

For some time, I had been worried about my status with the several agencies that had to approve all people who were released from the centers as I had been in Japan from the ~~XXXXXX~~ September, 1939, to December, 1940.

I finally wrote to Mr. Conard in an effort to check on rumors that I had heard:

District 5 Avenue F Barrack 23 Unit 3  
Santa Anita Assembly Center  
Arcadia, California

August 21  
1942

Mr. Joseph Conrad  
National Student Relocation Council  
Southern California Branch  
715 South Hope Street  
Los Angeles, California

Dear Mr. Conrad:

Thank you for your kind letter of the 19th. I am seeking entrance to the University of Nebraska graduate school, but as I have an individual problem that you might help solve, I am taking advantage of your invitation to write. I realize that you are busy and have a vast amount of correspondence to read and answer, so I will try to be as brief as possible.

It has come to my attention that it would be exceedingly difficult for persons who have lived or studied in Japan to leave assembly or relocation centers to take jobs or attend schools in areas outside of the vital defense zone. This strikes home very hard as I was in Japan from September, 1939, to December, 1940.

My contention is that residence in Japan is no evidence of disloyalty to America; on the contrary, it seems to me that anyone reared under democratic principles would, upon going to Japan, lose any illusions he may have had about Japan's "new order." Having been there, I am probably more aware than the average American what we are in for if we are defeated; I have seen Japan's military government in action and want no part of it. Had I found Japan more congenial to my nature, I would not have returned when I did. I suppose that there are many others in the same position that I am in who feel the same way.

My claim of having been reared under democratic principles is not an empty one nor is it a half-truth for my early education was obtained entirely in the public schools; my parents were surprisingly liberal and never sent me to Japanese school; consequently, I never had the opportunity of studying the language until I went to Japan.

I cannot help but feel that any decision barring nisei who have been to Japan from being released from centers in order to attend school is comparable to barring other American citizens who have studied in Germany or Italy from schools here.

I realize that your burdens are so great that you cannot

take the time to review every individual case, but my desire to continue my education is no spur-of-the-moment idea that I have concocted in order to be released from this or any other center I may be sent to. All through my upper division work, I consciously studied with the idea of working for an advanced degree. Because of that, I stayed in school until the very last day that it was open to nisei students with the result that I was unable to take advantage of voluntary evacuation to inland states.

If you have no authority to judge this case, I should be grateful if you would forward this to the proper persons.

Thanking you for your time and trouble, I am

Very truly yours,

*Joseph B. Ishikawa*

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