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Section IV

PACIFIC CITIZEN

Saturday, December 21, 1946

ADDRESS: APO 500 c-o Postmaster, San Francisco

By MAS HORIUCHI

We landed in Yokohama after a trip by navy ship from Cagayan in the Philippine Islands, and went from there to Kumagaya, Japan, where the fighting "Winged Victory" 43rd division had its division headquarters and where the 175th language detachment was stationed.

Kumagaya was formerly a Japanese Air Cadet training school, and we were billeted in their former barracks, along with other members of the headquarters staff. Our job as linguists was mainly interpreting for our staff officers, and for approximately two weeks we worked practically without sleep. When we could, we slept on the floor with our mosquito netting strung around us. After awhile our job became routine, interpreting at headquarters or on a reconnaissance mission.

The 43rd was a battle-fatigued division; so a new division, the 97th, came to replace it. Shortly after this division arrived, some of us interpreters were taken along on a reconnaissance mission to inspect some former Japanese army posts with the new staff officers.

We were heading into virgin Japanese territory, so to speak, for no other American troops had penetrated into this area. We were the first troops to occupy the territory, and I was the first Nisei in the area.

As we entered one particular Japanese regimental headquarters, a platoon of soldiers stood at rigid, mechanical attention. We entered the conference room, soldiers saluting all over the place.

And then we stood rooted to the ground, shocked, surprised and chagrined. There, in letters a foot high on the blackboard, was the sign: "KILROY WAS HERE."

Everyone got a big bang out of it. How he was able to get into that regimental headquarters, I don't know, and it is a puzzle to this day. I have often wondered why the regimental commander did not have it erased and how long before our coming it had been written. Perhaps the commander thought that if a GI had written it, it shouldn't be erased.

Occupation after a time became very dull and all of us looked for varied avenues of excitement. One day I was asked by a teacher of a sewing school if I would teach English to her sewing class. I jumped at the opportunity, for it meant getting away from camp.

The students were all between the ages of 17 and 22. I was 23 and didn't know what I was getting into.

I had to remove my combat boots when I entered the classroom, and I walked up to the blackboard in my khaki-socked feet. I turned to face the class, when all of a sudden someone with a high pitched voice yelled "Kiyo tsuke" (attention!) and the entire class jumped to its feet. I hadn't the slightest idea what was coming off, and for a time I was taken aback and my hair must have literally stood on end and waved. As I stood facing them, they bowed gracefully, and I learned later that I should have been gracious enough to return it. Seats were taken at a given signal, and as I stood there with my face crimson as the setting sun, blurring out a stream of unheard Japanese, I started with the lesson.

For a time the students were content on concentrating on the alphabet and single phrases, but one student, curiosity getting the best of her, had to know what my stripes stood for. That started it. There followed a free-for-all questioning. They wanted to know first of all how old I was, what I did in the states, if I were married, if



By AL NIELSEN

all married men wore a ring on their finger, what the patch on my left shoulder stood for, if all the things they saw in American pictures were true, if girls kissed any boy they wanted to, why GI's hated green tea, and was it hard for me to sit with my legs crossed, as they did. At that point I was ready to throw in the towel. The students had turned the tables on me and my lesson turned out to be a personal history. I left the school with a feeling of having thoroughly been gone over. From that day hence I haven't made it a practice to teach school.

The time passed rapidly, and one day it was only a few days till Christmas. The boys in my squad wanted a Christmas tree; so I had to get a ton and a half truck, load a dozen fellows on it and go off in search of a tree. We searched a radius of 20 miles, and I can swear there isn't a fir tree in Japan. At one time one of the fellows spotted a tree in a family yard. It was an attractive home, considering it was in the country, and it took a lot of persuasion before I could stop the fellows from cutting it down.

Finally we spotted a tree with a straggly top that we thought would do. We rammed the tree down with the truck, and then

used our pocket knives to cut the top off. When we got it back we raided the dispensary and the messhall for trimmings, added some ornaments that some thoughtful mother had sent one of the fellows. On Christmas eve we sat around singing carols, drinking beer and talking of the lucky fellows who had made it home in time for Christmas. But it was a beautiful tree.

We must not forget to mention the girls of Japan. We must not forget these creatures who lived a life of suppression until the army of occupation came in. Before, if a Japanese girl wore lipstick or sat in a chair with her legs crossed, she was considered not quite a lady. Since the occupation there has been a drastic change. When given an opportunity they want to live, act, dress like any American girl. It is surprising how many girls learned to dance, wear cosmetics, and dress western style.

