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TESTIMONY TAKEN BEFORE THE DIES COMMITTEE

6 July 1943.

On 5 July 1943 Pvt. Mike Mabaoka was called as witness and testified as follows:

He was born in Fresno, California in 1915 of Japanese-born parents. He has five brothers, four in the Army and the fifth residing in Denver, Colorado, and employed by JACL. Witness's mother resides in Chicago. He is married, and knows of no relatives in Japan. He was educated in Salt Lake City, Utah, and attended the State University of Utah. Witness stated his employment record as follows:

1937 - 1940 - Employed as school teacher in Salt Lake City, Utah; acted as editor of English section of Japanese newspaper (does not read or write Japanese);

1 Sept. 1941 - 4 June 1943 - National Secretary of JACL.

4 June 1943 - Entered United States Army.

Subject was appointed National Secretary of JACL by the National Board of JACL and resided in San Francisco at the time of evacuation. Witness was not evacuated and refused to state the reason therefor. Witness stated that he worked on the evacuation and volunteered information to Naval Intelligence. In May, 1942, he came to the Eastern Headquarters of JACL in Washington, D. C.

Witness made the following statements regarding the JACL:

Membership includes Japanese-Americans, 18 years or over, who must swear an oath of allegiance to the United States. Until September, 1941, no national unity existed in the organization and each chapter was autonomous. Witness stated that he believes most Japanese-Americans to be absolute enemies of Japan. He stated that the JACL took the lead in the evacuation, and is unpopular at

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present among Japanese because its first consideration has been winning the war. He stated that certain militant minorities among JACL have made JACL unpopular. At the present time there are ten or eleven chapters of JACL remaining. Most of the chapters have broken up as members are in Relocation Centers, and Japanese-Americans in Relocation Centers hold associate memberships with dues of \$3.50 a year. Witness stated that at the time of evacuation JACL had 20,000 members, but that since evacuation this membership has fallen off to 5,000. Witness admitted that in May and June, 1943, JACL claimed a much larger membership and accredited this to the fact that in March, 1942, JACL decided to freeze its membership even though members had not paid their dues. Witness admitted the JACL publicly has claimed a membership of 20,000, and has reported this fact to Dillon Myer and the WRA. Doctor Matthews, Committee Investigator, produced a list of the membership of JACL taken from JACL records, and a count of the members listed showed 1800 regular members and 600 associate members. Witness stated that the list of 20,000 members is either in San Francisco or has been lost. Witness stated that JACL misrepresented and exaggerated its membership because it is the only group in a position to represent Japanese-Americans in the United States. When questioned regarding the expenditures of JACL, witness stated office expense amounted to at least \$600 per month and explained the deficit in expense over membership was made up by a \$10,000 contribution from the ten active chapters of JACL.

Witness was questioned regarding the loyalty of Japanese-Americans, and was asked to explain the reason why 630 Japanese-Americans at the Poston Relocation Center refused to state their loyalty to the United States on the War Department questionnaire. Witness stated that the large number of disloyal is generally due to evacuation, and that there has been no evidence of sabotage among the Japanese. He was asked whether he believed the Japanese were satisfied with

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evacuation, but refused to answer. Witness was asked whether he believed the large number of admittedly disloyal Japanese was due to the fact that so many had dual citizenship. Witness stated that he believed that few people have registered their children with the Japanese Government and that other countries have more stringent rules of dual citizenship than Japan.

Various letters written to and received by witness were produced by the investigators, and witness was questioned in detail in regard to them:

1. Letter of August 17, 1942 stated:

"I contacted Justice Stone, Mrs. Roosevelt, Secretary Stimson, Secretary Knox, Under-Secretary Wells, Attorney General Biddle, Senator Thomas, and others regarding our problems." When witness was questioned regarding his stated interviews with the above persons, he replied that he had really contacted only Justice Stone, Mrs. Roosevelt, and several Senators who did not believe they could publicly support any program at that time.

