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The Nisei Come Home

CHRISTMAS, 1946

Photo by Toge Fujihira
For the first time since 1941, the Christmas season will be observed this year by all Japanese American families in normal home surroundings outside the confines of WRA centers. In fact, when we remember the dark days of December, 1941, it becomes painfully clear that this is really the first "normal" Christmas for the entire group in six long years. Under these circumstances, it gives me particular pleasure to extend holiday greetings, through the Pacific Citizen, to the people who formerly lived in WRA centers.

Last spring, in the months before WRA finally closed its doors, I realized quite keenly that my personal interest in the welfare of the Japanese American people would long outlast my official responsibilities as director of the authority. It was wholly evident that ties which had been built up over a four-year period and forged in the heat of frequent attack by vicious and misinformed opponents of the program would not disappear suddenly at midnight on the 30th of June.

And they certainly have not. Today I find myself eagerly picking up all the scraps of information about the "evacuees" that are constantly coming to my attention from a great many sources. I am fully as anxious as I ever was to receive news both about the many former center residents whom I know personally and about the group as a whole.

The reports which I have received lately are generally encouraging. Like all friends of the evacuated people, I was tremendously pleased to learn about the impressive repudiation of Referendum Proposition No. 15 by the voters of California on November 5. The large number of votes run up against this gratuitous and ill-informed attempt to bolster the escheat law is another piece of evidence that the exploits of the 442nd at Belvedere and Biffontaine and the intelligence work of the Nisei in the Pacific have not been entirely forgotten. A great deal of credit for the results, I understand, is due to Mike Masao and other JACL leaders who apparently did an unusually fine job in arousing and sustaining organized public interest in the significance of the issue.

There are other indications that the old fires of anti-Oriental feeling on the West Coast are gradually dying down. I am told that most of the hotel operators of Seattle are now back in business that many Issei and Nisei flower merchants of Los Angeles County have resumed operations with little significant opposition. Large numbers of the Nisei, both on the West Coast and elsewhere, seem to be holding down better jobs than ever before and taking on the responsibilities that go with married life. All of these are healthy signs of real progress.

There are, of course, some items on the other side of the ledger. The road back, from all indications, is particularly difficult for those who operated firms before the evacuation. Leasing troubles, escheat difficulties, and current high costs of land and equipment are apparently holding many of them back and

Continued on Page 8
The Day the Signs Came Down

By Ralph G. Martin of the New Republic

IF YOU had never heard of it before, you would have thought Hood River was just another town, a quiet place sitting in a frame of mountains at the end of the winding loveliness of the Columbia River Gorge. But if you remembered things, you walked down the streets searching for signs that weren't there. Then, finally, you asked somebody where the courthouse was.

Because, even though you had never been here before, you remembered the courthouse best of all. You had heard of it on the 7th Army Front in France. It was a small story in The Stars and Stripes, telling how the Hood River American Leg­ion Post had wiped off the names of 16 Nisei soldiers from their Honor Roll on the side of their courthouse building.

You remembered all this so vividly because you had asked some 50th Division soldiers what they thought about it. They were all guys who were alive that day because an all-Nisei regiment, 442nd Infantry, had proved to save their starving, cut-off Lost Battalion. Most of what they had to say about Hood River, you couldn't print.

So now you walked quickly toward the courthouse and looked up at the long columns. Even in the dimness of twilight, you could see the freshly repainted names of the Nisei.

Why did they fight in this war anyway? Well, some went because they would have gone anyway. Some wanted to get out of the bombed concentration camps so that the Army had slung them into. The rest, because they wanted to prove to the world that they were as good American citizens as anybody. Only a bitter few seemed to think there was a war.

Not Fred Hachiyama. They gave him the Silver Star when they barried him in Leyte.

And not Sagie Nishikoa, who just got his 42nd blood transfusion. Nishikoa wrote a letter, which Reverend Burgoyne read in his Hood River pulpit, saying that he had already forgiven the mis­takes people had made into his home and smashed or "borrowed" his fine furniture. His one wish was that someday he would be able to come back and work on his own farm again.

