

NISEI

The Quiet Americans

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who were genuinely concerned with fifth-column rumors, the magnitude of the attack on Pearl Harbor, and the continuing successes of the Japanese enemy in South Pacific areas . . .

"The necessity for protecting coastal areas, the widespread hostility toward resident Japanese, racial animus, economic cupidity, fears of attack and apprehension over the growing victories of the enemy—these factors became so intertwined that their separation was impossible. Yet they all had the common feature of pushing in the direction of evacuation. And the political representatives of the Western states reflected these one-way pressures."

Even so, the War Department was ahead of Congress. It was February 13 when the West Coast delegation sent their recommendations for evacuation to President Roosevelt. Stimson had made his decision two days earlier. It was on February 18 that Rankin stood on the floor of the House to join in bitter invective against the government's delay in taking drastic action against Japanese Americans. But the decision for such action had been finalized in that memorable meeting in Biddle's home the night before.

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A FAULTY DIAGNOSIS

THE DOCUMENT known as Executive Order 9066 was placed on President Roosevelt's desk on February 19, 1942. The order gave the Secretary of War the authority to designate certain "military areas" and to exclude "any or all" persons from them. This was the authority that Secretary Stimson had sought to remove Japanese aliens as well as citizens of Japanese blood from the West Coast. President Roosevelt had endorsed this proposal in principle. The Army lawyers who composed the formal authorization realized there was a very good chance the Supreme Court would find it unconstitutional. So they couched the order in the broadest of terms to avoid the charge that it was a discriminatory measure directed at persons of a specific race.

The day that President Roosevelt received the document was the seventy-fourth since the attack on Pearl Harbor; two months and twelve days had sped by. What had been feared in the early days of December had not come to pass; the Japanese had ventured no farther to the east after the strike that had launched the war. Even to armchair strategists it was evident that the Pearl Harbor attack was a hit-and-run effort to cripple the American fleet and destroy its principal base, after which the thrust of Japanese aggression was turned in the opposite direction. As costly as the Pearl Harbor attack had been for the United States, it had not achieved the results Japan had sought, for the U.S. carrier fleet was still intact. Nonetheless, Japan had directed the full force of conquest at Southeast Asia and the far Southwest Pacific, not the American mainland. By February 19, Manila, Hongkong and much of the Dutch East Indies were in Japanese hands. Singapore had been lost



Representative Francis E. Walter
He helped correct immigration inequities

just four days earlier, and it was evident that Burma soon would be captured. It was a time for action rather than introspection. So Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 the same day he received it, indicating that he was familiar with its content and approved its purpose, or if this was not so, that he paid scant heed to its implications.

For the 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry who were uprooted from their homes as the primary consequence of Roosevelt's action, his decision could not have been more important. Yet, even though their future was clearly charted by the act of signing Executive Order 9066, to the *Issei* and particularly *Nisei* evacuation still seemed to be an impossibility. Such a thing could not happen in America; it was a hideous nightmare that would vanish with the dawn.

Their hopes were buoyed when it was announced that a congressional committee, headed by Representative John H. Tolan of California, would hold a series of hearings "to inquire further into the interstate migration of citizens," and to look into the "problems of evacuation of enemy aliens and others from prohibited military zones."



Congressman John H. Tolan
His committee provided a podium

Thoughtful *Nisei* knew that the power to evacuate "any or all" in the interests of military security had been provided by Executive Order 9066. But no action had been announced. And so, their vision clouded by a large measure of wishful thinking, they believed that the findings of the Tolan Committee would have a large part in determining the government's policy. Up to this point hardly anyone in authority had listened to *Nisei* protestations of loyalty and innocence. Now the Tolan Committee was inviting them to speak. At last here was someone who would listen, and a forum in which to be heard. All along the coast *Nisei* leaders prepared feverishly to make their case and asked their friends—ministers, sociology professors, social workers, business associates—to appear and put in a good word for them.

The hearings opened in San Francisco on February 21. (Almost unnoticed the previous day, Stimson had designated DeWitt to carry out Executive Order 9066.) The testimony of the initial witnesses quickly set the tone for the balance of the hearings. Mayor Angelo J. Rossi was the first to speak.

