

An Appeal to Americans of Japanese Ancestry

Introductory Remarks

From every point of view it is impossible for anyone to question the fact that this will be a long war. The Japanese military are steeling their people for a "Hundred Years War", while the United Nations are firmly determined to wage all-out war until the unconditional surrender of the Axis is attained. Thus the Japanese in the relocation centers, citizen and non-citizen alike, are deceiving themselves if they expect the war to be over within the year and hope to go back to Japan to enjoy the spoils of newly conquered territories. Instead of living uselessly from day to day beguiled by these self-delusions, should they not now be opening their minds to the realities and be making sound decisions regarding their futures and those of the second and third generations?

As the war prolongs American strengthening herself day by day mobilizes herself for total war. Before long every man, woman and child will be taking active part in the war effort. Up to now the question of nisei participation in this war effort has been an issue in doubt. Even today we have the loud clamorings of anti-Japanese sentiment in certain portions of the country. But this latter is nothing more than the prejudices of portions of the country whipped up by war hysteria, and is by no means representative of American opinion as a whole. The authorities in Washington, the Army authorities in particular,

have come to recognize the loyalty of the nisei in spite of the objections of a certain small portion of the people and have fully realized the valuable service the nisei are ready to render. The result has been the definite policy that the nisei will be allowed to take active part on the fighting front.

Joseph C. Grew, the former United States Ambassador to Japan, stated recently in a public address:

"The existence of American citizens of Japanese ancestry is useful and valuable. I am most proud to have them as part of the American people."

This, in brief, may be regarded as a reflection of the attitude of the United States government today.

The government thus expects the nisei gladly to do their part for their homeland--America. The nisei themselves as draftees and as volunteers, have responded already in great numbers. Some have participated in actual combat in Europe, in Africa, in the Pacific, in India and in Burma, and have shown in action those qualities of loyalty and devotion worthy of the finest traditions the Japanese in America have long upheld. They have won genuine praise from every sphere.

In this world divided into two camps and locked in a bitter life and death struggle, Japanese Americans should not cling to delusory hopes nor shrink back into sulky or self-pitying attitudes harmful only to their own cause. Their future lies nowhere but in this land of America. How you conduct yourself during this war will decide your fortunes after the war.

God helps him who helps himself. Take sound stock of your position and bend your efforts now toward the working out of your own destiny. The alternatives may be the spending of most of your lives uselessly in the interment camp or a miserable return penniless and with your children ignorant of the Japanese language to Japan; a nation completely prostrate in defeat.

The Nature and Objectives of This School

Then what type of school is this Army Language School in Savage, wrongly called a "spy school" among you? Hitherto, due to the necessity of preserving military secrecy, details about the school have not been revealed, and hence may have led to various misunderstandings. This school is by no means a training school for spies. In time of war it is of vital importance to know the language, culture and customs of your foe. For this purpose this school was established at Savage shortly after the present war began and has been functioning in high gear since. The main object of the training here is to prepare men to be skilled language specialists. After an intensive course of six months, men are sent out into the field.

Since the students here, differing from ordinary enlisted men in other branches of service, will be performing special duties requiring technical skill, their promotions are faster than in any other branch. At the front they perform such duties as language specialists.

The Performance of Graduates at the Front

Since the establishment of the school, the number of those who have left for the front is considerable. In the far-flung areas of the Pacific theater, they are doing spectacular work, and their faithfulness and skill have received the commendation of Army commanders and staffs in the various areas. In the letters received from those at the front, we hear gratifying news that the graduates of this school are receiving excellent treatment and are highly valued.

The excellent results produced by these Japanese American soldiers have impressed upon the Army authorities the great importance of the roles these men will play in the future. This school will be further expanded as a direct result of this performance. To meet this expansion, this pamphlet has been prepared with a view to obtain more applicants from among Japanese Americans.

At the recent commencement exercises, the graduating class was addressed by a certain Major General from the War Department in Washington, who in an inspiring speech wished the citizens of Japanese ancestry great success. This school was also visited by His Excellency Ambassador Grew who stated that the fate of all Americans of Japanese ancestry is in your hands, and that no matter how certain groups of Americans may discriminate against the Japanese in America, the future of all Americans of Japanese descent will be secured by a record of unflinching service to the country during this war.

The nisei soldiers who leave the school for the front, all depart with an iron determination to fight not only for their country but with the future of all Americans of Japanese ancestry at heart. Such sentiments cannot help but bring tears to our eyes.

The Recruiting of Students

Enrollment in this school calls for no difficult prerequisites. Any male who can understand Japanese is qualified, and a profound knowledge of Japanese is not necessarily required. For the purposes of the Army, all who complete the six months' course of study will be useful.

In the near future recruiting personnel from this school will visit each relocation center and volunteers will be individually interviewed. You will find details published in your center newspapers. So when the recruiting officers arrive, you will have an opportunity to respond heartily and do your part for the sake of the future of all nisei.

In conclusion, a point should be stressed in connection with the attitude of the people in the Eastern and Central United States with regard to the Japanese. Quite contrary to the sentiments found in certain newspapers, which are daily attacking Japanese Americans, here in Minnesota and in adjacent regions the newspapers and public opinion in general view the Japanese Americans with sympathetic and understanding attitudes. The courtesy extended the soldiers by the people of nearby

Minneapolis is almost unbelievable unless personally experienced.
This is a manifestation of the just attitude of people without
racial prejudices and with genuine respect for the spirit of
those who are giving themselves to the service of their country.

Kai E. Rasmussen.

KAI E. RASMUSSEN,
Colonel, CAC,
Commandant.