While Burgoyne read the letter aloud, the stoves in Hood River all had the signs in their windows, "NO JAP TRADE."

Also, Kent Shoemaker, a local Legion bigwig was running a full page weekly ad, which read: "Hood River, Golden Valley of the Hills, Who is to possess its acres and rills, A home of aliens from across the sea Or shall it be a Paradise for you and me?"

Signing the ad were dozens of Hood Riverites who wanted the Paradise for themselves. Most of them were farmers who had rented the land from the Nisei and wanted to keep it now. This now-rich land, once unwanted stumpland, which was given to the Japanese workers in lieu of wages even before the First World War, had wiped off the Nisei names of what they had to say.

That's another thing I don't like about those damn Japs. They work too hard. Unfair competition...

"As we have said time and again," protested Kent Shoemaker, when they rubbed off the Nisei names, "there is no economic issue involved in our action. This is to possess its acres and rills, or shall it be a Paradise for you and me?"

"Writing from Pearl Harbor, Marine Sgt. David White wrote home: "Why did you do it? We're ashamed to say we're from Oregon now, much less Hood River."

Somebody else wrote: "If you rub off those 16 Nisei names, rub mine off too."

Then the kissoff came when Kent Shoemaker's own soldier son, Ed, wrote a letter to the editor saying how much he disagreed with his Dad, how proud he was of his Nisei friends who he had grown up with and who had proven their citizenship ten times over.

But when the War Relocation Authority mailed pamphlets to the people of Hood River asking them to practice democracy when the Japanese American citizens returned, one Shoemaker stongly returned the pamphlet with this letter:

Gentlemen:

This paper is too stiff for the purpose I would like to use it.

Yours truly,

Hood River, Oregon

The tension reached a crucial tightness in January 1945 when the first three Nisei returned. Ray Satu, Min Anai and Sat Neji walked down Main Street and saw people look through them as if they were ghosts. In front of the building, a few of the regulars shouted: "Hi, Nisei... say hello to us... see what we done." And when Nishioka saw an old friend and rushed over with his hand outstretched, his old friend gave him a shifty look and walked right by. As for the kids, they jeered, "Japs... japs... japs... japs..."

Everybody waited for an explosion. The town grapevine rumored lynchings, burnings, beatings and the three Nisei slept together at Ray's place and waited for the worst. It never came. The town whispered that some FBI men had come to town and warned Shoemaker & Co. that they would be held responsible for any vi­olence.

By this time a few of the signs came down. A gas station operator named Kageyana decided there was no difference between a Nisei Japanese and a Nisei German and he was a Nisei German.

Another sign came down when an ex-Marine captain, who had had Nisei in his outfit, came back from England, pointed to the sign in his father's store window. "What the hell is this, Dad?"

But Nisei who walked downtown still said they felt they had signs on their backs. "Shoot here." When Mrs. Avon Sutton waved bells to Edna Steve on Main Street, Edna rushed over crying, "Mrs. Sutton you're the only friend in town who said hello to me." Even when Kikuro Yamasaki tried to sell her apricots crap, the produce man said nothing unless she got a white friend to sell it. He didn't want any of his friends to know he was buying Jap goods, he said. Kikuro's husband was overseas at that time.

And when Bob Kagayama went into the barber shop for a haircut, the barber grabbed for ten minutes, neither waiting on him nor kicking him out. When Bob finally asked him about it, the barber muttered, "But I've got a son in the Army..."

"Well, what do you think this is, a Boy Scout uniform?"

Then, suddenly, strange things happened. An owner of one of the movie theaters stopped a Nisei on the street to say how welcome Japanese Americans would be in his place. Also, several stockbrokers, hat in hand, visited their Japanese friends to tell them how much they missed them at their stores.

They weren't kidding.