The Nisei interpreters seem to fascinate these girls. The fact that there is no language barrier is probably the major reason. I learned that from frequent visits to Tokyo from Kumagaya. Girls cram the visiting room of the various Nisei billets all hours of the day.

On one of my visits to Tokyo, missing feminine companionship

(Continued on page 28)

NISEI VETERANS IN HAWAII

By MINEO KATAGIRI

THE NISEI veterans in Hawaii are at the same time the nemesis and hope of Hawaii society. They have returned to Hawaii with unprecedented prestige won through months and years of sacrificial toil and loss of blood and life. What they say and do, therefore, carry respect and power far and above their number. The veterans constitute the most powerful group potentially in Hawaii. They, therefore, can become a nemesis to Hawaiian society by selfish and ill-advised action. On the other hand they are the hope of our society if they can use their great prestige and power along channels which would be both creative and progressive. Only time can finally tell the course along which the veterans will move.

For the present we can only discern certain signs which may ultimately determine the final course of movement. My report therefore will only point out the signs which have been made evident in the course of the several months that the major portion of the 100th Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team has been home.

It is my belief that these signs are such that they can be interpreted either way. It depends to a large extent on one's own point of view. The writer feels that the veterans are more apt to be the hope of Hawaiian society rather than the nemesis to its progress. Here are the reasons why he believes as he does.

1. In the political campaign just concluded they proved themselves alert and progressive. Among the veterans seeking public offices were Calvin Ueki, Joseph Itagaki, Richard Kageyama, and Matsui Arashiro. All these candidates except Joe Itagaki received PAC support. All except Calvin Ueki were elected. Mr. Ueki ran for the House of Representatives from the Fourth District in Honolulu, a district from which a Nisei has never been elected to public office, and, therefore, his defeat was not unexpected. Richard Kageyama in his campaign not only did not repudiate PAC support but at each PAC rally read the PAC platform and said that he was back of that platform 100%. He was elected to the Board of Supervisors on Oahu. Matsui Arashiro was elected to the House of Representatives on Kauai. He is a newcomer to politics and yet polled the second highest vote for the House on Kauai. He is a former union officer, respected not only by union men but by all the people as well. Joseph Itagaki is a Republican committeeman and won a seat in the Lower House from the Fifth District. He cannot be classified as liberal and progressive.

These men are the representatives of the veterans in public office. And the veterans need not be ashamed. Richard Kageyama and Matsui Arashiro will bear watching. Kageyama is independent and has an independent following. Arashiro has the labor movement to support him. Both men are intelligent, fearless, with a working philosophy of life. The writer is confident that these two men will do yeoman work as public servants. Joseph Itagaki is a member of a political organization which does not tolerate too much independent action and will probably vote along party lines in most of the legislative proposals. But he can be counted on to fight for bills which will benefit the veterans.

Furthermore, a great number of veterans were out working for their favorite candidates. This is a sign of political maturity. And it speaks well for the veterans that they supported candidates of all races and not just the Japanese. That the democratic principle of human equality is well implanted in their minds and hearts was evidenced by their political activities. Fred Matsuo, for instance, actively worked for the election of three candidates, Delegate Joseph R. Farrington, a Caucasian; Chuck Mau, unsuccessful candidate for the Senate, a Chinese; and Mitsuyuki Kido, a Nisei, who won a seat to

the Lower House. That example was followed in most cases by other veterans. There was much talk among the Japanese community of "Japanese for the Japanese" or "the Japanese must stick together," but the veterans refused to follow that line and were among the first to condemn it.

2. The veterans have seen much and learned much and have come to value education. Those who had failed to get a high school education are now enrolled at the McKinley High School where a special veterans' section has been established under the leadership of Kenneth Okuma who is himself a veteran of the 442nd. An even more impressive display is put on at the University of Hawaii where the veteran enrollment is very high.

These veterans are giving leadership of a kind never before seen at the university. They bring maturity, intelligence, steadiness, spirit to their activities. Some things they have done at the university are: a group of veterans with the help of Hung Wai Ching revived the campus YMCA, which, until the war, had been the most progressive and active organization on the campus. The veterans appreciated the significant place the Y had played in pre-war days and the place it could again play in the lives of the students. And they have made it into a significant organization once again. Because of the lack of men students the Y had been temporarily disbanded during the war years.

An International Relations Club to stir interest in and support of the United Nations was formed, and is led by Robert Fukuda, a veteran. He and other like-minded veterans saw the need for strong United Nations to win the peace, and because they desired to awaken the rest of the student body, they formed this organization.

