

Seattle Office

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

3959 FIFTEENTH AVENUE NORTHEAST

SEATTLE 5, WASHINGTON



MAR - 6 1944

February 29, 1944

Floyd W. Schmoe
 3959 15th N.E.
 Seattle, Washington

Dear Floyd,

Thanks for sending me court records of the C.O. cases. They are very interesting from the subject point of view, although now I have a little more personal interest at stake. Some of the Southern Calif judges sound pretty liberal and hopeful; others are pretty sad. The bulky case record of Dolve, Darrow, Worley and Scaff I had previously glanced through at Tucson. Scaff has gone 1-A-0 to support his dependent Mother; the other three will be out in August. Darrow was turned down in his parole request to work as counselor at the Church of All Nations youth program. The other two, Worley and Dolve, were requesting similar releases so I imagine they were denied parole, too. Tucson is a tough place for C.O.s to win parole.

Tonight, Esther Briesemeister will speak to a gathering of F.O.R. people at the Y.W.C.A. lounge. Her subject will be something along the line of resettlement in other localities. Esther will speak to other groups, too, including an all-Nisei gathering Thursday night. She is a fast talker and makes quick answers to questions, but I was not too impressed with her profoundness. But I guess that is okay for platforms and time-limit luncheons and dinners. She did say one thing which I have felt all-along, and that is G. Raymond Booth is the top relocation officer in the country. In fact, she felt that his talents were being wasted in Cincinnati. Raymond ought to transfer to Spokane.

Miss Briesemeister was here for dinner last night. Nobu has somebody in for dinner at least 2 or 3 times per week.

Harry Yanagimachi, Nobu's huge 200 pound brother, is here today to spend part of his furlough. He has to be back at Shelby by March 7. He tells me a lot of interesting things.

I have just read about the loot ^{made on} the Seattle Japanese Baptist Church. Have they stolen very much? I guess Andy will be coming to Seattle, quick-like. The favor I asked concerns store property in Auburn. Mother wants somebody to check with Mr. Oliver of Kent to see if certain movable property such as the \$300.00 electric scale is still there or not. I'll give you more particulars when you come to Spokane.

Sincerely,

Gordon Hirabayashi

cc: Homer Morris

Seattle Office

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3959 FIFTEENTH AVENUE NORTHEAST

SEATTLE 5, WASHINGTON



March 6, 1944

MAR 10 1944

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Homer L. Morris
20 S. Twelfth Street
Philadelphia 7, Penna.

Dear Homer Morris,

Thank you for the recent letter. I think you are right when you say that important difficulties arise when one attempts too many things in connections with resettlement. Things work out a little differently, theoretically and actually.

However, I believe that the principle of cooperation is sound if applied intelligently, and now that this venture is already started, we must do all we can to help them. And if this cooperative is successful, it will mean two or three families successfully relocated.

A week ago, Ray Roberts, chairman of the committee supporting the co-op farm, came over to Spokane and helped to straighten out the difficulties, at least, noticeably so. Mrs. Van Buskirk was asked to resign; Mr. & Mrs. Bill Yaguchi, formerly of Puyallup valley, was voted in. Yaguchi has a lot of equipment belonging to his father which he says can be loaned to the co-op. Ray Roberts was voted in also. He will, more or less, be the backbone, the Caucasian contact man if one is needed, and will serve as the treasurer to take Van Buskirk's place. The atmosphere of the farm has changed completely; some of the silver lining is evident.

Mrs. Van Buskirk's resignation is effective March 31. After that she will be invited to live there as a paying guest until such times as she can be situated elsewhere. In June she will undoubtedly get a teaching post.

As described in the letter to Floyd there is a need for social outlet for Nisei here. We are studying this situation now. I hope to make a more detailed analysis of the situation and need here; it's a brand new field.

With warmest regards to you,

Sincerely,

Gordon Hirabayashi
Gordon Hirabayashi

E. 1626 Pacific, Spokane 15, Wash.

MAR 10 1944
March 6, 1944

Floyd W. Schmoe
3959 15th N.E.
Seattle 5, Wash.

