on our door. I called out, "come in," A voice asked, "Yoneda-san, may I come in?" Karl answered "yes" and in trooped 14 Kibei. Among them were Ben Kishi and Harry Uyeno (the two I knew by name) talking menacingly in Japanese, which I do not read, speak nor understand to this day. I looked out a window and saw more of their ilk staked outside. The 14 were in our room over an hour arguing and making threatening gestures toward Karl. Tommy sat cowering on his cot as I tried to calm him.

I left on the 25th for Los Angeles and on to San Francisco in search of Joyce. We listed her as a missing person and supplied pictures to the authorities. After a week, we were notified she had been found and would be in Juvenile Hall until a hearing could be held. I had several visits with her but returned to Manzanar on September 15, when no specific hearing date had been set. My mother remained in San Francisco. She and Joyce returned to Los Angeles on September 27.

Tommy's asthma grew worse and his attacks more frequent. We were given permission to make our room smaller by moving apartment 1's wall inward into our area by five feet. The two Nishimuras, their cots and straw mattresses joined their family--a total of 9 persons in a 20 x 30 foot room! We hoped this move would help to lessen Tommy's health problems. Windows could be kept closed nights, no more straw dust nor smell, etc. I went back to work on the nets, taking special care to shield my arms.

Group after group of men and a small number of women, including Koji Ariyoshi and his bride, Taeko, went out on temporary leave to Idaho and Montana to help save the sugar beet crop. Soon Koji wired Karl to help recruit additional workers. We decided Karl should also go. The nursery school had not re-opened and I stopped work since Tommy could not be left alone.

Karl with about 100 others left for Idaho on October 6. After seeing him off, Tommy and I stopped at Block 1, Barrack 14 when we saw its door ajar. The nursery school and kindergarten were to be housed there. It had re-opened that day and Tommy enjoyed playing with the other children. The next morning we returned to the school with some toys to add to its meager supply. While talking to one of its aides, I learned the kindergarten section needed a helper. I went for a job interview, was hired and started to work there on the 8th. I felt this would be very helpful, as I could be nearby should Tommy get an asthma attack, yet not be constantly with him and I would be doing something useful.

Joe Kurihara, Hawaiian Nisei and World War I veteran, (a behind-the-scene Black Dragon advisor with whom Karl had had many confrontations) accompanied by two Kibei, came over late that afternoon looking for Karl. Kurihara did the talking: "We came with a proposition for Karl." They did not tell me nor did I ask what it might be. I just told them it had to wait until his return from Idaho.

More war saving stamps for Tommy, packages of toys and candy arrived from Karl, plus a crate of delicious Idaho apples, which were shared with some neighbors and friends. After a pay day, he sent two war bonds. Tommy was thrilled over all this attention. He drew pictures for his daddy, had me print messages he dictated and tried to copy. He also made sure I enclosed them with my letters to Karl. I wrote about camp happenings and rumors. One of the latter grew persistently louder--a military recruiting team was headed this way.

We stocked food which could be prepared for Tommy when needed. But he had only three minor attacks during the six weeks Karl was gone, so we ate at the mess hall. This accorded me time to reflect on other than the fearful experiences that had befallen us because of the unjust, illegal incarceration, without hearing or trial of all West Coast persons of Japanese descent.

- I mulled over the fact how fortunate we were to be able to have the moral and financial support of my parents, other relatives and many scores of friends, and of their innumerable letters and gifts. The latter consisted of books, magazines, clothing, toys

Tommy could and learned to share with other children, a portable Victrola and records, etc. Their inflow and our responses kept the Manzanar post office busy. If the authorities opened letters or packages, we were unaware of this.

- I thought of my parents' visits and friends who were able to get to the camp despite gas rationing. How our spirits were lifted during and after seeing them, of the exhilaration we felt as we listened to a record of Paul Robeson's magnificent voice singing the "Ballads for Americans" and other current songs.

