

Shigeo Nagatomi
Shingo

Board
Mr. Heath
Mr. Morgan

November 23, 1943

Q: You were born in Japan. When did you first come to the U. S?

(Interpreter called in)

A: In 1933.

Q: He came over for a short visit and then went back to Japan?

A: He says he came to America once and never went back to Japan since. Before that time he was in Canada. He came to Canada directly on his first trip. Then he went back to Japan and then he came to the U. S. and never went back again.

Q: He had his religious education in Japan?

A: Yes

Q: Does he want to stay in America when the war is over?

A: He can't live here too long. It depends on the future of all Japanese in America. If he can continue his work, he will stay, but if there are not many Japanese left here and his work no longer requires him, as he is a Buddhist, then his future is not here.

Q: Does he think most of the people of Japanese ancestry will go back after the war?

A: He doesn't know.

Q: Is he subject to orders from the headquarters of his church as to where he should go?

A: If there are any such orders, he has to obey. As far as the headquarters in Japan are concerned, ~~he~~ if he wants to go back to Japan he may, or if he wants to stay he may; they do not give any direct orders.

Q: Are there several sects of the Buddhist church as there ^{are} of the Christian church?

A: Many; his is the Shinchu.

Q: Is that a large sect or a small one? Does it have any connection with the Japanese government?

A: It has no connection with the government.

Q: Do any of the sects have?

A: None of them; only Shinto maybe.

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

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Q: Does the sect with which he is associated teach any of the teachings of Shintoism.

A: Oh, no! There is a decided difference between Shintoism and Buddhism. Buddhists pray for Buddha and in Shintoism they have their own God and that is who they pray for.

Q: Does any Buddhist church teach that the Emperor of Japan is a descendant of heaven?

A: No.

Q: Has he, aside from his position as a minister, ~~has~~ any connection with the Japanese government?

A: No.

Q: Has he ever been connected with a Japanese language school? Or any Japanese school other than the church?

A: No, and no connection with any Japanese school except Sunday school.

Q: Does he consider his church in America as either pro-American or pro-Japanese?

A: The Buddhist, like the Christian, does not like war; he has no connection with war. They teach only religion and it is against the teaching of Buddhism to teach anything about war.

Q: Does he teach anything that would lead young people, American citizens, to look upon Japan as their country?

A: He doesn't tell any nisei to be loyal to Japan; the only thing he teaches is that you have to be honest to yourself. If you are truly loyal to Japan, don't say that you are loyal to America just to try to relocate.

Q: His statement that Buddhism was opposed to war and wanted peace might be taken to mean that he thinks Japan is wrong in fighting this war as Japan is supposed to have started it.

A: As a religious person, he cannot say whether one country is right or another. From the teachings of Buddhism he himself could tell which country is right. But he, as an individual, cannot say which is right and which is wrong.

Shinjo

Q: Which country would he prefer to live in after the war is over?

A: He has some family and a church in Japan, his father's. It is a tradition in Japan to pass along a church from father to son; his father died 4 years ago and as things here made it impossible for him to go back at that time he feels that after the war, even if he wanted to live here, he would like to go back to Japan and look after this church which is his church.

Q: Does he feel that it would be fair to draft nisei boys into the army?

A: Sure, every country is the same; they are citizens.

Q: Would it be right to ask them to fight the Japanese if necessary?

A: Oh, yes!

Q: Does he feel that nisei have a future in America?

A: He feels that the nisei in America, if they are really loyal, should try to do the best for America. The American democratic type of government should endeavor to make the Japanese-Americans feel like they belong here and should accept them and treat them as nationals, as they have been in this WRA center, and if they treat them outside after the war as they do in this center, then for nisei who live in America there is a future. If they are discriminated against, he feels differently.

Q: When he went to school in Japan, he had military training did he?

A: At the present time there is a lot of that training in school, but at the time he went there was not, and in his school there was none, because he went to a religious school.

Q: Has he ever had any military training?

A: No. They have to register for military training at a certain age, but because of his eyes he was rejected.

Q: Does he want to stay in Wanzan for the duration?

A: Yes.

Q: Does he feel that the other people should relocate?

A: It is up to the individual. If he feels that he really is a loyal citizen, he should go out and help in the war effort and do what he can, but if his reason for relocation is because he can't see shoes or eat chicken, then he shouldn't relocate.

Q: Does he think relocation will help the Japanese people to be accepted in America?

RELOCATION AUTHORITY

A: It is all up to the people. There are some who will be accepted and others who won't. After these leave clearance hearings you should determine very closely if he will be accepted or not on the outside. If he is the type

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who cannot be accepted because he may feel for Japan, such a person should not be granted leave clearance. If a person is granted leave clearance he should be the type who will be accepted.

Q: Does he think the group living in Manzanar will make it possible for others to be accepted more easily, or not?

A: It is not up to the people in here to determine whether they will be accepted or not. It is up to the public. If the people outside feel that they will accept the Japanese, then it makes no difference whether it is people in Manzanar or any other center.

He has always kept it in his mind that there will never be a repetition of the riot they had here, and he hopes that the people of WRA will understand exactly how he feels. The past was brought about by the Kibei group. He has a lot of Kibei in his organization and he is teaching them not to bring about any such thing as the past incident.