Rossi pointed out the "seriousness of having alien enemies in our midst." He said the measures already taken against enemy aliens "have caused great anxiety and distress among this group of people," causing dislocation of families and loss of livelihood. But, he went on, "the great majority of non-citizens in this area is made up of elderly men and women whom I believe for the most part to be industrious, peaceful and law-abiding residents of this community. Most of them have native-born children. Many of them have sons in the armed forces and both sons and daughters engaged in defense industries and civilian defense activities. It is the well-considered opinion of many that most of these people are entirely loyal to this nation; are in accord with its form of government, believe in its ideals and have an affection for its traditions and that under no circumstances would they engage in any subversive activities or conduct.

"It has been said that the measures which are proposed to be taken against these aliens, instead of making for national solidarity and unity of effort in this emergency may cause dissatisfaction and resentment among those of alien parentage . . ."

So far, so good.

Then Rossi uttered the disclaimer that was to be heard again and again throughout the hearings. "In my opinion the above-mentioned facts apply particularly to the German and Italian alien problems. Their problems should be considered separately from those of the Japanese. The Japanese situation should be given immediate attention. It admits of no delay. The activities of the Japanese saboteurs and fifth columnists in Honolulu and the battle fronts in the Pacific have forced me to the conclusion that every Japanese alien should be removed from this community. I am also strongly of the conviction that Japanese who are American citizens should be subjected to a more detailed and all-encompassing investigation. After investigation, if it is found that these citizens are not loyal to this country, they, too, should be removed from the community."

Mayor Rossi was arguing that Italian and German aliens should be less suspect than Japanese aliens and their American-born offspring.

Why?

Because Italians and Germans are white, and the Japanese are of another race. Mayor Rossi was too intelligent to put it in such bald language, but the implication was clear.

California Attorney General Earl Warren, later to become an outstanding champion of civil rights as Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, was the next principal witness. His testimony, including a detailed written statement, covers fifty printed pages in the committee's published report. Warren went to considerable lengths to point out that Japanese farmers were clustered around a vast array of strategic installations—aircraft plants, airports, highways, dams, pumping stations, military bases, bridges, power lines and the like. When Congressman Laurence F. Arnold of Illinois asked if "it just couldn't have happened that way," Warren replied: "We don't believe that it could in all of these instances, and knowing what happened at Pearl Harbor and other places, we believe that there is a pattern to these land ownerships in California . . ." No one embarrassed the attorney general by pointing out that many of the areas had been wilderness when Japanese immigrants cleared the brush and leveled the land for farms—long before highways, military camps, power lines and the Wright brothers had appeared on the scene.

Warren also made much of the inscrutable Oriental who had baffled Californians for half a century, and fired a slanderous broadside at the *Nisei*: "I want to say that the consensus of opinion among the law-enforcement officers of this state is that there is more potential danger among the group of Japanese who are born in this country than from the alien Japanese who were born in Japan." When Congressman Arnold asked if there were any way of distinguishing between the loyal and disloyal, Warren replied: "We believe that when we are dealing with the Caucasian race we have methods that will test the loyalty of them, and we believe that we can, in dealing with the Germans and the Italians, arrive at some fairly sound conclusions because of our knowledge of the way they live in the community and have lived for many years. But when we deal with the Japanese we are in an entirely different

field and we cannot form any opinion that we believe to be sound."

A few moments after he admitted there had been no sabotage and no fifth column activity in California, Warren charged that there were no informers among the Japanese to report "subversive activities or any disloyalty to this country." Then he indulged in an astonishing bit of logic in which he had the active support of the Congressmen. The following is taken directly from the Tolan Committee report:

"Attorney General Warren: . . . To assume that the enemy has not planned fifth column activities for us in a wave of sabotage is simply to live in a fool's paradise . . . I am afraid many of our people in other parts of the country are of the opinion that because we have had no sabotage and no fifth column activities in this State since the beginning of the war, that means that none have been planned for us. But I take the view that this is the most ominous sign in our whole situation. It convinces me more than perhaps any other factor that the sabotage that we are to get, the fifth column activities that we are to get, are timed just like Pearl Harbor was timed and just like the invasion of France, and of Denmark, and of Norway, and all those other countries. I believe that we are just being lulled into a false sense of security and that the only reason we haven't had disaster in California is because it has been timed for a different date, and that when that time comes if we don't do something about it it is going to mean disaster both to California and to our nation. Our day of reckoning is bound to come in that regard. When, nobody knows, of course, but we are approaching an invisible deadline.

