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## BEYOND THE EVACUATION ZONE: JAPANESE EVACUATION AND RESETTLEMENT IN SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

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BEYOND THE EVACUATION ZONE:  
JAPANESE EVACUATION AND  
RESETTLEMENT IN SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

By  
Rose Sliger Krause

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
Department of History

2006

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## ABSTRACT

During World War II, the federal government interned approximately 120,000 Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans in inland relocation camps. Few scholars have investigated the effects of the evacuation, relocation, and resettlement program on non-evacuated communities with pre-World War II Japanese populations. Located outside the prohibited coastal zones in eastern Washington, Spokane's Japanese community of approximately 300 was not evacuated or interned. However, Spokane played an important role as a "safe" zone or "straddle" area for evacuees and resettlers seeking refuge from internment camps. By 1945, approximately 2,500 Japanese aliens and Japanese American citizens called Spokane home. This thesis examines two central questions. First, why were evacuees and relocatees attracted to Spokane during and after World War II? Second, how was the Spokane Japanese community impacted and changed by the influx of evacuees and relocatees during and after World War II? I argue that Spokane's location in eastern Washington State and its established Japanese community made it an attractive evacuation and resettlement location. I divide my investigation into three subject areas: demographics, businesses and occupations, and social and religious organizations.

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Thank you to Dale Soden, Whitworth College Professor of History, who was curious about the presence of Japanese American students at Whitworth College during the 1940s. His interest resulted in a grant, which provided me with my first paid job out of college, researching and producing an audio documentary on the experiences of Japanese Americans in the Inland Pacific Northwest during World War II. Thank you to Janet Hauck, Whitworth College Archivist, for mentoring me during my two years of work at Whitworth College, and for her assistance in building the collection of oral interviews with Japanese Americans in the Northwest.

Thank you to Marsha Rooney, Curator of History at the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture (MAC), for supporting acquisition of materials from Spokane's Japanese American community, as well as for featuring the community in history exhibitions. Thank you to Larry Schoonover, Director of Exhibits and Programs, who gave me the opportunity to work with the MAC's archival collections.

I owe a significant debt of gratitude to Ryosuke Suzuki for his assistance in translation and in his unfailing enthusiasm for documenting the history of the Spokane

Japanese American community. To the many members of Spokane's Nikkei community, I owe the most thanks for their assistance in locating interviewees, records, and stories. Many people volunteered their time and knowledge to a community advisory group at the MAC: Kazue Yamamoto, Mii Tai, Spady and Miya Koyama, George Yamada, Fred and Lily Shiosaki, Ed Tsutakawa, Pastor John Coleman-Campbell of Highland Park United Methodist Church, and Doug Heyamoto of the Spokane Buddhist Church and the Spokane chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League. A special thank you is also due to Sumi (Yoshida) Okamoto, whose donation of her wedding dress worn on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1941, is one of the most poignant, story-laden objects now held by the MAC. Motoko Hirata, daughter-in-law of Kazuma and Jun Hirata, donated the excellent collection of internment-era letters now housed at the MAC's research facility, without which I would not have been able to trace the story of this significant family.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents and my husband, Dan, for their support during the entirety of this intellectual journey.

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## INTRODUCTION

On December 7, 1941, Japanese airplanes attacked American naval bases at Pearl Harbor. As a result, the U.S. declared war on Japan and formally entered the Second World War. A combination of racial prejudice and national panic set into motion plans for the evacuation and exclusion of Japanese nationals and their American-born children from western America. The United States government eventually transported entire Nikkei<sup>1</sup> communities located within the restricted coastal zones to ten wind-swept inland internment camps where they remained from 1942 until the last camp closed in the fall of 1945.

In the Inland Northwest city of Spokane, Washington, the small Japanese community of just over three-hundred feared it would also be included in the spring 1942 evacuation orders. On the day of the Pearl Harbor attack at a wedding reception at the Desert Hotel, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) arrested two of the community's leaders. The government required all Japanese nationals and their American-born children to hand over all firearms, explosives, and cameras to the state patrol; by March 1942 the Spokane police station boasted "an entire storeroom filled with Japanese-owned articles."<sup>2</sup> Local police searched some Spokane Japanese homes; the FBI questioned others about possible subversive activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Nikkei is the term used to describe people of Japanese heritage or Japanese communities living outside Japan. See Appendix B: Glossary of Terms for further information.

<sup>2</sup> "State Patrol Collects Few Japanese Articles," Spokesman-Review, 1 March 1942, 8.

At the time of the Pearl Harbor attack Spokane already boasted a well-settled Japanese community that was relatively urban, included established Japanese businesses patronized by whites and Japanese alike, as well as Japanese social and religious organizations. Because it was located in Military Area #3, Spokane's Japanese community was not evacuated or interned like those from Washington's coastal cities, such as Seattle and Tacoma. However, evacuees fleeing the coast during "voluntary" evacuation and resettlers leaving internment camps in pursuit of work or education chose to move to Spokane. When large numbers of Japanese began leaving internment camps at the end of World War II, thousands of evacuees chose to settle in Spokane until coastal areas reopened. Between 1943 and 1945, an estimated 2,500 Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans moved into the Spokane region. Even after the coastal areas reopened, many evacuees and resettlers decided to permanently call Spokane home. By 1950 the Japanese American population in Spokane totaled 1,171, over three times the pre-war population.<sup>3</sup>

A study of the Spokane Japanese community during World War II affords an opportunity to examine the effect of evacuation and resettlement on a non-evacuated Japanese community located in the same state from which a large number of Japanese were evacuated. In examining this event, two central questions are posed. First, why were evacuees and relocatees attracted to Spokane during and after World War II?

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<sup>3</sup> John deYoung, "Japanese American Resettlement in the Spokane Area, September 16, 1946," Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Collection (JERS), W2.14, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 6 (hereafter, JERS followed by file and page number); U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Seventeenth Census of the United States (Washington, D.C., 1950), Population, 49(1):47-100; in contrast to the number of Japanese Americans living in Spokane by the mid-1940s, only 4,400 of Seattle's 6,675 Japanese Americans returned to Seattle by March 1946. Newsletter, "Resettlement Bulletin-'Finis?'," April 1946, Box 6, Folder "Japanese Relocation, 1942-45," Council of Churches, Washington and Northern Idaho, Accession Nos. 1567, 1567-1, 1567-2, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, Washington.

Second, how was the Spokane Japanese community impacted and changed by the influx of evacuees and relocatees during and after World War II? I argue that Spokane's location in eastern Washington state and its established Japanese community made it an attractive evacuation and resettlement location. I divide my investigation into three topical areas: demographics, businesses and occupations, and social and religious organizations. Focusing on these topics, I first give an overview of the pre-war settlement and formation of the Spokane Japanese community up to 1940. The second section gives an overview of the evacuation and resettlement program, the response of the Spokane Japanese community to this program, and the ways in which coastal Japanese could relocate to Spokane during and after World War II with special emphasis on the voluntary evacuation and the resettlement periods. This section is subdivided into two areas: evacuation and removal from the west coast and resettlement out of inland camps. Both subsections examine the reasons why Japanese evacuees and relocatees decided to move to Spokane during these periods. The third section analyzes how the Spokane Japanese community was impacted and changed by the evacuation and relocation program with specific focus on demographics, businesses and occupations, and social and religious organizations. Concluding remarks focus on the importance of studying non-evacuated communities in order to better understand the internment period.<sup>4</sup>

Few scholarly investigations into the effects of evacuation, relocation and resettlement on non-evacuated communities with pre-war Japanese populations exist. Most scholarly material about the experiences of Japanese Americans during World War

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<sup>4</sup> First-person accounts are used throughout this paper to provide a human element in addition to the factual material. In some cases, extensive quotations from oral history interviews or newspaper articles are used in order to create a story-driven narrative.

II centers on the evacuation and internment experience. One scholarly investigation written about the history of Spokane's Nikkei community focuses on the pre-war settlement and formation of the community from approximately 1890 through the 1930s. Recent publications dealing with the Nikkei community in the Pacific Northwest discuss the experiences of the "free zone" Nikkei, but do not focus on Spokane; rather, the discussion centers on Nikkei communities in Idaho and Eastern Oregon.<sup>5</sup>

A few remarks should be made to delineate topics this thesis will not discuss. First, while the topic of this paper is the World War II evacuation and resettlement of Japanese Americans, the purpose is not to argue whether these events were just, correct or warranted. In-depth debates about this topic may be found in other sources.<sup>6</sup> Secondly, this thesis will not describe the internment camps or events that occurred in these camps, except as they inform an understanding of the Japanese community in Spokane. Published resources provide detailed information about the camps and significant work has been done to capture the remembrances of those incarcerated.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See Deborah Ann Gallacci Wilbert, "A History of the Formation of the Japanese American Community in Spokane, Washington, 1890-1941," Master's Thesis, Washington State University, Pullman, 1982; Robert C. Sims, "The 'Free Zone' Nikkei: Japanese Americans in Idaho and Eastern Oregon in World War II," in Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds., Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century (Seattle: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest in association with University of Washington Press, 2005), 236-53. The "free zone" is defined as those areas located outside Military Area 1; generally, it was east of the Cascade Mountains in Washington and Oregon and east of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California, Sims, "The 'Free Zone' Nikkei," 251, footnote 3.

<sup>6</sup> See Commission on the Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC), Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1982).

<sup>7</sup> See Roger Daniels, Concentration Camps, North America: Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II (Malabar, Fla.: Krieger Pub. Co., 1993); Michi Weglyn, Years of Infamy (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1976); Monica Sone, Nisei Daughter (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1953); "Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project," available from <http://www.densho.org>; Internet.

### Note on Terms

Scholars argue about the correct terms used to describe the internment and incarceration of Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans during World War II. Some scholars contend that the terms used by the U.S. government in its correspondence and public documents were euphemistic and masked the unconstitutional aspects of the evacuation and incarceration.<sup>8</sup> I use the U.S. government's terms to describe the evacuation and resettlement program. This provides continuity between government documents and other writings on this subject. This also takes into account the fact that most Nikkei who lived through the period refer to it using the government euphemisms. Terms that fall into this category include "evacuation," "resettlement," "internment," "internment camp," "assembly center," "internee," and "evacuee." See Appendix B for definitions and a more complete list of terms.

The use of Japanese terms also deserves note. Some Japanese terms delineate generational differences. *Issei* refers to first generation Japanese immigrants who were unable to become U.S. citizens until 1952. *Nisei* designates the second-generation or children of the *Issei*; *Nisei* held U.S. citizenship. *Kibei* were *Nisei* who were sent to Japan for the majority of their formal education and returned to the U.S. in early adulthood. *Sansei* is the term given to the third generation; *Yonsei* indicates fourth generation. I chose to describe the Spokane Japanese community as a whole in the pre-World War II and war periods as "Japanese" or "Nikkei." The term "Nikkei" describes people of Japanese ancestry living outside Japan including immigrant and later

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<sup>8</sup> For an excellent discussion of terms, see Tetsuden Kashima, Judgment without Trial: Japanese American Imprisonment during World War II, The Scott and Laurie Oki Series in Asian American Studies (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 8-10.

generations.<sup>9</sup> I have chosen to also use the word “Japanese” to describe the Spokane community during these two periods because it distinguishes two aspects of the community. First, it reflects the way the Japanese community was seen by those on the outside; most non-Japanese would not have known that children of Japanese immigrants born in America were U.S. citizens. Newspaper accounts of the day use the words “Japanese” or “Japs” without distinguishing Japanese-born non-citizens from their U.S.-citizen children. Secondly, until the McCarren-Walter Act of 1952 passed, the U.S. government barred Japanese-born nationals from becoming U.S. citizens.<sup>10</sup> I use “Japanese American” to describe the Spokane community in the post-1952 period. I also use “Japanese American” when referring to the second generation *Nisei* before and during World War II.

#### Note on Sources

I compiled many of the sources used for this thesis long before writing this document. I conducted oral history interviews and collected background information on the experiences of Japanese Americans during World War II in the State of Washington as part of a grant-funded project completed at Whitworth College and supported by the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction’s Washington Civil Liberties Public Education Program (WCLPEP) in 2002-2003. This project produced an audio documentary on the experiences of Japanese Americans who were not interned during World War II, and who spent the majority of the war in Spokane and the Inland Northwest. Whitworth College and North by Northwest Productions then used this

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<sup>9</sup> Kashima, Judgment, 10. See Appendix B for further description.

<sup>10</sup> Kashima, Judgment, 10; Daniels, Concentration Camps, 19.

research to produce a film documentary, “In Time of War,” in 2004. A subsequent WCLPEP grant in 2004-2005 provided the support for oral interviews and the collection of primary source materials related to the history of the Spokane Japanese community. All of the materials gathered for the above-mentioned projects are available to the public at local repositories. The first two projects’ materials are available in the Whitworth College Archives; the last project’s materials are available at the Joel E. Ferris Research Library and Archives of the Eastern Washington State Historical Society (now known as the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture).

## CHAPTER I

### SPOKANE'S JAPANESE COMMUNITY BEFORE WORLD WAR II

At the onset of World War II, Japanese immigrants had lived in Spokane for approximately fifty years. After their arrival in the late 1880s and early 1890s, many Japanese men worked for the railroads as section hands or on the mail gangs. Families also ran hotels, laundries, restaurants, specialty stores, and produce farms. Most Japanese lived behind or above their business premises in the downtown core between Trent and Sprague Avenues and Browne and Howard Streets. A few also rented homes close to downtown. The Japanese Methodist Church served as the social and religious hub of the Spokane Japanese community. Social organizations existed separately for *Issei* and *Nisei*. Most *Nisei* were high school or elementary school-aged; those that had gone on to college were unable to find white collar jobs in Spokane and either returned to their parents' service businesses or moved to larger Japanese communities. Because Spokane's Japanese community was relatively small before World War II, it did not form an insulated ethnic enclave. Rather, its members interacted with whites from the Spokane community on a regular basis, whether in school, at their businesses, or at their central social and religious institution, the Japanese Methodist Church. This section will give a brief history of Spokane and of Japanese immigration to the United States in general, then discuss the demographics, businesses and occupations, and social and religious organizations of Spokane's Japanese community before World War II.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For an in-depth examination of the settlement of the Spokane Japanese community see Wilbert, "A History of the Formation of the Japanese American Community in Spokane, Washington, 1890-1941,"



Incorporated as Spokane Falls in 1881, the town grew up around a series of falls near which saw mills and flour mills promptly stood. The surrounding area supported agriculture in the form of produce and grain, logging, mining, and other extractive industries. Spokane served as a central shipping and business hub for the Inland Northwest, with lines from several railroads running through its downtown core. Three transcontinental railroads arrived during the last two decades of the nineteenth century: the Northern Pacific in 1881, the Union Pacific in 1889, and the Great Northern in 1893. The discovery of gold and silver in the nearby Coeur d'Alene region in the 1880s brought thousands of prospectors to the area. Spokane became a clearing house for labor, a supply center for mines, and a bedroom community for the rich. An 1889 fire destroyed much of the downtown core. In the process of rebuilding that followed, thousands of laborers, many recent immigrants to the United States, flocked to the city. By 1890, Spokane boasted a population of 20,000, twenty-three of whom were Japanese.<sup>2</sup>

Japanese immigration to Spokane followed the general pattern for other areas of the American West.<sup>3</sup> During the Meiji Era, beginning in 1868, Japan began to modernize and industrialize. Many farmers sold their land to pay rising taxes, and thousands of men contracted themselves out as laborers to be sent to Hawaii and the U.S. mainland. The

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Master's Thesis, Washington State University, Pullman, 1982. Wilbert divides the pre-World War II period of the history of the Spokane Japanese community into three distinct parts. The first includes early immigration pre-1900; the second, from 1900-1920, depicts the formation of the community; while the third (1921-1941) focuses on the raising of the second generation (*Nisei*).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Eleventh Census of the United States (Washington, D.C., 1890), Population, 3:1004. For a series of essays on the history of Spokane see David, H. Stratton, ed., Spokane and the Inland Empire: An Interior Pacific Northwest Anthology, rev. ed. (Pullman, Washington: Washington State University Press, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> For a description of Asian immigration to the United States, see Ronald Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans, updated and revised edition (New York and Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), 21-132; for Japanese immigration specifically see pp. 42-52 and 179-229.

Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 barred Chinese immigration, which raised the demand for more Japanese laborers to work in sawmills, mines, canneries, and on railroads and farms. Between 1885 and 1924, 200,000 Japanese contract laborers arrived in Hawaii and 180,000 on the mainland. Most of these laborers were educated men in their 20s and 30s. While they ultimately planned to return to Japan once they made their fortunes, many Japanese men stayed much longer. They started businesses, sent for wives from Japan, and started families.

Japanese immigrants and their American-born children faced adversity in settling in the United States. They became a greater focus of anti-Asian sentiment as the Chinese population in the U.S. shrank between 1900 and 1920 and as Japan grew more aggressive as a world power. The 1908 Gentleman's Agreement restricted the immigration of Japanese laborers, but allowed for a loophole regarding parents, wives, and children of laborers already in America. By 1921, however, Japan halted issuance of passports to picture brides and the 1924 National Origins and Immigration (Smith) Act cut off new Japanese immigration.<sup>4</sup>

The U.S. barred Japanese nationals from becoming naturalized citizens, but their American-born children held automatic U.S. citizenship. Many *Issei* parents also registered their children as citizens of Japan, in anticipation of someday returning to their homeland with their children. As both Japanese and American, *Nisei* lived with dual citizenship as well as dual identities.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Takaki, Strangers, 45-7; Robert A. Wilson and Bill Hosokawa, East to America: A History of Japanese in the United States (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1980), 167-8; Daniels, Concentration Camps, 20.

<sup>5</sup> Takaki, Strangers, 45-7; Wilson and Hosokawa, East to America, 167-8. In *Ozawa vs. US* (1922), the US Supreme Court officially denied Japanese immigrants the right to naturalize as "aliens ineligible for citizenship," Kashima, Judgment, 14.

Alien land laws in the Pacific coast states further prohibited Japanese nationals from owning land or property in the U.S. The 1921 Alien Land Law in Washington State prohibited Japanese aliens from holding title to land in the state. Further amendments in 1925 stated that when a minor child of an alien deemed ineligible for citizenship held title to land, the parents were presumed to be the real owners and were thus subject to prosecution. California and Oregon passed similar laws in 1913 and 1923, respectively.<sup>6</sup>

### DEMOGRAPHICS

From the beginning of Japanese settlement in Spokane in the 1880s through 1940 the community grew slowly and concentrated close to the downtown core and the railway lines.<sup>7</sup> Records indicate that some of the earliest Japanese in Spokane arrived in the 1880s. Risuke Yanagiya and Sankichi Kawasaki arrived in 1887 and Mrs. Otake, possibly a prostitute, died in Spokane in 1889. Masao Fujii arrived via the Northern Pacific Railroad in October 1890, when people and businesses were still housed in tents after the August 1889 fire. By 1890, Spokane's twenty-three Japanese residents and itinerant laborers supported a Japanese restaurant.<sup>8</sup>

Involvement in underworld activities characterized the beginning of the Japanese community's settlement in Spokane. Secretary Toshiro Fugita of the Japanese Consulate arrived in 1891 to investigate Japanese involvement in gambling and prostitution. In his

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<sup>6</sup> Takaki, Strangers, 45-7; Wilson and Hosokawa, East to America, 167-8.

<sup>7</sup> See Robert B. Hyslop, Spokane's Building Blocks (Spokane, Washington: R.B. Hyslop, 1983) for pre-fire and post-fire maps of downtown Spokane. See Appendix D: Maps for pre- and post-World War II maps of Japanese businesses, residences and churches.

<sup>8</sup> Hokubei Nenkan [North American Times Year Book] (Shakō [Seattle]: Hokubei Jijisha, 1936), trans. for the author by Ryosuke Suzuki; Eleventh Census of the United States (1890), Population, 3:1004; Spokane City Directory (Spokane: R.L. Polk & Co., 1890).

findings he warned that if Spokane Japanese continued their underworld activities, “the citizens of other nationalities will come to hate Japanese and probably advocate banishing them.”<sup>9</sup> Deborah Gallacci Wilbert, in “A History of the Formation of the Japanese American Community in Spokane, Washington, 1890-1941,” notes that “as Spokane grew and lost its frontier attributes, the red light district shrank in size and importance and by 1905 the majority of the Japanese community was law-abiding.”<sup>10</sup>

The Spokane Japanese population expanded significantly in the early twentieth century. By 1900, the Japanese population grew to fifty-one and by 1910 totaled 352. The period from 1900 to 1910 also witnessed the largest growth in Spokane’s population: from 36,848 to 104,402. Compared to Seattle’s Japanese population, which equaled over one percent of that city’s total, Spokane’s Japanese population comprised only 0.3 percent of the total city population in 1910. While the Japanese population in Spokane in 1910 was overwhelmingly male, it included twenty-four married women, indicating that a family-oriented community was growing. The first reported *Nisei* birth in Spokane occurred in 1904. A photograph from the same year shows eleven *Issei* women with five children in front of a church building.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Kazuo Ito, *Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America*, trans. Shinichiro Nakamura and Jean S. Gerard (Seattle: Executive Committee for Publication of *Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America*, 1973), 653; cited in Wilbert, “Formation,” from *Nihon Gaiko Bunsho* (Diplomatic Documents of Japan), vol. 24, Report of Secretary Fugita to Japanese Consul Sutemi Chinda, 22 July 1891.

<sup>10</sup> Wilbert, “Formation,” 35.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Twelfth Census of the United States* (Washington, D.C., 1900), 3:1004; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States* (Washington, D.C., 1910), 3:970; *Spokesman-Review*, 4 May 1904, 7:5; Highland Park United Methodist Church, *Sixty-five Years in Pictures* (Spokane, Washington: Issei Commission on Evangelism, 1967), 15.

From 1910 through 1940, the Japanese population in Spokane, like the total Spokane population, grew slowly. Compared to the surge in population from 1900 to 1910 when Spokane acquired over 67,000 new residents, the period from 1910 to 1940 showed a total increase of only 17,599. Similarly, the Japanese population in Spokane stagnated from 1910 to 1940. Between 1910 and 1920, it decreased from 352 to 168.<sup>12</sup> In an attempt to explain the sharp decline in the Japanese population in Spokane during the 1910s and 1920s, a writer for the Japanese-language North American Times newspaper gave the following analysis:

Japanese people in Spokane had little luck. America experienced economic growth during World War I and the majority of the Japanese population went to cities on the coast side, like Los Angeles and Seattle, where major industries were. The Japanese population in Spokane declined significantly as the pioneers returned to Japan, died, or moved to somewhere else. The businesses that targeted the Japanese customers, such as restaurants, bath houses, and candy stores were forced to close down.<sup>13</sup>

By 1930 the population rebounded to 393, experiencing a decline again in 1940 to 330. The make-up of the population changed drastically during this time. As more *Nisei* were born and older, unmarried *Issei* men died, the percentage of *Nisei* within the community grew significantly. By 1930, *Nisei* made up nearly half of the Spokane Japanese population, with a wide age gap between them and their parents. One-hundred forty-four Japanese men, 63 Japanese women, and 176 Japanese children lived in Spokane in 1936. The average age of children was 12; the average age for men was 52.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census of the United States (Washington, .D.C, 1910), Population, 2:157; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States (Washington, .D.C, 1920), 2:1096.

<sup>13</sup> Hokubei Nenkan [North American Times Year Book] (1936).

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States (Washington, .D.C, 1930), Population, 1:233 and 2:1209; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the

A restrictive color line dictated where Japanese businesses and residences could be located in pre-World War II Spokane. Along with other foreign-born residents, Japanese businesses and living areas were concentrated in what has been referred to as an “international district” bounded by Front (Trent), Howard, Riverside and Bernard streets.<sup>15</sup> By the 1930s and 1940s, local residents referred to the area as “Skid Row.”<sup>16</sup> Although a concentrated amount of Japanese businesses and residences existed in this area, a “Little Tokyo” or “Japantown” (*Nihonmachi*) never formed. *Nisei* who grew up in this area before World War II remembered the largest concentration of Japanese businesses and residences in “Trent Alley,” a narrow thoroughfare between the buildings fronting Trent and Main Avenues. Mii Tai, who grew up near Trent Alley remembered other nationalities represented in the alley, including Italians and Chinese. “There [were] Italian people there that had sort of a restaurant-like thing—this is within the alley, L-shape[d] alley. And I remember the nice garden they had back there, vegetable garden. Then further on into the alley ... was all Chinese.”<sup>17</sup>

From the turn of the century through the 1920s, most Japanese residences were located above or behind businesses in the “international district.” The local Realty Board

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Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States (Washington, .D.C, 1940), 3:1304; Hokubei Nenkan [North American Times Year Book] (1936).

<sup>15</sup> Wilbert, “Formation,” 37, 51. Although this area has been referred to by Wilbert as an “international district,” it was not referred to in those terms during the years described here. In fact, the area was never known as a named “international district” as is the “International District” in Seattle.

<sup>16</sup> deYoung, JERS, W2.14, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Mii Tai, interview by Rose Sliger, tape recording, Spokane, Washington, 25 November 2002, Japanese American Alumni during World War II Collection (hereafter JAWWIIC), Whitworth College Archives, Spokane, