



THE PEOPLE NOBODY WANTS

An on-the-spot observer tells what happened in the lives of more than 100,000 Japanese when they were ordered out of the Pacific Coast Combat Zone.

By **FRANK J. TAYLOR**

ON THE fateful day that Lt. Gen. John L. De Witt, chief of the Western Defense Command, ordered the removal of all persons of Japanese blood from the Pacific Coast Combat Zone, chunky little Takeo Yuchi, largest Japanese farmer in "the Salad Bowl of the Nation," California's Salinas Valley, was wrangling over the telephone with a produce buyer in San Francisco.

"That fellow purchases for the Navy," he said, slamming down the phone. "He wants me to grow more Australian brown onions because the Navy needs them. The Army tells us to evacuate our farms right now. Just where do we stand, anyway?"

In a dozen areas, from San Diego to Seattle, set apart on Pacific Coast defense maps as "Japanese islands," thousands of American citizens of Nipponese extraction were faced with similar dilemmas. The Nisei, or second-generation Japanese, had long anticipated that the Issei, or Japan-born aliens, would be ordered from the coast defense zone. But not that American citizens might go with them. Like Takeo Yuchi, they were stunned.

The evacuation order from the Army was an unquestioned military necessity. Too many mysterious

messages between unidentified ships at sea and secret radio stations on the shore had been intercepted to leave any doubt about the presence of Nipponese undercover agents on the Pacific Coast. Coincidences between ship departures and submarine attacks outside Pacific ports added up to the same thing.

Too many times glassy-smooth seas, making the take-off of planes from submarines possible, coincided with detection of unidentified planes over West Coast cities. The shelling of oil tanks by submarines off the Southern California shore synchronized suspiciously with intercepted messages about Army movements. The complete absence of sabotage on the Pacific Coast merely convinced military authorities of one thing: that saboteurs were being held under wraps by Japanese agents until the order came from Tokyo to strike. There was only one sure way to remove this hazard, and General De Witt took it.

His order arbitrarily transplanted 112,905 of the 127,000 people of Japanese ancestry who live in the country. At least half of them were rooted in the soil; the rest were fishermen, merchants, hotelkeep-

ers, nurserymen, gardeners or in domestic service. It temporarily deprived 71,896 American citizens of their constitutional rights. It launched in its course the greatest hurry-up mass hegira this country has seen—one that will change the economics of the Western United States permanently in some respects, as was evident in microcosm from the effect of the order on the life of Takeo Yuchi and the men and women, both white and Japanese, with whom he did business.

"Tak's going to leave a hole here when he pulls out," a professional man who went to school with Yuchi told me the day De Witt's order came through. "I've known him ever since he was the best sprinter in Salinas High."

Deposing an Onion King

LAST year Yuchi and the 125 Japanese who work on his farms raised 70,000 bags of onions. The Navy bought the entire crop because the Australian browns in which he specializes have tough, hard skins and they keep well on long voyages. Yuchi's farms also grew 2700 carloads of lettuce—about one tenth of the Salinas Valley output—which other Japanese, young American-born men and women, packed and shipped in a modern mechanized packing plant. Yuchi likewise planted 300 acres of beets, "to sweeten the soil," as he says, but the beets also helped to relieve the sugar shortage to the extent of more than 2,000,000 pounds, refined at the near-by Spreckels factory. His 1942 onion crop was already in the ground when the evacuation order came. The crop will top 1941's if by next August his white partner, Tom Bun, can find



Too many mysterious messages between unidentified ships at sea and secret radio stations on the shore made the Jap evacuation a military necessity. Here a Jap family clings to its belongings under the watchful eye of the M.P.

workers to harvest them after the Japanese have migrated over the mountains.