"The Chairman (Tolan): On that point, when that came up in our committee hearings there was not a single case of sabotage reported on the Pacific coast, we heard the heads of the Navy and the Army, and they all tell us that the Pacific coast can be attacked. The sabotage would come coincident with that attack, would it not?

"Attorney General Warren: Exactly.

"The Chairman: They would be fools to tip their hands now, wouldn't they?

"Attorney General Warren: Exactly . . ."

There is no reason to believe Warren and Congressman Tolan

were other than sincere in their fears. They were so completely convinced in their minds that the Japanese in California were disloyal, they could rationalize that the fact nothing had happened was proof that something terrible surely would come to pass. The temper and hysterical pressure of the time was such that few dared to challenge their astonishing logic, a curiously distorted logic hardly calculated to prove an endorsement for the post of Chief Justice of the United States.

The suspicion is inescapable that politicians like Warren, Congressman Tolan and Governor Olson, being familiar with the history of California's discrimination against the Japanese, simply could not understand why they shouldn't be disloyal. Hostility toward their persecutors would have seemed to be the natural and inevitable reaction.

Mike Masaoka, representing the JACL, was the first *Nisei* to appear before the committee. He did not receive the prompting from the Congressmen that Warren had enjoyed. Rather, he was questioned sharply. Apparently Masaoka was the first *Nisei* several of the Congressmen had ever encountered. They indicated surprise that he spoke English so well, and were surprised again when he said he could not read, write or speak Japanese. The Congressmen had heard that *Nisei* had attended Japanese language schools where they learned loyalty to the Emperor. Masaoka said he had never attended Japanese schools. The Congressmen had heard that many *Nisei* had been educated in Japan. Masaoka said he had never been there. The Congressmen had heard that many Japanese were Buddhists or embraced Shinto, which they believed to be proof per se of disloyalty. When Masaoka was questioned about his religion he said he and several members of his family were Mormons, while others in the family were Presbyterians.

Appearing together with Masaoka were Henry Tani, executive secretary of the San Francisco JACL chapter, and Dave Tatsuno, the chapter president. Both were subjected to the same line of questioning as Masaoka. Tani said he had been born in San Francisco, received his degree from Stanford University, had never been to Japan, had attended Japanese language school for one year when he was six years old, that he was a member of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and felt no allegiance whatsoever to the Japanese government. Tatsuno testified he had been to Japan for

six months when he was ten years old, was an American college graduate and an elder in the Presbyterian Church. The nature of the questioning showed the Congressmen were surprised, but not convinced that these witnesses with Japanese faces were really as free of Japanese influence as they seemed to be.

Over the years JACL and Masaoka have been accused of failing to oppose the evacuation strongly enough, of agreeing too readily to cooperate in the government's evacuation plans, in short, of selling the *Nisei* down the river. In view of these charges, the significant portion of Masaoka's prepared statement presented to the Tolan Committee as the position of the JACL, is reproduced here for the record. Speaking on behalf of "the 20,000 American citizen members of the 62 chapters of the Japanese American Citizens League," Masaoka said:

"When the President's recent Executive Order was issued, we welcomed it as definitely centralizing and coordinating defense efforts relative to the evacuation problem. Later interpretations of the order, however, seem to indicate that it is aimed primarily at the Japanese, American citizens as well as alien nationals. As your committee continues its investigations in this and subsequent hearings, we hope and trust that you will recommend to the proper authorities that no undue discrimination be shown to American citizens of Japanese descent.

