

Gila Relocation Center
61-2-B
Rivero, Arizona
February 16, 1943

Dear "Big Sis"

I just received your post-card and I'm sorry to have caused you worry about my coat, when you must have had so much to do. We were all very sorry to hear about the condition of your father. I do hope he recovers rapidly. It wasn't too serious was it?

We all had our winter coats, but have gotten rid of them finally and all are quite well, except me. I'm all right - just that my bones have suddenly become weary & should I say my mind also? I got an excuse to rest up for a week from my work, I really never felt so fatigued as I do now. I was working in the T.B. ward for one whole month (one month is the time we have to serve in there), but because we lacked so much in helpers we had to do extra work and I just became a little too over-worked - imagine one overworking!?! You know how people hate that disease. As soon as girls find that they are to be transferred to the T.B. ward they simply quit. On the whole the way the hospital had been managed was simply disgusting - too much responsibility and work was put on student nurses and nurse's aide, therefore many nurses and aides have threatened to leave.

I'm working for selfish reasons, I want to learn more about the field of nursing and well, I do have satisfaction in working among patients.

Things have been happening to make our lives experience this war fever. It really is not pleasant. Since the draft got around to the age of 18 to 35 the army has come into this relocation camp asking for volunteers, in fact, they are registering them and making it just about compulsory that all volunteer. Ever since they first arrived young nice fellows have been grouping together discussing the problem. Many are burnt up about the situation for the fact that after having been interned into these camps, the army still demands more. They all say they would have gladly volunteered if they were outside, but when they were outside and had volunteered they were refused and they became considered as enemy aliens etc. Also this new idea of the army of segregating the Japanese from the Caucasians to form a separate battalion seems to hurt the nice boys considerably. Following are some questions asked by the fellows:

Why segregation in the army? Why were not the Japanese American put on draft basis? Why were the women not released if they were considered loyal enough for the army? Weren't the women everywhere receiving

special treatment, a form of discrimination? Why were native sons of California and other reactionary groups and individuals continually harping on the evacuees when the implications of the War Department actions were clear? Could the regaining of evacuee rights be guaranteed? What about the tremendous property losses suffered by the evacuees? Could the American prejudice ever be overcome?

But there were no hard and fast answers to most of these questions. The army representatives had answered some, but most of the answer lay with the evacuees. The counter-question was: Could the evacuees through their actions prove to the American public that they were not enemies and justice was due them as much as to any other Americans? Were the Japanese Americans going to stake their future in America or elsewhere?

I don't think such questions have helped the nicis any for already they have gone through enough. Because the response for volunteering was so very poor and because of the reluctance that the army men sensed they have begun to threaten. Whether because of the poor response or not, just today the F.B.I. men have begun rounding up nicis and kibei and some nicis. Since the beginning of the round-up the atmosphere around was sickening. There were small groups gathered looking so solemn and so worried. One man has been taken from our block and we all do sympathize with his wife and tiny tots, oldest

is 10 years old and three others ranging down to some months. At present, as the F.B.I. is making the rounds this whole camp is under martial law. This situation is certainly making the attitude of the nisei antagonistic. Imagine to come into this concentration camp and the still drag people elsewhere. The boys are willing to join the army, but when they see such goings on you can't blame their hostile feeling. Things seem to be happening every minute. I can just understand the feeling of the affected family since we were through it. Dad didn't even want to go outside because he hated the feeling of it all. I believe everyone is on the end of their nose just wondering. All I can say is that we all pray for the end of this horrible war.

The weather here has suddenly become warm, summer here already. I imagine this is suppose to be spring, but surely feels like summer to me. All this month has been windy and dusty.

I'm trying to enter the St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, Minnesota. They sent me applications for entrance and whether I will be accepted is a question to be hopefully awaited. I haven't sent the application back since I still have to get my medical and dental examination.

Did I tell you that my brother is

working in the camouflage net factory weaving nets? Well, he is - hoping to make some money because \$19- doesn't seem sufficient - I'm just guessing.

I heard from Shizu Iwahashi and she informs me that she is now working as nurse's aide at their hospital and likes it, feels it practical.

Before I forget and I imagine you are wondering when I'm going to tell you - about my size for the coat - sis tells me size "14" is best for me as my shoulder is broad. The width of my shoulder is "13 1/2" ~~14~~.

I've heard of Mr. Nicholson of Pasadena - of Kings Church - have you not? He's been wonderful to our evacuees. With a truck given to him by one of the evacuees he has been delivering baggage of evacuees to such camps as Manzanar, Poston, Gila, Arkansas, Lordsburg and others. He's just happened to come into camp this morning he was greeted by soldiers with bayonets. Nevertheless he was able to enter in spite of martial law. He brought in two persons for special speakers for our Wednesday night vesper service and had planned to stay two nights, but because no meetings can be held he is going back to Pasadena.

Well, I believe I have written enough, haven't I? I better close now.

Thank you for remembering my coat. By the

way, I believe sis has something to ask of you.
I do hope we aren't taking too much advantage of
your willing kindness.

The folks wish to be remembered to you
and your father.

Very sincerely,
Martha

From.
M. Marooka
61-2-B
Rivers, Arizona



VIA AIR MAIL

Miss Violet Sell
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California