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CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Guy Robertson
Project Director
Heart Mountain Relocation Center
Heart Mountain, Wyoming

Dear Mr. Robertson:

Inclosed are copies of two reports recently received by the Director which he has asked me to send on for your information and checking. They are from confidential sources and though much of the material is rumor and gossip, there are several items which you will want to look into rather closely, particularly some of the reports against individuals and the short-wave radio activity.

We should like to have reports on anything that your investigations disclose.

Sincerely,

John E. Pravinse, Chief
Community Management Division

Inclosures

RE: T ON A CONVERSATION WITH MR. OKADA OF 14-1-C
IN HEART MOUNTAIN

An Issei, appearing to be in his early forties, married, with a son, Shigeru aged eleven. He was evacuated with his family from San Francisco and our family became acquainted with them at the Pomona Assembly Center as they occupied the quarters next to us. My mother has been corresponding quite regularly with him since she has been living with us in Denver. Recently my mother mentioned to me that unless all of the nisei would resist the draft instead of a few, it would not accomplish anything. Upon further discussion, I learned that she had just received a letter from Mr. Okada evidently persuading her with the typical arguments of the Fair Play Committee. Through Mr. Okada, my mother had apparently become a convert to their cause.

Having good reason to visit the Okadas, conveying a gift from my mother, we called upon them. After the usual greetings, our conversation was carried on in Japanese, as follows:

Mr. Okada: "What about the Army? How is it with you?"

I: "Not yet. My reclassification has not come yet. Evidently, even if one wanted to escape it, there's no way of getting by, is there?"

Mr. Okada: "Certainly there is. You can resist and go to jail for three years or so as those other fellows did (evidently in Poston) and three years or so in jail is better than being all shot up and perhaps killed. The war will be over by then, and then you can go to Japan."

I: "What am I, or a person like myself to do in Japan? I've never been there and don't even know the language."

Mr. Okada: "You can go to the Philippines or Singapore or places as such where everything has been carried on in English. You don't have to go to Japan necessarily."

I: "That's on the assumption Japan will win the war. What if they don't?"

Mr. Okada: "That will never happen. Japan will win this war, I tell you. They will never be licked. The United Nations will get so far and then will be stalemated so that they can't get any further. Look at what's happened in Italy. Moreover, they've talked of a second front for a long period of time and still we haven't seen it come as they're scared and know it's an impossible task. With the foolish manner in which the war is executed in this country, they'll never win the war. They call it "democracy" and they have strikes, and everyone is fighting the government. Look at Dai-Nippon where everything is under rigid control from the top..."

From there he went into a lengthy discourse on price control and how he knew that the price control structure would collapse shortly and inflation would set in dooming the finances of the U. S.

Mr. Okada: "We of the Fair Play Committee are carrying on our fight. This visit of Ben Kuroki is of no significance. He can't understand us and our feelings and problems as he's never been through evacuation."

Mrs. Okada: "He shouldn't have called us 'Japanese-Americans' when he spoke to us when he came here. We're not Americans. I resent that."

I: "What should he have called us? He was doing his best and never has spoken to Japanese before."

Mrs. Okada: "Yes, but he doesn't have to call us that. He should have more sense than that."

I: "What should he have addressed us as then, as 'American-Japanese'?"

Mrs. Okada: "That would be better. He may think he's an American himself, but he's not. How could he call us Americans."

Mr. Okada: "Anyways, he can't understand why the fellows refuse to go for the draft. He doesn't even know. In order that the people on the outside can understand our point, we've got to fight this. The J.A.C.L. told us to evacuate peacefully and look where it got us. The Fair Play Committee has got an opinion from the Supreme Court stating that by voluntarily evacuating all of us have lost our rights, even the nisei." (Then he narrated about the two fellows who defied the administration and went through the gates without a pass and how they were respected by the M. P. 's for their actions. Subsequently he related how he fought the decrease in wages ordered by the administration. He is evidently a foreman of a carpenter crew). "I went to the Caucasian in charge and told him 'You cut my wages from \$19 to \$16 but I don't care, as I just won't supervise anything and let everyone do as they please. However there may be a few accidents around here costing \$10 or \$15 a week and look at what would happen to you.' You can understand what I meant by 'accidents', can't you? After they thought it over a bit, they didn't cut our wages. You see, you've got to fight and demand whatever you want before you can get it."