Still in his thirties, Yuchi already had wrested a fortune estimated at a quarter of a million dollars from the Salinas Valley soils. His father, Tsurumatsu Yuchi, left Japan in 1898, worked briefly in the Hawaiian sugar-cane fields, then joined a gang in the California beet fields of doughty Claus Spreckels, who pioneered the beet-sugar industry in this country. When the white men's backs broke thinning the beets, Spreckels used Chinese. The Chinese soon quit the fields for the cities, and Spreckels brought in Japanese to save his business. The Spreckels mill, largest beet-sugar factory in the country, has tried Hindus, Mexicans, Filipinos, Okie and Arkie migrants, both white and black. Charles L. Pioda, veteran manager of the plant, says that the Japanese were the most efficient field workers the company ever employed.

But Tsurumatsu Yuchi, like the other Nipponese who worked in the beets, had come to America to make a quick bank roll with which to return to Japan and buy a small farm or retire. They soon discovered that the riches of "Gold Mountain," as both the Chinese and Japanese called California, weren't to be won by working for the white bosses. So, loving the thick black earth that the white man farmed so prodigally, Tsurumatsu Yuchi invested his hard-earned savings in a few acres of land, then sent for a picture bride from Japan. Tsurumatsu was much older than his wife, which is true of many of the fathers of Nisei, and he passed away soon after his son, Takeo, finished high school. When Takeo took over the operations, the elder Yuchi was farming 100 acres with the aid of a small tractor.

"I still keep that old tractor," Yuchi told me with pride. "We're farming two thousand acres now with fifty tractors, eighteen trucks and six pickups. Over two hundred families make a living out of this operation. Now what are they going to do?"

Yuchi has been operating all year round, just as the white Salinas Valley grower-shippers do, by maturing lettuce crops in the Imperial Valley and Arizona's Salt River Valley in midwinter. Foreseeing the evacuation of aliens from the Pacific Coast, he advised many of his workers to head East with their families this winter, instead of returning to California when the Arizona deal ended. A number of them took his advice, but in New Mexico they were turned back by NO JAPS WANTED signs.

The Shadow on the Valley

YUCHI'S own family, consisting of his alien mother, his Salinas-born wife, his eight-year-old daughter, six-year-old son and a baby daughter, is an average California-Japanese household. His wife's brother, Hideo Abe, is in the Army. His younger brother, Masao, was called in by the local draft board for his physical examination the day I was there. Only rarely has a Japanese been turned down for physical reasons. Farm work has kept them fit. Of the 21,000 Japanese families on the Pacific Coast, one in every five has contributed a son to the Army.

"Well, are you going to go voluntarily or wait until the Army evacuates you?" I asked.

"It's a tough one to figure out," Yuchi replied. "I'm American. I speak English better than I do

Japanese. I think in English, not Japanese. Maybe the easiest way out is to forget about onions for the Navy and join the Army too."

After leaving the Yuchi household, I called on another Nisei, Dr. Harry Y. Kita, a dentist. At least a dozen Salinas people had told me, "If there's one good Jap in this town, it's Doc Kita." Prior to Pearl Harbor, Kita, a University of California graduate, enjoyed a thriving practice. Half of the patients who sat in his three chairs were whites. Since then, most of them had been from the Japanese community.

"I haven't much practice left," said Kita, with a laugh. The Japanese-Americans always laugh when they speak of their adversities since Pearl Harbor—a hearty but forced laugh. "I understand why it is," he continued. "I feel American. I think American. I talk American. My only connection with Japan is that I look Japanese."

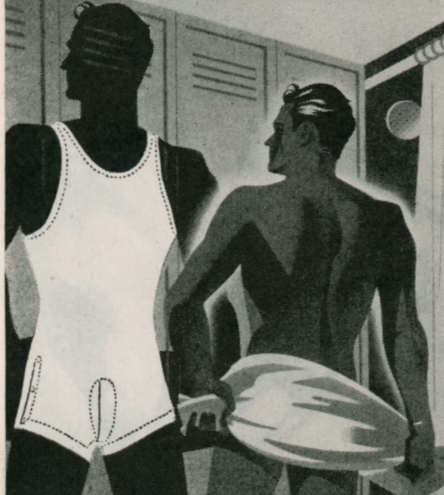
"Could you tell a good Japanese from a bad one?" I asked him.

"No more than you could," he replied. "But if I knew one who was disloyal to this country, you can bet I'd turn him in."

