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"Skeleton in the Closet": The Japanese American *Hokoku Seinen-dan* and Their "Disloyal" Activities at the Tule Lake Segregation Center during World War II

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INTRODUCTION

At a monthly meeting of *Imin Kenkyu-Kai* or the Immigration/ Emigration Studies Society in December, 1991, in Tokyo, Jean Wakatsuki Houston described the event which prompted her to write *Farewell to Manzanar* (1973).[1] One day her nephew asked her to tell him about the "Manzanar Relocation Center," one of ten concentration camps where West Coast Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II, and the place where he was born. She told him to ask his own parents, but he responded, "I can't ask them. It's like a skeleton in the closet in my family." He said that his family had never discussed their life in Manzanar; he sensed he had to refrain from discussing the topic. Jean Wakatsuki Houston herself had never told the story even to her husband in their fifteen years of marriage. She realized that she had also evaded the topic. Encouraged by her husband, she sat in front of a tape-recorder to narrate her life there, but she burst into tears. "A skeleton," or a deep hidden shame, jumped out of the closet and overwhelmed her. Michi Weglyn explains in *Years of Infamy* (1976) how she felt when, as a teenage girl, she was driven with other Japanese

Americans into the desert:

> With profound remorse, I believed, as did numerous Japanese Americans, that somehow the stain of dishonor we collectively felt for the treachery of Pearl Harbor must be eradicated, however great the sacrifice, however little we were responsible for it. In our immaturity and naiveté, many of us who were American citizens—two-thirds of the total—believed that this, under the circumstances, was the only way to prove our loyalty to a country which we loved.

"In an inexplicable spirit of atonement and with great sadness" Weglyn followed her parents into one of the concentration camps.[2] This wartime experience of Japanese Americans, driven into the wilderness by their own government, had been their "skeleton in the closet" for years. It had been their shame, both as an ethnic group and as Americans, hidden deep inside their hearts as if they had committed something unforgivable against their own country.

Painstaking research by Weglyn and Frank F. Chuman, a Japanese American lawyer and the author of *The Bamboo People: The Law and Japanese Americans* (1976),[3] as well as moving personal narratives by Wakatsuki Houston and other Japanese Americans, helped Japanese Americans in general to understand the injustice that had been done to them. The campaign for redress which took place in the late 70s and early 80s led the nation to establish the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, which recommended Congress in 1983 to compensate the victims for "a grave injustice." On August 10, 1988, President Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act. Now, Japanese Americans have restored their ethnic pride and at last driven the skeleton out of the closet.[4]

In the course of research on the "returnees" from the United States during and immediately after World War II,[5] however, I found that the issue of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, or the young men's association to serve the nation [Japan],[6] is the last of the "skeletons in the closet" in the history of Japanese Americans. The former members of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* have been stigmatized as "disloyals" or "trouble makers" not only by the American government and by Americans in general, but also by their fellow Japanese Americans; some of them still suffer from the stigma of their wartime activities. I have to confess that I myself was biased against the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* activists when I started this research, a prejudice I had had since I read *The Spoilage* by

Dorothy Swain Thomas and Richard S. Nishimoto (1946). I was uneasy at the start of my first interview with a former *Hokoku Seinen-dan* activist. But toward the end of the interview I realized that I had been prejudiced and that we do have a responsibility to listen to these former activists. With the redress to the incarcerated Japanese Americans brought about by the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 and the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, the time seems to have come to present what the former members of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* have to say about their activities, renunciation, and repatriation. This paper is based upon interviews with eighteen former members including three central committee members and two branch leaders: eleven Kibei, Nisei who had been sent to Japan for education and then retuned to America in their mid-teens, and seven Jun-Nisei, Nisei who had never been to Japan before World War II.[7]

I

"ENEMIES" WITHIN

The census of 1940 counted 126,947 ethnic Japanese in the mainland United States, out of which 112,353 lived in the three Pacific coastal states, mostly in California. The location of this population alarmed the military because, as the *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942* puts it, it was "significantly concentrated near many highly sensitive installations essential to the war effort."[8] At the outbreak of the war, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) rounded up Japanese community leaders as "potentially dangerous enemy aliens"; by December 13, 1941, the number of Japanese taken into custody had reached 1,395 compared with 1,074 Germans, and 185 Italians.[9] The ethnic Japanese were generally regarded as "a large, unassimilated, tightly knit racial group, bound to an enemy nation," whose "loyalties [to the United States] were unknown."[10] They were soon forced to "evacuate" from their homes under the pretext of military necessity. On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066; on March 2, thus authorized, the commanding general of the Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, John L. DeWitt, prescribed military zones along the Pacific coast and the southern part of Arizona from which "all persons of Japanese ancestry" were to be "evacuated." On March 18, President

Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9102, creating the War Relocation Authority (WRA) to "relocate" Japanese "evacuees." Ethnic Japanese, regardless of their citizenship, were officially segregated as "enemies" within the nation.[11]

In February 1943, all incarcerated persons of 17 years of age and older were told to fill out a four page questionnaire for "army enlistment and leave clearance registration." This registration, commonly known as "loyalty registration," was intended to investigate the intensity of "Japaneseness" of the "evacuees."[12] The two most disputed questions were Questions 27 and 28. Question 27, for male citizens only, was: "Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?"; and Question 28 was: "Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese Emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization?" By September 1943, out of 40,306 (21,047 male and 19,259 female) citizens, 38,816 registered; but to Question 28, 6,333 gave negative answers, 585 gave qualified negative answers, 354 did not answer, and in 146 cases the record of their answers is unknown. Altogether, 7,418 citizens or 18.4 percent of the total 40,306 did not give an affirmative answer to Question 28. Among the draft age citizens (17 to 38), "[an] alarming proportion" of 24 percent, or 4,783 persons, did not swear their loyalty to the United States.[13] Question 28 actually asked or mixed three questions in one, namely; 1) Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America? 2) Will you faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces? 3) Will you forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese Emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization? It might have been easier to answer in the affirmative only to the first part of the question. The second part should not have caused any trouble in answering. But the last one was tricky and puzzling. They might have wondered why a loyal citizen should be asked to "forswear any form of allegiance" which he did not have in the first place. Subsequently all persons:

1. who had requested repatriation or expatriation to Japan and did not cancel their application before July 1, 1943;
2. who did not answer affirmatively to Questions 27 and 28;
3. who refused to fill out the questionnaire;

4. who had been denied leave clearance because of unfavorable individual reports by intelligence agencies or some other information were segregated into the Tule Lake Center with their dependents; in addition to 6,249 original Tuleans, 12,173 "segregees" were transferred from nine other "relocation" centers.[14]

II

TULE LAKE SEGREGATION CENTER

One of the reasons for the segregation was to prevent disputes and conflicts between "loyals" and "disloyals" among the ethnic Japanese in "relocation centers." C. S., a Kibei, recalls:

> After we got into the camp, what I detested was. . . . well, we were harassed not by Americans, but by fellow Japanese. Hush-hushes, rumors, suspicions, so and so is a spy. . . . Just a guess. But we were suspicious and fearful ourselves.[15]

S.T. and other "disloyals" expected that in the Tule Lake Center, the segregation center for "disloyals," they would be able to live more peacefully with people of similar views and orientations. But in the Tule Lake Center, the conflicts not only continued but even became aggravated. As Masaru Hashimoto, a Kibei and an executive committee member of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, remembers, newly segregated "disloyals" were fingerprinted on arrival, and the center was heavily guarded by armed soldiers. It was quite clear to him that they were being treated as enemy aliens, but this he could accept because he had not sworn allegiance to the American nation. However, he recalls, "soon later I came to hate the life in the Tule Lake Center, the life living with those different people." "You couldn't tell who was watching or listening," he adds.[16] W. K., a Kibei and a branch executive of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, also says, "I was very disappointed to find those 'loyals' in Tule Lake, supposedly the camp for 'No-No' people."[17] He explains that his expectation of waiting for the day of repatriation peacefully with people of similar views in the segregation center was shattered.

Living conditions at the segregation center also shattered hopes of starting a more peaceful life. Even though the War Relocation Authority asserted that the "segregees" received the same treatment as the residents of other centers in its facilities, the transferred people found liv-

ing conditions there to be extremely poor. One person wrote to a friend in the Jerome Center in Arkansas on October 3, 1943:

> In comparison, facilities here are much worse than those in Jerome, and the sanitary condition is very poor; bathrooms are filthy and showers are dirty. Much worse than stables at Santa Anita [a Los Angeles race track, the horse stalls of which housed Japanese American "evacuees" as an "Assembly Center"]. Living quarters too are in shambles. No one would believe that people have lived here.[18]

Noboru Shirai, an original Tulean, writes in a memoir of his Tule Lake days that almost all valuables, including large pieces of furniture and stoves and even wooden partitions, had been taken away before the transferred "segregees" arrived.[19] W. K. remembers that the administration favored, or at least he suspected that they favored, the original Tuleans. Although the letter quoted above did mention that the food was good, this too soon deteriorated and food became scarce. Some transferred Tuleans believed that food supplies were being smuggled out by Caucasian personnel.[20] Because of food shortages, persistent rumors among the "segregees," and the firm belief that they were being unfairly treated by the administration personnel, those were the hardest days of his wartime experience in the memory of Masaru Hashimoto, a Kibei and a transferred "segregee." Judging from other interviews and the personal memoirs of other "segregees," the embittered transferred people came to believe that something had to be done to improve the living conditions in the Tule Lake Center.