Ever since the 400 Japanese Americans had come out of their concentration camps in the valley, these town merchants had watched the swarms spending all their money in nearby towns. They needed all kinds of equipment to replace everything that had been broken and stolen and just while they were away. They weren't buying in Hood River because the signs were still up.

So, one day, the signs came down, all of them.

The merchants decided that they were no longer afraid of Kent Shoemaker's boycott pressure and besides, it was silly to lose out on all this money.

Mrs. Max Moore, a big friendly woman, one of the few who never had the sign in her window, had added explanation for the change.

"It's mostly because most people in Hood River are really good people. As for the noisy few who started all the trouble, their convictions weren't as deep as ours. Theirs was mostly a bluff and now I really think the bluff is over."

Something else that espoused the bluff was the fact that people like Ray Yasui had made sure that every one of 85 eligible Nisei had registered to vote. The word got around. And in Hood River, 88 votes are a lot of votes. So when the politicians were considering candidates for county judge and somebody sug­gested Kent Shoemaker, the politicians all screamed at once, "Are you crazy?"

Final touch to embarrass the race-haters were the stagey demonstrations of friendship everytime a Cauucasion vet saw one of his Nisei friends downtown. That prompted a lot of town organizations, like the Booster Club and Veterans of Foreign Wars, to send invitations to different Nisei to come back again into community life.

Somehow, though, the Nisei aren't rushing back. It takes time for their hurt to heal, and they've been hurt so much. All those signs, blank books, boy­cotts, threats, hate. It will take time for Ray Yasui to rub away the look on his five-year-old daughter's face when she came back from the grocery store this Spring, whimpering, "Daddy, they don't like Japs in there, do they?"

Because the pushed-down race hate in Hood River still exists.

The farmer who said, "I don't like those lousy Japs but I'm not doing any­thing about it because I'm mixed up in a lot of farm deals with them.

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The farmer who said, "I don't like those lousy Japs but I'm not doing any­thing about it because I'm mixed up in a lot of farm deals with them."

The Methodist minister attacked the action as undemocratic and unchristian. River ever since then, Burgoyne had small handful continued their fight until their stand became known all over America. Letters poured in from every­where and people asked what was going on.

To each of them, Burgoyne sent this answer:

"The battle for American decency happened to be here this year. We fought it and won. Next year it may be in your part of America and I'm counting on you to stand true."

PACIFIC CITIZEN Saturday, December 21, 1944

RALPH G. MARTIN

WHEN I first heard of the sign war in Hood River, Oregon, I was shocked...
Of Chicago's 20,000 Nisei resettlers, roughly 19,500 still think that "some day" they're "going back" to where they started from—the west coast. What they are doing, however, does not jibe with what they are saying. And it seems safe to predict that in 1986 most of the 20,000 will still be talking through their hats about "going back." By that time some of their grandchildren will probably be graduating from the University of Chicago.

But today nobody is going to stop them from periodically spouting about the beauties of Southern California sunshine or the scenic majesty of Mt. Rainier. For some three and a half years the resettlers of the midwest have been nomads, in both the physical and psychological sense, wavering between the perennial pull of the west coast and new attachments in communities that have welcomed them.

Now that they are seriously digging in to take root as permanent residents of Chicago, they seem to talk more furiously than ever about "going back." Aside from the few hardy souls who occasionally buy a one-way fare on the Los Angeles Limited, there has been only an imperceptible trickle of departures for the west coast this year. The loss in the Chicago resettler population has been more than augmented by a noticeable influx from smaller cities and towns of the midwest.

``DAYDREAMING vs. REALITY``

By "going back" resettlers usually refer to California, Washington, Oregon, or even Arizona. Invariably they say that they want no more of Chicago's un-chamber-of-commerce-like weather; they want to trade the routine of winter freezing and summer broiling for the balmy southland or the brisk but pleasant Pacific northwest.

But the gap between this kind of talk and the action that goes alongside of it widens with each passing month; and the paradox becomes all the more incongruous.

Most resettlers will tell you that, while they do not contemplate immediately "going back" (Who can get any housing in Los Angeles, San Francisco, or Seattle, anyway?), but sometime within the next "four or five years" they'll pack up again and head westward.