Dear Floyd,

By the time you get here on Friday I expect to have three reports on three possible houses we may use as a hostel. It's the hardest thing to get the local people in a buying mood, but perhaps the reports these individuals make will stimulate that interest a bit. I have visited all of these places; one is the one on Indiana Street which I have already mentioned, another is an old church near Altamont (up on a hill and about two miles from town business district), and the other one is a large house close to the Armour Meat Packing plant.

As you know by now the Spokane Council of Churches have turned down Don's request to sponsor Muzumdar's two day visit (\$75). Among other things the two days selected for Spokane were very poor - Saturday and Sunday - as far as churches are concerned. Another thing, the two leading pastors are English which may have something to do with this. Lela is trying to line up something, but the F.O.R. is very unpopular as a group among certain church officials - personal clashes. My idea is to line up meetings with the groups that are interested, and pass the plate at these meetings. Possible groups are NAACP, FOR, Medial Lake, maybe one session with the Council of Churches, some church Sunday morning, Unitarian Sunday evening forum. Don't know how much we can raise financially that way, but that seems to be the only guarantee we can make. I think we can make a wider contact of people through these meetings than otherwise.

*Also YWCA
on Community
Affairs (vacuum work)*
Following Esther Briesemeister's meeting at the YWCA for Nisei, discussion started spontaneously from the group rank and file that we need something desperately for wholesome release of energy and emotions. Also, since there are no organizations established nor a place available where Nisei can feel free to drop in, many Nisei are hungry for opportunities to meet socially and in interest groups. It seems that it is too early in the Nisei make-up to expect them to mix in with the Caucasian community; some don't even want to. The local (old-time resident) people aren't lending a helping hand by inviting the hotel resident Nisei to their homes nor to what clubs they have here. The Japanese church is defunct actually although it meets every Sunday. Anyway, there is a need for social and cultural outlet for Nisei, and somehow, we must see that it is met. The question is: How many can be encouraged to join in on the community openings now? Is there justification for organizing an all-Nisei club? How else can the needs of some be met?

Is the situation in Spokane basically different from that of eastern

MAR 10 1942

cities where Nisei have relocated? We do not wish to plant seeds for another Lil' Tokyo. What can we do?

As an attempt to study further possible solutions to this problem, A volunteer "steering committee" of eight persons were approved and they will meet this Thursday evening at Suzuki's home. One original Spokaneite is on this committee, which is about the correct proportion. The purpose of this first meeting is primarily to study the problem and possible directions we may take, and secondarily, to plan an open forum for all Nisei for the purpose of education and further direction.

There is one organized Nisei group, the AJCC (American Japanese Civic Club) which is the brainchild of Sab Nishimura, former Seattle JACL leader. His idea is to perpetuate a similar set-up here as existed in Seattle. Activities such as bond drives, scrap drives, 'Nisei stay out of sight' cautions, etc., naturally do not appeal to the majority of Nisei and so that organization hasn't even gotten on its feet yet. All they've done is collect \$1,000; now the contributors are clamoring for some constructive use of the money. They haven't the personnel to carry on as yet. They may join the JACL movement officially. If they do, I think it may mean their funeral as far as Nisei support is concerned.

We may gain further light after Thursday's meeting.

There may be opportunities to show your movies to a youth group of one church. I was supposed to meet with a high school group at St. Paul's Meth. Church this coming Sunday. When I mentioned that you may be around with movies, they said that it may be well to have both of us appear. I'll hear more about it later today or tomorrow.

For the Saturday morning meeting with Bernard Waring did you wish to meet a group of Nisei, mixed group, or what? Many of the Nisei will be working. I could get a small group together, however. We could visit Medical Lake in the afternoon (the best time to visit as most of the boys are on night shift), and then have an evening informal get-together at either the Ernsts or the Suzukis for the interested FOR people. Our regular F.O.R. meeting is this Sunday afternoon. Have you any suggestions to make?