On November 1, 1943, when Dillon Myer, the national director of the WRA, visited the Tule Lake Segregation Center, what the Dies Committee was later to call "the Tule Lake riot" broke out. On November 4, the army was called in with machine guns and tanks and the center remained under strict military control until January 14, 1944. The suspected leaders of "the riot" were held until the following summer, without any charges being made against them, in what was commonly known as the "stockade," or what the WRA called "Area B" or the "Surveillance Area." At first, according to Tokio Yamane, a Kibei and one of the executive committee members of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, he and two other young men arrested at "the riot" were imprisoned in the "bull pen," a makeshift tent. The three men, who had been badly beaten by WRA security staff, were left untreated in the freezing cold.[21]

Following a series of conflicts, a demand for *Saikakuri*, or the resegregation of "disloyals," prevailed among the transferred Tuleans and a "Resegregation Committee" was formed. The committee pointed out in letters to both the Spanish Consul at San Francisco and the Tule Lake Project Director, Raymond Best, that even in the center for "disloyals," "there are still many Loyals whose Ideas and Ideals are opposite from us, and due to such unfavorable conditions, there may be caused unexpected misunderstandings and confusions."[22] They requested resegregation into separate facilities only for "disloyals." Their ultimate goal was, however, "immediate repatriation to Japan." On January 20, 1944, Henry L. Stimson, the Secretary of War, announced that Japanese Americans would be equally drafted and that any new request for repatriation to Japan after January 21 should be regarded as draft dodging. For some "segregees," fear of conscription added a reason to join the *Saikakuri Undo*, or resegregation movement. Around April, 1944, a rumor of a third exchange ship between Japan and the United States spread among the "segregees." This rumor gave another incentive to the resegregation movement. "Immediate repatriation" meant immediate release from the concentration camps, in other words, the ultimate solution of all their troubles in the concentration camps.

III

THE *HOKOKU SEINEN-DAN*

On October 6, 1944, Francis Biddle, the Secretary of Justice, announced that the department had begun to accept applications for renunciation of American citizenship. In order to declare their aims more clearly to the governments of the United States and Japan, the Resegregation Committee changed its name to the *Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan*, or the association for immediate repatriation and service in the motherland [Japan], commonly known as the *Hoshi-dan*. This name was formally adopted on October 27, 1944.[23] The "Constitution of the Sokuji Kikoku Hoshidan" defined its purpose as being:

> to aim for immediate repatriation and expatriation and also to wish for resegregation of those understanding the meaning and principles of this present war of our mother country; and to try to be loyal to Japan and to

clarify our position of relationship of the Emperor and his subjects. Upon repatriating we endeavor to sacrifice materially and mentally for the best of our Mother country for her disposal.[24]

By declaring loyalty to Japan, on the one hand, they hoped that the Japanese government would open negotiations with the American government for the earliest possible repatriation by exchange ships. At the same time, they claimed, or believed they could claim, that the American government should respect their rights as enemy aliens and treat them in accordance with the Geneva agreements of 1929 regarding prisoners of war. Although the constitution prescribed the framework of the organization, and the membership they claimed had reached 9,300, details of their daily activities still remain unclear. Judging from interviews with former executive members of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, the standing committee of the *Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan* seems to have been a loosely connected group of "advisers" to the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, or the young men's association to serve the nation [Japan], formerly known as the *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan*, or the "Young Men's Association for the Mother Country Studies".

Two of the advisers to the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* most frequently referred to by the interviewees are Kinzo E. Wakayama and Z. T. Of these two, Wakayama was a Kibei born in Hawaii, and a World War I veteran, and has been regarded as one of the leading schemers behind the troubles in both Manzanar and Tule Lake camps. Persistent rumor has it that he was a member of the *Kokuryu-kai*, or the Black Dragon, an extreme rightist society in Japan; more than a couple of the former *Hokoku Seinen-dan* members believed the rumor. One interviewee describes him as being as incomprehensible as a chimera. From several interviews with him,[25] however, I gather that he had always insisted while in the camps that the incarceration was fundamentally unconstitutional, and that Japanese Americans therefore not only had the right to protest but also the responsibility to protest, as members of a democracy. Before the war, on August 10, 1940, as the executive secretary of the Seine and Line Fisherman's Association in Terminal Island (a labor organization affiliated to the California State Federation of Labor), he made a public statement that "[they were] doing everything within [their] power to cooperate for the national defense and security of the nation." He asked for the investigation of the FBI in order to clear "the same exaggerated, unfounded 'yellow peril' accusations" that

they were "subversive fifth columnists."[26] At the time of the "evacuation" order to Japanese in Terminal Island, he filed a habeas corpus case as a protest. But his continual protests in the camp were regarded as "subversive" by the authorities. He was classified as "class A," a class which

> includes only those persons concerning whom [the Office of the Chief of Naval Operation] has reliable information indicating their participation in subversive activities within the relocation centers, including riots and anti-American demonstrations, pro-Japanese meetings, beating and intimidation of loyal Japanese (mostly Nisei, and particularly informers), strike agitation, pro-Japanese propaganda, the intentional spreading of rumors, anti-American political maneuverings, etc.[27]

At the "loyalty registration," he insisted to the officials at hearings that he had fought for America during World War I, and had proved his loyalty, so that it was unnecessary for him to prove his loyalty again and to "forswear any form of allegiance. . . . to any other foreign government." He remembers that he said to the officials that he was not "a slave." He later dropped the habeas corpus suit, however, and submitted a request for repatriation to Japan. He remembers how discouraged he was to hear that a Justice Department official had told his wife, "Tell your husband that if he wants protection he has to become an enemy alien." He signed citizenship renunciation "under protest," and eventually left America with his family. He lives in Japan now, but he sent his son to America to work his way through college because of his firm belief that America is a land of opportunity.

As for the other leader, Z. T., a Stanford educated Issei, many interviewees say that he was a man of integrity. His name is also found among government files as a leader of "subversive activities." He seemed to be a nationalist and maintained that Japanese people had better leave America, where they would be confined as second-class citizens even at best. In the first issue of the *Hokoku*, the short-lived organization paper for the *Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan*, on November 21, 1944, Z. T. declares that those who had been segregated in the Tule Lake Center should be awakened to their racial destiny. "Once aboard on a repatriation ship, we hurriedly return to our mother country, and willingly sacrifice our lives and our properties for our country. . . . For this goal, I strongly believe that we should endeavor for self-discipline and self-cultivation."[28] It has to be pointed out that he did not agitate

for any violent uprising against the American government. He repatriated himself to Japan, and later became a high-ranking official of the Department of Labor in Japan. But according to one of his friends, he was disillusioned to see filthy toilets when he landed at Uraga, Kanagawa; the Japanese had become a strange, uncivilized people to him. He seemed to begin having some doubts about whether he had given the right advice to the young people while in the Tule Lake Center.[29] Interviewees remember that Z. T. and Wakayama did not get along well, and neither did their followers.