And while they have pigeonholed plans for the trek somewhere in the more remote recesses of their minds, Japanese American resettlers in Chicago during 1946 have:

1. Invested approximately a million dollars, bringing to a reputed total of some $2,500,000 in over 400 business enterprises;
2. Purchased in excess of 450 homes throughout the city as permanent abodes for themselves and their families; and despite inflated real estate prices, they are still buying flats, apartments, and a few single-unit houses;
3. Launched new businesses at a steady clip of from two to five per week throughout the past year;
4. Persuaded several hundreds of west coast returnees who were unable to locate decent housing or jobs in California, including many older Issei, to join them in Chicago as permanent residents.

NISEI CHICAGO AT WORK AND PLAY: Top right: Nisei girls work at the Toy Packing Services company in the greeting card department. Left, top to bottom: A Nisei veteran with memories of war-torn countries still fresh in his mind gazes down Chicago's turbulent Michigan avenue. Elsie Itashiki, one of the best Nisei jive singers, appears at a talent review. Mary Suzuki, head of the Business and Professional Women's department of the Loop YWCA, drops in to chat with Rose Kakehata of the YW's Education Workshop.---Photos on these two pages by Vincent Tajiri.
Go Back Again

Turning to California, set their roots deeply

O TANAKA

(6) Formed new community groups on what seems to be a permanent basis, despite protestsations or plans to the contrary;

(7) Acquired another year's experience in, and immunity to, Chicago's horrible climate.

All this would add up to something of a net conclusion that Chicago resettlers are satisfying their conflicting urges by talking about "going back," while making the most of every opportunity where they happen to be.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

One gets the notion that there is inherent in the Chicago situation a strong reminder of what happened about a generation ago in California when the Issei were in their heydey.

Issei outnumbered Issei in this city by nearly a 3-to-1 ratio; and the resettlers are in some day "go back" to the west coast seems to be primarily of Nisei origin. The pattern of thinking is strangely reminiscent of the California Issei who talked incessantly of "going back" to Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Kumamoto—but who never got back at all, while their families grew up as native Californians.

Yet it is conceivable that Chicago's Japanese American population could be reduced considerably within the next few years, before the roots take hold, though it is presently inconceivable that it would ever drop to within shouting distance of its prewar size.

If west coast housing, for instance, outdistances openings in Chicago and is available to returnees, some midwestern resettlers who are deliberately bidding their time will no doubt make the leap.

From the prewar point of view, and despite the fact that it compares favorably with Chicago's average, resettler housing in the nation's second largest city is incredibly bad.

Resettlers for the most part rent or lease—but do not own—the places where they live. They pay high rental for cramped quarters in antiquated or inferior units located in marginal areas near blighted districts or slums.

Approximately 75 per cent of the resettler population may be found in four general areas, two of them, the near Northside and the Oakland-Kenwood, highly concentrated. Roughly one-fourth the resettler population is scattered pretty much all over the city.

Resettlers are living in rather crowded flats or apartments; they pay on the average 25 per cent over what has been the O.P.A. ceiling; in some cases they are mercilessly exploited by real-estate landlords; in some cases too, they themselves as landlords indulge in this national pastime. In many cases, landlord-tenant relationships have been models of harmonious diplomacy.

But the inescapable conclusion is that resettlers generally pay more money for poorer housing than their Caucasian American counterparts in the same income brackets; they fare somewhat better than their Negro American counterparts in Chicago's unhappy competition for decent housing.

Furnished apartments of the kind that most resettlers live in today cost their occupants anywhere from $5 per week per room to $15 or $20, with most of them around $7. These are units in which a degree of privacy comes with the apartment, and the landlords for the large part are Caucasian Americans.

In the resettler-operated rooming houses and apartments, there tends to be more of the dormitory atmosphere—at slightly less expensive rates. Some of the crowding that goes on is reminiscent of relocation center barracks in the early days of camp life.

