



Ruth Tanbara Papers

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[1992]



Reflections

Memoirs of Japanese American Women in Minnesota



John Nobuya Tsuchida, Editor

Joyce Hirabayashi
Alice Matsumoto
Mary Ogura
Martha Oye
Tai Shigaki
Gladys Stone
Esther Suzuki
Maye Uemura
Linda vanDooijeweert
Kimi Yanari
Toshiko Yoneji
Mary Yoshida
Yoshi Tani

REFLECTIONS: Memoirs-

Our book is finally out,

'Twas long awaited-

Many, many thanks, we say

To Ruth, our inspiration.



REFLECTIONS Memoirs of Japanese American
Women in Minnesota Book Project Appreciation
Dinner for Dr. Nobuya Tsuchida, August 27, 1994







P.O. Box 23
Ogori Machi
Yamaguchi Ken
Japan 754
June 22, 1995

Dear Mrs. Tanbara:

I hope this letter will find you fine and well. I suppose you are enjoying the best season in Minnesota. It is surely nice to hear that your book "REFLECTIONS...Memoirs of Japanese American Women in Minnesota" has been given much attention by lots of people and organizations and that accordingly it has been selling well. It is great to learn that you are still quite active in your volunteer services, which I believe keep you young and alert.

I recently received an old picture of the Rev. Teikichi Kawabe and the earliest members of the Japanese Methodist Mission in Portland. Could you identify some people in the picture I am sending you separately? When I visited the Epworth Methodist Church in Portland on Sunday last summer, I found the old picture displayed with some others in the basement of the church building. According to its caption, the photo was taken in 1893, that is, only a few months after the Japanese Methodist Mission was founded in Portland. I assume the photo was taken immediately after the Mission moved to its second building. If the picture was actually taken in 1893, the man in the front should be the young Pastor Kawabe with some thirty members around him. Among the boys in the photo, I noticed a specially young one to the far left in the back row. The boy resembles the young Yosuke Matsuoka in his Oakland days, the portrait of whom I had found in San Francisco several years ago.

When I saw the photo last summer, I asked the church to send me some copies of it. After I returned to Japan, I repeatedly requested them to send me its copies. After the long delay I recently received them. I had really wished to get the photo copy soon after I returned from the US. The main reason was I wanted Mr. Kenichiro Matsuoka, the eldest son of Mr. Yosuke Matsuoka, to identify his father in the picture. Exactly one year ago I had visited him in Tokyo and asked what he knew about his father. When I showed him the photo of the young Yosuke in Oakland and asked him if the boy was his father, he gave me his affirmative reply with no hesitation. During my two-hour interview he appreciated my study on his father, adding that I was doing what he had to do. I was happy to get his favorable comment on my study. I noticed, however, he was no longer aggressive to talk or learn about his father (I had first met him about ten years before). I thought he was suffering from some sort of serious illness. Because of this experience with him, I was anxious to receive the photo from Portland as soon as possible. I expected Mr. Kenichiro Matsuoka to identify the boy in the photo. To my great sorrow and disappointment, Mr. Kenichiro Matsuoka died of liver cancer in the end of last December. Now that he is gone, I am uncertain who will be able to identify the boy.

To identify all the early members of the Japanese Methodist Mission (Epworth Methodist Church) in Portland in old photographs is beyond the sphere of my present project. As a student of immigration history and ethnic studies, though, I strongly feel that identifying them is quite important to learn the church history. Old photos will be of little value if we do not know who are the persons in them. As a rule the identification is essential when we keep documents. It seems to me that many or most of the early church members may possibly be identified today only if the church tries to do so, but it won't be so ten years from now.

I was surprised and saddened to learn from Mrs. Chie Endo that Mr. Elmer Nishimoto died last winter. I was looking forward to seeing him at church last summer when I visited Portland. But he was too weak to attend the service. I regret I did not visit his home that Sunday. When I had visited him some ten years ago, he kindly helped me gather information about Yosuke Matsuoka, particularly Matsuoka's visit in 1933.

If you are able to identify any of the persons in the photo, may I ask you to write their names on the thin paper attached and send it back to me? You may retain the photo copy if you like. I have the identical photo copies here with me. I will appreciate your cooperation.