He had been called upon by the Social Welfare section in regards to his leave clearance as he had not answered the key questions satisfactorily. He had not appeared before them as yet, according to him, and here is what he had to say, very smugly:

"I'll just go there with an innocent look on my face, and give them any sort of an answer, and I'll get by. I don't intend to go out except perhaps on seasonal leave occasionally, and I'll stay here for the duration and return to Japan after the war is finished. I don't want to go to Tule Lake as there is no need for me to go there."

Mr. Okada is somewhat a typical case of those whom I believe to be operating in the background in Heart Mountain. As an individual, he is quite a personable fellow, apparently sincere and obliging as demonstrated when he aided my mother considerably at the time of my father's decease. However, he is not well-known nor is he one to take the limelight to make himself acknowledged. Nor does he venture out of his way to speak to anyone. In fact, I sincerely

think that he would not have spoken to me in the manner described if I had not conversed with him on my previous trip for my mother's benefit, and if he had not believed my convictions to be in accord with his because of my mother.

Mr. Okada's son as I mentioned is eleven years old, and he could not possibly have been motivated in the interest of his offspring to promulgate the interest of the FPC. Nor is he interested in the future of the nisei. He admits he is returning to Japan. Yet I doubt very much that despite his hearing, whether he would be slated to be transferred to Tule Lake if I had not mentioned his name to a nisei who was working in the interest of Mr. McMullen, the FBI agent.

Nevertheless while conversing with one of the key persons in the personnel, the party stated, "Well situations like this will help bring out the bad ones." It's surely a tragedy that several score of the young fellows have to be sacrificed, their minds and outlook on life warped and adulterated before any number of the "bad" ones can be isolated.

THE FAIR PLAY COMMITTEE AND SELECTIVE SERVICE

Although the activities of the Fair Play Committee and their promulgation of evading the draft has quieted down to a considerable extent, the committee is still active among the Issei and Kibei. Undoubtedly due to the incarceration and transfer of two of their leaders among the Nisei to Tule Lake, according to several informants they are still holding meetings only among a select group of known sympathizers, with notice of such gatherings being conveyed by word-of-mouth. However, they could not tell me of any meetings which may have been held during my sojourn at the project, nor of any definite gatherings subsequent to the transfer of Messrs. Okamoto and Horino to Tule Lake. A Mr. Okada, an Issei, and a self-acknowledged member of this group, indicated during our conversation that they are still active in "conveying the truth to the people". Whether at informal gatherings in laundries and latrines, or at appointed meetings, he did not say. A transcript of our conversation written up on the day following our talk, is attached.

In the opinion of most of the Nisei, whom I asked, there is a definite subversive group in the camp composed of Issei and Kibei who work in the background. Upon inquiring of several Nisei as to the names of those who are the most rabid FPC exponents among the Issei and Kibei, the invariable reply is that they know the persons by their faces and could point them out, but that they don't know their names or where they live. With the odds being in their favor in view of the circumstances of evacuation and the apathetic attitude of most Nisei in regards to subversive elements, this group seems to have laid an extensive groundwork among the Issei and are encroaching increasingly upon the thoughts of the younger Nisei. From what I could gather, their mode of operation appears to be as follows: It is well known that there is the wishful thought among the majority of the Issei that Japan will win the war, or that at least the war will end in a compromised peace, and that Japan will emerge stronger than ever when it is all over with. Being that the great majority of the Issei cannot read the English publications very readily and that there isn't any Japanese-written periodical giving any worth-while portrayal of the actual trend of the battle fronts, the people are prone to discount every Allied victory as propaganda, and twist the stories to suit their wishes. Moreover, there evidently are short-wave receiving sets in the area (every Nisei I asked believed that short-wave sets existed all over the place) but as to the locations of any, their reply was "ask any Issei, they know where they all are", and almost any information with the source given as the short-wave sets from Japan, is incredulously believed by them as the God-spoken truth. To every battle, there is a "short-wave" version. I recall that in September, 1942, [when I was a resident of the camp,] there were wide-spread tales of San Francisco having been bombed and left in rubbles. Almost every Nisei considered it a fairy tale with a few giving credence to its possibility, however, invariably any contradiction of the story to an Issei meant an all night argument as they had heard the "truth" via short-wave.

