

HEADQUARTERS 381ST INFANTRY
APO 96

13 July 1945

C-E-R-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-E

I certify that I have known Tec Third Grade KIYOTO YONAMURA, ASN 30104150, Infantry, United States Army since 11 June 1945, and that during that period 11 June 1945 to 5 July 1945, this man was assigned as Nisei Interpreter to S-2 section, 381st Infantry, and that over this period of time he continually performed his duties in a meritorious manner.

On 21 June 1945, T/3 Yonamura voluntarily offered his services and went forward to friendly front line rifle units, where he broadcast a surrender appeal for three hours over a loud speaker system. This appeal was directed towards MADEERA, where the 24th Div enemy CP was believed to be. In this area, enemy resistance was the most fanatical as this unit has experienced, largely composed of officers and non-commissioned officers. The task was made more hazardous by the large number of enemy infiltrators operating in rear of our front lines. Knowing that a loud-speaker system would be a target of primary importance to the enemy, T/3 Yonamura nevertheless stood his post and conducted the appeal in a most superior manner. This appeal caused hundreds of civilians and Japanese soldiers to surrender. 381st Infantry alone processed over 1500 civilians and 141 prisoners of war, and many other were seen surrendering to adjacent units.

Upon completion of his broadcast, T/3 Yonamura returned to the regimental command post and took an active part in screening the civilians and classifying the prisoners of war. During this particular day, the regimental command post could have better been described as a front line rifle company. Just 350 yards to the north-east of the command post, a group of seven Japs were killed in a cave of a small knoll from which they were firing a light machine gun. This cave entrance opened towards the area where T/3 Yonamura was working. A group of six more Japs were killed 300 yards due north, and a group of 26 more were killed 400 yards to the north-west. This last group of Japs also manned a light machine gun, and all three groups had good observation and fields of fire towards the command post. During these actions, not once did T/3 Yonamura leave his post, but he and the other interpreters remained with the prisoners and civilians, and their calmness was largely instrumental in maintaining control over the hostile groups where a fenced-in inclosure was not available.

On 22 June 1945, T/3 Yonamura again voluntarily went forward to front line rifle units and broadcast a second surrender appeal. This appeal likewise resulted in numerous surrenders.

After the island was declared secure, a Jap prisoner of war was

taken forward by T/3 Yonamura to a cave entrance that, according to the prisoner, led underground to the location of the 24th Div enemy CP. The cave was said to contain the Commanding General with some 300 officers and men, as well as several hundred civilians. The total friendly troops on the scene amounted to the fire power of one rifle squad, with no automatic weapons. The nearest friendly troops were 2000 yards distance. Nevertheless, a loud speaker was placed in the entrance of the cave and T/3 Yonamura broadcast a special appeal to the Japanese General on behalf of the American Army Commander, offering him and the remainder of his unit an honorable surrender. During this broadcast, a group of eleven enemy soldiers were discovered in another cave only 75 yards from T/3 Yonamura. Another interpreter called to these to surrender. As four of this group came out, one at a time, the other five were detonating hand grenades, either attempting to commit suicide or toss them at our troops around the cave entrance. Several times our troops took cover to this grenade action, but not once did T/3 Yonamura cease his efforts on the loud speaker system. Although the Japanese General refused to surrender, another prisoner of war was captured the following day who stated that he was in the cave during the appeal, and that the appeal was very effective and could be heard throughout the cave.

These are a few of the instances that demonstrate the performance of this and other Nisei interpreters assigned to work with regimental headquarters. T/3 Yonamura, through his untiring efforts, his superior devotion to duty, and his disregard for personal safety that his unit might benefit thereby, has reflected a great credit upon himself and the military service, and is held in highest esteem by those with, and for, whom he worked.

Thomas S. Teague
THOMAS S. TEAGUE
Major, Infantry
S-2