Local activities of the *Sokoku Kenkyu Kai*, or the mother country studies group, had started by May 1944. They were a part of the ethnic cultural renaissance among the Tuleans which the WRA allowed during the Tule Lake "riot," probably in order to conciliate the residents. The *Turu-rei-ko Jiho*, or *Tulean Dispatch Japanese Section*, of November 2, 1943 reports that some Tuleans had been making preparations to establish a unified Japanese language school system and *Kendo* (Japanese fencing) instructors had been working to form a club to "guide the youth through Bushido." On November 3, about 15,000 Tuleans gathered to honor Meiji Emperor, according to the *Tulean Dispatch Japanese Section* of November 4, 1943. The newspaper reported that:

> as the authorities permitted the ceremony, 15,000 men and women of all ages gathered; pupils of Japanese language schools led the parade, wearing head bands gallantly and the flags of the Rising Sun in hands. . . . The ceremony started by saluting the national flag at ten o'clock. *Kimigayo* [the Japanese national anthem] was sung in unison, then the Imperial Rescript on Education was read with all due submission.[30]

The same issue of the *Tulean Dispatch Japanese Section* carries a notice of a grand *sumo* tournament. Furthermore, the Japanese language schools naturally began to teach *shushin*, or Japanese ethics, and Japanese history. A Japanese correspondent in the Tule Lake Segregation Center commented ironically on this liberal policy of the camp administration regarding Japanese education: "America may well boast of its world famous reputation as a country of freedom; its generosity is beyond our expectation."[31]

According to W. K., the first head of the Ward One branch of the *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan*, members started regular programs for physical training and Japanese cultural studies, following the advice of

an elder Issei that they should not waste time by doing nothing while in the camp. If they intended to return to Japan, they had better discard their American aspects and learn to be perfect Japanese. They invited Issei elders to their meetings as advisers and lecturers. These local activities developed into the *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan.*

The first general meeting of the *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan* was held on August 9, 1944 and three days later, 650 members, 100 guests and 450 parents celebrated the formation of the organization. A part of "The Declaration" of the organization reads:

> Whereas the authorities of this nation, the policy of which stands for democracy, humanism, freedom, have given the legal permission in due form to our movement. . . .
> Whereas we establish the *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan* to achieve the three goals undermentioned, therefore be it
> Resolved, To endeavor vigorously for the fulfillment of the following three purposes:
> First; Being awakened racially and understanding the cultures of our mother country which is unique in the world:
> Second; Respecting established laws here and not committing to any political apparatus in this center, and devoting ourselves only to perfect our character:
> Third; Training for physical strength.[32]

This document shows that the *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan* was established with permission from the administration, or at least this was understood to be the case by the members. Their ultimate goal was to train the members physically and spiritually to serve their mother country immediately after their repatriation. The *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan* was organized into a central committee (a president, two vice presidents, two secretaries, a treasurer, and a superintendent), three subcommittees (*Shuyo* [Japanese Cultural Studies], *Shako* [Social Relations], and *Taiiku* [Physical Training]), and seven ward branches (later eight branches) which were also organized into sub-branches. *Shuyo* and *Taiiku* were the principal areas of activity. *Dai Ichi Shibu*, or Ward One Branch, had 140 members, organized into nine sub-branches, by September 22, 1944. About 60 percent of the members were Jun-Nisei, or Nisei who had never been to Japan. Daily attendance at the morning exercise session, in "silver gray sweater shirt and khaki pants," was encouraged "for [their] own benefit," but not compulsory. In the month

of August only 66 members attended, of which a mere 13 had perfect attendance records.[33]

At the bugle call, at five o'clock in the morning, members gathered in the playground, paid deference to the imperial palace in Japan and the imperial forces, completed Japanese radio gymnastic exercises No. 1 and No. 2, and then jogged around the camp, shouting, "*Wasshoi! Wasshoi!*" while the bugles unit played a march. Mamoku Sasaki, a Kibei and one of the perfect attendance record holders, put in his diary in Japanese, on September 14, 1944, "kicking the ground at dawn [in the frost], but this [training in the freezing temperature] is a good discipline." According to Tokio Yamane, a Kibei and the head of the *Chuo Taiiku-bu*, or the central subcommittee of physical training of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, as the membership grew larger, the bugle unit grew from only a few to well over fifty members. Soon, they were told not to blow their bugles, and to perform their exercises quietly, because, as G. O., a Kibei and a regular member, remembers, the battlefield-like noise irritated guards who had served in the Southern Pacific battlefields. Their activities, semi-military pro-Japan demonstrations made on American soil, must have been considered a gross affront by the administration. On receiving this order, they felt proud: as Mamoku Sasaki put it in his dairy on November 15, 1944, "We are regaining our Japanese identity." However, in order to avoid further trouble, the *Chuo Taiiku-bu*, or the central subcommittee of physical training, announced that the morning exercises should be held at six o'clock instead of five. They also held lecture meetings; the titles of some of those lectures are "Democracy and Freedom" by Kinzo Wakayama, "War and National Philosophy" by a Buddhist priest, and "On Japanese Culture" by another Buddhist priest. The *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan*, or the "Young Men's Association for the Mother Country Studies," changed its name to the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, or the young men's association to serve the nation [Japan], "in order to intensify efforts to achieve our purposes" at the end of November; membership was limited to those from age 15 to 35.[34] The leaders of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* mostly consisted of Kibei in their early twenties.

Apparently in an effort to suppress what the administration saw as the "subversive activities" of the organization, whose members seemed determined "to engage in pro-Japanese demonstrations and parades or to publish pro-Japanese newspapers or to wear a semi-military uniform bearing the emblem of the Rising Sun on it,"[35] on December

27, 1944, sixty-nine leading members of the *Hoshi-dan* and the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* "were unexpectedly arrested by the Authority of the United States Government. . . . and immediately moved to the Internment Camp in Santa Fe."[36] They were arrested by the order of the Attorney General. It was at about three in the morning, as G. O. recalls:

> I was raided when I was asleep. M. P. [Military Police] rushed in at midnight and ordered me to get out at bayonet point. I was hauled off; the bayonet was on my back, the gun was loaded and the safety catch was off. I was told to walk faster, and thrown in the stockade.

"I prepared for the worst," he confesses.[37] Mamoku Sasaki, a Kibei and another one of the arrested, wrote in his Japanese diary on December 27, 1944, "I have been prepared that this day would come." He had submitted his application for renunciation of citizenship in early November, and had been called for a hearing conducted by John Burling, a Justice Department official, on December 7. Before the raids began, he had suspected that the WRA was planning something against the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*. So had other leaders. According to the former leaders, in preparation for their arrests they had stratified their organization; four or five sets of executive boards were chosen, so that, once organization leaders were removed, the next set of leaders would spring to the front and assume responsibility until the day of their own arrest. Altogether, in a series of raids, 1, 416 men were transferred to the Justice Department internment camps in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Bismarck, North Dakota.[38] More than two-thirds of these men (1,098) were citizenship renunciants. In a sense they were finally "resegregated" as "enemy aliens" into what one of the former members called "the final station for repatriation to Japan."[39]

IV

RENUNCIATION

An amendment to the Nationality Act of 1940[40] enacted on July 1, 1944 allowed American citizens to renounce their citizenship in wartime and within American territory. By April 18, 1946, the Attorney General had approved 5,589 cases of application for renunciation, of which 5,461 cases were from Tule Lake citizens.

The *Hoshi-dan* and the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* have been considered responsible for this mass renunciation. Frank Chuman criticizes the Justice Department and the WRA for having "totally miscalculated the discouragement and loss of morale among the evacuees" which left them vulnerable to the renunciation drive from "the pro-Japanese pressure groups." As evidence of miscalculation he refers to the testimony of the Attorney General, who estimated to Congress that the number of renunciants would be between 300 and 1,000. Donald E. Collins, a historian and the author of *Native American Aliens*, on the other hand, argues that the Attorney General estimated differently: from 2,500 to 3,000 to the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, and 1,000 to 3,000 in a letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Collins considers the "push" by the *Hoshi-dan* and the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* to be one of the main reasons for the massive renunciation. Michi Weglyn also maintains that the radical activities of "this dictatorial extremist element" and the non-intervention policies of the WRA were responsible for the high numbers.[41]

However, John H. Province, Acting Director of the WRA, testified on January 26, 1944, at the hearings for the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization for the bills to amend the Nationality Act of 1940, that, "[The] best estimate we have now would indicate that there are about 6,000 who have persisted in their 'No' answers." Questioned as to how many of the 6,000 were willing to sign the renunciation agreement, he answered, "I would say approximately two-thirds of them would probably be willing to renounce their citizenship." That means that the WRA estimated that about 4,000 might renounce their citizenship. The actual number of renunciations by Tule Lake citizens approved by the Attorney General, however, reached 5,461 by April 18, 1946. Here, the WRA also underestimated the number of the renunciants. When the number of citizens who "persisted" in remaining "disloyal" to the United States and the number who renounced their citizenship while in the Tule Lake Center are compared, however, we find that the two figures are almost identical. Here we have to pay attention to the date of the testimony by John H. Province: January 26, 1944. It was well before the *Hoshi-dan* and *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan* were organized. This leads us to infer that the mass renunciation of citizenship in the Tule Lake Center might have been affected by factors other than the pressure from those extreme pro-Japan groups.

What do the former members think of the charges that they forced

the vulnerable residents of the Tule Lake Center to renounce their citizenship? The secretary of the central committee of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, Masaru Hashimoto, denies any responsibility of the organization for the mass renunciation:

> It's not true. It's a fabrication after the war. It's a fabrication to restore citizenship. But I tell you, we never threatened anyone. I can assure you of that. The *Hokoku Seinen-dan* never ever threatened anyone to join, or threatened to punish them if they didn't. We were sincere in our desire to become good Japanese. That is what we wanted. That's all.