2. Masaoka Report to National Headquarters of 19 September 1942 stated:

a. "We must increase our membership. Make everyone automatic members if necessary. Our membership does not cooperate with us." Witness stated that the plan to make all Japanese-Americans automatic members was not effected. He stated that when he referred to non-cooperativeness of the membership, he was thinking of the militant minorities of the JACL.

b. "JACL has received highly confidential reports from WRA and we discuss all major policies with Dillon Myer before they are made public. Do not reveal any confidential material received as we are fortunate to obtain these directives, and allow all matters of policy to be announced first by WRA." Witness stated that these directives were received after release to Relocation Centers and as far as he knew were not listed as confidential.

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c. "Curfews and similar restrictions should be eliminated. All Japanese-Americans and Japanese nationals should work out a scheme to present a united front, and should refuse to work in the harvest unless these restrictions are removed. We must employ the same cooperation which is effective in the labor movement." Witness stated that he was not referring to Japanese in Relocation Centers when he referred to the use of the strike (the letter directly refers to Relocation Centers).

Witness was, at this point, re-examined in regard to the portion of the report on JACL receiving confidential directives and forming WRA policies. Witness stated he was merely exaggerating and "liked to shoot the bull." He admitted that JACL received directives possibly before the public would be permitted to receive them. He admitted that the directives were received by Kanazawa at National Headquarters and not by witness personally. (Kanazawa stated on 3 July 1943 that JACL would receive confidential reports from WRA before their general release.)

d. "Myer believes that Nisei, Issei, and Kibei alike should be allowed to leave the Centers. Myer is willing to fight the Army on this point, and has told the Secretary of War that he is to be boss on the Japanese leaving the Centers. There is to be no division of authority. Myer admits he is only bluffing. No investigation of those to leave the Center will be necessary. A check of FBI files will suffice." Witness stated that the information in the above portion of his report was gained from personal conversations with Dillon Myer. He admitted that he was calling upon Assistant Secretary of War McCloy, Colonel Scobey, and Captain Hall about this same time.

e. "We are unable to obtain additional gasoline from WRA since an investigation might reveal that a Japanese pressure group is dictating

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their policies." Witness stated that JACL did not dictate the policy of WRA, but admitted that JACL "liked to feel that they had influence with WRA."

f. As gleaned from his report and admissions, witness had numerous conferences with Myer and Glick of WRA at which Baldwin, of ACLU, was often present as well as Micheljohn. At one of such meetings, a representative of the Justice Department also was present. The report refers to one case at which Myer and Baldwin stated that witness was the key man in the United States on the Japanese situation.

g. "Is Mrs. Roosevelt behind the new WRA directive, or did Myer figure it out for himself?" Witness had no comment.

3. Letter of 7 October 1942 stated:

"Holland has interested Cabinet officers in hiring Japanese-Americans."
 "It seems to me that it is a heck of a wage for a Cabinet Officer (Ickes) to pay his workers." Witness stated that the above remark was made because he was not well-acquainted with all of the facts and that he now understood the wages of Ickes Japanese workers have been adjusted.

4. Letter of 9 October 1942 from witness to Joe Kanazawa stated:

"Be sure to keep things quiet regarding Japanese-Americans entering a new community." Witness stated that this statement was made because the information got into the press that Secretary Wickard was considering hiring Japanese-Americans. WRA wanted this information kept confidential. Members of the Sub-Committee suggested that they believed after evacuees have been carefully checked and found to be loyal, news of their release should be publicized. Witness stated that it was Mr. Holland's belief, as well as his own, that release of Japanese to various communities should not be

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publicized.

5. Letter of 14 January 1943 from witness to Joe Kanazawa stated in part:

"Watch Slocum. He may cause trouble. He is fanatically American. Slocum is dangerous to resettlement." Witness stated he believed that certain people were so fanatically American that they use un-American tactics to achieve their ends. He stated he believed Slocum's methods were unfair and un-American. He stated that Slocum had said that most Japanese-Americans are disloyal. "We (witness remarked) volunteered in the Army to show the United States we are loyal to this country."