There, of course, is the Memorial Scholarship Fund created by the Trustees of the Memorial Fund. This fund offers scholarships of \$1500 a year to any person, male or female, who desires to go into those professions which will contribute to the welfare of the total community. The only string attached to this grant is an agreement that the recipient promises to return to Hawaii and make his contribution to the community for at least three years. One of the first grants was made to a Chinese American veteran.

This emphasis on education as a means of contributing to the general welfare is, I think, highly commendable.

3. The insistence by the veterans that they be treated fairly in the economic realm is another hopeful sign. That the Paradise of the Pacific suffered from economic injustices perpetrated on non-Caucasians has been an open secret. Dual standards of wage, job ceilings, and other practices have been common in Hawaii. The veterans are insisting that such practices be vanished.

The appointment of Maj. Mitsuyoshi Fukuda to a "junior executive" position by the Castle and Cooke Co. Ltd. caused much comment in the Nisei community. The suspicion is strong that this is only a gesture to appease the demands of the veterans, but that it is a significant gesture cannot be denied. It, at least, raises the ceiling one notch. Capt. Edward Yoshimatsu too has been given a position of more than usual importance by

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By Frank Miyamoto:

Main Street and Home Again**Story of Resettlement
In the Seattle Area**

VIEWING the Seattle Japanese community today almost two years since the first return of evacuees to this area, one is haunted with impressions of a similarity in form and function of the present community and the one that was here in pre-evacuation days. Many of the shops and offices that were on Jackson or Main are there again in the same general locality; the faces encountered somehow seem especially familiar in this setting; and the Caucasians too appear much the same—friendly if they were friendly

before, indifferent if they are of the public, and coolly resistant or sometimes antagonistic if one seeks something they want for themselves. All this, perhaps, attests to the essential continuity of the social process; but it also points to the infirmity of memory, for a year ago the changes and differences were what struck the eyes. Somewhere between the similar and the dissimilar in the community today and the community of yesterday is that picture which best represents the present life of the Seattle Japanese Americans.

At a rough guess, 4500 or about two-thirds of the former population are back in this city, and there is no reason to expect any substantial growth beyond the present mark. Their central area of residence is, on the whole, several blocks east and farther up the hill along Jackson or Yesler than it was before, a shift prompted in part by the displacement resulting from the wartime influx of Negroes to Seattle. Because of the housing shortage, a certain amount of residential concentration has also occurred on the fringe of the business district in hotels, apartment houses, and rooming houses, often in relatively undesirable neighborhoods. The outlying areas are also dotted with Japanese American homes, but residential

diffusion has been temporarily retarded by lack of housing. Housing discrimination has appeared principally in those cases where Japanese Americans have sought homes in the better middle class districts.

Seattle is one of the congested centers of the country, and during the early days of return, many resettler families suffered severely from inadequate housing. Hostels in the language school and churches aided the initial adjustments, but these makeshift dwellings are becoming hazards as people who entered as transients have taken up semi-permanent abode in them. War housing projects also helped to alleviate the housing problem, but the available units are at inconvenient distances from the city center such that a continuing search for better residential locations goes on among the project residents. While the adjustments during the past year relieved most of the acute problems which existed at the height of the return movement, there is still much doubling-up of apartments, and buying of homes and apartment houses at inflated prices in order to circumvent the shortage.

In the long run, employment more than housing is the major

concern of the people. There are several respects in which the occupational pattern today differs from what it was five or six years ago. The most significant advance has been made by the Nisei girl workers in the stenographic and clerical fields, for by contrast with the limitations of such opportunities in former days, there are today a number of private companies as well as government agencies which employ them in relatively desirable positions. However, it should be anticipated that the reduction of the number of federal agencies and employees will sharply curtail the number of office openings for women workers, and make it increasingly difficult for Nisei girls to compete in this field. The appearance of a certain number of

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The Labor Front:

Nisei in Hawaii's Trade Unions

By JOHN REINECKE

SINCE DECEMBER 7, 1941, a revolution has been taking place in the social-economic structure of Hawaii.

Part of the revolution is the change in the position of the Japanese-American community. In 1941 its wholesale internment was freely predicted; in 1943 threat of its permanent relegation to "second class citizenship" and economic discrimination was still a matter of deep concern. By 1945 its splendid war record had won its acceptance even from those who still dislike it. The person who now talks publicly about the "Japanese menace," as two or three did during the statehood hearings of January, 1946, is regarded as a "nut." The Japanese seem assured of integration within the wider Island community on the same terms as the other non-Caucasian group.

Another part of the revolution—one still in the conflict stage, with the crisis not yet safely behind us—is the phenomenal growth of the trade unions in membership and economic and political power, and the consequent challenge to the power of the oligarchy which has ruled Hawaii for nearly a century. In the rise of the unions Hawaii's Japanese-Americans are playing a leading part.