Hashimoto loved playing bridge, but his bridge mates were not *Hokoku Seinen-dan* members. He never dreamed of urging them to join his organization. He considered it meaningless, even harmful to the organization, if membership were yielded to unwilling "loyals." He admits there were many Jun-Nisei members but he guesses that most joined the organization mainly because of parental advice.[42]

Hidekazu Tamura, an executive of the central committee and the president of a ward branch, says:

> Three of five Kibei in my barrack room showed no interest [in the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* activities]. They just sniffed, "Whoever will attend the meeting?" One was a member, but in name only. Only I, out of the five [Kibei roommates, was the "real" member].

Tamura did not even try to persuade his roommates to join.[43] W. K., a former ward branch head, also denies the charge of forced membership. He insists they were too sincere in their activities to threaten anyone for membership. He concluded from his camp experiences that people of different principles should not be included, in order to maintain the harmony of the organization. But after thinking for a while about the reasons why the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* was labeled a "pressure group" for mass renunciation, he concludes that the morning exercises, a vigorous demonstration, might have been taken as an evidence that the organization was putting tremendous psychological pressure on non-members.[44]

Other general members, including Jun-Nisei, similarly do not remember any threats made to force people to join the organization. George Kinoshita, a Jun-Nisei and a regular member, does not remember any bossy leaders. O. H., a Jun-Nisei, joined with his friends; his mother felt proud when she saw him perform morning exercises and jog

around the camp with other boys. O. H. remembers that "in those days you might have felt alienated if you were not a member." Although the exact number of the membership remains unknown, his words suggest that non-members, especially young boys, might have been under strong social pressure. Kinoshita believes that at least half the Nisei were members, while another Jun-Nisei, Toyoji Yabuki, remembers that almost all were members. O. H. insists that "there was no physical or verbal threat" but that they "were moving with the flow" of the time. Masao Hiura, a Kibei and an original Tulean but not a member, makes it clear that he was not threatened or forced to join.[45]

Altogether, at present, it seems very doubtful to me that massive renunciation was caused by the militant threat or conspiracy of the pro-Japan organizations, the *Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan* and the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*. It seems more likely that those organizations were formed and won large memberships because of a prevailing embitterment among the "segregees": embitterment which the "segregees" had had since the days of forced removal from their home on the west coast, and which had become aggravated since their arrival at the Tule Lake Center. Some of them, like Wakayama, demanded immediate repatriation as a means of protest, while some others, like Z. T., did so to maintain their ethnic pride. Still others claimed that the "segregees" should not be drafted. All of these were taken as appropriate reasons for joining the group by supporters of the pro-Japan organizations. Once in the segregation camp for "disloyals," repatriation to Japan seemed to be their sole means of salvation.

For those who tried to have their citizenship restored after the war, and for Wayne Collins, who represented those renunciants in the mass suits after the war, the "pressure group theory" must have served their purpose well. Even leaders of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, however, were invited to join the mass suits. Hidekazu Tamura, a former executive of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, remembers that an attorney of the council for the mass suits strongly requested Tamura to join the suit, but he declined the offer. From this I surmise that Wayne Collins himself might have believed that all the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* members were victims of the "evacuation" order; the "pressure group" theory was necessary for him as a tactic for the mass suits and to appease strongly anti-"disloyal" public opinion. Unless they were told that those renunciants were victims of a radical "pressure group," Americans in gener-

al would not have allowed those "disloyals" to stay in or return to America as citizens. Besides, if fanatic "disloyals" were actually found in camps, however small in number among the whole population of Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals, then the "pressure group theory" must have served well to justify the "evacuation" policy as "military necessity." But the truth of the matter is that no such group existed before the "evacuation."

V

REPATRIATION

When the war was over, H. Y. remembers that in the Tule Lake Center some argued that since Japan had lost the war they had better remain in the United States, while others maintained that since Japan had lost the war they should go back and work for reconstruction; many people, however, did not believe that Japan had really been defeated. O. H.'s family firmly believed in Japanese victory partly because that was what they wanted to believe, and partly because the self-appointed war analysts sounded so convincing to them. Some argued that, as the American newspapers had once carried a false announcement of a Japanese surrender, this might be another false report. T. S. remembers that some internees at Santa Fe were convinced of Japanese victory because the administration personnel suddenly became very generous and understanding. Mamoku Sasaki, who had been monitoring shortwave news from Tokyo with his hand-assembled radio since his time in the Rohwer camp in Arkansas, received some "astounding" news on August 13, 1945, but on the following day he observed that all sort of wild rumors were spreading among the internees at Santa Fe. Even the *Jichi-Kai Jiho* (Japanese Council News) in the Santa Fe Interment Camp did not use the words "Japanese surrender" but "cease-fire." Tamura, while interned in Santa Fe, understood that Japan had lost the war, but he did not want to accept the fact. Some, like W. K., were convinced of the Japanese defeat, but kept it to themselves because other internees would not have listened to them. J. Y. accepted the Japanese defeat, but, as he confesses, the extent of the devastation in Japan was simply beyond his imagination. All expected or hoped to be repatriated to "Japan," the country as it had been before the war.

Some of the interviewees who were interned in Santa Fe or Bismarck

remember that they were told they could stay in America. At Santa Fe, C. S. recalls:

> On August 14, I think, we were told to gather in the lecture hall because Japan had surrendered. Then, the Director [of the Santa Fe Internment Camp] said, "You all have been for Japan till today. Anyone can go back to Japan now, if you wish. But if you do not, and want to stay, it is perfectly all right, I assure you. Think it over for a week. Think hard before you make up your mind."

C. S.'s cousin chose to remain in the United States.[46] Some of the *Hoshi-dan* leaders changed their mind and canceled their repatriation application. Some others told their families to remain in the United States, while they themselves repatriated.

According to some of the interviewees, people leaving the United States were told repeatedly that they could change their mind at any time: in the train to the port, before embarkation, and at debarkation. They were told: "Just shake your head if you cannot speak English, then you can stay." Sachiju Yokogawa saw one couple get off the vessel just before the departure to Japan. She says, "America was incredibly generous."[47] The *Annual Report of the Immigration and Naturalization Service for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1946* counted 7,686 repatriates and 40 deportees to Japan. It is still unknown, however, exactly how many canceled their repatriation on the way to Japan. Strangely enough, the Japanese government statistics on repatriates to Japan after the war does not show the number of civilian repatriates from the United States, even though the Repatriation Support Bureau in Japan issued repatriation certificates to the returnees from the United States.

Why did those returnees choose to repatriate themselves to their defeated "home" country even though they were allowed to cancel their repatriation request in the United States?

1) Jun-Nisei

In the cases of Jun-Nisei who followed their parents, the family seems to have been the most important factor in their decision. Many active members of the *Hoshi-dan* and the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* were interned in Santa Fe or Bismarck Internment Camps while their families, usually mothers and wives, stayed in the Tule Lake Center. Letters between them were censored, and delayed; under the circumstances the

only sure way to bring the family together was to follow their original plan, that is, to be repatriated. H. H. signed the repatriation form as a means of achieving family reunion, even though he was not a Japanese national. He was stateless after he renounced his American citizenship. He remembers:

> The most important parts [in the letter] were cut off. The rest you couldn't call a letter. Even when I received a letter, I couldn't figure out where to meet. Letters were heavily censored. Nothing but unimportant, "I am fine" or [information] of that sort, was left.

H. H. thought he would be able to meet his parents in Seattle, but they were not there.[48] As for O. H., he was reunited with his family in Portland. His mother, believing that the family should return to a victorious Japan, "worried all the time if he would really show up." She saw many families torn apart. "Many ended in tragedies. In some cases, only children went back [to Japan]." O. H. says, "If our family had been together we might have stayed in the United States." Then after a pause, he added, "We might. Maybe not."

They might not have stayed, because they felt betrayed and saw no promise in American society. Some lost all their family assets in the United States, while they still owned property, however small it was, in Japan. H. M. W. explains in his interview why the loss of their home was the major factor in his family's decision to repatriate to Japan:

> I had never been to Japan before the war, but I answered "No" [to Question 28]. While we were in the camp, our house was burned down. I have no idea whether someone set the fire or not. Well, whatever the cause was, our house was burned down. We had entrusted tax payment to a friend of mine in a written contract. But he did not observe it. So the government, the county tax office, confiscated the land and auctioned it off. He knocked it down and he got it. He got the land. Fishy, I felt. He might have planned it out. But how could we prove it?

Then he told why the small piece of land was "too precious for [them] to sell."

> We could not grow anything there when we bought it. . . . There was a stream about a mile away. In summer, no water flowed, so my father and I brought the mud, about 100 truck loads per acre, from the stream bed and mixed it with the soil of our farm. Finally, we succeeded in producing vegetables, tomatoes, onions, lettuce. . . . Not the land value, but the sweat and, oh, you can say just 100 truck loads only, but it wasn't easy. Every summer,

> 100 truck loads of soil per acre, from the stream bed, we brought the mud over, and. . . then, we started producing vegetables. Then, we were thrown in the camp. It was the time to harvest onions. . . . They put us Americans into camps. I admit [incarceration] was a big reason for me, too. But the biggest was that our house had been burned down while we were in the camp.