There is little change here with our life. I teach English part-time in Yamaguchi University and a local senior high school in the daytime, while privately teaching junior high school students five nights a week. On weekends I make it a rule to visit my sister in the hospital, usually with my wife and my sister's husband (he doesn't drive). She has been suffering from lung cancer for four years; that is, since I returned here from Minnesota. Next school year I plan to teach less private evening classes, so that I will be able to put aside extra hours for my own study of history.

I hope all is going well with you.

Sincerely yours,

Masaharu Ano

Masaharu Ano

July 1, 1995

TO: Mr. Masaharu Anp
P.O.Box 23
Ogori Machi
Yamaguchi Ken
Japan 754

From: Mrs. Ruth Tanbara
1181 Edgumbe Road # 216
St. Paul, Minnesota 55105-2833 U.S.A.

Thank you for your letter, it was good to hear from you. Our book "REFLECTIONS" hard cover copies are almost sold out, we are down to 5 books from 1000 published. The publisher is now printing "soft cover" copies and will be out in the late Fall 1995 for classes in history at the University of Minnesota and secondary schools in Minnesota. We have had requests from some secondary schools in the Chicago area to place in their libraries. One of the relatives of Dr. Gladys Stone (writer in our book) is from Japan and is living in the Washington D.C. area where her husband is teaching on a Fellowship; She has offered to translate the book into Japanese so Dr. Nobuya Tsuchida who helped us edit our manuscripts has given her permission to do the translations. By the way Dr. and Mrs. Tsuchida are moving to Los Angeles in August where he will be teaching in a college in Long Beach.

It was interesting to receive the early 1893 photo of the Japanese Methodist Mission in Portland, Oregon. I recognized Mr. Rikichi Maeda but was not sure so called his daughter Miss Frances Maeda (1412 S.E. 28th Avenue Portland, Oregon zip code 97214) and explained to her I will send her a copy of the photo to be sure, she may recognize her father and others in the photo. She must have a copy of the same photo in or among her parents albums. I mailed her the photo on June 30 th.

The one lady on far right in second row is Miss Miyo Iwakoshi who became Mrs. Andrew McKinnon, ~~she was~~ the first Japanese lady to come to Oregon in 1880. Her adopted daughter Tama married Mr. Shintaro Takaki. I knew Mrs. McKinnon, we called her Takaki no o ba san. ~~She taught~~ me many of the Needle crafts like crocheting, embroidery sewing etc during the summer vacation months when I was about 8 or 9 years old. She lived with the Takakis during the summer months on a farm near Gresham, Oregon ...Orient station. We played with the Takaki children and they taught us about farm life and fishing etc.

Do you have a copy of the OREGON HISTORICAL QUARTERLY Winter 1993-1994 issue? It is in their Special Issue: The Japanese in Oregon. There is a story about Mrs. McKinnon on Page 315 and also on page 322. Also there is a story about Yoshiko Matsuoka on page 320.

I will be glad to loan my copy to you if you are interested, it was given to me as a gift from one of my High School friends when I lived in

Portland. Or I can order a copy for you if you wish. The address is

Oregon Historical Society
1200 S.W. Park Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97205-2483

Oregon Historical Quarterly Winter 1993-1994 Special Issue: "The Japanese in Oregon"

It is a paper back edition of about 470 pages size 6" x 9"

As I read thru the pages, I regret that the History of the Japanese M.E. Mission is not included. Some historian should send it to them and they could publish a supplement to the Book. There is a history of the Catholic Church and Portland's Japanese 1930....The untimely St. Paul Miki School project pages 399-434 by Lillian A. Pereyra.

(From Page 315) "The first known Japanese immigrants to Oregon were Miss Miyo Iwakoshi and two members of her family who arrived in the state in 1880. Iwakoshi was married to Andrew McKinnon an Australian Scot whom she had met when he worked as a Professor of animal husbandry in northern Japan. McKinnon and his Japanese wife were accompanied to Oregon by her younger brother Riki, and her adopted daughter Tama Jewel Nitobe. The family settled near Gresham, where he established a sawmill. McKinnon named "Orient" in honor of his wife. Five years later in 1885, a traveling salesman Shintaro Takaki, came to Portland to sell Japanese goods to Chinese merchants. In 1889 Takaki had accumulated enough money to start a restaurant in the city. Two years later he married Tama Jewel Nitobe and thru this union the first Japanese immigrant family in Oregon was established."

