

Hello there, senior!

First of all, permit me to introduce myself. I am Paul Tani, a former resident of this center. I graduated from the high school in June, 1943, worked in the Co-op Store No. 1 for the next two months, and then I was kicked out of Topaz to Cleveland, Ohio. I lived at the Beta Theta Pi House and there I met many of the former S. F. Mikados. After a short visit there I moved a hundred miles southwest to a small town, Tiffin, where I spent the next eight months acquiring my first year at Heidelberg College. During June and July of this year, I resided in St. Louis. Then, I went to Philadelphia where the headquarters of the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council are located. I spent a few days there interviewing many of the Council officials there, and getting the low-down on the Council, talking with the W. R. A. officers of that city. I went back to St. Louis for a few days to become a private in Uncle Sam's Army. I was placed in the Enlisted Reserve Corps as I came here to Topaz, the vacation spot of Utah, to talk the potential college freshmen and freshwomen. Today, I'm leaving for St. Louis where I'll spend my remaining days as a civilian.

Secondly, the cause and purpose of this little discourse. During the last week, I was going to ask the High School officials if I could talk to you seniors as a group. However, because the offices were so cluttered up with students and the teachers and others of the administration were so heavily laden, I didn't ask for the meeting. This little sheet of paper, I hope, will be a substitute for what I was to say to you high-and-mighty-seniors. At a meeting, you could have asked questions, but unfortunately by the time that you have read this paper, I will be well on my way to the city of the "blues." However, sometime between October and December, Tom Bodine, Field Director of the Student Relocation Council, will be back again in Topaz with one of us collegians. At that time, if you have any questions pertaining to the Council and to student relocation, ask Tom and his companion will be more than willing to answer your questions.

I have tried to interview as many of you seniors individually as I could, but unavoidably some of you have eluded me. But from the interviews (I reached almost five-sixths of the senior class) I found that most of you are on the verge of "losing fight". I want you to bring both feet on the side where you and your folks think they ought to be. That side wants you to make the most of the present conditions. True, the conditions aren't the best. As a person who has relocated and then come back to the center, I realize that the conditions here are far from what they should be. But, if one could "find fight", buckle down and study hard, work hard, and play hard, and not "waste time," one could almost enjoy life here. There are two ways of looking at things. You could look through rose colored glasses and see things as they ought to be (optimistically), or you can look through jet black colored glasses and see what is the matter with everything (pessimistically). You, seniors, try the

former pair of glasses. It's hard, but this is war, and there are a myriad of things that are hard during wartime. Conditions in California aren't ideal. Washington and Oregon aren't what they used to be either. You wouldn't be perfectly happy in Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, New York or any other state nowadays. You should be thankful for the cool summer nights here in Topaz. Many are the evenings that I slept without covers in Ohio and St. Louis because of the eternal heat. There are other things that you could be thankful for, too. I don't know Dr. Carver's exact words but they ran something like "Take what you have, and make the most of it." There's our challenge to you, Seniors!

It almost sounds as if I'm encouraging you to remain in the center, doesn't it? Well, I do advise it. That is, of course, until the day you receive your diplomas. Then, RELOCATE! Some of you will go to schools, colleges and universities. Others will relocate to seek employment. Those of you who have already lost fight, and those of you who have no plans, start thinking of your future. I know and realize the proximity of the Army to you fellows in this class. I'm on the verge of being called for active service myself. But, I spent a most profitable and enjoyable year at Heidelberg College since graduating from this same high school. Maybe, some of you will be fortunate enough to do the same thing at some other college. Some of you will remember Himo Tsumori and Tommy Nitta. Both of them have already passed their physical examinations, but they're going back to their respective colleges in this fall. Some of you will ask why I am not going back. I've been in the Enlisted Reserve Corps for almost two months. I consider myself lucky for not being called for active service as yet. I don't know how much longer I will be a civilian but I doubt if it will be more than a month. I couldn't learn much in a month at a college. But those of you fellows who will not be eighteen by next October have an excellent opportunity to finish at least a semester of college work. Therefore, if you are not in the Enlisted Reserve Corps by September of 1945, relocate! Possibly to a college, or possibly to work. Nevertheless, RELOCATE as soon as possible after your GRADUATION!

You may be interested to know what else I found as a result of our interviews. Thirty-eight percent of you are planning to or will attend colleges or universities. That is, more than one out of three of you want to go to college and that is a very big percentage. Of the members of the graduating classes, of January and June, 1944, a little more than twenty-five percent are now in colleges. Your class percentage is 13 better than theirs if plans go through as contemplated. Fourteen percent of you want to attend business schools. Twelve percent of you will go to trade schools. Five percent want to become nurses. Four percent will attend other types of specialized schools. Twenty-five percent of you seniors are planning to relocate for purposes other than for acquiring higher education. The last two percent have no plans. There's your statistics seniors!

May I stick in another suggestion to you college-bound seniors. Why not form a "college-bound club"? Your function may be to hound the Student Relocation Council Office for the latest news about the colleges and the universities, to form a booklet about student relocation with comments by graduates of THS now in colleges which you can pass around to all the seniors (something like "From Camp to College"), to help Mr. Yamate and his committee to raise more money for student aid, and to help keep the morale of the rest of the class and the rest of the residents as high as possible. If you do form such a club, you can probably think up more things that such a group can do. How about it, potential collegians?

There have been two copies of "From Camp to College" circulating among you. We now have two more copies so that more of you can read it sooner.

Well, you omnipotent and omniscient seniors, I guess that is all. The very best of luck to you in the present academic year, and don't forget to MAKE THE MOST OF THE PRESENT CONDITIONS. So long, and thanx for the time.

Your friend,

Paul Tani