Chicago's restrictive racial covenants operate against Japanese Americans nowhere as completely or as viciously as they do in Los Angeles, although they undoubtedly do present problems at the level of the individual looking for a place to make his home.

Because Japanese Americans in Chicago generally have a standard of jobs and incomes several notches higher than their standard of housing, it seems likely that resettlers will either seek better living quarters in Chicago or its suburbs, or eventually turn elsewhere.

COMPARATIVE PROSPERITY

Nine out of every ten resettlers you meet in Chicago will tell you that he is earning anywhere from two to ten times more now than he did back in 1941 on the west coast.

Of course, this is a nationwide affliction of sorts, but the contrast for the resettler not only is in the size of his weekly pay check but in the more satisfying way in which he earned it.
City of Denver

First a hopping off place from the relocation centers, the mile-high city of Denver was for a short time the unofficial capital of the Nisei. A Denver newsman discusses the growth, life, and future of Japanese Americans in the city.

A Survey of Denver Resettlement by BILL HOSOKAWA

With Photography by HIKARU IWASAKI

THE FEAR that gripped the heart of Denver’s Japanese American community has no more. Today the community that thought it was doomed to become a ghost town is settling down to make a long-term go of things. It is prospering.

“My?” says a Nisei businessman. “I wouldn’t go back to California on a bet. That is, as long as I can make a living here. Where else can you get mountains like Colorado, the sunshine, the fishing...”

And he raves on like a chamber of commerce front man.

But it was not always thus. It took many factors to change Mr. and Mrs. Nisei Denver-Newcomer from refugees, supercharged with ideas for getting rich quick and moving on, to more stable folk looking at the future in terms of years rather than months. Not least of these factors was time.

At that time was all things to all homeless, bewildered Japanese Americans. Nisei Denver-Newcomer from refugees, supercharged with ideas for getting rich quick and moving on, to more stable folk looking at the future in terms of years rather than months. Not least of these factors was time.

The Japanese American community is centered.

The Denver Japanese telephone directory lists more than 90 establishments. Approximately 45 of the businesses are either wholesalers or manufacturers

The obvious reason they chose to stay is that they are able to make a not unpleasant livelihood here. Among other factors for their reluctance to leave are: no property to return to on the coast, fear of discrimination and reports of crowded living conditions in coastal areas, and a growing attachment for Colorado’s climate and scenery.

Within two years, Yatsushiro believes, an even larger percentage of those remaining in Denver will consider Colorado their permanent homes because of the close attachment to their surroundings, better social and economic adjustment, and the increased cost of moving again as roots are sunk deeper.

Yatsushiro’s studies show that a larger percentage of farm people have pulled out of Colorado than urban residents. This indicates, he says, that farmers have had more difficulty in adjusting to city dweller.

Today that movement has slowed almost to a trickle, and for the time being is no indication that it will become resurgent.

Around Larimer Way

We have brought up the farmers and their problem only in passing because under the pre-1946 economic pattern, the prosperity of Denver’s Japanese American merchants depended to a large extent on how well Colorado’s Japanese farmers fared.

But let’s get back to Denver and Larimer street around which the Japanese American community is centered.

Larimer is one of Denver’s historic old thoroughfares which, like so many of its kind, has suffered with the years. The Windsor hotel, Larimer street landmark and once the stopping place of presidents, now in little better than a glorified flop house. Recently it was listed as a fire hazard. It is typical of the district.

The Japanese American community is clustered for a few blocks on each side of Twentieth and Larimer, not far from the usual skid row concentration of dives, and the final third can be considered permanent Denverites. However, he believes a large proportion of those in the two-to-five-year group will remain permanently.

The Denver Japanese telephone directory lists more than 250 business enterprises. The number, according to oldtimers, does not differ much from the peak period. But some of the firms have changed hands several times as the original owners cashed in and moved on.

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Approximately 45 of the businesses are either wholesalers or manufacturers
of Japanese foodstuffs that depend primarily on out-of-town trade. Most of these outfits sprang up after the evacuation when Japanese sources were cut off and there was a great demand in the relocation centers and Hawaii for the delicacies.