His father told him that they would be able to live, at least, in a house in Japan. He felt betrayed by America and his old friends. So he decided to say "No" to the loyalty question, and eventually renounced his citizenship. In the Tule Lake Center, he started taking Japanese lessons from the very beginning, studying sentences like "one plus one makes two," with much younger children. He might have stayed in the United States, if his family had not lost their property. Physically and mentally he was uprooted and alienated while still in America; the process of repatriation was initiated by his sense of being deprived of his American identity. Soon after, he became involved with the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* activities and followed his parents to Japan. After the war an attorney from the Collins team came to Tokyo and advised him to join the mass suit; he had his citizenship restored in 1957. At his wife's insistence, he and his family returned to America.[49]

O. H. also felt mentally uprooted while still in America, and eventually he, too, followed his parents to Japan. He recalls:

> I was confused then. As I was put in the camp, I wondered if I was really American. If so, why did they put me in the camp? I wondered, I mulled it over. Finally, in the course of events, I thought I had better go to Japan as my father told me. I was young, then. . . . Once I decided to go back to Japan, I thought I should consider myself Japanese. Why? We had been persecuted, interned in the camp. That was only because our faces looked different, we looked like Japanese.

He realized he was not a Japanese when he started working in Japan, even though he looked Japanese. Although they were well-to-do, they returned to America because they were told that without formal higher education they would be unable to succeed in Japan. He had his citizenship restored around 1955. But he does not regret repatriation to Japan because "[he] was able to see Japan first hand. . . and meet [his] loving wife."[50]

Toyoshi Yabuki was also confused. At the time of evacuation, he could not understand why he was being "interned." Gradually, he,

too, figured out that his facial features were the reason. He could not change his features, so he concluded that he would not be accepted in America. Disoriented, he did not swear "unconditional allegiance" to the United States, joined the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, and eventually gave up his American citizenship and followed his parents to Japan. He, too, had his citizenship restored because of vocational necessity.[51]

Segregation to the Tule Lake Center was another factor influencing their decision to return to Japan. George Kinoshita says that once they had decided to say "No" to Question 28, he considered American citizenship useless, and joined the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, and without hesitation he renounced his citizenship. H. H. explains the context more; "As we had gone that far [being a member of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*], we were surely on the black list [of the members of the anti-government group]. Our records were bad, so we made up our mind, 'Let's go back.' " They repatriated themselves lest they be punished by the American government. Looking back over his life, Kinoshita is satisfied with what he has achieved in Japan. He believes that if he had remained in America without any skills he would have ended up as a tenant farmer. While Kinoshita chose to live in Japan, H. H. had his American citizenship restored in 1957 because he found he was more American than Japanese.[52]

Altogether, it seems that Jun-Nisei who repatriated themselves to Japan reached their decision mainly because they had lost their American identity while in concentration camps. They joined the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* because it seemed appropriate for them to become Japanese and "return" to Japan. America had become the wrong place to live for them by the close of the war. They believed that, even if they were released from the camps back into American society, they would find no place where they were welcome. Therefore, they followed their parents to Japan, a strange land to them. However, at least they felt they would be able to live with their parents.

2) Kibei

Today, the word "Kibei" is used, without any negative associations, to classify a certain group of Japanese Americans. However, Hidekazu Tamura and Masaru Hashimoto recall that the word was connotative of "stupidity" in the ethnic Japanese community in pre-war days. The Kibei were a minority within a minority in America. Hashimoto remembers that when he returned to America after he graduated from high

school in Japan he found himself estranged even from his own family:

> I was anxious to see my home. I yearned to see my parents. It's human nature, isn't it? It was a dream of mine. So I went back to the United States, at eighteen or nineteen after graduating from high school. . . . But I couldn't get along with my parents and family. . . . You know, living apart for many years weakens the family attachment. I clearly felt that. In fact my own parents favored my younger brothers and sisters. I felt as if they were saying, "Why did you come back to America?" You know, I had come back after more than 10 years only to see my parents. But they treated me as if I were a black sheep in the family.

However alienated he felt, Hashimoto regarded America as his native land and never dreamed of going back to Japan. He took the selective service physical examination, but was exempted. After war broke out, he followed his parents, who insisted that following the Japanese American Citizens League was the wisest choice. But while in the camp, several days before the loyalty registration, he was recruited by the military as a language officer. He would have been willing to go to the European front, but his Japanese attachment discouraged him from fighting against Japan. Besides, he was too proud to be submissive to the government while incarcerated in the camp. He declined the offer, and answered "No" to Question 28. Eventually without any hesitation, he repatriated himself to Japan. Hashimoto's parents endeavored to restore his citizenship but he learned that they failed because of his camp records. But he seems to have few regrets. After all, he found his ideal wife in Japan, he says.[53]

Hidekazu Tamura also chose to be a proud Japanese rather than a submissive American. He was thinking of going back to Japan after his college education anyway, because he was told by an instructor at college that no company would hire him for a decent position in the United States. He felt that Kibei were doubly alienated in America. The "evacuation" order strengthened his conviction. So at the registration, and at hearings for renunciation and repatriation, he answered for Japan. If he had been drafted as an equal citizen, however, he would have been willing to serve, because, he insists, "it was [his] duty as an American citizen." He has never thought of citizenship restoration. He is confident that he made the best possible decisions but he still believes post-war America would have offered him greater opportunities.[54]

G. O., a Kibei and a member of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, returned to

America in 1939 with high hopes for his life in America. America was, he felt, accommodating him well. He attended high school while helping his father, a successful merchant. Being a member of the photography club at high school, he used to carry a camera to take pictures. This led to his arrest by FBI agents on December 8, 1941. He believes his Kibei background was the key factor. He was held in custody overnight and disillusionment followed. "I used to write to Japan that America was much better than I had expected. But once the war broke out, everything went wrong." Before the "evacuation," however, he still tried to be a good American and bought a 20-dollar war bond. He felt betrayed by the "evacuation" order. He was disgusted with camp life, and became defiant. His father urged him to "obey America" and answer "Yes" to the loyalty questions. He remembers:

> My father always said; "You have American citizenship. Why don't you observe what America tells you? You were born here in America. Japanese are Japanese no matter where they were born, but in America, only native born can get citizenship." Well, he always insisted that I devote myself to America, only because I was born in America.

G. O. felt insulted at the loyalty registration and did not listen to his father. He answered "No" and went to the Tule Lake Center, leaving his father alone. In a letter dated August 27, 1945, his father wrote again and urged him to give up his pro-Japan stance because Japan had been defeated:

> So far Japan has confronted and struggled with America. But now that the confrontation is over, you had better cooperate with the authorities, or the so-called "leaders." Although there are very good things in old Japanese ideals, we should admit Japan made many mistakes.

His father tried to ease him of fear of anticipated punishment:

> Don't hesitate to correct mistakes. . . . America is like a loving mother and America is a country of democracy. So I believe America would not punish you. You only strayed for a short time. I strongly urge you to try hard from now on, pay full respect to and appreciate the democracy on which Americanism stands.

He told his son once again "to try [his] utmost to transform [his] Japanese mind to being American." He enclosed a clipping of the editorial of the *Utah Nippo* (August 20, 1945), which urged Japanese nationals in America to accept the Japanese defeat, cause no further

trouble, and concentrate their efforts on Japanese reconstruction. But G. O. could not listen to his father. "I was fed up with America," he added. "Was it because of youthful impatience? Was it because of guts? I wonder. But I should admit that we did not act after thinking it over, thinking what we were doing. Rather, we were provoked into action by what America had done to us. We simply reacted." He says he does not regret repatriation. But during an interview, while he was talking about his father who died in Chicago soon after the war, he almost broke into tears.[55]

G. O. admits that the younger unmarried *Hokoku Seinen-dan* members often criticized the married members for being half-hearted. He says:

> In the stockade, we were talking about who would be a *Shiju-Shichi-shi* [forty seven warriers in the Tokugawa period who stuck to their cause to the end]. . . . Married people dropped out, one by one. Looking back now at my age, I can understand them. If you have your own children, you would refrain for the sake of your wife and children. . . . [My cousin] worried a lot. He had a wife and children. But we were single, and we could go as far as we liked. We had nothing to worry about then. Because of their children and wives, many could not go along with us. Only after I got married, I came to understand them.[56]

But because of this kind of criticism, some married people stuck to the cause to the end. Toshio Yokogawa, for example, did not listen to his wife. After most of his friends were removed to Santa Fe, he joined the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, became an executive member, renounced his citizenship, and was himself sent to Santa Fe. During an interview, his wife told him how much she had entreated him to leave the organization:

> As I was expecting a second child, I begged you to give it up. Don't you remember? I begged you, "You are the father of this baby." But you didn't listen. Remember? You said, "Whatever you say, I cannot drop out now."