I have made note of your expected arrival change to Friday. On Friday morning I shall get down to Davenport and verify the room reservation for the Warings.

It is difficult to guess when the government will act on my case. I'll be busy until then.

Sincerely,

Gordon Hirabayashi
Gordon Hirabayashi

cc: Homer Merris

Spokane Co. Jail
Spokane, Wash
Dec. 12, 1944

Homer L. Morris
20 S 12th St.
Philadelphia 7

DEC 18 1944

Dear Homer Morris:

I am now on the first lap of my 12 months "hitch." Soon I shall be transferred to the McNail Island Farm. This is the first opportunity, since incarceration, of writing - even here we are limited to two letters, this being my fourth.

Esther & I had limited opportunities of expressing our views in regards to war and war philosophy (conscription, etc.). We made the most of it. One of the papers felt our stand of sufficient import to write a scathing editorial against me. We did not expect such attention, and were therefore gratified.

The judge failed to grasp our philosophy, and denounced it as "barbaric." The editorial merely followed up the judge's viewpoint.

We feel that the work-camp philosophy of the Friends need more following as opposed to the CPS philosophy. Too many people accept CPS on the ground that the work camp is good. We feel that the two things are basically different, in spite of efforts to make it the same. Also,

too many feel they can do more by accepting evil and trying to do good "from within." We feel that is a mistaken view - that if one recognizes an evil, he must say "no" to it.

The Christians sold out to the state for "acceptance and respectability" years ago. Many feel that, consciously and unconsciously, the Quakers are in the process of doing the same thing now. We hope not.

When in the spring of 1942 the Japanese farmers were evicted, they had tilled their soil and prepared the fields but had not sowed for the crop. We feel we are leaving somewhat in the same category. We have done quite a bit of cultivating; we feel Spokane is about ready for more. We are happy that within the year two interracial groups have been organized - Spokane Racial Relations Committee (city wide) and the Spokane Fellowship Center. We feel that the AFSC can continue to do immeasurable good by keeping various groups on the forward step and by keeping Spokane in contact with good and new ideas from other areas. Floyd agrees with us. We are very happy to have had this opportunity to work here.

We send greetings to you and Edna, the Warrings and others. Sincerely,

Dorothy Esther Hirabayashi

MAY 26 1944
H. H.
May 23, 1944

Floyd W. Schmoor
3959 15th N. E.
Seattle 5, Wash.

Dear Floyd:

Have you heard anything in regards to Jobu Yasumura? I have heard rumors that he is already working for Dr. Thomas doing relocation work in the New York area.

John & Susie Fukuyama are still dickering with the real estate agent about this shop on Grand Blvd. According to John he had a "show-down" with the agent to determine if he were stalling on the grounds of prejudice. He told him to come out with it if that were so. I guess the agent gave sufficient evidence that he had another client with whom he was dealing on the same property. The latest is that the agent wants John to rent the whole middle section, which used to be a grocery and another little shop. John doesn't want all that space. He is still trying to work out an arrangement.

Nobu Suzuki (Mrs. Paul Suzuki) feels quite confident about attending the Asilomar (Calif) YWCA conference. She bases her feelings on the letter the National YW received from the Western Defense Command requesting the names of the escorts for Nobu and another girl from Boise before acting on the permits. Nobu feels they shouldn't ask for escorts if they are going to turn her down. I hope she'll hear favorably pretty soon.

On this business of escheating which the State of Wash. has started against some of the Japanese seems to be quite a technical thing. I spoke to one of the Japanese involved and he used so many difficult Japanese terms that I couldn't follow him entirely. His is only a lease. I am having an interview with a Nisei hotel operator today and hope to get a clearer picture.

The Japanese Methodist Church last Sunday pledged a little over \$50.00. I was very much encouraged over the response. Lela and I are visiting some of the professionals, like Drs. Nakamura and Warashina. I am trying to get a delegation to call on the Japanese hotel operators. We should have a fair Japanese response, which should be natural.