Modern Hawaii began as a plantation colony, in which all power

was grasped tightly by a small, closely knit group of Caucasian capitalists known popularly as the "Big Five" (from the five great plantation agencies). Coolie wage levels, company towns, economic and social stratification along racial lines, have distinguished Hawaii's life. Even when Honolulu became almost indistinguishable from a mainland city, the plantation system remained unbroken and cast its shadow over the life of the whole Territory. Every attempt at unionization was broken.

Slowly, as Hawaii's working class changed (though not completely) from a conglomeration of alien peoples to an English-speak-

ing American citizenry, coolie wage levels rose until Hawaii could at least be compared with the more backward states. A middle class came into being, in which Japanese and Chinese were well represented. But the reins of economic and political power remained in the hands of the "Big Five." And the foundation of its power remained the plantation system. As long as the old plantation system with its social-economic stratification and its low wage levels survives, neither the Japanese nor any other Island people can become fully integrated within the American community.

By 1941 CIO unions had made a modest beginning at unionizing the plantations. Then came military rule. The Army, distrustful of any activity in which Japanese participated, and hostile to unions anyway, worked hand in glove with the business community to stifle unionism. Organization was set back for two years, but the restrictions placed on labor made unionism the more enticing once it was revived.

Beginning in January, 1944, the ILWU (International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's union, CIO) began a drive which has increased its membership from 900 to about 37,000. It has unionized and brought under contract the basic industries of sugar cane and pineapple, besides longshoring, railways, most of the little manufacturing and a substantial portion of warehousing. Other CIO unions, have begun organization of local government workers, the service trades, and some other fields and have perhaps 1800 members. At the same time A.F. of L. unions (Continued on page 32)

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(Continued from page 25)

(and who doesn't after a year overseas) and above all through curiosity, I ventured into a dance hall and in the course of time came to know some of these dancing girls. I must elaborate on their dancing gowns, because in a sense, they were striking. When American troops poured into Japan, everyone's thought was bent on Americanizing. The girls rushed to have dresses made or dug deep into their trunks and emerged with dancing dresses that resembled those of our "gay nineties" days. Some could rustle their bustles, a few dresses Yehudi seemed to be having difficulty holding up. An array of colors would greet a person entering the dance hall and the rainbow certainly had nothing over these girls.

But as time wore on, style magazines infiltrated into the populace and dry goods once again appeared in the shops. Gradually modern Americanized gowns were sported by the girls, much to my relief.

It was amazing how quickly the Japanese girls could learn to dance and jitterbug and even before they had decent gowns they could be seen jitterbugging in Kimonos with flaps flying, getas clacking.

I must admit that when these girls become attached to you, they are harder to shake off than barn-

acles on a ship. I can state this from an experience. It seems that a couple in particular took a shine to me. Heaven knows why, but the fact remains that they did, and I was caught quite off guard one day when an MP summoned me to the front gate and lo and behold, standing there were a couple of "musume sans." They had come 70, 80 miles by train to Kumagaya from Tokyo. That is what a casual glance, a casual

smile will do. As I look back now I must have looked silly standing there, muttering with M.P.'s gawking, attempting discreetly to shoo them away.

Despite all my amusing experiences I was never so glad to see land as the day we entered the strait of Juan De Fuca coming back to the United States. And the fact that I lost my 20% overseas pay as I entered the strait didn't matter. I was home.

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Conclusion: NISEI VETERANS

(Continued from page 25)

the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association.

When they are met by wage or job discrimination the veterans no longer take things laying down. They raise a "squawk" about it. The USES hears about them and has a long list of such complaints. And when anyone suffers from discrimination the news spreads fast. Furthermore the companies which are said to discriminate are eyed with a great deal of suspicion. The fact that the veterans are becoming aware of these practices and are refusing to accept them without raising their voices against them is indeed a healthy sign.

4. The willingness of veterans to join labor unions is, to this writer, a hopeful sign. There is no question but that organized labor will be in for difficult days once the 80th session of Congress begins. But the role of labor in society will be a good gauge of the health of our democracy. If labor is suppressed then democracy is weakened; if labor is given its just share in the process of society democracy is healthy. That a goodly portion of our veterans understand that and are taking their membership seriously is a good omen. In my own church were several veterans who took their union membership seriously and who were alert to union problems and possibilities. These are the men who will gradually bring poise, respect, prestige, intelligence and goodwill to the labor movement in Hawaii, a movement which is under severe attack from the vested interests at all times.