He explains the reason why he did not listen to his wife:

> We [members] were in the same boat, you know. We all hung together. No way of quitting. If we had sworn allegiance, unconditional allegiance, to America, we could have stayed. But I stuck to our cause to the end.

He could have stayed out of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, or left it at the plea of his wife. But he chose not to, because of his sense of pride as a

man. His wife, even though she tried hard to keep him away from the activities, seemed to share his mentality. She remembers an incident at the time of their embarkation on the repatriation vessel:

> The officers told us to have my baby's fingerprints taken because the baby was only five months old. I told them we did not like to because we would never come back, absolutely never. But they said it was my idea, not the baby's. They said he should be able to come back any time should he wish. They insisted if we did not let them take his fingerprints, they would not allow us to embark. Well, my relatives remained here. My younger brother was in the army. My uncle, too. So they suspected that I had been threatened to go back. But, well, I am a Kibei, so, after all, I think I was for Japan. I should admit I felt ashamed that my relatives and my parents chose to remain [in America].

Although she was not a member of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* and tried hard to keep him away from the organization, she understood her husband's point of view at the bottom of her heart and went to Japan with him.[57]

Some women organized a women's section of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*. H. Y. joined the group after her husband was arrested and removed to Santa Fe. She was indignant at his arrest. Her husband, a Kibei and a graduate of a state university in California, had protested strongly against the whole WRA program and had become a leader of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*. He was very "outspoken," and always criticized the unconstitutionality of the program. She was afraid during the war that he would be executed, and after the war that he would be deported as "a dangerous person." She repatriated herself, as the only way to reunite the family. At the end of the interview, she commented, "But for the war, we could have led a happy life in America." Her parents were prosperous farmers before the war. Her husband started a successful business after the war, but soon afterward passed away.[58]

Family responsibilities obliged some of the members to repatriate themselves. J. Y. took his family to Japan. His father told him just before his death in the camp that it was his last wish that he should take the whole family back to Japan. His father was the first son, and he was the first son himself, so he thought he should go back. But, when Japan lost the war, he advised his younger brothers, Jun-Nisei, to stay in America; nevertheless, they followed him. Before the war, they were farming near a military airport and a research institution. When the

war broke out, they were told to move. The district attorney general told them to give up farming there. The attorney said:

> If you give it up now, you'll get rent money back. But if you claim your rights, and continue farming, you will not get any money when the government orders you to move out.

For this reason, the family moved to another farm nearby, and then his father, already disabled, was taken by the FBI. The family felt betrayed. In the Tule Lake Center one of his younger brothers became an active member of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*. J. Y. joined the group after the brother was arrested. "Many, so many members were taken away. Then I was chosen as an executive member, so I was unable to leave. So I went along with the flow of the events, and eventually. . . . Well, as I had already decided to go back to Japan, I did not hesitate to repatriate myself." But he could return to America in 1957, partly because his wife was an American citizen. He does not regret what he did as a member of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* because the American government had violated their civil rights.[59]

K. Y. was also anxious to go back to Japan, where his family lived. He was the first son, the responsibility of which obliged him to go back to Japan, he says. Before the war, he temporarily went back to Japan, accompanied by his parents. But after three months' stay, sometime in 1940 [probably late October], "the American consulate advised that all Americans should evacuate [from Japan]." Accordingly he returned to America leaving his parents in Japan. At the Jerome Center in Arkansas, his mother's relatives answered "Yes" to Question 28, but his father's answered "No" and were sent to the Tule Lake Center. But for the incarceration, he would have gone to the European front. He followed his father's relatives. Then he learned through the Red Cross that his father had passed away; he thought he should return to Japan and assume the family responsibility. In the Tule Lake Center he took Japanese lessons, and was involved with the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* activities. He followed his uncle's family and was sent to the so called Crystal City family camp, from where he went back to Japan. He is now a successful farmer in Japan.[60]

Tokio Yamane, a Kibei and an executive member of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, says that he returned to Japan to look after his aging mother and a younger sister in Hiroshima. He worried that they were suffering because of the atomic bomb. But he had other reasons. In 1937, aban-

doning his high school education in Japan, he returned to America because an article in the *Chugoku Shimbun* in Hiroshima warned the Nisei in Japan to go back to America immediately, because otherwise they would lose their American citizenship. Believing that hard work would be fully rewarded in America, he worked his way through high school; he was a promising athlete and was admitted to a university. Then the war broke out. At the Jerome Center, he protested against Questions 27 and 28. He felt he could not swear "unconditional allegiance to the United States" while in the concentration camp and so he was sent to the Tule Lake Center. There, at the "Tule Lake Riot," he and two other Nisei were beaten bloody by about ten members of the WRA security staff for hours. One of the Nisei was hit in the head by a baseball bat and the bat broke into two. They were held in a bullpen—with no floor, no heating, and no medical treatment—for several months. No legal prosecution was filed against them. His sister petitioned the Spanish Embassy for help, but her efforts failed because of their American citizenship.[61] American citizenship denied them the protection provided even for enemy aliens. Yamane remembers that while in the bullpen he and the other two Nisei believed that the authorities would kill them any time as the main schemers of the "riot." He remembers clearly the seemingly endless torture, with the guards shouting "You, Jap" as they attacked them:

> The words were always ringing in my ears [when I was in the bullpen]. The words haunted me. They wouldn't allow me to be an American. Then, other than becoming a Japanese what else could I be? American society rejected me, would not accept me. I talked with the Spanish Ambassador, or the Consul, I talked with FBI agents, and the Dies Committee members. . . . Now I can understand not all of them [Americans] were mean, [those who were mean] were only a small part of the society. But in those days, I couldn't. I made up my mind, "O.K. If you think I am a Japanese, I will be a Japanese, and act accordingly to the end."

As a result, at the hearings Yamane answered he would fight for Japan, because he could not expect to have any hope in America. For Yamane, becoming a Japanese seemed the only logical consequence of the suffering and the shame he had received; once he decided he would live as a Japanese national, the suffering and the shame became a badge of honor and self-esteem, without which he could not have survived the freezing bullpen. Once released in August 1944, he became a leading

member of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*. By the end of war, his mind was set on voluntary repatriation. He gives three main reasons: incarceration, violence, his mother in Hiroshima, the picture of which after the atomic bomb he saw in the Santa Fe Internment Camp. He adds that if he was asked to declare his allegiance to America before the "evacuation," he might have answered "Yes."[62]

Some former members insist that they considered themselves "pure Japanese." Mamoku Sasaki, one of the leaders of a ward branch, answered when I first met him on February 8, 1987:

> I regarded myself as a Japanese, a pure Japanese. So whatever they asked me [about allegiance], the answer was always the same: "If there is a chance, I would like to go back [to Japan] immediately."

For this reason he answered "No" to Question 28 without any hesitation. He repeated in the interview that he had been born in America only by chance. In his family, American born children were supposed to return to America as soon as their education in Japan was over. When he resettled in America, he started his American education from elementary school and worked his way up to high school. His whole life in America—four years before the war, and four years in the camp—was for him "nothing but bitter memories."

Sasaki's wartime diaries (in Japanese, 1943–1946) reveal, however, that he had wavered between America and Japan. In the diaries he reflected upon arguments on the loyalty question. He criticized the American government policy toward Japanese Americans on February 4, 1942: "It's indeed very impudent of [the authorities] to believe that they can pick Nikkei [Japanese American] citizens and throw them into the army as volunteers." Yet, he could not easily decide whether he should answer "Yes" or "No." On the one hand, he felt that "No" was a more appropriate answer for a man of a proud race:

> If we reflect on the real meaning of this war, we should understand that this war broke out because we, the Japanese race, are not treated equally by those white races. We should not be slavish.

On the other hand he reflected on the possibility of living as an American of Japanese ancestry:

> Or if we think from the Mahayana point of view for the advancement of the Japanese race in the world, or from the great spirit of *Hakko Ichiu* [the world is one family], we surely have a choice to swear allegiance to America

and make ourselves a stepping stone for our racial advancement. On this point, dedication to America can be a contribution to Japan. This can be a possibility. Although the American government forced all Nikkei [Japanese Americans] to withdraw from the coastal area, maybe it was done by an emotional few [therefore, we should overlook this mistake and swear allegiance to the American government.]

But still he wondered;

They might be afraid of us because we are Nikkei. If so, once we understand this point [that we were incarcerated because we are Japanese], we should be able to discern even in adversity what patience and prudence really mean. At this point, we might take a course to become a good Japanese declaring simply that we, Japanese Americans, cannot support what the American government has done to us.

