

EVACUEES NOT AT ALL BITTER

American Japanese to Be Evacuated From Coast; Declares Loyalty.

The following article is from the Santa Barbara News-Press, which introduces it with the following note: "We publish a letter from Tom Hirashima, well-known member of Santa Barbara Japanese colony, as it well expresses what loyalty to America can mean to Americans of Japanese descent."

"War is hell!" said General Sherman of Civil war fame in answering those who charged him with being unnecessarily destructive. And the Japanese, aliens and citizens alike, can now vouch for that statement as they face evacuation from their homes to an unknown place and future.

Yesterday we Japanese Americans, because of our citizenship and believing in the integrity of that citizenship, could not believe that we would be forced to evacuate. In confused anger and fright we cried out: "Violation of our constitutional rights"; "unjust and unnecessary"; "it's contrary to what we are fighting for."

Worst Happened.

And we sincerely believed so. Many of us still do. We watched with great interest and anxiety the handling of the Japanese problem on the west coast by our government. And what seemed the worst that could happen to us happened. We, though United States citizens, must also evacuate. Debate on the subject was over.

The important thing now is what is our attitude regarding evacuation? How are we taking it? Are we bitter? Have we lost faith in America and its people . . . and in ourselves as American citizens?

Numbed by Order.

This is our answer: Most of us were born in Santa Barbara. We were raised and educated here. We know it as our home. Like you, we love the beauty, the kind friends and the peace that is Santa Barbara. We are somewhat "numbed" by the thought that we must leave it for God-knows-where and for a future which is uncertain—and somewhat frightening.

But this is war! Our country is fighting for its life against strong and vicious enemies. Fighting for the life we love as do you. No sacrifice, no hardship is too great in winning the war and preserving our priceless heritage of justice and free enterprise and human dignity.

Hearts Are Heavy.

With heavy hearts, but without bitterness, without rancor, we calmly and quietly prepare ourselves spiritually, mentally and physically for the ordeals ahead. This is the sacrifice that our government has called upon us to make. We have been requested to think of it as our contribution to our country's war effort. We accept it in that spirit.

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The turn of events, particularly the reverses suffered by our cause in the Pacific, makes for a long and hard war before we will emerge victorious as we surely will. Thousands upon thousands of our boys will die in the fight for freedom.

Believe in America.

We think, feel, act like Americans. What else can we think and feel, what else can we be, for our background makes us appreciate more fully the wonderful advantages of this nation. We believe in her institutions, ideals and traditions; we glory in her heritage; we boast of her history; we trust in her future. She has granted us liberties and opportunities such as no individual enjoys in this world today.

She has given us an education befitting kings. She has intrusted us with the responsibilities of the franchise. She has permitted us to build a home, to earn a livelihood, to worship and act as we please . . . as a free man equal to every other man.

Wouldn't Go Back.

Do you think we would exchange all this for what Japan or any other country, for that matter, could offer us in exchange? Rather we would fight to the death to defend our country and the principles for which it stands against any and all aggressors.

Yes, we, too, remember Pearl Harbor and know full well that our right to live as free men in a free nation is in peril as long as the brutal forces of enslavement walk the earth. We know that axis aggression must be crushed and we are anxious to participate fully in that struggle.

Many in Uniform.

We Japanese Americans are also actively engaged in this fight against militarist Japan. Four thousand of us are with the armed forces of the United States. Some of us, because of our ability to speak, read and write the language of the enemy, are now being schooled in army "intelligence" for invaluable service to our country in this war with Japan.

Contrary to the present popular belief, most of the alien Japanese are also loyal to this country. Their whole life is now rooted in this country, particularly if they have American children, and here they wish to continue living and to die.

Sons in Service.

Let us not forget that many of them are mothers and fathers of United States soldiers. A good example of this is a mother and father who have been residents of this country for more than 30 years and who now have two of their three sons in the United States army.

One of the sons will soon complete his schooling in the army "intelligence" school where he is making an outstanding record. Prouder parents than this mother and father would be hard to find. I know. For they are my mother and father.

Will Keep Faith.

It is important that we do not lose faith in America, for some day the war will end. And in the peace, there will be great work to do—not work of destruction, but work of construction.

home here wish the people of Santa Barbara and vicinity good luck and say "thumbs up" until we meet again in peace. May victory be