

Letter From S. I. Hayakawa

I was also surprised to receive the following letter from Dr. S.I. Hayakawa:

Dear Mrs. Yamazaki:

I read with great interest and pleasure your "minority view" of the relocation of the Japanese on the West Coast during the Second World War.

As you say, most of the people who are making the biggest noise about the relocation are those who were born after it all happened. It is good to read your views on the subject, as reprinted in The Pacific Citizen.

I enclose my own views on the subject, as published in my syndicated column, which appeared in about fifty newspapers throughout the United States. This view is not exactly the same as yours, but I think you will understand the spirit in which it was offered.

I myself lived in Chicago during the war years. In 1944, I had a chance to visit the relocation center at Amache, Colorado. It wasn't good, but it wasn't all that terrible either. I was impressed with the way the elderly Japanese especially cultivated the traditional arts of Japan, practiced singing from the Kabuki drama, did wood-carving, and in many ways reasserted their Japanese identity. Did you ever read a book "Beauty Behind Barbed Wire" which is about the art work done in the relocation centers?

With every good wish,

Sincerely yours,
S. I. Hayakawa

(Released by The Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1974)

Warren And The Relocation

At the time of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the average age of Nisei — the American-born children of Japanese immigrants — was 15. This fact is important in evaluating the War Relocation program of 1942, which removed from West Coast states all people of Japanese ancestry — some 110,000 altogether — including thousands who were American citizens. They were sent to detention centers east of the Rockies, in Colorado, Utah, Arizona and elsewhere.

The relocation has been the subject of much discussion in subsequent years. The fears that there might be spies and saboteurs among the Japanese — the chief reason given for the relocation — ultimately proved to be groundless. Many Nisei fought and died for America in the battlefields of Europe.

The loyalty and trustworthiness of Japanese-Americans was further confirmed by their service in the Pacific theater as intelligence officers and interpreters.

The relocation made permanent changes in the patterns of Japanese-American living. Many, having been involuntarily moved east of the Rockies, decided to go further east, so that there are many Japanese today in cities where there were none or few before the war — Salt Lake City, Chicago, Cleveland, New York.

But many also came back to the West Coast states, where they settled down to useful careers in business, agriculture and the professions — and prospered. There was surprisingly little anger or bitterness about the relocation. Most Japanese-Americans were willing to let bygones be bygones.

I bring up these matters now because criticism of the relocation has rubbed off on former Chief Justice Earl Warren, whose death on July 9 the nation mourns. A small wolf-pack of dissident Japanese-Americans, most of whom weren't born when the relocation took place, has for years been trying to get Justice Warren to apologize for his "racist" decision, as Attorney General of California, to uphold and implement President Roosevelt's relocation order.

Mr. Warren died without ever having apologized. He is reported to have said he was "sorry" — it had to be done, but he gave no indication of believing that he should have acted otherwise.

I think I can understand why. In 1942 Californians knew very little about the Japanese, who had arrived in America later and were much fewer in number than other immigrant groups, such as the Chinese, Irish, Italians, Portuguese or Armenians. Since the average Nisei at that time was only 15, most Californians had not known them as classmates. As for the Issei (the immigrant generation), most of them spoke poor English or none at all.

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Munson Report

Pre-Pearl Harbor US Investigation Finds "No Threat" from Issei, Nisei

DEAR EDITOR:

I must assume that Mr. S. I. Hayakawa has never heard of the Munson Report, the secret pre-Pearl Harbor loyalty investigation of the Japanese minority ordered by FDR and key State Department advisers who had not been satisfied with the intelligence summation then being turned in by the Army, Navy and the FBI. Curtis B. Munson, the State Department representative charged with this highly clandestine mission, ended up confirming, unequivocally, the accuracy of their reports — most of them the results of over ten years of governmental snooping and spying. The Munson summation certified a highly favorable intelligence consensus that the Japanese American — mostly children and elders — posed NO THREAT to the nation's security.

But what is equally remarkable about this definitive pre-war report is the revealing character assessment made of a people at a time (October and November, 1941) of rising war feelings which totally contradicted tattered myths which, a few months later, "justified" the sending of 112,000 men, women and children to concentration camps; namely, that they were an "unknown people" and their loyalties unfathomable. The Munson Report, one of the war's best kept secrets — and covered up — reveals the investigators' surprise at the amazing uniformity of opinions obtained from "business, employees, universities, fellow white workers, students, fish packers, lettuce packers, farmers . . ." Among some of the conclusions arrived at by Munson were the following:

... The Issei (Japanese immigrants denied citizenship, though US residents for 30 to 50 years) were generally assessed to be of high moral character "for the most part simple and dignified" who "send their boys off to the Army with pride and tears." They were looked upon as "good neighbors" and their family life "disciplined and honorable."