(From page 322") "There is a photo of Mrs. McKinnon the first permanent Japanese resident in Oregon is shown with two grandsons, Maxwell and Robert."

(From Page 320") "Starting in 1893, the Rev. Sadakichi Kawabe, who established the Portland Japanese Methodist Church launched a campaign to reform the public morals of Japanese residents. Community leaders such as Shintaro Takaki and Shinzaburo Ban gave their support to the campaign. AN IMMIGRANT STUDENT YOSUKE MATSUOKA came to Portland in 1891. Kawabe took him into the Church and found him a job as a house servant for a white family. This position enabled Matsuoka to support himself while pursuing his dream of studying in America. With room and board provided, he could attend a grammar school during the day and do housework mornings and evenings. When he was expelled from school after a fight with white students, Rev. Kawabe convinced the principal to reconsider the decision. Thereafter Matsuoka, studied diligently and sometimes assisted the Reverend in his moral reform activities. In one instance Kawabe and Matsuoka supposedly rescued some Japanese women who had been kidnapped and forced into prostitution. YOSUKE MATSUOKA graduated with a Law degree from the University of Oregon in 1900 and eventually became FOREIGN MINISTER OF JAPAN. "

This chapter on A HISTORY OF OREGON's ISSEI
was writtern by Eichiro Azuma pages 315-367
1880- 1952

IF YOU USE QUOTATIONS FROM THESE PARAGRAPHS, PLEASE GIVE CREDIT TO
OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND TO EICHIRO AZUMA.

Friends often ask me where I lived before coming to Minnesota and when I explain I lived in the San Francisco Bay Region in Berkeley. Everyone seemed surprised that I would leave San Francisco where they enjoy Mediterranean climate of about 70 degrees year\$ around like in Italy. So I answered do you really want to learn how we moved here fifty years ago.....

YOSHI TANI one of our writers expressed it well in a Tanka poem she wrote

Homeless, we were once,
 Fprced out from our West Coast homes...
 Americans, all,
 But there were those who proclaimed,
 We looked like the enemy.
 Barbed wire fences....
 Prisoners, were we--
 Yet, we managed to survive,
 Unbroken, like the Bamboo.
 Justice did prevail---
 World War II is history
 Freedom lost, regained,
 Minnesota, "Home Sweet Home."
 We have a story to tell.Yoshi Uchiyama Tani

My husband Earl and I were living in Berkeley near the University of California when World War II was declared on Sunday, Dec. 7, 1971. It was the greatest shock to all of us. How could they do this to the U.S. During this period the widespread topic of conversation was "EVACUATION." We were American citizens by birth in the U.S. but our parents who had lived here over 40 years could not be naturalized citizens. After the War the laws were changed. and our parents became naturalized . During the War it was difficult position for our parents, ^{since} outsiders would not know the difficult^{ence} of the Japanese born in Japan or born in the U.S.

I was teaching handcrafts in a studio in the Womens City Club of San Francisco and since the U.S. Government was holding the Tolan Hearings on Evacuation in the large Stone Church next door, I went over to listen to the discussion on "EVACUATION" During this period all of us German Americans, Italizn Americans were living under curfew of 8:30 p.m. I noticed the average age of the Japanese Americans at the meeting was between 18-25 years of age. I was sitting next to representatives from the Italian and German groups and noticed they were more mature in their ages around 45 years to 50 years.

oc.t 12/94

The Italian man said "Don't worry lady, they wont Evacuate the people...since there were too many Italians in San Francisco ...even Mayor Rossi was of Italian background and it would be difficult to find a place to move the Italians... the German representative repeated the same idea of not moving them. So they both assured me...don't worry lady, the government will not do a mass Evacuation. But it did happen to the Japanese Americans. That was in February. On March 1, 1942 the U.S. Government issued an Executive Order # 9066 for a 48 hour Evacuation Voluntary to move inland from the West Coast 150 miles.... So with a kind invitation from a Japanese family friend we moved to one of their farms in Reedley, California which is about 15 miles from Fresno.