Events came to mind such as the very small number of old and new friends who helped celebrate our 9th anniversary in May and the much larger get-together for Karl's 36th birthday in July, where we served goodies purchased at the Camp Co-op store; the rabbit hunt to save the cabbage patch (our son still recalls this happening); the viewing of occasional outdoor movies on hot, summer nights and the community "sings"; attending weddings; Karl had been best man at Koji and Taeko's ceremony in September (I was in San Francisco searching for Joyce); of the two picnics in which we were participants and allowed to go outside the barbed wire fence. We climbed toward the majestic mountains to a creek where trout was caught and roasted along with hot dogs we brought up with us.

- Instead of rumor, I soon learned from a reliable source that, indeed, Colonel Kai Rasmussen of the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MIS) would be in Manzanar soon on a recruiting mission. I wired Karl on November 13 to come back quickly if he

wanted to see the Colonel. He returned on the 18th with more war saving stamps and cash in his pockets--sugar beet toppers were paid the prevailing farm wage.

The MIS team did arrive November 28, 1942. Black Dragons busily cruised around urging Nisei not to enlist. About 50 applied but only 14 Nisei and Kibei, including Karl (the oldest) passed the bilingual test. They were immediately inducted as buck privates in the U. S. Army for Pacific Warfare service. We held a lively celebration that night with many well-wishers dropping by. My parents, who had been visiting that weekend, took a few of our belongings with them in anticipation of Tommy and my early return to Military Area No. 1.

About 10 to 12 men began sulking around our barracks; three of them followed Karl and me for a couple of hours. Karl asked Camp Police Chief Gilkey for protection but none showed up. Therefore enlistees Koji Ariyoshi, Louis Obikane, James Oda and others took turns guarding us with baseball bats until the day of departure December 2.

Their families and friends were kept inside the barbed-wire fence by MP's posted along the exit, as the 14 commenced their journey to Camp Savage, Minnesota. No one was allowed near the bus, not even for what might turn out to be a last embrace considering their dangerous commitment. Everyone, including men, had tears in their eyes. Tommy cried out: "Daddy, don't leave me. I want to go with you and help beat up the Nazis." Suppressed sobs could be heard as the bus pulled away.

Early that evening I had to take Tommy to see a doctor. He had cried most of the day, calling for his daddy, had the runs and his temperature was 103. The doctor, suspecting dysentery, ordered him into the hospital. He was kept there until mid-afternoon of the 5th. The diagnosis was simple diarrhea.

Block 4 Nisei resident and former U.C.L.A. student, Yo Ukita, with whom we formed a lasting friendship, stayed with me a couple of nights, while Tommy was hospitalized.

I received a wire from Karl Saturday morning. They had arrived in very cold and snow-covered Minnesota.

During lunch on the 6th heard about the vicious beating given Fred Tayama the night before and what had happened at the hospital while he was being treated and that a suspect, namely Harry Uyeno, was under arrest. Tayama was the former Los Angeles Japanese American Citizens League Chapter President and one of the founders in July of the Manzanar Citizens Federation along with Karl, Koji and six others. He had just returned from attending the National JACL Conference held in Salt Lake City, Utah, where a resolution had been adopted requesting Nisei be drafted into the U. S. Armed Forces.

Though Karl was in the U. S. Army, our son, whose fourth birthday would occur on January 10, was classified a "potential dangerous enemy" and could not return to Military Area No. 1 without a special permit issued by General DeWitt. We could have gone to Minnesota at our own expense but I had to consider Tommy's health and the uncertainty of length of time Karl would be there.

Thus, on the afternoon of December 6, Tommy and I headed for the Admin. Building to inquire if his pass had been received, not knowing that what was to turn into the "Manzanar Riot" was in progress in front of the office--a most frightening experience!

I heard Joe Kurihara speaking to a crowd of about 1,000 in Japanese, (it sounded strange even to my ears and later I was told it was "pidgeon" Japanese.) He mentioned the name "Yoneda" a couple of times but I didn't know in what context. Mr. Chester, Admin. staff member who understood Japanese, came over to me and said, "Elaine, they are in an ugly mood and Joe is saying that Yoneda ran away from them to hide in the Army but Yoneda's son is still here so we can still 'get him' ". I stood there stunned in disbelief. Then Ben Kishi took the podium and he, too, mentioned "Yoneda" about three times.