Now I want to make two comments on what seem to me glaring weaknesses among the Nisei veterans. If these two conditions could be fulfilled there would be no question as to the role the veterans will play in the growth of Hawaii. The failure to meet these two conditions will greatly retard the veterans' influence on Hawaiian society.

1. The veteran groups are so divided as to make them ineffective other than to give the members a chance to come together

and talk of old times. Among the Nisei veterans alone are the Club 100, 442nd Club, the MIS Club, and the veterans who have refused to join any of these. This division has tended to weaken whatever demands the veterans have made. The liaison between these groups is not very good either. On the Island of Kauai this problem was solved by the formation of the Kauai Veterans' Association which takes in all the veterans. When Maj. Fukuda went to Kauai to organize the Club 100 he received a very cool reception. The morale among the Kauai veterans is far and above that of the Honolulu veterans. On Maui the Nisei veterans are joining the AVC and providing leadership in that organization.

If the Nisei veterans on Honolulu, where the major bulk of the veterans reside, can somehow resolve this problem and present a united front they could become a highly effective instrument for social progress. This is, of course, the opinion of an outsider, a non-veteran, who perhaps does not appreciate the internal problems of these organizations.

2. The second deficiency among the Nisei veterans is the lack of a personality or personalities around whom the various groups can rally and who can give direction to the energies of the men. There seems to be no direction toward which the groups are moving, no agreement as to what the various clubs are supposed to accomplish and provide. If the first deficiency is to be overcome some person or persons with vision, drawing power, and courage will have to arise to aid the veterans to give their loyalty to a group larger than its own club. Such a person or persons would rally the veterans to accept responsibilities and to contribute to the health of the entire community.

The veterans will have to see the important part they can play in community life, and fit themselves into it in such a way as to help make Hawaii a progressive and healthy community. This they can do by preparing a definite pro-

SUPERVISOR



Richard M. Kageyama of Honolulu was recently elected to the Board of Supervisors of the city and county of Honolulu, first Nisei ever elected to that post.

A former member of the armed forces, Kageyama campaigned on the Democratic ticket.

gram and by joining forces to present a united front in attaining the desired ends. To do this a person or persons will have to give leadership. At the moment no such person or persons can be seen.

Well, will the veterans be a nemesis to our common life, or the hope for fulfilling the promises of American life? Only time can tell. But because of the examples sighted above, this writer for one is confident that the veterans constitute a hope for a more fuller and more abundant life for the residents of Hawaii. And so to the veterans of the continental United States I say, Your brothers are not doing everything that they might, but they are behaving in such a way as to make this writer feel that they are the hope of our society. What more can you expect of your comrades?

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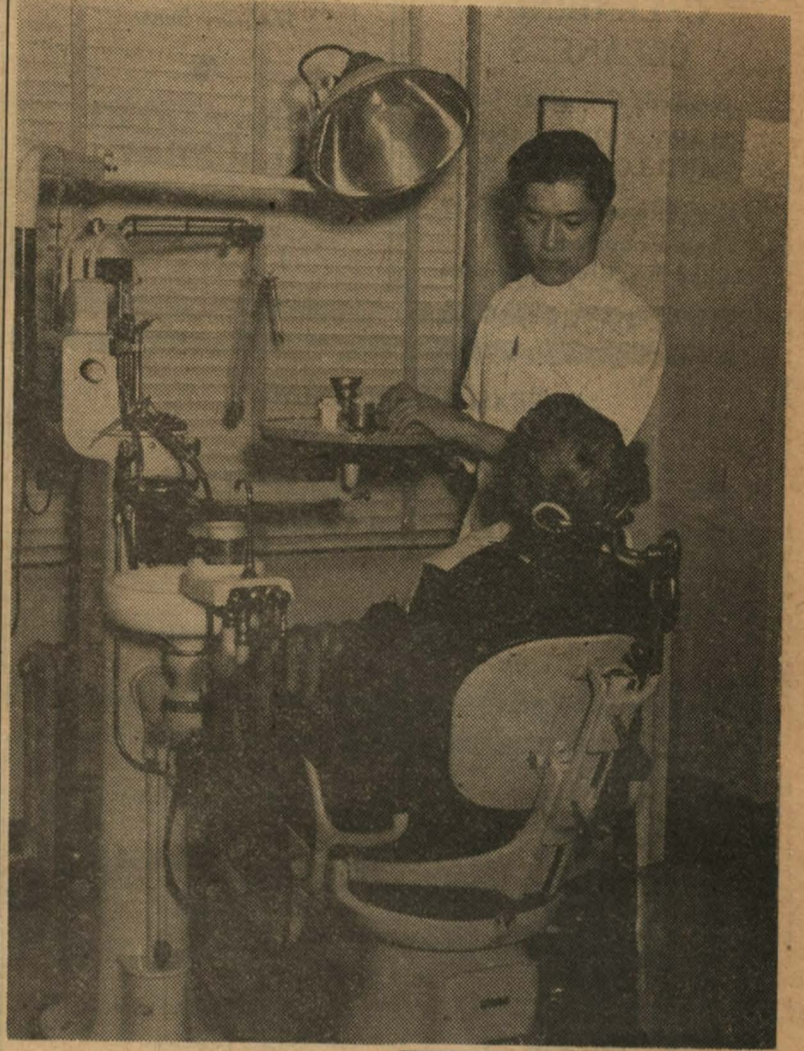
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Main Street & Home Again?