^C We had lived in our home 8 years, and to move the entire household in 48 hours was no easy task. Our Caucasian American Friends came to our rescue and helped us organize the move. We called a local transfer company to move our good furniture to our friends homes....some took the Dining Room furniture....some the Bedroom furniture, chest of drawers, Cedar Chests, etc to their homes and used them and took care of them by keeping them dusted and polished for over 3 yrs. One friend wrote me when she vacuumed the rugs and moved them. My assignment in the moving was to close the Handcraft Studio in the Womens City Club in San Francisco, when the officers of the club granted me permission to store the tables, chairs, chests display cases in their General storage area. After the War, these items were returned to us in St. Paul by government expense/ The only items which were not returned were from the Police Department where we were asked to bring in our cameras, knives, any hunting equipment.

I went to pay the utility bills, close our accounts at the stores and took a small steamer trunk to the Safety deposit Bank to store for safekeeping our silverware,, etc. Then I rented our house to a graduate students family with the help of a family who were in the real estate business to care for the home when it needed any repairs or expenses and collected the rent and forwarded it to us regularly.

We were becoming adjusted to the 115 degrees temperature, farm life and work. Reedley is in the rich San Joaquin Valley where Elberta peaches, Santa Rosa Plums, Nectarines, Table Grapes are grown. When I go to the grocery stores here, I notice with a smile ^{the mention the shopping center} of the Producers from Reedley and towns where we once lived.

Then in the heat of July another Evacuation Order was issued to relocate at government Centers, housing constructed by the Army, to 10 Centers in different States ...Arizona, Idaho, Wyoming, California, Utah.....

Show copy of Iritani's book 'ten visits'

Oct. 12 19

Since my husband and I were above the average age of the Nisei (second generation) ^{and} had been employed over 10 years, the Army Officer suggested we could have the option of going to the Midwest or East ^{and} build community acceptance and help resettle the Evacuees from the Relocation Centers on a volunteer basis. We were not to go on relief since there was no reciprocity of funds between states. The Govt. was now going to resettle people since they did not want another Indian Reservation problem and many organizations and lawyers explained it was unconstitutional to hold American citizens behind Barbed Wire without due process of law. We could not go to the Midwest by car so my husband stood in front of the Bank and sold our nearly new Chevrolet for \$250.00. The officer ^{explained} we could not get enough gas rations for the long trip and some of the stations ^{probably} would not sell to customers with Japanese faces. The Chinese people during this time wore large Buttons with I AM CHINESE so they would not be harmed.

We were scheduled to go to Lincoln Nebraska where a faculty member offered my husband a teaching assignment....he was a graduate in ECONOMICS from U. of Calif. Berkeley and had experience in Business thru his employment with 10 years as Advertising Manager of the American President Lines....a world wide Travel Company. I could find an odd job doing secretarial work. However, the Chief of Police recommended that it would be wiser not to go to Lincoln, because he of German extraction was finding it difficult to live there and we of higher visibility might be threatened. So we called a Japanese family friend who lived in St. Paul. ^{the time} He had been the Chef on the Presidents Car of the Great Northern Trains and at that naturalization was not open to aliens of Japanese Ancestry so our friend could not ride the trains during war. Father Frances Jennings of St. Mary's Church on the St. Croix employed Mr. Matsushita for his cook. So on Sundays we would go there to listen to Father Jennings sermons, go fishing and listen to his collection of classical music.

Our role was to help build understanding and community acceptance by giving talks to Youth groups, Sermons in Churches, ^{adult} meet with groups and explain the role of the Japanese American soldiers at Fort Snelling. Every week we had assignments and one time I went to Fairmont, Minn during the Corn husking season and learned how de-tasseling was done with the corn.

Several committees were organized....the Council of Human Relations, and Mr. Warren Burger, an outstanding attorney in St. Paul was our first committee chairman.....when I retired after 30 years on the program staff of the St. Paul YWCA Chief Justice Warren ^{of the U.S. Supreme Court} Burger wrote me a congratulatory letter....it is copied in our book

Oct. 12/1994

Our main role was to find housing, employment, schools for the students health care for those who needed it, and help toward their social life, going to their Churches. Our Resettlement committee leased a small ^{Hotel} ~~house~~ located where the St. Paul Civic Center now stands, employed Mrs. Ogata as manager, and evacuees came directly there for lodging, meals and waited to be employed. The YWCA, International ~~Institute~~ ^{Charity}, Family Service Agency all helped in taking care of the Evacuees needs. Since many of the young women wanted to finish their education, we needed room and board for them, so many were employed in homes to cook, care for their children and general house work. The YWCA thru a committee set standards for hours of work, wages, and time off for these girls.... Many came because their boy friends or brothers were stationed at Fort Snelling and many weddings were performed there...Mr. Tanbura and I often were asked to ^{Substitute} ~~as~~ ^{be} parents since they could not come from Camp.

