

Rafa Shimpō  
7 July 1972 P. 1  
Letters To The Editor

This was written before I became a city councilman. I sent it to the Rafa after the Gardena Valley News refused to print it.

# Miss Elbee chided

(The Rafa Shimpō welcomes the opinions and comments of its readers. Those wishing to express themselves are urged to write: Letters to the Editor, The Rafa Shimpō, 242 S. San Pedro St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90012.)

Following is an open letter to Lillian Baker, author of the "PartyLine" column by Miss Elbee in the Gardena Valley News.

Dear Miss Elbee:

Regarding your June 22, 1972 column in the Gardena Valley News entitled "Internment camp injustice . . . another side to the controversy."

As a citizen you are entitled to say whatever you wish, and as a local gadfly you certainly use that right to project your opinions—however boring or deluded—to the readers of the GVN. But when you presume to comment on the right and proper role of history you should tread carefully. Even the most inexperienced cub reporter is exhorted to get the facts straight before venturing an intriguing and revealing collection of self-seeking distortions.

A number of Japanese Americans have reacted strongly against your article by writing detailed refutations of your numerous gross distortions of historical facts. J. Matsukawa's June 29 letter to the GVN and the columns by Kats Kunitatsu in the Kashi Mainichi (June 28) and Vince Matsudaira in The Rafa Shimpō (June 29) demonstrate clearly that Americans of Japanese ancestry will not remain docile and silent in the face of your brand of hysteria and pseudo-patriotism.

So why waste the effort on small-time demagogues such as yourself? Because you are dangerous. You so self-righteously dismiss any recall of the less-than-pure elements of OUR American past as the work of "rabble-rousers who are stirring up discontent and half-truths." I agree that there are rabble-rousers in our midst, but instead of pointing at historians I suggest that you look for proof of prophets of doom and the lunatic fringe by using your own mirror. But then again, that may be the cause of your myopia, for you prefer to view reality through the eyes of a narcissist who desperately hopes that the wrinkles and blemishes will disappear if you wish hard enough.

If history were to be written to satisfy you we would carefully censor out all those events and personalities which irritate or embarrass those who want our youth to be sheltered from reality. But that would be propaganda and mythology, not history.

In your statements and in our telephone conversation today you vehemently asserted that "the greatest tribute or landmark we can give our young is the realization that there is no worse life than truth misunderstood by those who hear it." "I'm tired of our younger generation seeing only one side of the picture . . ." and "Americans may be naive in some respects but we can never be accused of short memories."

You've convinced me that you are indeed tired and old, and your recollections are not accurate as a valid description of the world which existed beyond your own

personal experiences during World War II. It is undeniable that you did suffer personally as a result of OUR war with Japan. But so did other fellow Americans who you still casually lump together with the enemy just because their faces and surnames were unlike yours.

Wake up, Rip Van Winkle Elbee. The youth of today have been weaned on inflated body-counts in the non-war in Vietnam, statements by American officers to the effect that "in order to save the Vietnamese village from communism we had to destroy it," the Pentagon Papers scandal, the wire-tapping of political campaign headquarters, and the recent trumped-up charges against Coroner Thomas Noguchi.

The Noguchi fiasco, in which he was cleared of all charges is especially damning, for it shows that we must take the time to respond to confirmed bigots as well as possibly well-intentioned but pathetically misguided "rabble-rousers" such as yourself. Instead of blindly pursuing your self-proclaimed mission of "protecting our youth" from reality by keeping the dirty linen unwashed, get out of your dark closet of the past.

You may find that, in spite of our problems, we're surviving together. The forms may be different, but patriotism isn't dead. And perhaps it's even based on a stronger foundation now, for by learning from the mistakes of the past we know how hard we must all strive to maintain the fragile format for society which we call democracy.

On the phone today you lamented that a variety of crackpots had called to damn you without waiting for a reply. Such lack of courtesy is not to be condoned, especially since you need to be taken by the hand and led out into a world which is much bigger than your mental womb.

And don't dismiss this letter as an angry outburst from the lunatic fringe. As a fourth generation American of Japanese ancestry I have a vested interest in our ability to live together. I am over 30, my hair is cut short. I wear narrow lapel coats with striped ties, my car and my home are owned by the bank, and I'm a teacher. I am also an ex-inmate of OUR American concentration camp at Gila River, Ariz. I will not and cannot forget your painful memory of the wartime period. But if you begrudge my right to remember, you will not go unchallenged.

Until the appearance of this article your column had served only one useful purpose for this reader: a section of the newspaper which I used for the wrapping of garbage and dog droppings. That function will continue in the future, but I'll also remember to glance at your column without fail.