Satoru Kamikawa, Issei U. C. graduate and a MANZANAR FREE PRESS Japanese Section reporter, came running over. He repeated what Chester told me, adding: "Go back to your apartment, lock yourself in, and don't even go out for meals."

With Tommy in tow, I ran to the Camp Police Station requesting protection at our apartment but none was offered. We proceeded at a run to 4-2-2, barricading the door with the inside bolt and the table.

Yo Ukita came over towards dusk and said she would try to get us some food and spend the night, although things were tense out there. An hour later she returned but was unable to stay because her father had forbidden her to do so due to threats to

him and the rest of their family.

At nine that night I became aware of movements outside, then loud banging on kitchen utensils came from Mess Hall No. 4. After midnight, anguished screams came from the direction of the Ito apartment in Barrack 1. Not able to contain myself, I warned Tommy not to make any noise nor put on a light. I moved the table and ran across to the Ito's. There I heard the horrifying news that their youngest son, James, a signer of the petition to President Roosevelt, was shot and killed by an MP as he headed to his Admin. Building night job. Mother Ito, James' sister, Martha Kano, and I embraced in tears. They said: "You had better go back to Tommy. We know you and Karl are not guilty of James' death as some are saying. Please watch out."

At 4:30 a.m., December 7, unable to withstand the growing anxiety for our safety, I tied a scarf on Tommy's head, and put on his coat with its shiny lining outside to give him a little girl's appearance. With nothing but my son and purse in hand, I began running in the darkness toward the Admin. Building.

I did not know martial law had been declared. Near the west end of Block 4, Barrack 1, a voice called out: "Halt, who goes there?" A soldier appeared with a drawn, bayonet-equipped rifle, flashing a light in my face. He asked: "What are you doing on this side of the fence?" He mistook me for a "hysterical wife" from the MP encampment a mile away. After I explained our plight and his having heard about the 14 Japanese American enlistees, he took us to the next guard and so on down the line until the office

building was reached. It was surrounded by troops clustered around machine guns. After yet another explanation, this time to an Army officer, we were then escorted into an office by a soldier. When Campbell saw us, he said, "Oh, I forgot about you." (He knew full well we were on the Black Dragon death list.) In the largest office, desks had been pushed against the walls and two long rows of Army cots had been placed in the remaining space. Nearly 60 "pro-Americans", men, women and children, had already been transported there for protection. They were trying to sleep fully clothed.

At daybreak we were all taken by Army trucks to the MP encampment and crowded into the small, two-room dispensary building for meals and "rest." Late that afternoon our good San Francisco friends, Tom Yamazaki, Issei U.C. graduate journalist, his Nisei wife, Ruth (both anti-fascists), and two young daughters arrived at the MP quarters. Yo Ukita and six other members of her family were also brought in. She indicated it would be alright for her to remain with us. But her father insisted they all go back to Block 4 and the Army took them back. (It would be five years before we were to meet again.) I inquired about the whereabouts of Koji's pregnant wife but no one seemed to know. The next day an Admin. employee told me Taeko was okay and hoped to leave for Minnesota soon.

After three days of requesting an opportunity to obtain a change of clothes for Tommy and me (some of the others taken into "protective custody" had baggage with them), we were escorted by an armed soldier in a jeep to 4-2-2.

A crowd, all wearing black armbands, soon gathered. Our escort kept knocking on the door urging us to hurry. Changing our clothes as quickly as possible, I packed two suitcases and Tommy again held a bag of toys. I had been told to bring back only what I could carry for all of us would soon be moved again.

Halfway back to MP quarters I suddenly realized that I had forgotten my purse. Our driver called for and was given reinforcements. He had qualms about returning to Block 4. Upon reaching the barrack, we found three young boys, Mas Nakajo, George Fukumoto and Seigo Murakami's son, trying to break off the door lock. They fled when we appeared and I retrieved my purse in a hurry. This proved to be the last time we were to see 4-2-2 and the belongings we left behind.