Doctor Kita took me out to his home to show that he "lives American." The house was a low, attractive, six-room place, built in 1938 with a \$6500 FHA loan. There wasn't a Japanese touch anywhere. His vivacious young wife, Fumiko, born and raised in Watsonville, was as American in manner as any white woman in town. Mrs. Kita's brother, Joe Yamamoto, was already "over the mountains." He joined the Army on January first, and was assigned to Fort Francis E. Warren in Wyoming. Five-year-old

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THE PEOPLE NOBODY WANTS

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Patricia, the older daughter, romped home from school chattering about the pickup truck and trailer in which "daddy's going to take us on a long, long trip." Christina, the younger daughter, was one year old that day.

"It's pretty tough to leave your lifetime work and savings behind and pull out with what you can put in your trailer," said Kita. "Especially when you know that wherever you go, you're not wanted."

The Kita-family saga is also a typical one among the Japanese of the Salinas Valley. His father, Yosachiki Kita, came to the United States in 1894, on the Navy sloop Pensacola. His honorable discharge papers are one of the dentist's proud possessions. The elder Kita went to work in the Salinas beet fields, bought five acres of land in 1899, then sent for his wife. Harry Kita was born on the little farm in a plain house his father built. It still stands behind the new FHA house, which the doctor built after working his way through college and establishing his thriving practice.

A few days after my visit to his home, Doctor Kita invited me over to the Japanese-American Citizens League clubhouse in Salinas to meet a group of Nisei who were trying to solve the problem of evacuating themselves voluntarily from the valley. On receiving news of the removal order, a score of them had chipped in enough money to send two of their number, both successful farmers, to Idaho to look over a 2000-acre farm about which they had heard. The property, which was in the hands of a Federal credit agency, consisted of 600 acres of apple orchard, 400 acres of vegetable land, some pasture land, and a packing and dehydrating plant.

Facing East

"The farm was under two feet of snow, but it looked good anyway," reported Kenzo Yoshito, who had just returned from the survey. "It would take seventy thousand dollars to swing the deal, but we could farm it co-operatively and support one fourth of the Japanese now living in the Salinas Valley."

Yoshito, a handsome, clean-cut Japanese, was born in Hawaii, grew up in Alameda, worked his way through the University of California, carrying both commerce and agriculture courses. Since 1934 he has farmed near Salinas, raising lettuce, sugar beets and tomatoes—and two sons.

The group at the meeting pored over the map of Idaho and hung on Yoshito's words as he described the country beyond the Sierra Nevada Range, which few Pacific Coast Japanese have ever crossed.

"We don't know much about apples," objected Henry Tanda, president of the JAFL local, "but maybe we could get some apple growers from Watsonville."

Henry Tanda, born in Salinas, attended the University of Redlands, then started to work his way through the Stanford premedical school. While there, he met Margaret Ushida, who was working in a home near the campus. After that he couldn't keep his mind on his studies, so they were married, and Henry joined his three brothers, who worked in the lettuce sheds at Salinas. Henry, James and Charles

and their young wives recently completed three modern homes built with FHA loans.

"We'd pull up cactus and plant vegetables anywhere, if they'd tell us where to go," James Tanda said.

"Yeah, but suppose you're running a drugstore," cut in Richard Endo, the leading druggist of Salinas' Little Tokyo. "California doesn't reciprocate with Idaho in pharmacists' licenses, so I can't move my pharmacy."

Endo, a graduate of the University of California, and his partner, Tad Tomihiro, run two drugstores in Salinas. Endo owns a modern new home on the west side of town. He and his wife, Lily, have three small sons.

"A lot of us city slickers will have to switch to farming," remarked another Nisei, laughing the forced laugh. He was John Urabe, a native of Salinas who had studied engineering. A shrewd businessman, Urabe operated an automobile agency in Salinas until the war liquidated auto production. One of his enterprises is a real-estate subdivision on the east side of town. When he laid out the tract he donated a three-acre playground to the city.