"Our frank and reasoned opinion on the matter of evacuation revolves around certain considerations of which we feel both your committee and the general public should be apprised. With any policy of evacuation definitely arising from reasons of military necessity and national safety, we are in complete agreement. As American citizens, we cannot and should not take any other stand. But, also, as American citizens believing in the integrity of our citizenship, we feel that any evacuation enforced on grounds violating that integrity should be opposed.

"If, in the judgment of military and federal authorities, evacuation of Japanese residents from the West Coast is a primary step toward assuring the safety of this nation, we will have no hesitation in complying with the necessities implicit in that judgment. But if, on the other hand, such evacuation is primarily a measure whose surface urgency cloaks the desires of political or other pressure groups who want us to leave merely for motives of self-

interest, we feel that we have every right to protest and to demand equitable judgment on our merits as American citizens."

The statement was clear enough. If the United States declared evacuation was a military necessity, the *Nisei* would have no choice but to accept it. This is a point that none of the *Nisei* witnesses challenged. But Secretary Stimson already had declared evacuation was necessary to the national defense. The Tolan Committee hearings could not affect the decision in any way. In this sense the hearings were a sham, a forum for expression of opinions and prejudices, for the voicing of pleas for justice as well as the cries of bigotry, none of which could have any effect on the issue.

Yet it was important that the public be heard, pro and con. The Tolan Committee, like a traveling medicine show, moved from San Francisco to Portland to Seattle to Los Angeles and back to San Francisco. The hearings were concluded on March 12, and the testimony taken was printed in three booklets totaling 965 pages. The hearings were only half completed when, on March 1, General DeWitt issued Proclamation No. 1 designating the western half of California, Oregon and Washington and the southern third of Arizona as military areas from which all persons of Japanese ancestry eventually would be removed. One day before the hearings ended—March 11—DeWitt established the Wartime Civil Control Administration with Colonel Bendetsen as director, to carry out the evacuation program.

The San Francisco hearings established a pattern that was followed in each of the other cities. Municipal and county officials, local peace officers, members of the Joint Immigration Committee in California stirring the ashes of old campaigns, veterans' groups, chambers of commerce, representatives of floral and agricultural organizations competing with the Japanese, even service clubs (the Downtown Seattle Kiwanis Club, for one) added their voices to the demand that all Japanese be evacuated. Federal agricultural and labor officials testified briefly on the effect evacuation of Japanese would have on the local situation. And spokesmen for the *Nisei*, joined by ministers, college professors and sometimes by CIO labor leaders, argued *Nisei* loyalty and pleaded for justice.

The demands for mass evacuation of all Japanese fell into four general categories:

First, they stressed the danger of sabotage, espionage and fifth

column activity by the Japanese and the need for removing this potential from a war zone.

Second, they argued for mass evacuation because of supposed inability to distinguish the loyal from the disloyal.

Third, a large part of the testimony was devoted to declaring that evacuation of Japanese would not be detrimental to the economy of the West Coast.

Fourth, mass evacuation was urged as a humanitarian measure to keep families together, to protect them from vigilante action, and as an opportunity for the *Nisei* to demonstrate their loyalty by accepting incarceration.

Let us examine each of these arguments briefly.

First, the danger of hostile activity. Time and again witnesses charged that the Japanese were guilty of sabotage in Hawaii during the attack on Pearl Harbor, and cited the danger of the same thing happening on the mainland if it were bombed or invaded. Even members of the committee threw this charge at *Nisei* witnesses who spoke of their loyalty. "What about your people at Pearl Harbor? Did they remain loyal Americans?" Congressman Tolan challenged Masaoka in San Francisco. "There are authentic pictures during the attack showing hundreds of Japanese old automobiles cluttered on the one street of Honolulu so the Army could not get to the ships. Are you conversant with those things?" And in Seattle, Congressman Arnold lectured Jimmie Sakamoto: "Of course, you probably recognize that if the Japanese in Honolulu and Hawaii had not conducted themselves as they did on December 7, that perhaps such drastic action would not be thought of in this area of the United States at this time." Sakamoto asked: "Do I understand from that, that the Americans of Japanese ancestry in Hawaii did not contribute loyally toward the defense effort on that day, at the time of the attack?" Congressman Arnold replied: "Well, there is a good deal of evidence to that effect, yes."