These businesses prospered on the mail order trade to the camps, and later to virtually every state as the evacuees relocated but retained their hunger for soy sauce, Japanese pickles and preserves.

But now the tide has changed. Japanese provisions stores have been set up in every community where there is a sizeable Japanese American population, and that means the death of the mail order business. And since the center of Japanese American population is back in Southern California, many manufacturers have moved too, or are preparing eventually to move to that area.

The cost of freighting their products over the Rockies to the coast is a disadvantage. Denver manufacturers cannot overcome in competing with firms in the west. And in some cases, such as fish and seaweed products, a Denver plant must pay freight charges outward on the raw ingredients and back again on the finished item.

Not least among their worries is the prospect of renewed imports from Japan. The local manufacturers frankly admit their products cannot compete with the Japanese, either in quality or cost. Many food manufacturers are reported planning just one more year of operations to see how things turn out, and meanwhile their employees are looking about for new jobs.

But in almost every other line of business there are no long faces. Let's visit a few businesses.

First stop is Jack's barber shop, a little one-chair place operated by Jack Fuji who has plied his trade in San Jose, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

"I've got enough work to keep in another barber," Jack says. "Most of my business is Japanese, but I get a sprinkling of white customers. I suppose I could get more if I had the time to take care of them."

Fuji has no desire to return to the coast. "What's the use," he asks. "I'm making a good living. I like Denver. If I went back I'd have to start all over again. There's no percentage in going back as long as I can get along here."

Has the exodus affected Jack's business? "Not so he has noticed it. You need an appointment to get a haircut unless you want to wait an hour. Fuji's is one of the few Japanese American barbers in Denver, none of whom seems to be worried about business."

Around the corner and a block down Larimer from Jack's is the Pacific Mercantile Co., a retail food store operated in partnership by George Clem Oyama and an issei, George Inai.

Of the well-known Oyamas of Los Angeles, Clem is a chemist by training. He was a food products wholesaler before the war.

The record of Pacific Mercantile's business reflects the history of the growth of Denver's evacuee community. First, Oyama recalls, the main business was in kitchen utensils and furnishings as families fresh from the relocation centers set up housekeeping. Mail order business was heavy.

Now the emphasis is on food, and the mail orders have dropped off. The regular family trade increased as households were established.

"It came to a point," Oyama says, "where we had to do something to build up family trade and make up for loss of our other business, or refund. In the last year there have been four small grocery stores begun in the neighborhood—small family enterprises with low overhead—and they were beginning to cut into our business."

In a step that certainly reflects no fear for the community's future, Oyama met the situation by installing a $2,000 fish and meat counter a few months ago. It was a smart move. Oyama expects to get back the investment cost soon, and after that the income will be all gravy. In addition the fresh fish department has brought in considerable non-Japanese trade which, until recently, was less than 5 per cent of the total.

Mr. Oyama is as Denver as a pleasant town as he ever has lived in. He would like to stay, but if business becomes too bad, he may go in with his brother, Wesley, who built up a big food distributing business in Denver during the war and who, with headquarters now in San Francisco, has ambitious expansion plans.

A few doors from Pacific Mercantile is the Manchu Grill which serves American and Chinese food plus a limited Japanese menu. The Manchu is a favorite hangout for Nisei businessmen and the younger set alike. Many a Nisei business deals have been worked out in an inside booth over what apparently was a relaxing game in gin rummy.

The Manchu was founded by George Furuta, formerly a Southern California beach concessions operator. Furuta sold out eventually to his sister-in-law and her husband, Helen and Byko Umezawa, who now are the proprietors.

Oyama, who has phed his trade m Los Angeles, his wife an office manager for the same firm. The only thing that really drives him as a Denverite is sure Denver is as pleasant a town as he ever has lived in. He would like to stay, but if business becomes too bad, he may go in with his brother, Wesley, who built up a big food distributing business in Denver during the war and who, with headquarters now in San Francisco, has ambitious expansion plans.