On December 10, some 67 were convoyed to an abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp in Death Valley. Most buildings were in need of repairs, windows and toilet bowls had been smashed. We all rolled up our sleeves to clean up and patch up as best we could. Fred Tayama (his head bandaged from the beating), and his brother Tom, former restaurant operators, became our cooks. What a change from Block 4's fare. A package of candy through Manzanar came from Karl but no letters.

Life at the CCC camp was one of waiting and more waiting for my son's pass and Karl's letters while I worked as one of the kitchen crew. A lecture and slides on the beauty of Death Valley, as well as short, guided tours of the area by Death Valley Park personnel were accorded us.

Tommy landed in the makeshift hospital with a high fever and crying for his daddy.

E. R. Fryer, San Francisco WRA Regional Director, drove in on December 15 and told me he would try to rush Tommy's permit. The next day 18 letters and cards from Karl and four from friends were delivered via Manzanar. They were all written prior to December 7 and it was obvious he and the others did not know we were in Death Valley, although I had written about the events that had taken place and of our removal to the Valley.

I heard from a new Manzanar arrival that Karl and others had wired various heads of governmental agencies inquiring about their families' well-being.

Campbell and Fryer returned from Manzanar the evening of the 16th and informed me to pack and be ready to depart for Los Angeles the following morning. However, along with Tommy's permit (copy attached) there was a letter of instructions: 1) I must complete an affidavit each month (to be supplied by General DeWitt's office), attesting to the fact Tommy had or had not been in any fight because of his ancestry; 2) He had done nothing to endanger national security; 3) I was to report all address changes; 4) He was to always be in a Caucasian's custody, namely his mother! I demurred at point 4, inquiring: "If Tommy was to spend weekends or what have you with any of our Chinese, Filipino or Negro friends, would he be in violation of his right to be in Military Area No. 1?" Campbell admonished me: "You always raise unnecessary questions." I replied: "Not unnecessary; I'm just trying to avoid any mis-

understandings that might lead to his return to a concentration camp." At this, Fryer tore up the instructions, remarking: "Just get those affidavits in and keep General DeWitt's headquarters informed of any address change, no matter how temporary."

Campbell told me the office had received a long wire from Karl demanding protection for his family from mob violence and that he, Campbell, wired back a reply that we were safe and well-cared for. He failed, however, to inform Karl that the brunette wife he had kissed good-bye less than three weeks ago was now "silver-haired". (This, no doubt, an aftermath of the Manzanar Riot and the residue of the other Black Dragon confrontations I had.)

We bid farewell to the others with wishes that they would soon get out to more fruitful lives. Ruth, Tom and I tearfully parted, promising to keep in touch. A thought flashed through my mind--would we ever get together again? (Later, Tom became a Japanese language instructor for the Armed Forces. In 1945 he joined the U. S. Occupation Army in Japan. There he was killed in an aircraft accident. We remained close friends with Ruth until her untimely death in 1975.)

Campbell drove us to Lone Pine where I purchased bus tickets with our funds. My parents met us at the terminal.

It must be borne in mind that all the above occurred before the unfair 1943 loyalty questionnaire issue; that we were not JACL members then, but had been (and still are) anti-fascists cooperating with them to help fight the fascist Axis and its inherent

genocidal tenets. (Attached are copies of our letter dated November 24, 1973 to Ms. Ellen Endo, then English editor of the Los Angeles RAFU SHIMPO, and the article "Manzanar: Another View" which appeared in the paper's December 19, 1973 issue, and a letter from Tad Uyeno, dated December 21, 1973, which may throw additional light on some of the factions within Manzanar, the first U. S.-style concentration camp, established in March, 1942.)

Incidentally, the notarized reports and change of address notices to DeWitt continued until October, 1944. This was even after Karl had seen active no-man's-land duty in the North Burma Battle of Myitkyina. (He had been assigned to the China-Burma-India OWI Psychological Warfare Team and served until November 11, 1945.)

Tommy and I soon returned to San Francisco, where I worked on a coffee warehouse belt line, obtained through the ILWU Local 6 hiring hall, for three months. Then we visited Karl during the Easter Week of 1943. Returning to San Francisco I immediately obtained a secretarial job in the Oakland office of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America Union (UE Local 1412, CIO.) This was war-related and from late 1943 until April of 1946, I was its Office Manager.