Apparently, this faith in a Japanese victory is where the foundation of the subversive element rests, as a good number of the Issei, especially among the wealthier group, expect to remain in camp for the duration, collect an indemnity for their losses perhaps, and return to Japan or possibly to Manchukuo, China, Philippines, or even to Singapore. As you can readily see, if the actual progress of the war could be conveyed to the Issei, their ideas and their attitude would be altered considerably.

Among the Nisei this same wishful belief exists with those disgruntled individuals who had not been successful prior to evacuation, or whose magnified ego will not permit them to go out and start all over again from the bottom, grieving over their much enlarged-upon losses, and with the younger group who have no one to rely upon for advice except their parents or their circle of friends who reciprocate.

With these conditions existing, the foundation of the so-called Fair Play Committee was laid at the time of the Selective Service Questionnaire registration, when a number of disgruntled Nisei, Kibei, and Issei carried the torch in opposition to the registration. In fact, I was informed that the organization was started as early as in November, 1942. One keen observer, who incidentally admitted he believed in the cause of the FPC until they opposed the draft, remarked as to how odd it is that the severest critics of these who had registered and answered in the affirmative to the controversial question were among those who were not sent to Tule Lake, and were the same torch bearers in propagating the evasion of selective service. According to him, they were mostly Kibei whom he did not know by name, but were ever present at FPC gatherings, and otherwise never to be seen. A friend of his, one Rikio Tomo (married to a Caucasian and now relocated) was a leader in the anti-registration movement until he noticed that mostly Kibei were rallying to his "cause". Mr. Glenn Rumley, the fire chief, remarked on another case, where a young fellow named Ishida or Nishida who worked for him as a fireman went to Tule Lake and his father remained in the camp. Upon inquiry of the parent, he gave Mr. Rumley an explanation which he could not understand, and Mr. Rumley attributed it to the fact that the Issei could not speak English very coherently. Other Nisei have noticed that a number of the "No-No" faction were still around. Perhaps they compose a part of the last contingent scheduled to leave for Tule Lake during the early part of May but none could say for certain.

This same element had gone to work on the Issei at the outset and now there is an apparent cleavage among this generation, especially on the issue of selective service. On several occasions I was chided or reprimanded by isseis while trying to obtain their feelings on the evasion of the draft, for making remarks sympathetic to the evaders. Perhaps in the future there may even be a clash among the isseis themselves, between those whose sons have gone off to war and those opposed to them. Currently, the former are still in the minority, however it is brought out somewhat in a statement attributed to an issei mother at a meeting of the newly-formed Parents Association of those whose sons are in the army. She is reported to have stood up at their gathering and said "When my son volunteered none of you would talk to me, shunned me and even called me an 'Inu'. Now I see that you are in the same position I have been in and can appreciate what I had to suffer through."

Having gained a large pro-Japan following with the "short-wave treatment", "playing up" their grievances, the injustices, etc., and acquiring the respect of others by claiming to have alleviated a number of petty complaints and amnying conditions in the camp by the "proper" approach to the administration, the parents of this faction began to induce their children to lend an ear to their cause.

The so-called nisei leaders who championed their cause were chiefly used to propagate the "inequalities and injustices" and were pointed out by the isseis as an example of what the leading niseis thought. Evidently some of the nisei proponents were carried over the fence by the weight of the power they had acquired, and although perhaps not inherently disloyal, the pressure of the group and the intoxication of power was too much for their capacity. I believe this to be true of some of the nisei "leaders" while others were motivated by bitterness, or even disloyalty. However, as to the evaders, the feeling is that among the younger group, the parents were responsible chiefly for their actions, and the parents have evidently committed a breach of faith in view of their statement not to commit any action contrary to the policy of our government, or words to that effect, by inducing their sons through coercion, misadvice, etc., to evade the draft. In fact in most quarters this is taken for granted as "you know how some of the isseis feel", and are prone to put the final responsibility upon the parents, although the evaders gave various reasons for their actions. Some of the first group stated that they had a good test case to ascertain the validity of selective service as applicable to them. In this connection, [I was told by] ^{out} an elder brother of one of the evaders, Fred Iriye, quote: "As I understand it, the lawyer in Denver, (apparently Samuel Menin) told them that they had a very good test case". I had no means of verifying this, as most of the persons appeared to be ignorant of what they had been told, else they were evasive. Others, the kibeiis chiefly, were out-and-out pro-Japan and apparently said so without any qualms, according to observers. The later groups of evaders have used the standard phraseology that "they couldn't let the other fellows down".

In reviewing the existing conditions at Heart Mountain from the perspective of the reasons for the existence and the sudden growth of the FPC, I can readily appreciate how and why in view of the following circumstances:

1. The administration appears to cater to those who complain the loudest and the longest. The isseis have gained the upper hand due to the fact that the more qualified nisei have relocated and only youngsters and misfits are the ones remaining except in a few exceptional cases, and the isseis reign supreme.
2. Moreover, if a part of the WRA program is to Americanize and assimilate the younger niseis of school age, this portion of the program has retrogressed at Heart Mountain. It appears that although this should be of prime importance in considering the program, it is being forgotten in the shuffle to keep the isseis happy. Here are some of the incidents which are pertinent:
 - a. Firstly, a school teacher who has been on the project since its beginning observed that "the first graduation class from the high school was grand. However with each succeeding class the caliber of graduates has dropped until now they are poor by comparison."
 - b. The youngsters are developing an utter disrespect for law and order, and in turn for the United States government. It is common knowledge that G. I. property is being stolen from the area, and as the rumors go, even by the administrative personnel. The isseis wink at it and even encourage it as a retribution for their "losses".
 - c. It is also commonly known among the evacuees that K. Doi, the judge of the court and Harris Shioya, the acting project attorney, are both

backers of gambling syndicates on the project, and perhaps even in a bootlegging set-up. In turn, Harris Shioya, who seems to be accorded favored treatment by the administration, would boast to everyone how well he has "done for himself".

d. The young and old are becoming "racket conscious". One Frank Tsuchiya, who has evidently made a tidy sum by selling fish directly to the evacuees rather than through the Community Enterprises, boasted to a friend of mine that he has had to pay off certain officials including Project Director Robertson in order to get his merchandise through. This may be an idle boast, however it carries considerable weight in view of the business that Tsuchiya does.

e. During my sojourn there was a Japanese movie shown at a mess hall. In conjunction, there was a newsreel depicting the bombing of Pearl Harbor, as I understood it. When this was shown with the motto "Remember Pearl Harbor" there was an outburst of applause from the issei. A young nisei girl about 17 years of age, whose mother related the story to me, ran to her mother, hurt and bewildered, and said, "They can't applaud and do things like that, can they? It isn't right." Can she feel that she's an American later on when she has become accustomed to such incidents?

f. Also during my stay, which happened to coincide with that of Sgt. Ben Kuroki, Ben addressed a group of issei and stated, like a true American that he is, that Tokyo would be bombed in the near future, and that he hopes to be one of those chosen to bomb it. Afterwards when he had left, there was a rumpus in Block One of the area, and some isseis voiced threats of bodily harm to Ben, as they resented his statement.