Clem Oyama, food store operator, once specialized in mail orders to relocation centers, but now he concentrates on the family trade of newcomers to Denver. Oyama lived in Los Angeles before the war and moved to Denver by way of Heart Mountain, Wyo.

"But we serve good food, that is, for a restaurant of this class. When we can't get fresh vegetables in the winter, we use frozen vegetables. Not very many restaurants in Denver will go the expense."

"We try to serve good food at reasonable prices," Mrs. Unewa says, "It hasn't been easy, with costs rising all the time. Every time butter or meat jumps a few cents we can't pass the raise on to our customers."

"But we serve good food, that is, for a restaurant of this class. When we can't get fresh vegetables in the winter, we use frozen vegetables. Not very many restaurants in Denver will go the expense."

"The policy has been paying off. What was exclusively a Japanese trade has spread out. Non-Japanese businessmen drop in for lunch and return later with their families. The volume has shown no signs of falling, and even with a lack of help Mrs. Unewa keeps the kitchen and glassware glittering. That's more than can be said for many another restaurant."

"But we serve good food, that is, for a restaurant of this class. When we can't get fresh vegetables in the winter, we use frozen vegetables. Not very many restaurants in Denver will go the expense."

Gunst is not reluctant about admitting his business has been a success, at least during the summer months. The big drawback is that an open air stand has to be closed after cold weather sets in, and Yokoe is looking longingly to Southern California. He plans to sell his interest in the business and go west where, he believes, a depression when it hits will not be so severe as in Denver.
They Won't Go Back Again

By Yogo Tanaka

Continued from Page 5

Professional and business men, parents, and practically the latter, fare most handsomely in the hierarchy of the resettler economic ladder, so the word goes how the in-laws cope.

"Business men don’t talk about their incomes, they prefer to tell you how the sweat broke," said one Nisei.

All things considered, however, it is not uncommon among Chicago resettlers of Japanese extraction to make about $15,000 and $20,000 a year.

There is no millionaire among the group, but a scrutiny of the types of businesses in which investments have been made—spread among those that do not depend at all upon the limited racial group but aim rather to capture the larger Chicago market—indicates that there are aspirants with fair starts and much hope.

Mostly Working People

Only about one-sixth of the resettler population, however, can be classified as business or professional persons or employees. Five-sixths are workers—employees in some 2,000 establishments throughout Chicago. On the average they earn fifty dollars a week for men and slightly under thirty dollars for women.

They have been hit hard by the rising cost of living, by the threat of O.P.A. rent control lifting, and have been compelled like millions of other Americans of moderate income to resort to close budgeting.

A substantial number of them also resorted to overtime working—in two or even three jobs—to keep abreast of the rising level of income. On the average they have increased their base pay about 8 per cent during 1946.

When WRA closed its doors in June, there were two items of "unfinished business" in which all of us were interested—the so-called "claims" bill and the question of naturalization for Issei residents of the United States. During the last session of Congress much significant progress was made on both fronts. A bill which would set up an evacuation claims commission was recommended by WRA and the Secretary of the Interior, endorsed by the President, and passed by the Senate. A bill which would permit Issei residents of the United States to acquire citizenship by naturalization was introduced in the House of Representatives by Delegate Joseph Farrington of Hawaii. Although neither of these measures was finally enacted, a great deal of educational work on them was done in both houses of Congress, and a solid groundwork was laid for their reintroduction and reconsideration at the next session. I shall continue to urge their passage as strongly as I have urged it in the past.

As a final word, I want to express my appreciation to the editors of the Pacific Citizen for affording me this opportunity to communicate briefly with the Issei, the Nisei, and even the few remaining American families of Japanese descent face today in common with all other American families. There are undoubtedly occasional instances of racial feeling and discriminatory treatment. The picture, as a whole, seems to me predominantly a favored one and certainly far better than many of us dared to anticipate back in 1943.

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