From white vegetable growers I heard the other side of the story. The Salinas Vegetable Grower-Shipper Association had just published a brochure entitled NO JAPS NEEDED, to counteract a widespread impression that Californians would go hungry if the Japanese truck gardeners were removed. This idea gathered momentum after the freezing of credits of alien Japanese by the Treasury Department, the day after Pearl Harbor. When this happened, Los Angeles housewives found their markets almost emptied of

fresh vegetables and fruits. The produce appeared again only after the Treasury released the alien accounts. However, NO JAPS NEEDED cited U. S. Department of Agriculture crop-report statistics that were reassuring. Although the 40,000 Japanese agriculturists grew one fourth of all the fresh vegetables and berries produced in California last year, they dominated only a few crops. They controlled the strawberry market, growing 90 per cent of the berries. They grew three fourths of the cucumbers, onions and spinach produced in the state; half of the celery, snap beans and cauliflower; one third of the tomatoes. But in other staple crops, such as Lima beans, beets, carrots, corn, lettuce and potatoes, they grew less than 12 per cent.

Vegetable War

"Only four and a half per cent of all the vegetables grown in the United States are produced by California Japanese, or under Japanese influence in California," the Grower-Shipper Association concluded. "If all vegetable acreage produced, controlled or influenced by Japanese were completely eliminated, the loss in available fresh food supply to the United States and Canada would be insignificant."

The dislike of the militant Grower-Shipper Association for the valley's Japanese farmers is an old and bitter one. The association is composed of a few score large-scale white growers who lease lands, produce lettuce, carrots and other fresh vegetables the year round in the Salinas, Imperial and Salt River valleys for the Eastern markets.

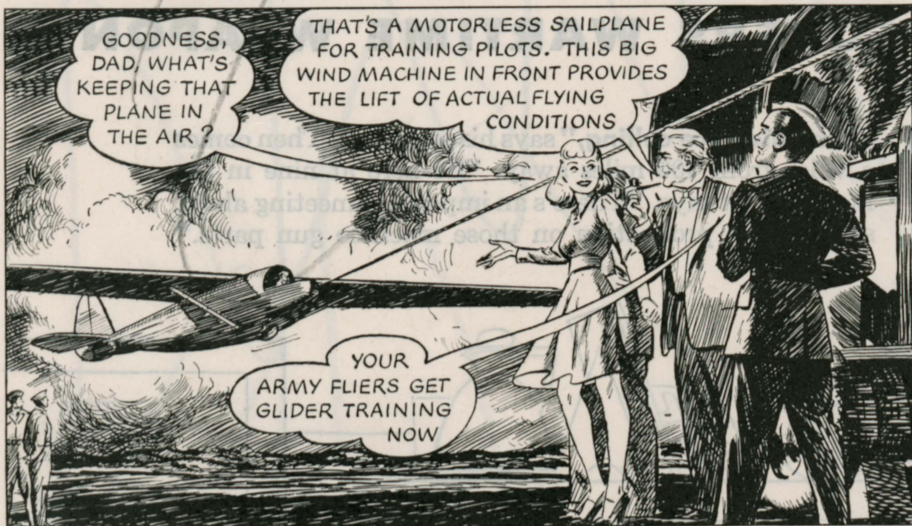
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"She's going to speak on what part men should be permitted to play in the war."

WONDERS OF AMERICA

Silent Warbirds



GOODNESS, DAD, WHAT'S KEEPING THAT PLANE IN THE AIR?

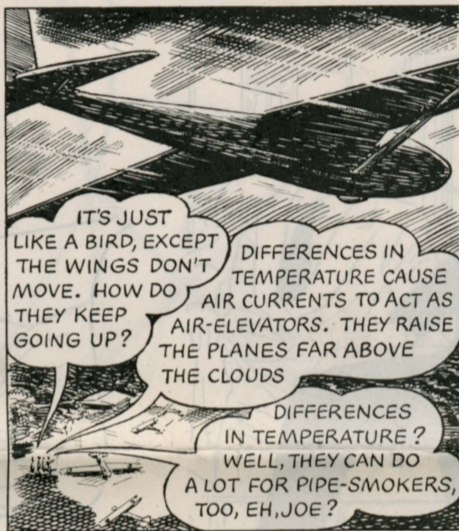
THAT'S A MOTORLESS SAILPLANE FOR TRAINING PILOTS. THIS BIG WIND MACHINE IN FRONT PROVIDES THE LIFT OF ACTUAL FLYING CONDITIONS