The first student from Camp was George Suzuki and his parents wrote this letter since George was accepted as a student ~~for~~ Macalester College. (READ LETTER) Through Dr. Charles Turck Macalester was the first College to accept the J.A. students.

Before the War about 10 Japanese families resided in the Twin Cities, but there is no record of their names or where they lived, worked mostly in restaurants. Only Mary Ogura ~~wrote~~ ^{the} in the Books of her living in St. Paul before War. She and her husband John raised a family, gave them a good education and she is happy she stayed in St. Paul.

Alice Sickels founder of the Festival of Nations was the Executive Director of the International Institute at that time. She welcomed us to St. Paul and the Institute invited the soldiers from Fort Snelling MILD to their first New Year's Party. It was difficult for our group to find a place where we could meet.

One member of the Church where we attended opened her large apartment from 6:30 to 11:30 pm for small groups of soldiers and their friends could have a party if my husband and I would serve as chaperones. The Hostess left the foods for the party since she stayed at a friends til the party was over. We were invited again the next month.

Mrs. Sickels assigned her social work staff to go with the Evacuees to find housing and employment....it was not easy in those days. ...it is written in her book "Around the World in St. Paul"

Examples to explain about Hair cuts for young men.

The mortuary's and Cemeteries were not open to JA & since changed later

I recall one incident I experienced. The MILS was a special Unit at fort Snelling where many Japanese American men had volunteered for Army Service. At this special Unit, the men studied the Japanese Language...many of the Nisei could understand Japanese when spoken, but the majority did not study it to write or read it....so this was their special assignment.

On Sundays, my husband and I would invite my brother for Sunday Supper, and he invited some of his Army friends. They would bring their Meat Ration coupons so we could prepare a tasty Japanese Dinner.

Some of our neighbors reported to the FBI that we were entertaining Japanese soldiers. My brother was stationed at Fort Snelling and was one of the for col. Rasmussen's car at the Fort.

Driver

So my brother explained to the Colonel that we were being criticized. So one day the Colonel called on each home....both sides of the Street, ^{he explained} the soldiers were U.S. Army men and that we were offering a home cooked dinner for the enlisted men and it was a special treat for them. The Colonel gave me a Service flag with a star to place in our Window showing a member of the family is serving in the U.S. Army. After this incident many of the neighbors invited the soldiers to ice skate on their family rinks.

I remember a few episodes during our Resettlement days.....Story of ^{the late} Bishop Emeritus

Philip McNairy of St. Marks Cathedral in Minneapolis

Cemetery - Mortuary *supposedly Arthur F. ...* Hair cuts for young students (men) who dressed up in those days with dark suits & neckties
Tai Shigaki: Page 273 bottom page 273-274 279 Reflections Page 280

Kimi Yanari story: Page:
Tai Shigaki

1st Rough
draft

In 1941 Earl, my husband and I were among the 120,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. We were American Citizens by Birth just as many of you are. My parents came from Japan to the U.S. 1903. 2/3rds of the group were American citizens, 9000 served in the U.S. Army and 2000 were students. Oregon was my home State and I am a product of the American system of Public Education. and did undergraduate work at Oregon State University. We who are Japanese Americans are called Nisei (the second generation of Japanese Americans we lived a bi-cultural and bi lingu. life in Berkeley California. Earl was the Advertising Manager of the American President Steamship Lines across the Bay in San Francisco....there were no commercial planes in those days. At that time our parents could not be naturalized, (but the Warren McCarron Nationality and Immigration Act was passed and repealed the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924.)

