

Nov. 7, 1942

Dear Doris,

Just to read of your trips around tires me out - what a traveler you've turned out to be!! Doris - a thousand apologies for not writing sooner, and although I might curse myself a thousand times, I can't recapture the past so I'll have to make the best of the present. I'll bet you're cramming like hell again, and this soft, easy life is starting to get the better of me again. There's a lot to write about, and I don't <sup>know</sup> where to begin.

About the time you were gallivanting around the mid-west, I was over there not so far from you having visited Topeka, Kansas from the 9th through the 11th and spent the 12th (October) in Peru, Nebraska, an old river town on the Missouri about 60 miles south of Omaha. What an experience! I wished that I had a month - only 60 miles from my cousins (Ben, Martha, Frank, and families) in Lincoln, not so far from St. Louis or Kansas City - and I had to hurry back before my pass expired. At Topeka was the Regional Y. M. Y. W. Confab - met some swell fellows and girls and was able to renew my faith and to really broaden my perspective again on the whole of life away from the stifling camp atmosphere. At Peru I visited the State Teachers College and spoke at convocation as well as at an evening gathering - what a secluded, isolated college community - far from the beaten path so that it could be the true ivory tower, and yet not so far away as to feel antiquated and out of date.

Last week, and I took a flying trip up to Denver (leaving here on the 1:30 a.m. train - which left at 3 - and arriving in Denver 8 hours later at 11 instead of 8. If any train goes through less than an hour late, something drastic has happened. In the big city I met Helen & Lily Yozzo, Tosh & Siwai, Harry Matoba from Seattle - others from Fresno, Sacramento and some from camp. The main purpose of our excursion was to speak Sunday morning at the Trinity Methodist Church - two Los Angeles Y. M. C. A. leaders and myself - a 500 mile trip whereas the church should have been able to get those capable of representing the problem right there from the several thousand <sup>on the spot</sup> there. But the apathy and ignorance

on the part of the people! The dance residents there admitted to see that they know or had heard of no one among them who could or was presenting the problems of the Japanese and Japanese-Americans - probably Paul & Michi Watanabe & Jimmy & Bernice Kamibuchi are doing their share - but that is far from enough. If the ignorance is as prevalent as it is in Denver, how much more are people needed elsewhere to present our problems.

Each student released card should be such an emissary! How many, though, are? We decried the shortage of leaders, but are we in our own small way doing what we can for the other Japanese who are less fortunate? What a dilemma!!!

Caleb Faote was here Thursday and spent the day (as well as staying overnight). We had an extremely interesting discussion that evening - five pacifists including myself were among the small group which really went to town - plus two pacifist members of the teaching staff! In Heart Mountain Theresa Honda, Mary Sakimura, and several attend (inc. Mary Suey) are very active in the small, active study group on co-ops and <sup>the</sup> cell group which is studying pacifism and non-violent methods. Fumiko Takano who certainly surprised me by dropping a line is now attending school somewhere back in the middle West. To get back to the discussion - the effects of camp life are most damaging psychologically. I wonder how you'll agree after your glimpse of camp existence there in Idaho? Young people in particular seem to be losing their ~~self~~ initiative - we all, so afraid of taking and fulfilling any responsibilities. This may be a superficial observation. There are over a thousand young men working outside - the work is not too hard at all easy. I feel that the true test will come next spring - these people have tested the hardships as well as the freedom work outside offers - will they go out again? If they do - if they show themselves as willing to work hard and long - then the detrimental loosening effect of camp existence can be <sup>relatively</sup> fought easily - perhaps it is in a way an outer mask which may become permanent if only we stay too long in this atmosphere.

As Caleb stated there are two powerful <sup>drugs</sup> ~~drugs~~ on camp life - drugs which produce a pleasant, stupifying, dulling effect on the mind - the recreational program which threatens to become an end in itself by neglecting the intellectual for the purely physical, and the idea that we might as well let things go since we will be leaving shortly. It is so easy to have the athletic

-2-  
program, the dances, the parties become the main emphasis and to constantly keep ourselves occupied there with them showing all serious thought way into the back of the mind. The other is just as powerful a drug - I've suffered from it much more than from anything else. Much of my time at Puget Sound was wasted since there was always lurking in the back of my mind the idea that I might as well let the others shoulder all of the responsibility since I would be leaving soon - and that has carried over even here.

