

October 19, 1943

*Yip*

Dear Larry:

I think your piece needs more work, and I hope you'll have the time to give it a once-over. Most of the first four pages are recapitulation of stuff we have done earlier, and while they give you a taking-off place for the article, I don't think we can afford so much of it. The piece really begins on page 5 with the paragraph "Two full years have passed since the Pearl Harbor attack.". You take up there the intensification of race consciousness of the evacuees, and what you say about it earlier on pages 3 and 4 ought to be incorporated with this. Your piece, you see, is not what you tentatively entitled it, "Farewell Little Tokyo." It is rather about your own personal discovery and conviction that the problem of Japanese Americans is one of color and must be correlated with the other problems of color in the United States. I stress this as your personal conviction. I doubt if the majority of evacuees have traveled that far as yet. Eddie has; probably Joe Oyama, Noguchi and a few others of the leaders perhaps, though I doubt if even Kido would go the whole way with you on this. I am sure you're right, you understand, and I think the group as a whole needs to come to your realization. But I think you're off on the wrong premise when you make this general in belief, and not just your own point of view. I think the piece needs the personal pronoun "I."

Then comes the question where you go with the article after you have established this. It is weak in this respect as it now stands. As I implied earlier I don't think the "Farewell Little Tokyo" title stands; what is more important is "Hello What?". What methods of procedure do you recommend for the evacuees themselves -- what forces shall they align themselves with specifically, once they are resettled? What are the forces all groups of color must align themselves with to make of democracy a reality? If you answer these questions you give something for the evacuees themselves to consider and ponder over as well as to other interested

groups. I hope somewhere you will work in the one-way ticket to Tule Lake business, which is now in the first few pages that don't belong where they are now. This stuff is important in showing what can happen to an individual who isn't tough enough to live on marginal democracy -- and therefore typical of what can happen to more and more marginal people in our civilization.

Does this give you enough to work on so that you can have a go at this again? You're on the edge of a good piece here, and I want you to make it come clear. How soon can you get it back to me? By the middle of next week? At any rate, get it back the first instant you can and drop me a line so that I know when it's coming.

Yours,

Hi, Larry. Margaret has asked me to add any suggestions I have since we all feel here that you have the makings of solid piece. Here goes: how about mentioning and discussing the two schools of thought the resettled evacuees are concerned with in their post-evacuation lives? One extremist school believing that no two Japanese American should be seen together in public; the other maintaining a tight, secluded social existence in which only JAs are allowed (and waiting for the day when they can make their exclusiveness complete by being employed by a Japanese boss). We know how simple the answer is to these two extreme viewpoint, yet to those embracing these views it is a fundamental question. Some direction and leadership to these relocatees (?) must be given. And it is important to our non-JA friends to know that this big problem exists. Tolerance, as shown by "white" church groups in weekly mixed dances ~~xxxxit~~ isn't enough. Acceptance is what we need and want. Visiting in homes as friends, going to the horseraces together as friends, etc. The evacuee may not know why but he is unsatisfied with "assimilation" when "whites" accept him only in white-group activities -- and thus he reverts back to insular living.

I want soon to comment on your editorial regarding criticism of the PC in the October 2nd issue and on the letter in the same issue from a reader. The letter shows well, I think, that your readers are looking to you for leadership and direction in their present and future conduct (i.e., way of living).

I met Teiko last week and promised her all the help I can give. Perhaps you might assure her of this too. I think New York can be a swell testing ground ~~for~~ to prove that JAs can work together.