After war was declared on Dec. 7, 1941 there was discussion on the possibility of mass evacuation. So early in Jan 1942, I attended some of the Tolan Hearings In San Francisco...they were government sponsored meetings on Evacuation. I remember the Japanese Americans as a very young naive group in their late teens and early 20's compared to the ^{mature} Italian and German leaders attending the Hearings. The Italian American explained to me, they will never evacuate them since they would have to move most of the people in San Francisco....even Mayor Rossi was of Italian descent....the German representative felt the same so he said.... don't worry, evacuation would not happen.

But it did happen to the Japanese Americans...thru fear, prejudice, public sentiment was against us and we were highly visible. From week to week, we did get military orders, we lived under curfew regulations, had to give up our cooking knives, personal cameras, guns or any hunting equipment to the local police station and never were returned. Because it was difficult to differentiate the Chinese Americans and the Japanese Americans, my Chinese friends wore large buttons..."I AM CHINESE"

Then we received orders that we could move voluntarily on 48 hours notice if we would move 150 miles inland from the Coast....so with my husband's Mother and Father, we decided to move to a friend's farm in Reedley, California which is about 15 miles from Fresno by March 2. With the help of our loyal Caucasian friends we stored our household goods, closed our businesses, settled our accounts within that 48 hour period. We placed our silver and little jewelry with a signed statement of Contents and put them in the Safety Deposit vault in the local bank. We made arrangements with a local transfer company for moving our basic things.... stove, refrigerator, clothing to Reedley. Many of our friends helped us pack our belongings and assisted in renting our six room house to a family who were studying for their Advanced degrees at U. of Calif....they welcomed the housing especially when their children could enjoy the garden.

After being in Reedley 5 months and just beginning to learn about farming with the help of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture staff.....this is the region in California where the Peaches, Santa Rosa Plums, Oranges and Table grapes are ^{produced}. Then one hot day when the temperature hovered around 117 degrees we were given another order to move again to Relocation Centers. We had planned to go ^{to} one of the Centers with our family. However, during the registration process, Earl and I were given the option by the Provost Marshall of the U.S. Army stationed in Reedley ~~of~~ to go to the Eastern or Midwestern part of the U.S. voluntarily, if we would help build community acceptance and help resettle the people from the Relocation Centers on a volunteer basis. We promised we would take a job as a cook or gardener to make ends meet. *and not go on Welfare since there was no proximity of welfare between them*

The Sociologists at the Universities on the West Coast in their study did not want another Indian Reservation problem. So we were planning to go to Lincoln, Nebraska since my husband was offered a teaching position, but the Chief of Police

in Lincoln warned us not to come since he was of German extraction and it was becoming unsafe for him to stay there during the War. He feared we of higher visibility might suffer. We were concerned because we knew some of the Evacuees who were professional dentists and doctors went to Texas and were held in prison until their identity was established as good citizens *by the FBI*.

In haste we had to sell our Car outside of the local bank to the first customer for \$250.00 an almost new Chevrolet. We had to travel by train since the Army ^{officer} felt it would be safer, rationing of Gas would not permit this long journey and some places might not sell gasoline to people with Japanese faces. Through family friendly ~~home~~ was offered to us, and we arrived in St. Paul on August 9, 1942

We had letters of introduction and references to various organizations, churches, YW and YMCAs, the International Institute and Colleges. I had served on the staff of the YWCA in Portland and was part time Social case worker for the San Francisco International Institute when I lived in Berkeley. We also had clearance thru the FBI.

Our main assignment was to BUILD COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE. So each Week Earl and I would go to different groups in Churches, Youth Groups, schools and colleges and give talks on Japanese Americans. Sometimes the weather was 26 degrees below zero and we were not prepared for it since we had been living in sunny California. We did not have a car, no buses then...we traveled by trolley car and I remember our first visit to South St. Paul took over an hour to get there. Only about 10 Japanese ^{were} living in St. Paul before the War, so many Minnesotans were not acquainted with American Citizens of Japanese extraction.