The *Nisei* on the mainland, as well as the general public, had no information to contradict the Congressmen. They had to assume members of Congress knew what they were talking about. But the facts are that the Congressmen and others who repeated as truth rumors of fifth column activity in Hawaii were wrong. Many weeks later, much too late to prevent the evacuation, officials in a position to know categorically denied the accusations. In response

to an inquiry by Congressman Tolan, Secretary of War Stimson wrote: "The War Department has received no information of sabotage committed by Japanese during the attack on Pearl Harbor." Here are some other responses:

"Mr. John Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has advised me there was no sabotage committed there (in Hawaii) prior to December 7, on December 7, or subsequent to that time."—James Rowe, Jr., assistant to the attorney general.

"There were no acts of sabotage in the city and county of Honolulu December 7, nor have there been any reported to the police department since that date."—W. A. Gabrielson, Honolulu chief of police.

"There have been no known acts of sabotage, espionage or fifth column activity committed by the Japanese in Hawaii either on or subsequent to December 7, 1941."—Col. Kendall J. Fielder, chief of military intelligence, Hawaii Department.

So thoroughly were the rumors implanted, however, that even today there are many Americans still convinced that some Japanese in Hawaii guided enemy planes to Pearl Harbor by cutting arrows in sugar cane fields, blocked traffic to delay rescue efforts, set fires and otherwise sabotaged the defense effort. Nothing like this ever took place. In fact, many Japanese Americans were cited for rushing to the defense of Hawaii.

On the mainland, as we have seen, even California's Attorney General Warren conceded that there had been no fifth column activity, an admission confirmed by General DeWitt. But they saw this as an ominous sign rather than a reassuring one.

DeWitt also charged that "for a period of several weeks following December 7, substantially every ship leaving a West Coast port was attacked by an enemy submarine. This seemed conclusively to point to the existence of hostile shore-to-ship communication."

Here again DeWitt was either misinformed, or speaking loosely in an effort to reinforce the argument for evacuation. Stetson Conn tells us in his official history that nine Japanese submarines arrived off the West Coast about December 17 and remained about a week. Only four of the subs made attacks and they sank two tankers and damaged one freighter off California. During the same period dozens of Allied ships were being sunk by German sub-

marines in the western Atlantic. The Army's complaints about suspicious radio transmissions were investigated by the Federal Communications Commission's monitors, using highly sophisticated stationary and mobile equipment. A total of 760 reports were investigated, and in 641 cases it was found no radio signals were involved. In the remaining 119 investigations, 21 were found to be legal transmissions from U.S. Army stations, 8 from U.S. Navy stations, 12 from local police stations, 65 from U.S. and foreign commercial licensed stations, 3 were short-range transmissions emanating from home record players, and 10 from Japanese stations in Japanese territory!

Chairman James L. Fly of the FCC wrote the Attorney General: "There were no radio signals reported to the Commission which could not be identified, or which were unlawful. Like the Department of Justice, the Commission knows of no evidence of any illicit radio signaling in this area during the period in question." Fly complained bitterly about the "lack of training and experience" of military monitors. "Frankly, I never have seen an organization that was so hopeless to cope with radio intelligence requirements," he said. "They take bearings with loop equipment on Japanese stations in Tokyo . . . and report to their commanding officers that they have fixes on Jap agents operating transmitters on the Pacific Coast. These officers, knowing no different, pass it on to the General and he takes their word for it. It's pathetic to say the least."

It was more than pathetic; it was tragic. Fly's report was not made public until long after the evacuation was carried out. DeWitt's charges were widely circulated and an unfortunate coincidence provided what seemed to be the stamp of authenticity to what he was saying. On February 23, a submarine shelled oil installations at Goleta, near Santa Barbara, California, but fled after a few ineffective salvos. It was the only Japanese attack on the American mainland while the *Issei* and *Nisei* were at liberty. But it took place twelve days after Secretary Stimson received President Roosevelt's approval for evacuation; it could not have entered into deliberations as to the military necessity of evacuation. There were only two other Japanese attacks on the mainland. On June 20, 1942, fifteen days after the last person of Japanese ancestry who lived on the West Coast was in detention, a submarine shelled shore batteries near Astoria, Oregon. And on September 9, 1942, three

months after the Japanese were locked up, a submarine-based plane dropped incendiary bombs on Mount Emily in Oregon in an attempt to start forest fires. Both attacks were ineffectual.