YOUR ARMY FLIERS GET GLIDER TRAINING NOW



GLIDERS CAN TAKE OFF FROM ANY HIGH GROUND. GETTING A TOW IS THE QUICK WAY. THAT PILOT IS READY TO CAST OFF THE TOW-LINE. A SMOOTH TAKE-OFF, I'D SAY

SMOOTH AS A PIPE-LOAD OF PRINCE ALBERT



IT'S JUST LIKE A BIRD, EXCEPT THE WINGS DON'T MOVE. HOW DO THEY KEEP GOING UP?

DIFFERENCES IN TEMPERATURE CAUSE AIR CURRENTS TO ACT AS AIR-ELEVATORS. THEY RAISE THE PLANES FAR ABOVE THE CLOUDS

DIFFERENCES IN TEMPERATURE? WELL, THEY CAN DO A LOT FOR PIPE-SMOKERS, TOO, EH, JOE?



HERE'S HOW GLIDERS CAN BE USED TO TRANSPORT TROOPS. TRAINS OF GLIDERS ARE RELEASED BY REGULAR PLANES TO CRUISE FOR SURPRISE LANDINGS

IN RECENT LABORATORY "SMOKING BOWL" TESTS, PRINCE ALBERT BURNED **86 DEGREES COOLER** THAN THE AVERAGE OF THE 30 OTHER OF THE LARGEST-SELLING BRANDS TESTED — COOLEST OF ALL!

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IN 'MAKIN'S' SMOKES, TOO, DON'T FORGET THAT PA. CRIMP CUT FOR BETTER PACKING AND DRAWING — AND FOR EASIER SHAPING, FASTER ROLLING



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PRINCE ALBERT THE NATIONAL JOY SMOKE

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Last year the Salinas Valley alone yielded 27,000 carloads of lettuce. There have been years when "the Salad Bowl of the Nation" grew half the head lettuce sold in the country's produce markets.

At one time the lettuce growers, like the sugar-beet growers, depended upon Japanese for field labor. As the Japanese, one by one, became farmers in their own right, and competitors, their places in the field were taken by Mexican or Filipino labor. White men and women, largely Oklahomans, handled the trimming, icing and crating in the packing plants, but they were never able to endure the back-breaking stoop work in the fields. Only the short-legged Japs could take that.

Shortly after December seventh the association dispatched its managing secretary, Austin E. Anson, to Washington to urge the Federal authorities to remove all Japanese from the area. Anson pointed out to the War and Navy departments, the Attorney General, to every congressman who would listen to him, how the Salinas Valley sloped off into Monterey Bay, a most inviting landing place for an invading army; how the valley's Japanese, if they chose to do so, might blow up bridges, disrupt traffic and sabotage defense.

"We're charged with wanting to get rid of the Japs for selfish reasons," Anson told me. "We might as well be honest. We do. It's a question of whether the white man lives on the Pacific Coast or the brown men. They came into this valley to work, and they stayed to take over. They offer higher prices and higher rents than the white man can pay for land. They undersell the white man in the markets. They can do this because they raise their own labor. They work their women and children while the white farmer has to pay wages for his help. If all the Japs were removed tomorrow, we'd never miss them in two weeks, because the white farmers can take over and produce everything the Jap grows. And we don't want them back when the war ends, either."

Traffic in Soil

In every Pacific Coast community from San Diego to Seattle there are counterparts of Anson, swelling the chorus, "We don't want them back." They are so vociferous that many of the Japanese *evacués*, looking back at their little farms as they departed for beyond the mountains, felt they could never return. Ironically, to them, at least, General De Witt asked them all to prove their loyalty to the United States by planting and cultivating, until the day of departure, the crops that they could not return to harvest.