... The Nisei (US born, average age 19, not 15) were also held in high esteem, and assessed to be "not Japanese in culture. They are foreigners to Japan . . . They are not oriental or mysterious, they are very American" and "show a pathetic eagerness to be Americans." (The "subversive" nature of language schools was considered, even then, to be an exclusionist myth. Has Mr. Hayakawa made a recent survey of Japanese-language schools to make such an absurd assertion as "What do you think they are teaching in those Japanese-language schools?"

... Munson concluded from his exhaustive findings that "THERE IS NO JAPANESE

PROBLEM," also that the Issei and Nisei are "universally estimated from 90 to 98 percent loyal to the United States if the Japanese educated element of the Kibei is excluded." He saw no need for concentration camps and had urged that "the Nisei should work with and among white persons, and made to feel he is welcome on a basis of equality." He recommended that Issei property be placed under Federal control, and that Washington "put responsibility for behavior of Issei and Nisei on the leaders of Nisei groups such as the Japanese American Citizens League." Munson's primary recommendation was: The loyal Japanese citizens should be encouraged by a statement from high government authority and public attitudes toward them outlined."

Considering the level-headed tenor of public thinking only weeks prior to the war's outbreak, it was unfortunate that the charismatic then-Attorney General and other nativist politicians fell in line with the small but vocal anti-Oriental minority demanding whole sale ouster, for this made easy — as one reverse followed another in the Pacific War — the cruel governmental hoax subsequently enacted in the name of national security, "military necessity," and "protection" for these "admirable people." (Incidentally, in Hawaii where tolerance was encouraged, no killer mobs descended on Japanese communities.)

Yet I am struck by the forgiving, unfailingly courteous nature of Japanese Americans whose praise in public print of the late Chief Justice have been eulogistic, while my right-wing white American friends gleefully shout "good riddance."

One last point: It was not so much an act of statesmanship, as a stern warning from Washington that violence and bloodshed would result in retaliation against US detainees in enemy hands, which finally caused Earl Warren to order law enforcement officials to safeguard the lives and property of the returnees. But, by then, a minority had been efficiently slandered and crucified, with often awful consequences not only to them but to American nationals in enemy prison camps. For thanks to US media excesses, Tokyo had been provided throughout the war with provocative details of the wholesale mistreatment of a racial group for the crime of looking like the enemy — most of whom were Americans. Documentation for all this may be found in my book "AMERICA KYOSEI SHU-YOJO (Days of Infamy)" recently published by the Political Public Relations Center, Tokyo.

— MICHI WEGLYN
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A₄H₄A
America
UNITED

Americans FOR HISTORIC ACCURACY

There were GOOD
REASONS FOR
"Hysteria"...

July 4, 1975 - ACCORDING TO THE MANZANAR COMMITTEE, INVASION OF OUR WEST COAST WAS A FIGMENT OF MILITARY MEN'S IMAGINATION. "THESE MEN WERE SEEKING POWER..." -- ACCORDING TO A LOS ANGELES TIMES REPORTER, OUR OWN SHIPS "GOOFED" AND BOMBED GOLETA; AND, TO QUOTE THIS SAME YOUNG REPORTER, "DON'T BELIEVE THE STORIES IN THE L.A. TIMES IN 1942, BECAUSE 'WE HAD VERY BAD REPORTERS THEN!'"

YOU ONLY *THINK*
YOU KNOW ABOUT
WORLD WAR II
UNLESS YOU'VE READ
RETALIATION

*Japanese Attacks and
Allied Countermeasures
on the Pacific Coast
in World War II*

by BERT WEBBER

(Oregon State Univ. Press - \$14.50)

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SURVIVING crew members from the Japanese submarines and balloon-launching teams have provided documents, diaries, and recollections. One chapter includes the story of the only pilot ever to bomb the U.S.A., Fujita, the intrepid pilot whose landing field was the ocean and whose hangar was a submarine.

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- Newspaper and radio editors defeat balloon offensive with silence
- Field artillery practice hit passenger train
- Landing sites of more than 300 balloons and bombs identified from Alaska to Michigan, Kansas and Texas.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Bert Webber, author of innumerable articles and short books, is a Medford, Oregon free-lance photojournalist. Reared in San Francisco, he now lives in the Pacific Northwest. During World War II he served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps as a cameraman in both Europe and the Aleutians. Webber holds a B.A. from Whitworth College and an M.L.S. from University of Portland. He has been a teacher, librarian, photographer, etc., and is an accredited researcher.

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