The second argument for evacuation had to do with inability to distinguish the loyal from the disloyal.

Many months before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Federal Bureau of Investigation as well as the military intelligence services had begun a systematic probe of Japanese American communities. When hostilities broke out, the FBI quickly rounded up all persons it considered potentially dangerous. Commander Ringle of Naval Intelligence reported the great majority of *Issei* and *Nisei* were beyond suspicion. But this did not satisfy the politicians, the Army, and men like Attorney General Warren. While piously admitting that undoubtedly many were loyal, they contended it was impossible to separate them from the disloyal. In effect they were saying that because it was not possible to distinguish the sheep from the goats, all must be considered potentially dangerous. Grodzins tells us that when Senator Sheridan Downey turned to Congressman Leland Ford and said he was quite sure there were many Japanese Americans who were just as loyal citizens as himself or even Congressman Ford himself, "Ford roared a protest." The FBI had applied rigid criteria—some perhaps excessively harsh—to *Issei* its agents had observed on an individual basis over a long period. But others wanted blanket condemnation based on rumor and misconceptions.

Much was made of the fact that an organization called the *Butoku Kai* existed in some communities. Translated literally, which is what intelligence authorities did, it means Society for Military Virtue. In reality the *Butoku Kai* were athletic clubs where fencing, judo and wrestling—skills valued by the warrior class in feudal times—were taught and practiced. As one observer has noted, these clubs were "no more related to militarism in modern Japan than the buttons of the sleeve of an American male's business suit today are connected with dueling." Without this knowledge, however, the presence of *Butoku Kai* in various Japanese American communities resurrected visions of thousands of Japanese military reservists drilled and ready to rise against the United States, a phantasm that had been conjured originally by alarmists in the Yellow Peril era.

Earl Warren was among those who felt the *Nisei* were a greater

hazard to the national security than the *Issei*. Those who espoused this point of view cited two factors, the Japanese education of many *Nisei* and dual citizenship.

A number of *Nisei* had received a portion of their education in Japan, but there was considerable confusion about the number involved, and the period of time they had spent in Japan, and the effect of this experience. A federal study made after the evacuation showed that nearly three out of four *Nisei*—72.7 percent—had never been to Japan. Another 14.4 percent had visited Japan briefly. And only 12.2 percent had three or more years of schooling in Japan. One-fourth of this last group were forty years of age or older, indicating they had studied in Japan before the rise of militarism. On the other hand, less than 2 percent of those under twenty had three or more years of education in Japan, proof that the practice of sending youngsters to school in Japan had largely ended by the 1940's.

Nor could it be said that the 12.2 percent of *Nisei* who had studied in Japan all had been exposed to, or accepted, Japanese nationalistic propaganda. Many were apolitical. Many others were repelled by the rising tide of Japanese militarism and could not get back to the United States quickly enough. Still others hurried home to the States to avoid military service in Japan.

Nisei who had gone to school for any substantial length of time and then returned to the United States were known as *Kibei*. The "Japanese-ness" of the *Kibei* depended on several factors, among them the age at which they had left the United States and the length of time they had spent in Japan, but this was no test of loyalty. Naturally those who had spent a large part of their lives in Japan were the most fluent in the Japanese language, and many of them proved to be extremely valuable to the United States as language instructors, radio monitors, propaganda and psychological warfare specialists, and military intelligence service interpreters and translators. They performed a service for which few Americans were qualified.

This is not to say that some *Kibei* did not become provocateurs under the abnormal conditions of the relocation camps. These almost invariably were *Kibei* who had been unable to make a cultural adjustment to life in the United States and the indignity of the evacuation stirred their hostilities rather than severed their

loyalties. Prior to the evacuation the loyalty to the United States of the great majority of *Kibei* was unquestionable, and the doubtful ones were well-known. It was as wrong to condemn the *Kibei* as a group as it was to make blanket accusations against all *Nisei*.