Horio - I'd be very much interested in your general and specific impressions of camp life as a pure outsider - be perfectly frank, and I'll try to explain if at any points I would or could not agree with you.

I'm a representative of the Pacific Northwest in the Church Council - no trouble during the elections or anything since we're the only families here - but I'm afraid that the ministers committed a blunder in their slow, groping attempt at organizing a strong General Christian Church when they drew up the Constitution. Just as there are numerous fundamentalists here, there are a number of very liberal Christians (I like to feel that I'm one of the latter), and to expect to bend them all to the Church by the constitution drawn up is a sad mistake. Baptism is stated as a necessary qualification to membership - I don't know much about Church theology and dogma, but I don't think that the Quakers at any rate perform baptism - perhaps baptism is necessary, but to make it a necessary qualification to membership goes against my grain. I might be mistaken - I hope there'll be some opportunities to study this whole question of creed and dogma. The Church accepts the Apostle's Creed which I believe several liberal churches do not accept - I can't say that I believe fully in it myself. I cannot help wondering if I am making a mountain out of a mole hill, and yet I feel that the ministers did not have to put those questions into the picture. I'll lie low and do my part in carrying forth the ideas of the Church - but I'm afraid that the Constitution seeks to limit the Kingdom of God which by its very nature should be limitless and without human institutions to limit and define. Perhaps my idea of the Church isn't the orthodox, but how can we build the Church Universal upon the orthodox where that has resulted in a thousand Church Infinitesimals

If we expect Christianity to become a stronger force, we shouldn't try to make all Christians believe in the virgin birth of Christ, for example. Believe what they may, it is their fundamental actions and ideas which count!!!

I seem to have been side-tracked for a moment. Next time you take a jaunt home, and a more leisurely one, I hope, how about taking a little time out to visit me if possible - ~~but~~ if I'm still here. The route would be a little longer but - from St. Louis to Kansas City, the Santa Fe from KC to Saman (the camp) to Denver, and then the U. P. from Denver to Idaho - By the way, how did or are you faring with Yasuko? My L. A. 's are nil at the moment - no gal friends, no dates - what a life! Someday I may bump into something or somebody interesting, but give me time! I've surprised myself by my good behavior - can't meet any girl, either, who'll carry my interest along. Give me time!!

If I don't forget, I'll mail a copy of our paper with this - you will probably be very much interested in the front page story. A national JACL gathering in Salt Lake City the middle of the month with 2 representatives from each camp will study the problem of how the Selective Service should deal with the issue. The story here is one way out - but a number (majority I'm afraid) would not have the language requirements. Should the issue be drafted? The repercussions psychologically would be hard to foresee. Or should the issue be allowed to volunteer or be prevented from seeing duty altogether? It's a ~~tot~~ ticklish problem which will have multifold implications <sup>despite</sup> whichever manner the ~~prob~~ problem might be resolved. O'Brien is also supposed to show up for the conference - hope that he might be able to drop in here for a short visit and stop-over.

Camp life here is a day to day existence - but what of the future? What will happen to us when the war ends? Relocation as it is being practiced now is no solution. Domestic and short-term agricultural work - the war ends, thousands & millions seek to be rehabilitated in private life - work, especially those of a migratory nature disappears - and what do we do? Or should we develop camp life and the

3  
farms in the project to such an extent that we will be able to support ourselves during the post-war crisis? Then, as economic conditions settle down (return to normal is so much easier to say and so more often said - but we can't return to the pre-war type of normalcy), we will gradually work ourselves out of camp. Either path is no bed of roses - and definitely no solution as such. Which course should we follow? Encourage everyone to go out to work and let the camp be supported like an Indian reservation? Discourage them from leaving in favor of building up the camp community so that we (as a group) will have something to turn to in the post-war period. The dilemma hits all thinkers full in the face!

My school chances are still a huge question mark - I don't know if I'll ever be permitted to leave, but I'm still trying hard. Just be patient and wait - that's the only thing that we can do - I should know before this year is out whether I'll be able to leave or not - probably will have to spend New Year at home if that is the case since school starts the end of January. Bill seems to be doing all right - getting invited to a job by two girls - didn't say whether the spin or the lean finally took her - have to write and find out. Sueko wrote me a brilliant letter - and I haven't answered it yet - too much to do.

Don't study too hard, and don't get too hard up. I could stand a getting party now - a good 8 or 9 months since I've enjoyed anything like it. Don't do anything I wouldn't do -

Just,  
Kenji