Did you happen to meet Mr. Peterson of the Salt Lake

Regional WRA office? He came up through the coast and was in Spokane last weekend until yesterday. In my opinion he is the type of a person that would evaporate any confidence the evacuee may have in the WRA, which unfortunately is very little to begin with. I do not know what his approach to European Americans are, but he would not gain the confidence % of the peoples whom he is supposed to help relocate.

In the first place he is very poorly informed. He doesn't know the Japanese. What information he did exhibit during my interview was strictly administration information. That, in my opinion, is a minority information.

In the second place he impressed me as being anti-pacifist. He discouraged any positive work done by pacifists, including myself, saying that the presence of pacifists automatically meant defeat as far as Japanese integration went. He seemed to think that pacifists were running the relocation work in Spokane on the strength that I was a pacifist. The explanation that as far as I was concerned, my pacifism was being expressed in action and not "anti-war" talks didn't seem to penetrate his thoughts.

In the third place he discouraged community or minority committees saying that they usually did more harm than good. In all these criticisms, he failed even once to suggest an alternative, other than doing nothing. He said doing nothing was better than doing harm.

In the fourth place he displayed very little enthusiasm for relocation, integration and return to the coast. A man in his position ought to be full of pep and ideas concerning those things. I was thoroughly disgusted and disappointed.

Those are my first impressions of Mr. Peterson. Perhaps the impression shall improve as I get to know him better. I certainly hope so.

In my Mother's last letter she indicates a real interest in returning to the coast. She wrote that every member of the family is now at work either on a farm or at the laundry; their major impetus is to save enough to buy a home and to make a new start. Her personal inclination is to find a spot in the vicinity of Seattle. I have written her about your suggestions.

We are expecting Dr. Katharine Taylor this weekend. I am sure her visit will be meaningful to Spokane.

Sincerely,

Gordon Hirabayashi

Gordon Hirabayashi

cc to Homer Morris

encl.

MAY 26 1944

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3959 FIFTEENTH AVENUE NORTHEAST
SEATTLE 5, WASHINGTON

MAY 26 1944



May 23, 1944

Homer L. Morris
20 S. Twelfth St.
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Homer Morris:

We are busy establishing our fellowship center on a firm basis. Our biggest initial concern is to raise the necessary down payment, which we think we will be able to do by the end of the month. Beatrice Shipley was here a week ago and gave us some very needed guidance. Her background and experience helped to crystallize many things that were floating in our minds. The caution which you mentioned regarding organizational participation and responsibility shall be carefully looked into. I have a feeling that our center board will be composed of inter-organizational, inter-racial, inter-religious interests, with members coming in primarily as individuals with broad human interests, rather than as representatives of some organization or some racial group.

The advice we receive from experienced persons like you, Beatrice, and many others certainly are helpful. We hope to avoid as many pitfalls as possible.

Dr. Suzuki is temporarily situated inasmuch as the Deaconess Hospital has continued to extend to him the courtesy arrangement of the use of the hospital for his patients. The president of the hospital board and the chief surgeon are good friends of Dr. Suzuki, and they have suggested that he merely continue to bring his patients there rather than to make another application and create a problem. They think nothing will be done about his continued presence at the hospital.

We have Rev. Bill Gold doing some work to look into the possibility of membership in the medical society. He has making various contacts with higher ups in the city. No tangible results as yet.

My draft status is as follows: The local board has evidently decided to ignore the "Nisei questionnaire" which I did not fill in. They have sent me a classification of 4-E on their own

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initiative as far as I know. Last week the Spokane local board 4 sent me "Greetings" and an invitation to have a pre-induction physical this Saturday. Since I do not wish to cooperate with military conscription, I will be unable to take the physical examination. I am aware of the possible consequences.

Since I feel no guilt, I do not feel that I should plead "guilty", nor even "not guilty". I feel that the proper procedure for one in my position is to leave everything up to the court, as this is their business.

I am sorry there is always something coming up in my case to interrupt our work. But, even away from Spokane, I feel I'll be able to work in other aspects of human relationship.

Sincerely,

Gordon Hirabayashi
Gordon Hirabayashi