The matter of dual citizenship was equally confused. It was charged that most if not all *Nisei*, while claiming American citizenship, were considered Japanese subjects under Japan's statutes, and that therefore their loyalty to the United States was suspect. Some legislators demanded that dual citizens be stripped of their U.S. citizenship while others wanted dual citizens to be treated as aliens. As a matter of fact, dual citizenship was not unique to the *Nisei*. Dual citizenship was possible under the laws of many European nations, including Germany and Italy. In fact, when Japan was codifying its laws in 1899, it copied common European practice when it adopted the so-called *jus sanguinis* rule that provided that "a child is a Japanese if his or her father is a Japanese at the time of his or her birth." In the United States and in many Western Hemisphere countries, citizenship is determined by birth on the soil of the nation (*jus soli*) regardless of ancestry. Thus the American-born children of Japanese immigrants, as well as the offspring of immigrants from many other countries, were claimed as citizens by both the United States and the ancestral land.

Sensing the complications that might arise, Japanese residents of the United States petitioned Tokyo to liberalize the nationality code and make expatriation or single citizenship possible. In 1924 Japan amended its laws. A child born of Japanese parents in the United States, Canada and many South American countries no longer would be claimed as a Japanese subject unless the parents indicated within fourteen days their intention of claiming Japanese citizenship for the child. In practice, it meant taking a positive action, registering the child's birth at the nearest Japanese consulate. The law also provided that those born prior to 1924, who consequently possessed dual citizenship, could cancel their Japanese citizenship by filing a notification. No figures are available, but a great many *Nisei* did take steps to rid themselves of Japanese citizenship. It is safe to say that of those who did not go through this process, the majority were unaware that they were dual citizens, and of those who were aware, many thought so little of their Japanese citizenship that they didn't bother to do anything about can-

celing it. After 1924, it was a rare parent indeed who went to the trouble of notifying a consulate of intent to accept Japanese citizenship for his child. Many *Nisei* were quite unaware there was such a thing as dual citizenship until politicians raised the issue as another reason for doubting their loyalty.

A surprisingly large number of witnesses based their argument for evacuation on the contention that removal of the Japanese would not hurt the West Coast's economy. Most outspoken were representatives of a variety of farm organizations—the Western Growers Protective Association, the Grower-Shipper Vegetable Association in the Salinas Valley, the California Farm Bureau Federation, and others—who obviously would profit by the elimination of competition by Japanese growers. What these witnesses overlooked—and members of the committee ignored—was that the expendability or the indispensability of the Japanese on the West Coast was not the issue. The question was whether it was necessary to remove the Japanese Americans for reasons of national security. If the answer was yes, they had to be removed regardless of cost, and the effect of evacuation on the economy should not have entered consideration. The fact that so much stress was placed on the possible economic effects of evacuation lent weight to the *Nisei* charge that powerful interests who would benefit by the expulsion of Japanese had a big part in forcing the decision.

If there was any doubt, it was dispelled by an article by Frank J. Taylor in the May 9, 1942, issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Taylor interviewed Austin Anson, managing secretary of the Grower-Shippers, and quoted Anson:

"We're charged with wanting to get rid of the Japs for selfish reasons. We might as well be honest. We do. It's a question of whether the white man lives on the Pacific Coast or the brown men. They came to this valley to work, and they stayed to take over. They offer higher prices and higher rents than the white man can pay for land. They undersell the white man in the markets. They can do this because they raise their own labor. They work their women and children while the white farmer has to pay wages for his help."

The argument most difficult to answer—because it was emotional rather than logical—was the contention that the *Nisei* could demonstrate their patriotism by accepting evacuation. Coupled with this

viewpoint was a warning that the Japanese might be subjected to mob or vigilante action, particularly if the mainland were attacked, and it was to their interest to accept "protective custody." Governor Olson advanced these arguments in his meeting with *Nisei* leaders in Sacramento, and they were voiced many times by members of the Tolan Committee as well as witnesses.

