

Copy of part of a letter written to a friend

The final letter I beefed up to Sam Hall helped in the healing process after leaving D.C. pretty frayed. I've been thinking a lot about ^{now emotionally ravaged} ~~the~~ ^{we are} ~~effects~~ from the incarceration. Compounded by our Japanese cultural values - deference to others, especially to authority - it has all desensitized us to a point where many of us can't allow ourselves to act on our emotions, let alone own up to our feelings. You notice I say "allow". It wasn't until Aiko gave me a pep talk over a long distance phone call and after a JACL'er told me that we nisei have got to start losing our cool, that I felt I had the permission to express my anger. I then went over an innocuous letter I had already written and pulled out the plugs. I beefed up and rebeefed it to the resultant letter I enclose. It could have even been stronger but what's important is that I have learned to place more trust in my own feelings. The briefing I got before I left, from Sansei incidentally, was "don't be so negative, think of it as a privilege", "don't antagonize the committee members. They are the ones who are making the decisions, etc.." I fell into that completely. I was going through a self censorship process as I was trying to field some very hostile questions. After a particularly harsh attack by Thomas Kindness (what a cruel joke, that name) I was so nonplussed I have no recall of the response I gave. From my husband's reports I'd say they were pretty inane. I have a rough enough time thinking on my feet. Why couldn't I have just said "you are so wrong, Mr. Kindness", just as my guts were telling me. Pretty sad.

I've taken copies of testimonies to Hokubei. They've looked ^{them} ~~it~~ over and feel it's important enough to do a story with broad coverage. They plan to contact people who attended the three hearings to get an overview especially since Donna Omata's letter reported a serious change of tenor in the hearings which I confirmed. Enclosing same in case you didn't read it. I admire her for pouring forth her outrage straight out without the handwringing I went through.

In my interview I'd like to focus on our battered ego~~s~~ which doesn't allow us to acknowledge and act on our true feelings, especially to authority.

I think we allow authority to intimidate us because of this behavior too. If we don't express our outrage now we may as well forget redress. It's a new ballgame from now on which will be played with a roughness we've never had to deal with before. Those who will testify hereafter will have to be armed to the teeth with facts backed up by documents. They can no longer afford to testify with the notion that they must humble themselves to the authorities, rather they have to ^{testify} with a strong conviction that this is not a privilege but a right, dammit.

Hall and Kindness have a mindset where they want to believe the arch conservatives like Bendetsen, Wiener, Lowman and ilk, their ludicrous, unfounded statements notwithstanding, I mean outright lies about us. Hall, Kindness, et al will be back with more ludicrous statements, ^{supplied} willingly and readily ~~supplied~~ by Bendetsen types. Something about these old boys. They never quit and they never seem to die. Bendetsen shuffles slowly and McCloy approaches ninety. It's as if their mission to shoot down this bill keeps them alive. Scary. We nisei at least have a few years on them so must be even tougher and more dogged. We nikkei whether we support redress or not cannot afford to take all this lying down.