In the light of all this and a multitude of other incidents I could cite, how is the average nisei in their teens to maintain their equilibrium and not become confused? Humanitarianism should be practised, I agree, however in this case it appears to be exercised at the expense of demoralizing the nisei. It is also being carried out to the extent of Japanizing the young nisei. In addition to having Japanese cinema, talent shows are almost exclusively conducted in Japanese, due to the fact that nisei talent have long ago relocated. One of the administrative personnel called my attention to the fact that the evacuees employed in the offices are constantly conversing more and more in Japanese, with complete disregard for the Caucasians around them.

The younger nisei and the Americanization program apparently have been forsaken on the project. The Community Council composed entirely of isseis except for two niseis, swings considerable weight with the administration. Yet when they were invited to investigate the Fair Play Committee at the time draft evasion was the issue, a couple of the nisei I am acquainted with, urged, begged, and even dared the members of the council to have enough initiative and courage to accompany them to one of the FPC's meetings to ascertain what it was all about,

Mr. Rumley

not a single one would go. They would talk of opposing the FPC in their meetings, but none had the courage nor conviction to go into the area and expose the FPC for what it was--inherently a subversive group. Nevertheless, as every request of the council is made, it is given due consideration and usually granted by the administration. Under these extenuating circumstances it is readily possible for anything pro-Japan to flourish on the project. Unless the administration should take a firm grasp on things and conduct everything possible with the view of Americanizing the people, and eliminate anyone who should feel otherwise, the same subversive group can take hold again when another controversial problem is approached.

I personally feel that the younger group who were forced into evading the draft were begging and in a dire want for advice, and yet the only ones the majority of them could seek in askance were either their parents or their friends, who in turn were in the same shoes. (Mr. Glenn Rumley, the Fire Chief, with whom I rode to Denver, told me of fellows coming to him for his opinion, and he is rightly proud in that none of his firemen were among those delinquent.) Evidently through exercising perseverance, patience and understanding, he had been able to gain the confidence of the young men in his force so that when they were in need of advice, they came to him for his counsel and took it as theirs. Whereas this condition should have prevailed in most sections of employment, it was an exception rather than general.

That Messrs. Okamoto and Horino were transferred to Tule Lake, and that Messrs. Nakadate and Emi are slated to go, is only nipping the bud. Undoubtedly the FBI agents who were quite active during my sojourn will ferret out a number of the subversive group. Nevertheless here are a list of a few names and their actions as I have been able to ascertain. Without excusing myself, I believe that a number of the people I talked to were rather cagy and evasive when it came to names, perhaps due to the presence of the FBI agents.

Among those according to observers, who were actively soliciting funds for the Fair Play Committee were:

- Block 6 - Kenmatsu, a kibeI who was among those who evaded the draft.
- Block 20 - Mr. Suzuki, residence 20-18-7, a transferee from Tule Lake. He also solicited funds from Block 27 with one Nishimoto residing in Block 27, a young kibeI, and also another unidentified kibeI.
- Block 22 - Robert Inouye, a nisei. His brother Frank was a strong supporter of non-registration last year and is now relocated.
- Block 30 - Mr. Kuroda, an issei and a reputed rabid exponent of the FPC.

A Mr. Okada residing at 14-1-C is quite apparently, one of the subversive group operating with the Fair Play Committee, and a report of our conversation is attached. Also a clan named the Shimane, including several families residing in Block 23 were quite vociferous about the evasion. I understand that several of their boys did not appear.

Lastly, I wish to mention in closing that although the hard fought battle for relocation against almost insurmountable opposition is being carried through on the "outside", it appears that for the majority of the Japanese, it is being lost within the relocation centers.