6. Letter of 19 April 1943 from witness to National Headquarters stated:

"Myer believes that Nisei should be allowed to return to the Pacific Coast. He has gone to the President on this. McCloy and Stimson feel that the matter is now civilian in nature and that danger on the Pacific Coast is over. The General Staff and General DeWitt disagree. There has been a rift between the civilian and military divisions of the War Department on this. Myer cussed the Army for ten minutes." Witness refused to comment on this letter. Captain Hall arose and stated that he has been acquainted with the situation in the War Department for some time and that there has been no such rift. Chairman Costello requested that a representative of the War Department be called to testify.

7. Letter of 26 April 1943 stated:

a. "WRA policy now allows the Project Director alone to issue furloughs to evacuees. There is no longer any need for an FBI check. Release is to be based on the "yes" or "no" answer of the evacuee to question 28 on the War Department questionnaire. This is a temporary measure as the relocation policy is lagging." Witness stated he believed the above policy to be

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a good one. Congressman Costello remarked, "If you don't fear sabotage by letting these people loose without even an FBI check, how about espionage?"

Witness replied that there have been no such cases to date and that Japanese, being of peculiar facial characteristics, are easily watched. Congressman Costello stated that he believed the above WRA policy to be clearly inadequate.

b. "WRA desires to avoid segregation if possible." Witness explained that the above statement meant that WRA wished to avoid artificial segregation based upon such criteria as travel to Japan. WRA it is stated believes in resettling as many evacuees as possible and leaving the remainder in the Centers without branding them as dangerous. Congressman Mundt asked, "When you heard that evacuees were being released without any check whatsoever, weren't you bothered?" Witness answered, "No. It never occurred to me. I discussed it with WRA who stated some check was made. I believe an FBI and Project Director's check is sufficient." Witness stated that he believes some form of segregation is necessary and that the WRA is working on the problem, and that a reasonable check should be made before evacuation or release.

c. "I contacted Innes of the Justice Department who allowed me to attend a highly confidential meeting of officers in the Justice Department who discussed the Japanese evacuation case." Witness stated that the above portion of his letter was untrue, and that he was only informed by Innes of this meeting. According to witness, Innes told him that detention was the weak point in the Government case.

Witness stated that WRA has a difficult job, and, generally speaking, the supervision and running of the camps has been excellent. He feels it is a fine

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idea to release 1,000 evacuees per week.

Witness was asked whether he considered Dillon Myer qualified to determine whether an evacuee is loyal. Witness said "Yes. He has his staff, and a check is made with FBI files. This is sufficient." "JACL policy on release of evacuees is that it should be based on loyalty and talent of the evacuees." Witness stated that "since an FBI check is sufficient for all other Americans, it should be sufficient for Japanese-Americans." Congressman Mundt asked, "A check in one Relocation Center alone, Poston, Arizona, indicated that out of two or three thousand Japanese-Americans 630 stated that they are not loyal to the United States. Would you desire to release those who answered "yes" to question 28 on the War Department questionnaire who may be spies?" Witness replied that the FBI has their records, or should have them.

Witness, in criticism of WRA, stated the following:

1. The number of Japanese-Americans being released is insufficient. Relocation is at present a rich man's relocation. Those being released should be given transportation and funds.
2. Regimentation and lack of privacy in the Centers is a bad condition.
3. WRA should broadcast a truer picture of the loyalty of the Japanese-Americans to the newspapers.
4. The educational system in the Centers is insufficient.

In regard to segregation, witness stated that it is his belief that some sort of segregation is necessary and that WRA is working on this at the present time. This segregation should not be based entirely on answers to question 28 on the War Department questionnaire. Some consideration should be given the reasons for these answers. They may, in part, have resulted from undue influence, etc. WRA is working on segregation along the following lines:

1. Persons requesting expatriation (keep them in the Centers.)

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2. Those answering "no" to question 28 (give them serious thought.)
3. Segregation by families.