But he thought it over again:

The problem at issue is very tangled, I am afraid, with countless contradictions. The policy which gives the highest priority to an individual's will asks too many questions. It seems a matter of common sense, but it still remains puzzling to me. Puzzling, that is all that I can understand now.[63]

On February 7, 1943, he was aware that the loyalty registration would be a "crucial test given by the American government." On March 3, he found himself "jumbled up." The next day, he wrote, "Today is the registration day; I feel as if a fox played a trick on me, but it decides our future." He finally decided to identify himself as a Japanese because he could not overlook the contradictions in the principles and practices of American democracy. He eventually repatriated himself to Japan. He studied electronic engineering by correspondence while in camps, and now runs a large electric appliance shop in the countryside of Hiroshima.

Out of 18 *Hokoku Seinen-dan* interviewees, only W. K. regarded the loyalty registration as due process for a country at war; he answered at the registration hearings that he would fight for Japan as a Japanese national. But it should be added that until the war broke out, he had never thought of which country he should swear allegiance to; he had been eager to succeed in America; he almost fulfilled his American dream of becoming a small entrepreneur. It was because of the forced evacuation, he bluntly says, that he had to give up this long anticipated opportunity.

Epilogue

All the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* members I have interviewed so far had different stories, but reached the same conclusion: renunciation of American citizenship and repatriation to Japan. It is impossible to isolate a single determining factor behind this decision. But this can be said: the members of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*, including the leaders, all lost their sense of American identity while incarcerated in the concentration camps. The forced evacuation shook their ethnic pride. Incarceration shattered their faith not only in the American government but also in their own neighbors. Segregated in the closed community, in a flood of contradictory information—government announcements, newspaper and radio news, confidential hearsay, shortwave news from Tokyo, arguments at meetings—they were frustrated. The loyalty registration aggravated their anguish. Some answered "No" in confusion. Others answered "No" because of their ethnic pride. A few protested against the registration itself. Even though the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* members were told after the war that they could stay in America, they had little confidence in the words of the government. In the course of events—the segregation as "disloyals," involvement in the Tule Lake "riot," activities as members of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan*—some were afraid that they had gone too far. Besides, if they remained in the United States, they would have to live with the stigma of having been identified as "disloyals."

Those who repatriated themselves to Japan believed repatriation was the best possible choice available. They felt there would be no place, no hope, no aspiration, for them in America even after the war. Others felt they had become real Japanese so that the repatriation was actually their duty.

Those who renounced their citizenship and repatriated to Japan were "disloyals" from the American point of view. It is true that they did not swear "unconditional allegiance" to America when they were questioned. But it should be remembered that they were law abiding respectable citizens before the war; certainly they did not conspire against the American government during the war. They decided to become Japanese only after they found, or thought they had found, that they were excluded from American society. As the editorial of the *Pacific*

Citizen, the organization paper of the Japanese American Citizens League, put it on February 2, 1946,

> the "Disloyal" persons are not born; they are made. They are made by discriminatory schooling, discriminatory legislation, discriminatory employment, discriminatory housing. They are made by hate, and they are fostered by ignorance.

Among eighteen *Hokoku Seinen-dan* members I have interviewed, only six persons now live in the United States. Among eleven Kibei of the eighteen, only two are in the United States, the rest remain in Japan. Among seven Jun-Nisei, on the other hand, only two remain in Japan. Today, none of the *Hokoku Seinen-dan* members I have interviewed appear to regret their decision to repatriate. It is true that the circumstances at the time of interviews influence how they regard their past. In fact, in the decade between 1985 and 1995 the tone of their story has changed significantly, especially after they received the formal apology from President Bush for the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans. Many highly appreciate the redress, saying, "[That America committed injustice to us] is just what we pointed out while in the camps. Now, America has admitted its wrong-doings and apologized to us all." Sasaki says, "Only America can make such [an apology] possible." Now, almost all of them, except one, value their native land more positively. But even today there are those who want to hide their wartime past. As Yamane says, "war is fought by the soldiers in the battlefields, but it isn't limited to the field. War affects all people, both soldiers and civilians, and hurts them and leaves an incurable scar on them." For Yamane the war was not over until he received his high school diploma fifty years after "evacuation" and he received the apology from the American President. But we have to acknowledge that there still remain uncompensated Japanese Americans—those exchanged Japanese immigrants and their children aboard the wartime exchange vessels between Japan and the United States.[64] Besides, as W. K. points out, to many the apology came too late. A haiku commemorates those who passed away in the camps before the end of their incarceration.

Manzanar,
all have gone but
a deserted cenotaph (Suido Itano)[65]

NOTES

I would like to acknowledge with gratitude that most of the interviews were conducted with Yoko Murakawa and funded by grants from the Toyota Foundation in 1985, 1986 and 1987.

[1] Jean Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar* (New York: Bantam Books, 1973).

[2] Michi Weglyn, *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps* (New York: Morrow Quill, 1976), 21.

[3] Frank Chuman, *The Bamboo People: The Law and Japanese-Americans* (Del Mar, Calif.: Publisher's Inc., 1976; repr., Chicago: Japanese American Research Project and Japanese American Citizens League, 1981).

[4] About this process, see Yasuko I. Takezawa, *Breaking the Silence: Redress and Japanese American Ethnicity* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995).

[5] See the author's report with Yoko Murakawa to the Toyota Foundation in 1992, *Nichibei-senji-kokan-sen sengo-sokan-sen "kikoku"sha ni kansuru kisoteki kenkyu* [A Study on the "Japanese" Repatriates and Expatriates from the United States During and After World War II].

[6] The *Hokoku Seinen-dan* was called "Young Men's Cultural Association Organization" by its parental organization, the *Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan*. The *Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan* to Raymond Best, 27 November, 1944. Transcript attached to the Memorandum from Spanish Embassy no. 22, 8 February, 1945. Transcript in Record Group (RG) 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

[7] For the presentation at the 29th annual conference of the Japanese Association for American Studies on June 4, 1995, this author asked permission to give their real names, but some of them declined. One of the interviewees still worried that it might stir latent ill feeling against him and his relatives in America. One of the 18 interviewees did not say he was a member, but since he was transferred to the Santa Fe Internment Camp, this author believes he was a member.

[8] John L. DeWitt, *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1943), vii.

[9] Transcript in Records of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[10] DeWitt, *Final Report*, vii.

[11] There were 465 persons of Japanese ancestry exempted from the "evacuation" order because they were "mixed-marriage families" or "mixed-blood individuals." DeWitt, *Final Report*, 145–147.

[12] "Evacuees, for example," who had made "three trips to Japan after the age of six" except for seamen, or who had "ten years of residence in Japan by a male citizen of the United States after the age of six" were "regarded by intelligence agencies as sufficient to warrant a recommendation that leave clearance be denied." Exact quotation. War Relocation Authority, "War Relocation Authority: Issuance of Leave for Departure from a Relocation Area: Administrative Instruction: Investigation for Leave Clearance in Doubtful Cases Section 60.10: September 28, 1943." For further analysis, see Teruko Kumei, "*Senji tenjusho karano 'saiteiju': Nikkei amerikajin no chusei o meguru ichi-oboegaki* ["Relocation" from War Relocation Centers: A Study on the Loyalty Registration over the Japanese Americans], *Journal of Nagano Prefectural College*, 47 (1992): 177–188. This suggests that Kibei were placed under strong sus-

picion and treated accordingly.

[13] John H. Province, Acting Director of the WRA, to Edward J. Ennis, 24 January, 1944, quoted in House of Representatives, *Hearings before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, House of Representatives, 78th Congress, 2nd Session on H. R. 2701, H. R. 3012, H. R. 3489, H. R. 3446, H. R. 4103, Bills to Expatriate Certain Nationals of the United States; to Create a Japanese Deportation Commission; and to Deport Disloyal Japanese* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1944), 37–38. House of Representatives, *Subcommittee of the Special Committee on Un-American Activities: House of Representatives, 78th Congress, 1st Session on H. Res. 282, Committee Print, Majority and Minority Report of the Subcommittee Investigating War Relocation Authority* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1943), 7.

[14] Those segregated people were called "segregees" by the WRA. War Relocation Authority, *The Evacuated People: A Quantitative Description* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1946; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1975), 166–168.

[15] Translated by author. C. S., interview by author, 27 March, 1986, tape recording, (tapes in author's possession).

[16] Translated by author. Masaru Hashimoto of Ibaraki Prefecture, interview by author, 25 February, 1995, Ibaraki Prefecture, tape recording, (tapes in author's possession).

[17] Translated by author. W. K., Telephone interview by author, 17 February, 1995.

[18] Translated by author. T. K to Y's family, 3 October, 1943.

[19] Noboru Shirai, *Kariforunia nikkeijin kyosei shuyojo* [Japanese Concentration Camps in California] (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 1981), 140.

