Kiyoshi Okamoto 5604-D Tulle Lake Segregation Camp Newell, Calif.

July 2nd, 1944

To Fair Play Committee

I am in receipt of several letters from Denver. They effect you and you may be interested. I thereby transcribe notations.

- (I) The first letter containsJimmy asked Mennin to try to get statements from each of the 63 Boys since M. was leaving the next day to see them. Instead of making some kind of a deal with Jimmie, M horsed around and said he would take up Jimmies case for him. (This was not what Jimmie wanted. He wanted statements of exhonoration from any implication with the FPC. as already communicated to you previously.) Mennin made no bones about letting it be known all he was interested in was money. Jimmy doesnt think too highly of M.
- Recently, I have been talking to Mr....one of the lawyers who works with the Japanese lawyer. He says he regards M as an oppurtunist...bull headed as hell and often a good fighter but lacking in the fine points. "He will put up a good fight for the" 63" as long as the money holds out. M has told several (Jimmy included) he didn't think the Boys had a chance but... "he had no objections to defending them" As for myself, I think M will put up a good fight for the hoys. Perhaps bull-dog tactics are the best when fighting the likes of "R".
- (3) Today, I went over to the "News". I took a copy of the Sentinel with me. I asked their editor if it were possible for him to give the "63" a favorable write-up. He did not seem to be impressed. Next time I will try Casey.
- (4) Well, Oki, Im on my feet again as it were. The situation with us rests until Fall when we have a court case on top. Im really at your services now and ready to go to work. I say, we must defent the Constitution and see It's rights established.
- (5) By the way, Im giving you the name of the Japanese lawyer.

 You can depend on him. Recently, the JACL tried to get him under their wing. He laughed in their faces and said he was a lawyer and not a politician. His name and address Taul Watanabi (of Seattle)

830-18th Street
Florence Building, Denver, Colorado.
He has another Japanese working with him. He is to take the bar examination next month. (I understand there are three haku-jin in partnership with Watanabe. OK.) He believes as the "63" that Democracy is worth testing and fighting for

- I wish you would contact them. Taul and Clesson both say the 63 have a good chance if the case is properly handled. M. is a hard man for another lawyer to work with. They say they do not care for his court room tactics. I am not trying to run M down but I am telling these things so you can form your opinion for the sake of the Boys. These other two Lawyers... Griffin etc. say if they had the case they would first ask for a " DECLA RATORN VERDIUT" i.e., they would ask the Court if the issue involved in their case did not FIRST CONSTITUTE A CONSTITUT-IONAL ISSUE and, not just the issue of the selective Service. (I think this is an important question. We want to throw the responsibility upon the prosecutioni, e., Government. As it is now constituted, the onus is placed on us or , we are made the defendants. The Government should be made the defendant in our case inasmuch as we have demanded a clarification of our rights and status. OK.) This, they contend, would place the case in it's proper place or spotlight. They claim there are certain legal issues in this particular case where this proceedure would be permitted. They advise a declarative verdict in order to get the case out of the jurisdiction of the State. Of course, I do not understand the issue set forth but I think it best for you to know what these other fellows said.
- (6) By the way, the Rocky Shinpo is now controlled by the JACL.
- You have no idea how the JACL is dispised by the common People of this town. No matter how Jimmie acts now, I will always respect the fact he was the only who openly opposed them. (
 Jimmie, as I am given to understand, is very down hearted.... disappointed and disillusioned. Perhaps it is because I have failed in giving him proper support. OK.)
- (8) There are mamy too many long ears to suit me there. So it is best you write meS.Toshi
 628 I/2....I8th Street
 A partment 6
 Denver, Colorado.

2nd letter.

- I attended part of the trial for the IS from Amache. which was held here in Denver. As you may know, M was the lawyer defending them. Really. M made a very very poor showing. There were so many instances when he might have brought to light favorable evidence but he just seemed to be sleeping or not to care. I spoke to him about his method. He told me it was just like knocking your head aganst a stone wall. I didnt relish his attitude. I am not saying he did not try for he surely did in his way but it wasnt good enough.
- (2) I believe your next step should be to secure your personal freedom....for what you can do in prison (Tulle) seperated from your group. I will do what I can to help you. Please advise and trust me.

3rd letter.

- I would like to know from you as soon as possible and get all the information I can regarding the FPC and where you stand. (if same) with them. Also wish to know whom I should contact among them leaders. Personally, I think it more than advisable to have anoth r lawyer appeal and proceed to the Supreme Court. I do ish you would write to Taul and discuss the matter with him. To be frank, Taul is young ...about 30...he is starting out to make a name for himself. His assistants have had many years of law and are mellow. They will make a wonderful combination. He would come nearer to success than M. I know he would give all the best in him. I know no Japanese lawyer will work with Sam because he will demand everything his own way. I will also say because of his assistants Taul is a little steeper than what Sam has asked as fee.but they will be entirely honest...much more than Sam.and not try to milk you dry. You can also ask Jimmie Omura what he thinks of this combination.
- (2) It doesn't do me any good to see Sam He wont give me any information as to where he stands. He just hems and haws around.

Finished.

By Kiyoshi Okamoto

tfranscript from original letters

Dear Friends,

The foregoing should explain themselves.

I am advised from the San Francisco Office that you folks are out of their jurisdiction. They suggested that you contact N.Y. through one of the Boys.

However, if you should retain Watanabe and his group, you could still work with the Civil Liberties.

As to M....you know my original intention. It was to satisfy the emergency. He was placed on trial. If he proved himself well, he was to continue. If not...look around. His bickering tactics is not big enough to me to indicate that he can handle such an important issue. (I refer you back to Griffin's opinion or suggestion....ask for a declaratory verdict and take the case out of the State jurisdiction into that of the Federal. Also, make the Government the defendant instead of being on the defensive yourselves.

In case you change, the Boys will have to be patient for a short while until you can arrange matters. Suggest you contact Watanabe immediately. If you have already paid any money to M.... make up your mind to place it on the profit and loss. You now willing horses. Go to it. Way don't you work with amade?

I am expecting a representative of the Civil Liberties from S.F. on the tenth of July. He is interested in Horizo. I am dou. ful about mine. Jood luck to you falks.