

Eji Suyama M. D. P. A.

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To PC

Dear Sir,

Although the experiences of Ms. Miyuki Takeuchi (PC, Feb. 18-24) and Mr. Nao Takasugi (PC, Feb. 4-7) even when viewed through the lens of the present, continue to resonate with compassionate and selfless efforts of an individual, Ms. Rantala, and, collectively, the American Friends Service, some however, myself included, have Manichean views and experiences with major academic institution during that dysfunctional period, 1942-46.

During an interview (Feb. '46) at Northwestern Univ. (Evanston, IL) and still in uniform (I had just returned from Italy and was on post surgical convalescent leave from the Army), my application to the medical school was dismissed, similarly at Harvard and Yale, because of a War Department edict, proscribing universities with military research grants and projects from admitting Nisei student applicants. There were few isolated exceptions but we all know how zealously grant writers and their masters guard and protect the turf even today.***

How many Nisei lives and careers were affected by that constriction of the collegiate world when we had so much to contribute--and needed so much?

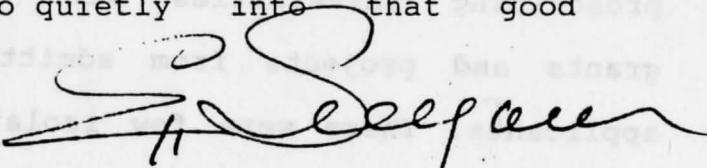
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I must expand that number to include those who remained deformed and immobilized in the camps, killed in the war, resisted the draft and were imprisoned, or compelled by principles, outrage, and yes, courage to become renounciants--many of whom we may have shunned. This narrowing of the education window was one of the evacuation realities.

Yet after courageously facing the physical and mental abyss why is it that Niseis continue to be quiet and is this silence another form of camouflage? Now that the flag waving of the 442 CT is over and the monument builders have taken over, THIS is the moment to reexamine the old and new realities, for in some ways, reality is the only homeland. We can begin by examining and analyzing the Lim Report. Otherwise we will loose it forever. We should not plan to go quietly into that good night.

Very truly yours,



***On the same day of the Northwestern interview I was accepted on the spot by Univ. of Chicago, the home of the first atomic pile, by an individual and not a committee, the Distinguish Prof. of Surgery, Dr. Lester Dragstedt--an ~~act of~~ obvious personal affirmative action.