Reported by Sgt. I. V. Tierman
5 July 1943.

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TESTIMONY TAKEN BEFORE THE DIES COMMITTEE

9 July 1943

At the morning session on 6 July 1943 Pvt. Mike Masaoka continued his testimony as follows:

Directives were produced from JACL files and it was noted that they were marked "For Use of WRA Staff Only." Letter of 3 September 1942 from Kanazawa to witness "Received a two-inch stack of directives from WRA including material from the San Francisco conference. Rowalt has placed us on the mailing list for future directives."

Witness admitted that on 14 January 1943 he submitted to WRA a memorandum on segregation.

Letter of 27 June 1942 witness wrote, "We have defeated the Stuart Bill or at least postponed it. Government officials have aided us, but not in their official capacity. We talked to Baldwin on this, to the Chief of the Alien Division of the Justice Department, and to Justice Stone who agreed to send a representative to the Justice Department. We also talked to Senator Thomas and Glick and Myer who agreed to see the President, Secretary of War, and the Secretary of Agriculture." Witness stated that JACL has lobbied for the Issei as well as the Nisei.

Witness was asked how many Japanese-Americans have gone to language school. He stated, most of them have. It is necessary for communication. The average person learns very little there however.

Witness stated that he believes an FBI check should be made before evacuees are released. A letter dated 7 October 1942, written by witness to the National Headquarters, was produced. "I argued that FBI clearance should be eliminated. This is impossible now due to public relations. The FBI check takes too long.

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Thus far there have been no objections to this new regulation (directive of 1 October 1942). Don't give it too much publicity as Congressmen may get ahold of it." Witness stated he did not wish Congressmen to learn too much about WRA procedure because, "certain Congressmen are prejudiced against us."

Congressman Mundt asked: What do you consider to be a sound check before release of evacuees?

Witness replied:

1. Those requesting repatriation should not be released.
2. Persons who have caused real trouble in the Centers should be held.
3. The activities of Kibei and Issei should be investigated pre-Pearl Harbor.
4. If an evacuee is refused release, he should be allowed a hearing by a board made up of representatives from the Justice Department, ONI, MID, and WRA.

Congressman Mundt: Would you check previous employment?

Witness: Yes.

Congressman Mundt: WRA doesn't.

Witness: "You shouldn't keep a person in the Center merely because he is listed on the rolls of a Japanese organization."

Congressman Ebharder: Do you think there has been sufficient discipline in the Centers?

Witness: In many instances WRA should have taken a firmer position, particularly on segregation. WRA has demonstrated that democracy is applicable even in a Relocation Center. If Relocation Centers had been placed under Army control, there would have been more trouble, possibly bloodshed. Evacuees should be allowed as normal a life as possible, and this would not be possible under Army discipline. There should be strict control over disloyal persons and law

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violators however.

Congressman Ebharder: In some Centers authorities knew or should have known those causing riots. Did they receive sufficient punishment?

Witness stated that he did not know.

A letter was produced dated 11 July 1942 from Unida, a block leader at Manzanar, to WRA. Unida stated in the letter that he had been present on a train moving evacuees from an Assembly Center to a Relocation Center and that one Wichi Uyemoto said, "Roosevelt should be killed. He is a damn fool."

On 8 August 1942, Unida reported that at a meeting of Kitchen 15 at Manzanar Uyemoto made a speech stating that he was a Kibel and had resided for many years in Japan. Uyemoto asked the meeting: "Why aren't you united as they are in Japan?" Witness was asked whether he knew of any action taken against Uyemoto. Witness stated he did not know but it seemed obvious that no action had been taken between July and August, 1942.

