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Headquarters
THIRTEENTH NAVAL DISTRICT
Seattle, Washington

November 9, 1943

MEMORANDUM

From: The District Intelligence Officer, Thirteenth Naval District
To: The Director of Naval Intelligence

Subject: Japanese Activities at Minidoka Relocation Center

1. This letter supplements previous reports sent to the Director of Naval Intelligence on Japanese activities at the Minidoka Relocation Center.

2. In celebration of Meiji Setsu (birthday of the grandfather of the present emperor) the alien Japanese inhabitants of Block 34 surreptitiously collected food stuffs for a special dinner. The banquet, scheduled to be held on November 3rd, was for the two-fold purpose of "honoring the memory of the Great Emperor Meiji (during whose reign nearly all the issei presently in the United States were born) and of celebrating Japan's winning of the war," according to one of the promoters.

While all the individuals responsible for the affair are not yet known, two of the most active were Kohel HIJIYA, a former hotel proprietor in Portland, Oregon, and a shintoist (Konko-Kyō sect), and Matsutaro MURAMATSU, a farmer formerly residing on a Portland rural route, MURAMATSU is a Block Manager of Block 34.

Information concerning the proposed banquet came to the knowledge of certain loyal American born Japanese. As a result of the objections of the latter, the affair had to be cancelled. This has added additional fuel to the rift between the American born Japanese (nisei) and the alien Japanese (issei) at the Center.

3. Further information is now at hand relative to attempts of the issei to retain the actual political control of Minidoka Center. Article III, Section 8, of the proposed Constitution entitled "Rights of Defendant" reads as follows:

"The defendant, in all cases heard by the Judicial Commission, for violation of law and order regulations, shall have an opportunity to be heard, the right to be represented before the Commission, and shall not be convicted unless upon the testimony of at least one witness to an overt act, or a confession in open court.

It is definitely known that Minoru YASUI is responsible for the clause in question in the proposed Charter (or Constitution) for the Minidoka self-government. YASUI, Hood River and Portland nisei, formerly employed by the Japanese Consul-General in Chicago, and recently tried in Federal Court at Portland for curfew violation, has stated that he was opposed to convictions and had deliberately made it well-nigh impossible

for the Judicial Commission to secure a conviction by reason of inclusion of the clause.

4. There is a great deal of dissatisfaction on the part of pro-American inhabitants of the Center in certain of the War Relocation Authority personnel. In particular this objection concerns George TOWNSEND, the Community Activity Supervisor, and Carl V. SANTOS, Councilor. Both of men are members of the Friends faith and are supposed to be sociologists. These men allow and encourage activities where Japanese folk dances, theatricals and other nationalistic Japanese entertainment are given. They have encouraged the establishment of a Japanese library and have arranged for the pro-Japanese literature which had been confiscated at the Puyallup Assembly Center to be sent to Minidoka to be included in the library. It is quite apparent that the alien enemy Japanese leaders have been encouraged by these two individuals to promote as much pro-Japanese activity as possible.

5. A confidential information of known reliability who has just completed a motor trip from Baker, Oregon to Seattle by way of Minidoka, made a point of questioning merchants and private citizens concerning the Japanese who have been permitted to leave the Relocation Center for farm work. With little exception he was informed that the situation is viewed with considerable alarm. The private citizens and farmers are, in some cases, very incensed, the citizens because of the extreme arrogant attitude adopted by the Japanese, both men and women, when they are on the streets or in the stores. Examples were cited where three or four Japanese, walking abreast, would not extend even common courtest on the street. It was a case of either getting off the sidewalk or being run into. In the stores Caucasians have been rudely shoved aside by the Japanese. Farmers, in many cases, have employed Japanese on a contract basis which had been approved by the Relocation Center Authorities, only to have the Japanese after a day's work demand higher pay on threat of quitting. These Japanese have further demanded the use of farmer's cars for making visits to town or even to return to the Relocation Center over weekends.

6. Reliable reports indicate that the police, both county and state, are alarmed for fear of violence against the Japanese on the part of the Caucasian residents. They are also perturbed over the possibility of a riot starting in the camp which might spread to the outside. An informant states that the police in the neighborhood of the Minidoka Center feel that the camp management is most lax. They report that the Camp Director, Mr. Stafford, spends most of his time playing golf and taking flying lessons instead of devoting his time to knowing what is going on at the center.

7. This same informant added that it was quite apparent the Japanese are allowed to do almost anything they wish. No orders seem to be given by Center authorities. They may "suggest" but if the Japanese do not care for the "suggestion" no attempt at enforcement of the "suggestion" is made.

8. There appears to be no inspection or search of trucks driven in and out of the Center by Japanese workers. The military guard does no

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more than check the driver's pass. It would be entirely possible for the Japanese truck drivers to take out of the Camp anything desired, or to bring in contraband by the load.

s/
Hartwell C. Davis