(Continued from page 26)

workers in manufacturing industries also marks a change from the past, for there are now a few Japanese Americans in foundries, shipyards, and other work of similar nature.

Nevertheless, the amount of industrial employment in Seattle is still much less than in midwestern and eastern cities. One explanation of this situation being the unwillingness of most trade unions to accept even the Nisei veterans for membership. This city is one of the strongest "union towns" in the country, and the industries are so extensively organized that few are able to gain industrial employment without the consent of the unions. Unfortunately, the most powerful local unions have tended toward a policy of excluding Japanese Americans, and have even been able to discourage the establishment of Japanese operated enterprises such as produce or dye work and cleaning business by refusing cooperation with them. One Japanese American operator of a fair sized merchandise store which employs only Caucasians remarked, "Nisei vets have come around asking for jobs, and we'd like to hire them, but our store is completely unionized by locals that won't take the Nisei. That's why we can't hire them. And it's impossible to buck the unions." Many are discouraged by this impenetrable barrier of trade union policy, for though jobs are available and some unions are open, the Japanese-Americans regard themselves as receiving only the undesirable positions which majority group workers would not accept, the "dirty work," and membership in unions which are the least able to gain economic advantage for them. The further misfortune is that education about the function of labor organizations in our society, much needed in the Japanese community,

is difficult to foster under these conditions, which in turn contributes to the impression among labor leaders that these people are unfriendly toward unions.

Management, too, shows reluctance about hiring Japanese Americans for other than the less desirable jobs. The "economic ladder of opportunity" starts at a lower level for racial minorities, reaches a lower ceiling, and is a very much less stable ladder than for the majority group. This is the case for resettlers to Seattle. Of those employed by Caucasians, a large number of both the Issei and Nisei are building services workers performing menial duties at hotels, hospitals, clubs, and certain business concerns. Nisei working as office and shipping clerks in downtown shops are sustained by the hope that they may, in due time, receive advancement to better positions through recognition of their efficiency. But, on the whole, very few are in positions which match their expectations or capabilities, and there is today an increasing feeling that "decent" jobs in Caucasian companies are hopelessly difficult to get.

Although housing and employment adjustments are settling into recognizable patterns, the process of community organization has advanced more slowly and along a less well defined course. Most of the pre-war organizations are gone, but whether the old groups are revived or new ones created to replace them, there is no doubt of the need for more organization than now exists. Under the present circumstances where no central community agency exists, problems of community service such as in hardship cases receive inadequate attention, questions requiring community-wide action have no point at which collective action can be mobilized, representation for the purpose of public relations is hampered by the lack of delegated authority, and the circulation of information is relatively inefficient although the establishment of a weekly newspaper (in Japanese) has somewhat alleviated this difficulty.

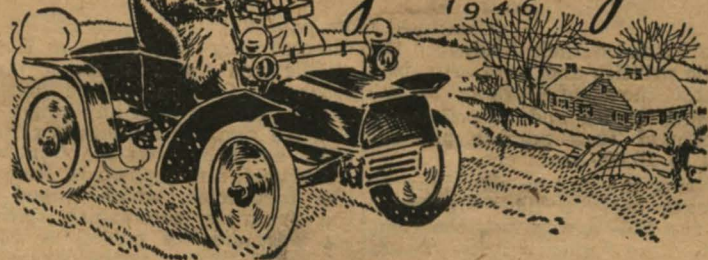
The need for organization is well recognized. Last winter when a few community leaders became concerned over the lack of organized channels of activity for teen-aged youths, a United Nisei Activities Committee was organized which successfully undertook social and recreational program, but the few who interested themselves in supervising the group suffered from a considerable drain of time and energy. An abortive attempt

was therefore made about the time of the WRA closing to organize a service committee, with a paid executive secretary, which would handle not only the teen-aged problems but also the problems of the community in general. The latter attempt failed, and principal among the reasons of failure were the lack of funds, the fear of "segregation" on the part of interested Caucasians, and the lack of leadership. Of the last it should be said that the lack was not of individuals with the capacity for leadership, but rather of those with sufficient time and willingness to undertake the required work. The long awaited revival of the Seattle chapter of the JACL may serve to fill the existing gap in community organization, but the role which this organization plays in the community will depend in large part upon the extent to which it can affect the personal lives of the resettlers. To become an effective force in the community it seems virtually necessary that a local office be established and an aggressive executive secretary be hired.