A letter dated 14 September 1942, written by George Inagaki to witness reads: "Nisei must be good Americans to leave the Centers, and that got the fellows to thinking (Manzanar)."

Witness was asked: Do you know of cases where evacuees have been furloughed to work in the beet crops and have disappeared?

Witness: Yes.

A letter written by witness dated 8 August 1942 was produced: "Teto Okomoto was in the Montana beet fields and has disappeared. Can you give us any information as to his whereabouts?"

Witness admitted that he exaggerated the subscription list of the Pacific Citizen. In a letter to the editor of the Pacific Citizen he stated, "Editorials in your paper carry great weight with Myer. I have exaggerated the subscription list to gain weight. Use figure of 10,000." Witness admitted that he doesn't

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know the exact subscription of the Pacific Citizen, but that he did not believe it to be over three or four thousand.

Witness stated he had never accepted membership or a directorship in the American Committee of Protection for Foreign Born, but nevertheless was listed as a director of the organization. Witness later resigned from the organization and remarked in one of his letters that the organization was Communistic.

Witness admitted that he is in favor of having contraband articles returned to evacuees.

A letter dated 19 April 1943 was produced in which witness stated, "Innes (Department of Justice) said it would be all right with him if the Government lost the curfew case. DeWitt will send a representative to watch the Justice Department." Witness could not recall the source of this information.

Witness admitted that he was active in trying to suppress the motion picture "Air Force" because, he stated, "It didn't relate true facts as were shown in the Tolan Committee report." Witness admitted that he contacted Pearl Buck and Madam Chiang-kai-chek on this project. Witness would not discuss his meeting with Madam Chiang-kai-chek at the public session.

A report dated 26 April 1943 by witness to the National Headquarters read in part: "Glick gave us an opinion on dual citizenship. This is not for publication. Myer and Glick stated that WRA could be liquidated in 1944. Some evacuees are to be returned to the West Coast to show California that it cannot dictate to the rest of the United States. I said that the evacuees should be allowed to go to the West Coast even if bloodshed results. I had a conference with Secretary McCloy, Colonel Scobey, and Captain Hall. Colonel Scobey feels that those answering "no" to question 28 on the War Department questionnaire should be segregated. I can't move him on this point." Witness stated that the above information was only hearsay. He stated he hoped that those answering "no" to

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question 28 would be allowed a re-hearing. It was asked: Didn't WRA call the evacuees in and offer them inducements to change their answers on question 28? Witness answered, "I have heard this."

In a letter written 7 September 1942 witness said: "We are working on a liberalization of WRA policy. We may be able to swing it."

A letter was produced written by Ross Wright to witness dated 1 July 1942. The letter stated: "I am going to see the Governors of the Western States and will guarantee to deliver 70,000 votes for a liberal guarantee." Witness stated that he took no action in regard to this letter, and that JACL has never encouraged a block vote. He admitted that JACL encouraged voting, and passed out ballots at the Centers.

Witness admitted receipt of a WRA document dated 1 July 1942. He explained that this document was prepared for WRA by his brother Joe, and that Joe sent him a copy. It was an official WRA document.

Witness stated that JACL had attempted to secure civil service jobs for evacuees. Witness stated that the program was a failure. In a letter of 19 September 1942, witness said: "Evacuees should be allowed to take civil service examinations at the Centers and to come to Washington for jobs. It looks good. Fleming (Civil Service Commission) is in favor of it."

Witness was asked: Is Mrs. Roosevelt behind the policies of WRA?

Witness: No.

Witness stated that on 17 November 1942 Dillon Myer gave an off-the-record address to JACL.

Witness was read a telegram sent by Kido (believed to be one of Ickes' workers) to Kanazawa stating: "Consult Baldwin Tuesday. Don't talk to investigators of hostile Committee." Witness stated that he did not receive such a wire from Kido or from anyone else. Witness stated that he has had no conversations regarding his testimony before the Committee.

Reported by Sgt. I. V. Tierman
8 July 1943.

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