

Excerpts from the letter of a former Japanese American student: (If used it might be inserted after the long paragraph on page 13 of ms.)

It is only now after these many years that I know the thoughts, the feelings of these young evacuees. At my request a former student, one of the boys who proved his loyalty in the famed 442nd Japanese American Combat team, has as he says let his "feelings run".

His first reaction to evacuation orders "was one of absolute anger." His thoughts: "I'm an American. How come they are going to single us out? What right have they to do this? On what grounds do they make the accusation? This is not right.

"Then when all the shouting died down it was the submissive Oriental 'old folks' attitude that prevailed and the ole 'lets not make it worse than it is'... 'we must obey'... 'we will recover' attitude that still is very evident."

With all too little time in which to settle affairs, "our businesses were sold at a tremendous loss, and those who took advantage of us really put on the ole squeeze. Can you imagine selling a restaurant business for \$2000.00 total, including the inventory, physical plant and all? We couldn't even keep a copy of the menu.

"Then there was the home and all the furnishings--just incredible the monetary losses involved. In addition many family heirlooms--because of Japanese affiliations--were destroyed. Photos of people in Japan, medals presented for professional excellence, time honored scrolls, family jewels that had been handed down from my grandparents ents...lost forever."

"And what about the impact on a high school senior? It meant not playing the varsity basketball team, not enjoying the companionship of friends we had known since grade school." It meant the dream of attending the local University was shattered. It meant fear--fear

of not being allowed to live in the United States--fear of never again being free--fear of being sent to Japan.

Then came the fateful day. "We were all herded into buses headed for the relocation centers. It was hard to take. To see many old folks weeping...completely whipped and beaten...a sad picture...one I will never forget.

"The nightmare was not over. When we arrived at the Puyallup Fair Grounds (an assembly center in Washington) we were thrust into small rooms probably intended for livestock. Talk about being mad. Can you imagine four families sharing a room no larger than the laundry room where we had class?"

The building in which he and his parents lived was divided into twelve cubicles. With a seven foot single board wall separating the cubicles there was "No privacy at all. It was easy to hear the conversations of families living at the farthest end of the building.

"It rained constantly, so it seemed. Mud and 'goop' every where. Whata mess."

Yet, these displaced persons made the best of a miserable situation. There were fun times, but whenever they looked up they saw the guard towers and rifles pointing at them. They really "wondered about the Bill of Rights...the Constitutions... 'all men are created equal'... 'freedoms'... 'not guilty unless proven'." These were the ideals they learned in school. They believed them...then evacuation. They began "to understand that this is a Caucasian country."

"From this horse<sup>ranch</sup> we went to Idaho and into the 'Country Club' where only eight families shared a barracks. This time they were kind enough to allow individual families to have their own niche. We even had the luxury of a pot bellied stove. Remember?"

"My mother died in Idaho. I feel that she suffered from the evacuation and had inadequate hospital care. There are many scars." This had to be one of them.

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