We had many interesting experiences...one of my brothers was stationed at Fort Snelling at the Military Intelligence Language School and on Sundays we would invite him and his friends for a home cooked dinner. One of the neighbors complained

to the FBI that we were entertaining Japanese soldiers. The FBI came to visit us and Col. ^{Karl} Rasmussen from Fort Snelling called on the homes in our neighborhood and explained to them, the soldiers were U.S. Army officers and they were in the Intelligence Unit studying Japanese. He suggested that I place a Service Flag in the window to show that we had a relative serving in the U.S. Army

Many families and students wrote to us from the Relocation Centers (there were 10 Centers in different parts of California, Idaho, Arkansas, Wyoming, etc. wanting to resettle here, so we started to make contacts with the Colleges and places of employment...many Japanese Americans were highly skilled in their professions...^{engineers} auto mechanics, cooks, dentists, stenographers, Dr.'s nurses, dressmakers.

In the beginning, we helped by opening our small home to families and students, but the numbers increased beyond our expectations.....so it was necessary to form the St. Paul Resettlement Committee, composed of social workers, Church leaders, College faculty members and community people. So an organized ^{St Paul Council of Human Relations} Resettlement program ^{like others} was started. Mr. Warren Burger was an attorney in St. Paul and served as our first Chairman, he recently retired as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the U.S., Dr. Charles Turck President of Macalester College was the second chairman of the committee.

In St. Paul, the committee leased a small Hotel....(located where the present Civic Center now stands and Mrs. Tomiko Ogata was the Director, she managed the housing, and prepared the meals for the families who came directly from the different Resettlement Centers. She also advised them about adjustments of living in Minnesota with the cold weather and humid summers. In this way housing, employment and immediate needs were met.

I was on the staff of the St. Paul YWCA at the time, and many girls were seeking Household employment since they were going to school and needed a place where they could get Board and Room. Through the YWCA a committee was formed and helped establish standards for Household employees...re: defining their responsibilities in the homes, their work hours, salaries, free time and also found homes who were seeking workers. Committee members would contact the families and the homes, help with the interviews and ~~and~~ worked out the details of placement. Many girls came since ^{their} boy friends or brothers were stationed at Fort Snelling. ^{at the Military Academy} With the help of the International Institute we planned social get to gethers ^{with} for the group.

^{developed into} the Resettlement Committee, the St. Paul Council of Human Relations ^{and helped} not only ^{the} the Japanese Americans, but other Minority groups

An interesting experience was when the late Bishop Emeritus Philip McNairy of St. Marks Cathedral in Minneapolis ^{the 3rd} served as chr. ^{Minister}. Rev. McNairy was Minister of Christ Episcopal Church in St. Paul during the War years. One time he

Photo of
Letter to
Chief Justice

asked if there were specific problems of our group and I explained the need to find a Barber so the men students could get their hair cut....some of the *Barbers* turned down the Japanese American students. We also needed to find employment for trained and experienced Beauticians. so. Rev. McNairy expressed this need in his sermon and found members of his Church who opened their shops ~~for~~ for these services.

Our first task was to help the students resettle since they wished to continue their education...they would find odd jobs around the house and gardens and they had a good command of English. We received many letters from the Relocation Centers from young adults who were interested in finishing their education.

(Read Suzuki's letter)

Though we did have some problems in finding housing and employment, Minnesota was outstanding in accepting the group, private colleges and the University opened their doors to the students who applied. Hospitals accepted internships for the Medical students....some ^{from} were at the top of their classes in pre-medics at the University of California in Berkeley.

Though the weather was truly cold in Minnesota, the hearts of the people *were* warm and gracious. Many opened their homes and Churches welcomed them to help the Nisei adjust their religious and social life. We were in communication with friends who resettled in other states and cities and in comparison, Minnesota was outstanding in accepting the group X

After the War, many resettled people moved back to their homes on the West Coast to be with their families or businesses, and farms, but many stayed in Minnesota and became long-time residents and are participating and contributing to ~~the~~ Community. *life*

Personally, evacuation was a tragic experience, a lot of sadness and bitterness and I sincerely hope it will never be repeated to any group or persons.

In retrospect, we were a part of a huge HUMAN DRAMA where there was no SCRIPT because it was unprecedented to have compulsory mass migration in the United States of U.S. Citizens. At that time our parents could not become Naturalized because the Laws did not allow it. However, the laws were changed in 1952 and Japanese can become naturalized citizens when they meet the requirements of Residence and ^{study the government policies} take the examinations.

There was not time for a DRESS REHEARSAL of this drama, everything was trial and error and the VILLAN was race prejudice, fear, war hysteria, intolerance and discrimination as well as political and economic pressures.