[20] Subcommittee of the Special Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, *Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States, Committee Print Report on the Tule Lake Riot* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1944), 30. A. S., one of the witnesses of the testimony during the above investigation, interview by author, 12 March,1986, tape recording, (tapes in author's possession).

[21] Tokio Yamane of Hiroshima Prefecture, interview by author, 7 to 8 February, 1987, 21 to 24 November, 1991, 13 to 14 August, 1992, Hiroshima Prefecture, tape recording, (tapes in author's possession).

[22] Exact quotation. "Re-Segregation Committee" to H. Ickes, Secretary of Interior, 24 April, 1944 and to F. de Amat, Consul of Spain, San Francisco, 30 May, 1944. The "Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan, formerly known as 'Resegregation Committee'" to F. de Amat, Consul of Spain, 30 November, 1944, and Raymond Best, Project Director of the Tule Lake Center, 27 November, 1944. Transcript in R. G. 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

[23] *Sokoku kenkyu seinen-dan dai ichi shibu shuho* [Ward One Weekly of Young Men's Association for the Mother Country Studies], Special Edition (Japanese Section), 27 October, 1944.

[24] Exact quotation. "Article II of Constitution of the Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan." Transcript attached to the letter to Raymond Best, 27 November, 1944. Transcript in R. G.59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

[25] Kinzo Wakayama of Fukuoka Prefecture, interview by author, 3 to 4 February, 1987, 5 to 6 February 1988, Fukuoka Prefecture, tape recording, (tapes in author's possession).

[26] Quoted in *Rafu Shimpo* (English Section), 11 August, 1940.

[27] E. M. Zacharias, Acting Director of Naval Intelligence, to D. Myer, 20 January,

1943. Transcript in R. G. 210, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

[28] Translated by author.

[29] Kamenosuke Sakakibara of Tokyo, interview by author, 2 August, 1989, 9 September, 1995, Tokyo, tape recording, (tapes in author's possession).

[30] Translated by author. WRA permitted only if the "segregees" would supply all necessities and hire teachers at their own expense.

[31] Translated by author. The *Utah Nippo*, 9 February, 1944.

[32] Translated by author. "*Sengen-bun* [Declaration]" of *Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen-dan* [Young Men's Association for the Mother Country Studies], 12 August, 1944.

[33] *Sokoku kenkyu seinen-dan dai ichi shibu shuho* [Ward One Weekly of Young Men's Association for the Mother Country Studies], no. 1, 22 September, 1944 (Japanese Section); and no. 2, 29 September, 1944 (Japanese and English Section). As for the membership, W. K., the first president of the Ward One branch, remembers that it had about 270 members, and was the most active of all branches.

[34] Translated by author. *Sokoku kenkyu seinen-dan dai ichi shibu shuho* [Ward One Weekly of Young Men's Association for the Mother Country Studies], no. 9, 13 November, 1944 (Japanese Section); and no. 8, 10 November, 1944 (Japanese Section). However, none of the interviewees remember that the morning exercises were ever held at six.

[35] John L. Burling, an official of the Alien Enemy Control Unit of Department of Justice who visited the Tule Lake Segregation Center to conduct hearings for citizenship renunciants, to the "Hokoku Seimen [sic] Dan," 19 January, 1945. Transcript in R. G. 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

[36] *Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi-dan* and *Hokoku Seinen-dan* to Secretary of State, 1 January, 1945. The number of arrests was mentioned as seventy in the letter by John L. Burling, 19 January, 1945. Transcript in R. G. 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

[37] Translated by author. G. O., interview by author, 18 May, 1986, 30 August, and 18 September, 1992, 5 August, 1995, tape recording (tapes in author's possession).

[38] Jacobus tenBroek et. al, *Prejudice, War and the Constitution: Causes and Consequences of the Evacuation of the Japanese Americans in World War II*, 5th ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 177.

[39] Yamane of Hiroshima Prefecture, see Note 21. Although there were confrontations with the internment camp authorities, the interviewees remember that they led a more peaceful and satisfactory life there and enjoyed various pastime activities, like *shakuhachi* (Japanese flute) lessons, baseball games, or *sumo* wrestling tournaments.

[40] The Act of July 1, 1944, or Public Law 405 of the 78th Congress 2nd Session, which is also known as the Renunciation Law, provides for voluntary renunciation of American citizenship within the United States by "making in the United States a formal written renunciation of nationality in such form as may be prescribed by. . . . the Attorney General, whenever the United States shall be in a state of war and the Attorney General shall approve such renunciation as not contrary to the interests of national defense." Section. 403, clause (i). The text is quoted from Edwin Austin Avery, ed. *Laws Applicable to Immigration and Nationality* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1953), 987.

[41] Frank F. Chuman, *The Bamboo People*, 267–68; Donald E. Collins, *Native American Aliens: Disloyalty and the Renunciation of Citizenship by Japanese Americans during World War II* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), 82, 185; and Weglyn, *Years of Infamy*, 234.

[42] Translated by author. Hashimoto of Ibaraki Prefecture, see Note 16.

[43] Translated by author. Hidekazu Tamura of Tokyo, interview by author, 22 July, 1990, 3 February, 1995, Tokyo, tape recording (tapes in author's possession).

[44] W. K., see Note 17.

[45] George Kinoshita of Tokyo, O. H., Toyoji Yabuki of Alaska, Masao Hiura of California, interview by author, 13 February, 1986, 20 July, 1987, 26 December, 1986, 26 July, 1987, tape recording, (tapes in author's possession). Hiura to author, 8 April, 1995, O. H. to author, 28 March, 1995.

[46] C. S., see Note 15.

[47] Sachiju Yokogawa of California, interview by author, 27 July, 1986, 24 July, 1987, tape recording (tapes in author's possession).

[48] H. H., interview by author, 18 July, 1986, tape recording (tapes in author's possession).

[49] Translated by author. H. M. W., interview by author, 27 July, 1987, tape recording (tapes in author's possession).

[50] Translated by author. O. H., see Note 45.

[51] Yabuki of Alaska, see Note 45, and Toyoji Yabuki to author, 13 April, 1995.

[52] Translated by author. Kinoshita of Tokyo, see Note 45, H. H., see Note 48.

[53] Translated by author. Hashimoto of Ibaraki Prefecture, see Note 16.

[54] Tamura of Tokyo, see Note 43.

[55] Translated by author. G. O., see Note 37.

[56] Translated by author. G. O., see Note 37.

[57] Translated by author. Sachiju and Toshio Yokogawa, see Note 47.

[58] Translated by author. H. Y., interview by author, 1 March, 1987.

[59] Translated by author. J. Y., interview by author, 26 July, 1986, tape recording (tapes in author's possession).

[60] Translated by author. K. Y., interview by author, 14 February 14, 1986, tape recording (tapes in author's possession).

[61] K. Matsuda to F. de Amat, Consul of Spain at San Francisco, 8 March, 1944. Transcript attached to the Memorandum of Spanish Embassy to State Department, 62, 14 March, 1944. The State Department responded to the Spanish Embassy that since both Matsuda and her brother were American citizens "the Spanish Embassy in charge of Japanese interests in the continental United States may wish to inform Mrs. Matsuda that she should direct any complaints that she may have with regard to conditions at the Tule Lake Relocation Center to the War Relocation Authority." Memorandum, 26 April, 1944. Transcript in R. G. 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

[62] Translated by author. Yamane of Hiroshima Prefecture, see Note 21.

[63] Translated by author. In memorandum space in February 1942. Although the literal meaning of *Hakko Ichiu* is "the world is one family," the phrase was advocated in Japan to justify the Japanese military expansion in the late 1930s. But the phrase was interpreted by Japanese immigrant leaders that their mother country encouraged them to stick to America and educate their children to become good American citizens no matter what might happen between Japan and America. For further arguments, see Teruko Kumei, *Gaikokujin o meguru shakaishi: kindai Amerika to Nihonjin imin* [A Social History on the Foreign Workers: Japanese Emigrants and America], (Yuzankaku Shuppan, 1995).

[64] For example, Sumiko Kawashima of San Francisco insists that she was strongly urged by the American government officials to board the second exchange vessel. Taka Takayama of Los Angeles says that she accepted the offer from the Japanese government only because there seemed no possibility for her husband to be released from an internment camp. Both took their children to Japan with them. Interview by author,

25 July, 1986, and 12 July, 1987, tape recording, (tapes in author's possession). As for the wartime exchange vessels between America and Japan, see Murakawa and Kumei, *Nichibei-senji-kokan-sen sengo-sokan-sen*, 67–107; and P. Scott Corbett, *Quiet Passage* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1987). However, after the submission of this article, it has been reported in the *Pacific Citizen* (April 19-May 2, 1996) that the Office of Redress Administration is preparing to review the redress regulations so that "minors" who returned to Japan with their parents on exchange vessels during the war be eligible for compensation.

[65] Translated by author. *Utah Nippo*, 24 December, 1945.