Since the enactment of the California alien land law, no Asiatic alien has been able to buy or lease farm land legally in the state. The law applied to Chinese, Hindus, Koreans, as well as Japanese. The former accepted the discrimination philosophically, but the astute and land-hungry Japanese found ways to get around the white man's law. They owned or leased lands in the names of their American-born children, who had rights under the Constitution, or through white dummies. The white growers of the Salinas Valley charge, for instance, that Takeo Yuchi is the front man behind whom scores of aliens hold some of the valley's richest lands. So far, Anthony Brazil, the diligent district attorney, has been un-

able to find any legal flaws in the titles and contracts by which the American-born Japanese farmers own 700 acres and lease 5000 more in Monterey County.

Yuchi consistently refused to join the Salinas Vegetable Grower-Shipper Association, although Anson says he was invited to join every year. Yuchi's reason was that he would always be in the minority, hampered by rules made by his hostile competitors. Yuchi could see how that might work by glancing at the Los Angeles produce mart, where white operators were a 10 per cent minority in a market dominated by Japanese.

The Yellow Octopus

The Los Angeles produce market is unique. Over a period of years a syndicate of Japanese who grow mainly in the rich Santa Maria Valley 140 miles south of Salinas gradually gained control of the distribution of fresh vegetables and fruits in this largest metropolitan produce-distributing center west of Chicago. The syndicate's tentacles reached out into hundreds of neighborhood retail fruit and vegetable stands operated in the city's supermarkets. It controlled other retailers by refusing them such Japanese-monopolized merchandise as strawberries, celery, cucumbers and fresh tomatoes, unless the white merchant bought all his produce through Japanese distributors. When an outside grower-shipper tried to sell in Los Angeles, the syndicate froze him out by depressing prices until he quit.

The astute and industrious Japanese have been formidable competitors in other fields than fresh vegetable marketing. In Los Angeles harbor they monopolized the fish industry until the Navy froze their fishing fleet and took over Terminal Island, on which it was based. In Monterey they monopolized the abalone-fishing business, which calls for skillful diving to pry the huge mollusks loose from underwater rocks. In Seattle, Japanese operated more than half of the city's hotels. In Portland they controlled a third of the hotels. In San Francisco, Japanese merchants at the gateway to Chinatown were well on the way toward capturing the best of the bazaar trade until the Treasury padlocked their stores. Seattle, Tacoma, Yakima, Portland, Sacramento, Fresno, San Francisco, Salinas, Monterey, Los Angeles, San Diego and El Centro supported Little Tokyos from which Japanese commercial interests radiated, controlling properties that were estimated to be worth from \$55,000,000 to \$75,000,000.

The Western Defense Command was too busy strengthening the defense of the Pacific Coast from Panama to Alaska to be concerned with this heated interracial commercial strife. But it was vitally interested in the fact that one of Takeo Yuchi's farms in the Salinas Valley was adjacent to a key defense airport. Also in the fact that his fifty tractors and twenty-four trucks and pickups were parked each night just outside his packing plant, which is on the main north-south coastal highway. Granting that Yuchi is a loyal American, the Army men argued, what about the aliens in his employ who drive the tractors and trucks? What would keep them from leaving equipment on the highway at a crucial moment and blocking it? On the neighboring Spiegl ranch, FBI men took into custody one Shunso Matsuda, an alien known as the

"Emperor of Chualar," and suspected of being Tokyo's key man in the valley. At the Shinto Temple in Salinas' Little Tokyo, they picked up three priests, all arrivals in this country within the year, one of them identified as a former Japanese police officer.

Few of the Nisei of the Salinas Valley ever attended this Shinto Temple; they had their own Presbyterian church on the opposite side of town. Nor did they belong to the mysterious Black Dragon Society, whose entire local membership was rounded up and hustled off to internment camps in Montana about the time the FBI discovered an alien in near-by Santa Cruz in an oceanside house packed with cases of fireworks and ideally situated for setting off signaling flares for enemy naval craft.