The SCENES were endless....many books ~~and~~ have been ~~on~~ written and ^{film made} and now after 49 years, the CURTAIN goes up on the FINAL ACT. We must remember the U.S. was founded on the premise that individuals of different races, religious

beliefs and cultural patterns, could live together harmoniously and could create a strong just and tolerant Nation.p

With the Resettlement Program over, I completed my Masters degree at this U.^{of Minn} and served on the Program staff of the St. Paul YWCA for over 30 years.

With Retirement, I continue my interest in Community committees as a volunteer and share my interest in Flower Arrangement, Gourmet Cooking and Travel ^{travelled} with groups.

FOR REDRESS.....You probably have read that on Aug. 10, 1988 the Civil Liberties ^{to Japan, Orient + area} Act was signed into Law and Redress payments began in October 1990 ^{for} tp ^{World} eligible Japanese American....the Nisei....Issei and Sansei

EXECUTIVE ORDER issued on Feb. 19, 1942
9066

1952 Walter McCarran Immigration and Naturalization Act was passed repealing the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924.

March 28, 1942 Evacuation orders were issued.

Return to
3 1/2 pages

Wed
Nov 6 - 9³⁰am

Send copy of Jack to Prof. Isakura
by Nov 4 - Paragraphs of
Paragraphs 10 sentence

In 1941 ^{and} my husband and I were among the 120,000 Japanese and ^{and our parents} Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. We were American Citizens by Birth just as many of you are. My parents came from Japan to the U.S. 1903. ^{Came over here from also to see kind of opportunity like others from foreign lands} 2/3rds of the group were American citizens, 9000 served in the U.S. Army and 2000 were students. Oregon was my home State and I am a product of the American system of Public Education. ^{and} I did undergraduate work at Oregon State University. We who are Japanese Americans are called Nisei (the second generation of Japanese Americans) ^{and} we lived a bi-cultural and bi lingual life in Berkeley, California. Earl was the Advertising Manager of the American President Steamship Lines ^{graduate of U of Calif in Berkeley & with head office} across the Bay in San Francisco....there were no commercial planes in those days. At that time our parents could not be naturalized, ^{because of} but the Warren McCarron Nationality and Immigration Act was passed and repealed the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924.

After war was declared on Dec. 7, 1941 there was discussion on the possibility of mass evacuation. So, early in Jan 1942, I attended some of the Tolan Hearings in San Francisco...they were government sponsored ^{discussion} meetings on Evacuation. I remember the Japanese Americans as a very young naive group in their late teens and early 20's compared to the ^{mature} Italian and German leaders attending the Hearings. The Italian American explained to me, they will never evacuate them since they would have to move most of the people in San Francisco....even Mayor Rossi was of Italian descent....the German representative felt the same so he said.... don't worry, evacuation would not happen.

But it did happen to the Japanese Americans...thru fear, prejudice, public sentiment against us and we were highly visible. From week to week, we ^{did} get military orders, we lived under curfew regulations, ^{of 8 pm} had to give up our cooking knife personal cameras, guns or any hunting equipment to the local police station and never were returned. Because it was difficult to differentiate the Chinese Americans and the Japanese Americans, my Chinese friends wore large buttons..."I AM CHINESE"

Then we ^{the} received orders that we could move voluntarily on 48 hours notice if we would move 150 miles inland from the Coast....so with my husbands Mother and Father, we decided to move to a friends farm in Reedley, California which is about 15 miles from Fresno ^{by March 2, 1942} by March 2. With the help of our loyal Caucasian friends we stored our household goods, closed our businesses, settled our accounts within that 48 hour period. We placed our silver and little jewelry with a signed statement of Contents and put them in the Safety Deposit vault in the local bank. We made arrangements with a local transfer company for moving our basic things stove, refrigerator, clothing to Reedley. ^{I will always be grateful to our non Japanese friend and took care of our furniture dishes - bed and linen home who} Many of our friends helped us pack our belongings and assisted in renting our six room house to a family who were studying for their Advanced degrees at U. of Calif....they welcomed the ^{home} especially when their children ^{could live since many apartments did not allow children} could enjoy the garden.

Among
our
group

Local
Library
6:30 pm

on
Isakura
+ notes

gentleman appeared
1908