In the meantime, Tommy's condition, because he had not been under constant care of a trained allergist, was escalating. He spent a month under observation at the San Francisco French Hospital and in October, 1944 to mid-June, 1945 was in the Stanford Convalescent Children's Hospital in Palo Alto with asthma and suspected rheumatic fever. Testing showed his high fevers and

stomach disorders were the result of consuming food that caused internal hives to form. His diet was reduced to only 16 items and he was given allergy shots three times a week. Thus it took several more years of testing and many more hospitalizations until some respite was attained. All at our expense; the Army and Red Cross were too busy to care for him due to the heavy load of casualties coming through this area. In June, 1945, through my position with the UE, we were covered under the Kaiser Permanente Health Plan which lessened our medical costs.

We firmly believe our son's condition would not have become so severe had he been able to continue under the care of Stanford's allergy department instead of going into hiatus for nearly a year due to "evacuation."

The occurrences relating to Manzanar and Death Valley are taken from my diary. I kept it because Karl and I believed that the issue of the internment of those of Japanese ancestry, without hearing or trial, would have to be addressed some day and I should be prepared to participate in the process. As events evolved, where some of us were further victimized by the failure of governmental officials to put a stop to the Black Dragon activities in Manzanar, the need seemed even greater. Their anti-U.S. and "Long Live the Empire of Japan," etched in 1943 into wet cement around the former camp reservoir site, can be seen even today. (Attached are copies.)

The question is often asked were there any psychological affects? Yes, Tommy had nightmares, waking up crying and demanding

to know: "What will happen to my daddy if the enemy gets a hold of him? Why didn't he go to fight Hitler instead of where the mean ones like those who came to our room in camp were?" My answer--"He's a soldier and had to go where ordered"--seemed to satisfy him, although his crying spells continued. After he overheard a conversation with friends about Karl's determination to serve in the Pacific, the nightmares increased in intensity.

We moved to Sonoma County in 1946 to try our hands at chicken farming. Tommy was in the second grade. The affects of internment lasted for a long time. For example, his pain and confusion when he saw a swastika in a classmate's home and was taunted with anti-Japanese and anti-Semitic insults. He knew this was wrong, yet he questioned whether he should confront his friend or "keep his mouth shut."

Later, in the McCarthy era, when he was 11 and in the sixth grade, after a Civics class, he came running home and asked: "Will I have to go into another concentration camp because my other grandparents came from Russia?"

In 1952, insult was added to injury in direct relation to the "evacuation." The Department of Justice Claims Division, after we agreed to settle our modest loss claim of \$1,355.00 (the Studebaker, five cartons of books, pictures and other documents) for \$1,010.00, in turn notified us it would be reduced to \$677.50 based on compensational items. This document contained a stamped addendum--"Above amount excludes interest of one spouse deemed ineligible." Thus, the payment we received was only for \$460.00.

We could have started appeal proceedings but felt it would be a futile and costly undertaking.

Though I had been housed, fed the same as all evacuees, and paid the meager sum of \$12.00 or \$16.00 per month for a 48-hour work week, I was denied a share of our joint losses. (We have only two of the exchanges with the Claims Division in our files, copies of which are attached.)

We never received a clothing allowance, nor reimbursement for the special foods, vitamins and corrective shoes we supplied for our young child so that he could retain some semblance of health.

In 1957 we first became members of the Sonoma County JACL Chapter. When we moved back to San Francisco in the 1960's, we transferred to a Bay Area Chapter. We were active in obtaining trade union support for the successful Title II of the McCarran Act repeal and presently for union support for Redress/Reparations for Japanese Americans and Aleuts, now pending before this Commission.

I feel very strongly there is a great need for redress as well as monetary reparations, free from any tax, to all those who endured confinement in a U. S.-style concentration camp. If some do not want payment, they could have the prerogative to assign their award to a community undertaking or charitable institution.

But most of all, we must see that it is made impossible for such racist, repressive edicts to be issued and used ever again against any group of people in these United States.

July 17, 1981

Elaine Black Yoneda
ELAINE BLACK YONEDA