What better way to remind myself that in this age of instant communication and space exploration there are those like yourself who forget Santana's caution that "those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it."

Donald Teuo Hata, Ph.D.  
Associate Prof. of History,  
Calif. State College,  
Dominguez Hills

242 SO. SAN PEDRO STREET  
ESTABLISHED 1933

## Booth openings

Booths are still available for the Nisei Festival carnival, according to chairman Marty Deasey.

Application blanks may be picked up at the Nisei Week office, 125 Weller St., or will be mailed to interested parties who call 627-1236. Forms must be returned by July 20 to qualify.

Free space has been granted to the Keiro Nursing Home at whose booth artifacts made by elderly patients will be sold. Money raised will be used for the patients, announces Susie Dobashi, speaking for Keiro.

## Japan flood deaths up to 74; 36 on Kyushu

TOKYO. — Death toll from southwestern Japan's torrential rains, flooding and landslides rose to 74, with another 114 persons reported missing.

On Kyushu, 36 persons were killed and 60 reported missing in a series of landslides after four inches of rain fell in two hours.

## Harvard professor to visit N. Korea

TOKYO. (AP)—Prof. Jerome Cohen of Harvard Univ. will visit North Korea this month at the invitation of Pyongyang's External Cultural Liaison Council, the newspaper Asahi Shimbun reported. It added that he would be the first American scholar to visit North Korea since the war.

Cohen has just completed a month-long trip to Communist China. A central figure in a China study group at Harvard, he is now in Japan as a guest professor at Doshisha Univ.

## Hunt goes on for armored car bandit

TOKYO. (AP)—Japanese police have been hunting three and a half years for a gunman who robbed an armored car of more than 294 million yen, then worth \$817,500. This week they decided to cut the investigation squad from 37 to 20 men but the manhunt will go on.

On Dec. 11, 1968, an armored car carrying year-end bonuses was flagged down by a gunman dressed as a traffic policeman.

He told the four in the vehicle he had been instructed to search for a bomb and frightened them out of the auto by pulling a smoke bomb from underneath it.

Then he climbed behind the wheel and drove away.

## 600,000 will get copy of tax bill

Duplicate tax bills will be sent Nov. 1 to 600,000 county property owners whose taxes are paid by banks, savings and loan associations and other lending agencies.

In the past, county tax collector Harold J. Ostly has mailed bills to 1.2 million property owners who pay their taxes directly.

## Asian 'Day of'

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Dear Mary and Bill -  
just to let you know what's happening.  
Am meeting with the AAs (Kazu, Aiko and others)  
and saying you won't be joining us.  
Has your black author friend had any luck?  
Maybe I could have my young editor, Susanne H., look  
at it. Warmest regards,  
Micki

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Henry B

JAMES A. MICHENER  
PIPERSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA  
18947

27 August 1975

Dear Ms. Howard,

Herewith I send William Morrow and Company the Introduction to Michi Weglyn's YEARS OF INFAMY.

It may not be published until Mrs. Weglyn checks every word for accuracy. This is an important statement about a very important topic, and it must be accurate.

I liked the book. It is responsible, well researched and of good intent. The material on the removal of Japanese from Latin American countries was new to me and quite surprising. The treatment of Tule Lake was more detailed than anything I had read previously.

Most of all, it is a good historical record with illuminating footnotes and much information that was hitherto scattered. It should have a long life.

Sincerely,

*Jim Michener*

Carbon copy enclosed for Mrs. Weglyn.

Cable: Wilmerow NY

UCLA Asian American  
Studies Center  
Telephone 212 • 889 • 3050



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Morrow Junior Books, Morrow Paperback Editions  
Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., Reynal & Co.  
Fielding Publications  
105 Madison Avenue New York, NY 10016

September 2, 1975

Ms. Michi Weglyn  
957 Park Avenue  
New York  
New York 10028

Dear Michi:

Well, I think it's a marvelous tribute to the book that Mr. Michener has delivered to us his Introduction before he's even delivered his letter of agreement. I am very, very pleased with his directness, his typical ease of expression as well as his "I was there" approach. He is obviously very proud to be associated with this excellent book, as are we all.

On page three "112,000" will want to be changed, then, won't it -- to "110,000". And, also on page three (line 10) a figure for Hawaiian Japanese Americans is needed. We, as you know, do not hyphenate Japanese American and will want this to conform, I'm sure.

I'm also enclosing the questionnaire I spoke of.

Yours,

*Susanne W. Howard*  
Susanne W. Howard  
Associate Editor

Encs.  
P.S. I'll wait for your final approval before writing to thank Mr. Michener.