The gist of *Nisei* replies was that they wanted to be treated like any other group of citizens, sharing the war burdens and seeking neither special consideration nor discrimination. They wished to remain in their home communities, they said, and help the victory effort in whatever capacity they could. As for the threat of mob action, Joseph Shinoda of Los Angeles expressed more faith in the good sense of Californians than the Congressmen. Shinoda, a large-scale flower grower appearing as a representative of the United Citizens Federation, told the Committee in reply to a direct question: "Personally I don't fear for my safety here among Californians who know us, who have seen many Japanese and who would not feel that an imperial army representative arrived every time they saw a strange face. I would feel much safer here, from a protection standpoint, but I also feel that even if the legal aspects of our civil liberties are more or less in a state of suspension, the average human being in Los Angeles County is to be depended upon. I haven't lost faith in the human beings here if sometimes I do doubt what they have done to us. I think that in time to come the complete and utter disregard for our right to make a living, to share in the defense effort in this area where we make our homes, where we pay our taxes, will some day appear as a very black page in American history."

Grodzins reports that seven Japanese Americans were slain, all in California, between December 8, 1941, and the end of the following March. In all, he says, there were thirty-six cases of violence that might be considered vigilante-type action with one-third occurring over the Christmas-New Year holidays. Grodzins concluded: "Seven killings in almost four months was no portent that 'the entire Jap population is going to be massacred,' as one constituent of Congressman Tolan wrote. Seven killings and twenty-nine additional cases of extralegal action in the first four excited months of war would not seem to justify the protective evacuation of 110,000 persons . . . the danger of vigilantism existed more in

the minds of those demanding evacuation than in the facts as such."

The *Nisei* witnesses uniformly opposed evacuation of citizens, but no one suggested he would defy a federal evacuation order. Masaoka had made the JACL's position clear and his stand was backed by *Nisei* witnesses not associated with the organization. In San Francisco, Michio Kunitani, representing the *Nisei* Democratic Club, declared he wanted to "live as Americans in America," but declared his group would accept evacuation "if the military authorities of the United States deem it necessary." In the Seattle hearings Tom Marutani representing a CIO local of the Industrial Woodworkers of America declared: "For the preservation of democratic ideals, we are willing to abide by any decision handed down by the government." In Los Angeles, the Reverend Lester Suzuki, a Methodist minister, pointed out the Americanizing influence of Christianity and added: "We want to reassure you that whatever the federal government thinks ought to be done, we will do." Shinoda said he would accept the evacuation decision in principle but urged individual hearings: ". . . since our Constitution even now would protect us from dispossession and confiscation, it would be only fair to give us some consideration or some form of trial so that at least when we leave we don't leave under the cloud of disloyalty."

Congressman Carl T. Curtis of Nebraska summarized the government's position when he replied to Shinoda in these words: "I don't believe anything will be gained by assuming that everyone who has to be evacuated is disloyal. These military decisions must be made upon the basis of the best judgment of those military authorities who are in charge. All the rest of us will have to comply. It will be tough, it will be cruel, there will be hardships . . . I don't mean to sermonize, but the point is that I hope that the loyal Japanese will feel that in complying with a military situation, that in that very compliance you are rendering a service to your country."

But the *Nisei* felt then, and feel today, that they had been called on to render a service that was discriminatory and, more important, unnecessary.

Tom Clark had told the Committee in San Francisco: "If the military authorities, in whom I have the utmost confidence, tell me it is necessary to remove from any area the citizens as well as the

aliens of a certain nationality or of all nationalities I would say the best thing to do would be to follow the advice of the doctor. Whenever you go to a doctor if he tells you to take aspirin you take aspirin. If he tells you to cut off your leg so you can save your body you cut off your leg."

The *Nisei* had no choice but to follow the doctor's orders. But they believed the doctor's diagnosis was wrong because, as so often happens to the best of them, the diagnosis was based on misinformation, incomplete information, and pressures and hysteria that should have had no part in the making of such a critical judgment. Tom Clark lived to admit he had been wrong. In 1966 he said the Evacuation decision had been a major error of World War II.