Without waiting for the Army to move them bodily, the Nisei launched their own Go East, Young Japanese movement as soon as General De Witt announced, on March second, that within sixty days every person of Japanese blood must be outside the prohibited zone. This removal was encouraged by the authorities by allowing the voluntary *évacués* to choose their own destinations and to keep their automobiles and any other possessions they cared to take or ship to their new homes. Those who waited for the Army to do the job had to go wherever shelter was assigned them and to leave behind their cars and personal property.

The main stumbling block to the migration was the unwillingness of the Rocky Mountain and Prairie states to accept the Japanese in any large numbers. Of all the governors asked to help find resettlement lands, only Colorado's executive offered to cooperate. Whereupon General De Witt, backed by the President's proclama-

tion of semimartial law for the eight Western states, set up a Wartime Civilian Control Authority, with power to move anybody anywhere, regardless of race, creed or color. To protect the crops and property left behind by the *évacués*, the WCCA enlisted the Federal Reserve Bank as custodian. To help them find new land, it brought in the Farm Security Administration. To build shelters in a hurry, it called in the Army engineers. To help groups evacuating voluntarily to new homes of their own choosing, it provided financing.

"The Japanese were never Americans in California," Dr. C. L. Dedrick, sociologist and the Census Bureau's expert on the WCCA staff, said recently. "Now, when they are dispersed, they may ultimately become absorbed in American life, not by intermarriage, but through losing their concentrated identity. This may be their great chance to become Americans."

Doctor Dedrick's hopeful forecast may or may not turn out to be sound. One thing, however, is certain—the Japanese-American loyalty creed, to which all Nisei publicly subscribe, is about to get its first real test, particularly these portions of it: ". . . I am firm in my belief that American sportsmanship and attitude of fair play will judge citizenship and patriotism on the basis of action and achievement, and not on the basis of physical characteristics. . . . Although some individuals may discriminate against me, I shall never become bitter or lose faith, for I know that such persons are not representative of the majority of the American people. . . ." In such a test the tolerance of the new host states will also feel the fire which has been ignited by the obvious requirements of a stern military emergency.

WHAT HITLER WANTS YOU TO THINK

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designed to keep them in a constant state of terror. By means of periodic war scares, carefully planned and rehearsed, he gradually produced a set of national jitters that left these nations weakened and demoralized.

A typical war scare was engineered in Belgium in January, 1940, when an obscure Nazi paper reported heavy German troop concentrations along the Belgian borders. Belgian papers fell into the trap by widely reprinting the item. Blood pressure rose all over Belgium. A day later a German plane carrying two German officers became "lost" over Belgian territory and was forced to land inside the frontier. Oddly enough, the officers had in their pockets German General Staff "plans" for an invasion of Belgium. Simultaneously, the German Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop, summoned the Belgian ambassador to his office in Berlin, picked a fight over some minor economic demand, and finally threw the ambassador out of his office, shouting, "You want war! Well, you'll get it!"

Belgian officials immediately sent a hurry call to General Gamelin, chief of the French forces, warning that Belgium momentarily expected a German attack. Defeatist rumors inside Belgium added to the terror. German agents launched whispering campaigns that Belgian defenses were obsolete and would crumble like paper before the German onslaught. Swastikas ap-

peared mysteriously on curbstones, on the walls of buildings and in the mails, while Nazi agents distributed Belgian flags bearing swastikas. "Keep this flag," they warned. "When the Germans arrive sew it onto your coat. Then you will surely be well treated." But the Germans did not arrive for five months—months of hideous suspense.¹⁶

The Or-Else Technique

Hitler's terror was often less than subtle. The night before the invasion of Norway, the German ambassador invited many prominent Norwegians to his home and showed them Baptism by Fire, a movie taken during the invasion of Poland. Bombed cities, raging fires and crushed bodies were pictured in harrowing detail. Later, over champagne and a midnight supper, the German ambassador quietly observed that the Poles could have been spared this tragedy had they granted Hitler's demands. Other nations, he suggested, would do well to remember Poland's fate.¹⁷

For years the Nazis bloodlessly invaded the Balkans, sending countless German agents armed with brief cases and impeccable manners to cultivate the friendship of business and professional men. Countless German commercial travelers abroad were Nazi agents. From 1933 the Germans

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