Community churches, university students organization, and other social clubs are again emerging; but as in every other resettlement area, wherever organization is under consideration, the issue of "integration versus segregation" is an ever present point of discussion. The misapprehensions about the "integration" process, indeed, have added so much confusion to organizational efforts that it would almost seem wise to rule out the word from our vocabulary as a meaningless term and turn our attention rather to what is possible and how any given objective may be achieved.

On the other hand, the building up of extensive interpersonal connections between the Japanese Americans and majority group members is dependent upon the personalities of those involved from both sides as well as upon the existence of common bases of interest. Increasing numbers are taking advantage of favorable circumstances to establish such contacts with members of the majority group, but with the existing housing situation and dependence upon the continued existence of the Japanese community, there is certainly no possibility of a sharp break from the past.

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NISEI IN HAWAIIAN TRADE UNIONS

(Continued from page 27)

have extended their hold over the public utilities and have organized several thousand workers in the building trades and miscellaneous industries. They number possibly 8000 to 10,000 members.

During the war no showdown of strength between the "Big Five" and the ILWU was possible. Contracts were signed, but they were unacceptable to both sides. When the master contract covering the sugar industry approached expiration on August 31, 1946, it was evident that the postponed trial of strength was at hand. The Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association and the Hawaii Employers' Council rejected all but 4 demands out of 25 advanced by the union. An 80-day sugar strike began on September 1.

In the unsuccessful sugar strikes of 1909 and 1920 the "Big Five" had talked of the "Japanese menace" to hide the economic nature of the struggles. Some observers expected that the racial angle would be played again in the 1946 strike.

Union leaders themselves were uncertain of the stability of 4,000 Filipino laborers who had been imported a few months before. New to Hawaii, penniless, some of them ex-guerilla fighters who had killed their Japanese, would they stick together with Issei and Japanese-Americans?

The strike proved two things. First, that the day has passed when Island workers can be divided to any substantial extent along racial lines. More than half the strikers were Filipinos. The rest were mostly Japanese, with a considerable number of Portuguese and a sprinkling of others. Leaders were mainly Japanese and Portuguese. In spite of some undercover efforts to detach the Filipinos, and in spite of the traditional preference which the Portuguese have enjoyed as whites, there was complete solidarity of all workers throughout the strike. Leaders were supported regardless of their ancestry. If any "racial" antagonism was shown, it was toward the Hoale (non-Portuguese Caucasians), and toward them only insofar as they, as administrators, belonged in the employers' camp.

Second, propaganda against unions, to be effective, cannot be

directed any longer to a Hoale middle and upper class; it must reach the Oriental middle classes, and therefore cannot any longer be directed against Japanese or Filipinos as such. Even the Honolulu Advertiser, a newspaper of Hearst-like tendencies, which sniped at the Japanese community during the war, did not publish a word against Japanese participation in and leadership of the strike.

Instead, the line of propaganda was well known in mainland America: not the yellow but the Red menace. In this line the "Big Five" was at some advantage because of the frankly leftwing leadership of the ILWU. Since the ILWU demanded the union shop, and this institution is almost unknown in Hawaii, employers were fairly successful in persuading the people of Honolulu that the ILWU was out to wrest control of industry from the hands of management. The corollary, that they were out to wrest control at Joe Stalin's behest, seems to have been received with great skepticism except among the upper classes. At least the attempt to discredit the ILWU's CIO-PAC by giving it a Red label was unsuccessful in spite of the tightening of class lines by the strike, and in spite of the inconvenience caused by the West Coast shipping strike in which the ILWU was also participating. PAC endorsed candidates who were popular were elected, those who were less popular were defeated.

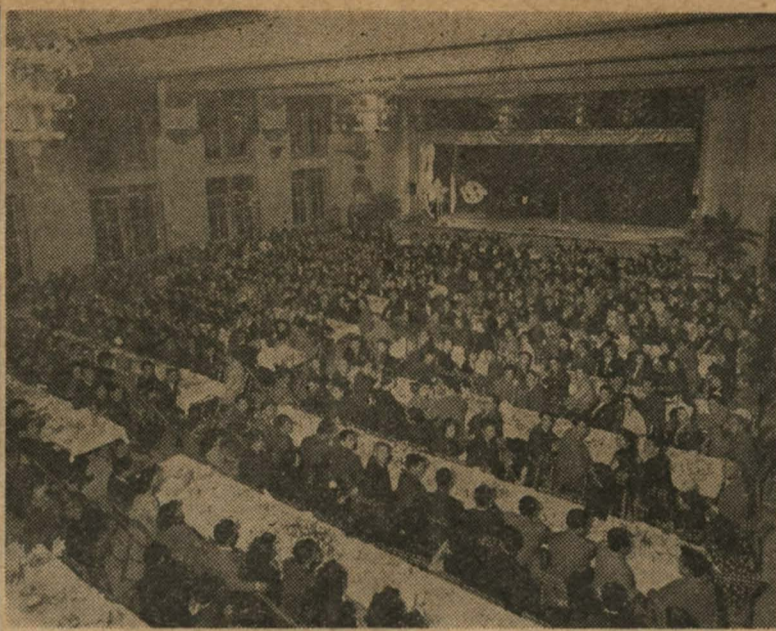
A strong effort was made to paint ILWU top leaders as irresponsible carpetbaggers from California, who are interested only in union dues and lead the poor dumb Island workers by the nose. Since three of them have German names, a little tentative Jew-baiting was tried out, but it seems to have gone over Hawaiian heads. Neither was the carpetbagger line of propaganda notably successful, for most Islanders, whether pro-ILWU or anti ILWU, were well enough acquainted with the issues to know that a strike would have taken place even had the leadership been wholly Hawaiian.

A great part of the population of Honolulu (itself containing half the people of Hawaii) have lived on plantations, or their parents have. Sympathy for the strikers—except on the widely misunderstood issue of the union shop—was therefore very common; but no poll of opinion was undertaken to determine its extent and degree. The writer's impression is that it was no more prevalent among the Japanese than among the Portuguese and native Hawaiians. Of all the ethnic groups, only the Island-bred Hoales were probably for the most part in the anti-ILWU camp.

A change can be seen among the Japanese middle classes. In the 1909 strike of Japanese plantation labor the leaders were business and professional men who later became substantial citizens.

The 1920 strike, also of Japanese labor, was generally supported by Japanese businessmen, but a certain coolness was noticeable among the more prosperous. In 1946 the sympathies of the Japanese, like those of other groups, divide in general along class lines, with small shopkeepers and professional men standing somewhat muddled in the middle.

The sugar strike has ended in a substantial though not complete victory for ILWU. A considerable wage increase was won. The system of "free" perquisites—housing, fuel, medical care—which gave the plantations so strong a hold over their workers, has been replaced by a system of cash payments by



employees. Adoption of seniority and non-discrimination rules opens the way for a drastic modification of the racial favoritism which has always existed on plantations. Most important, it has been demonstrated that a union composed of workers of several descents can come through a long-drawn struggle against the awesome "Big Five" unbroken and with very high morale.

The results of the strike remain to be seen. If the gains embodied in the new sugar contract are followed through, a partial lifting of the racial "ceiling" on jobs will elevate the social standing of plantation Japanese—and indeed, of all the non-Hoale groups—and make plantation life more attractive. One can venture a guess that Japanese American union leaders will be greatly encouraged to take a more active and substantial part in community leadership, and that they will at the same time feel themselves more closely integrated with the other "nationalities" of Hawaii.

Such men as Yasuki Arakaki, Bert H. Nakano, and Carl Fukumoto of Hawaii island, Shigeto Takemoto of Maui, Matsuki Arashiro (newly elected to the House of Representatives) and Yoshikazu Morimoto of Kauai, "Major" Okada and Wilfred Oka of Oahu, are beginning to be felt as forces within their respective islands. The reputation of Jack H. Kawano, leader of Honolulu longshoremen, is Territory-wide. Many other union leaders exert great influence within one or two plantations.

Generalizing, one may say that nearly all these leaders, whether local Jimmy Higginses or of Territorial stature, have attained leadership as unionists and as citizens rather than as Japanese. Unions have been a powerful influence toward assimilation.

Yet the racial problem—the Japanese problem in particular—is not

few Japanese are well known outside their own locals. Honolulu is a large city, and the Japanese head of a single local of a hundred members or so, among the 30-odd A. F. of L. locals, finds it hard to achieve recognition.

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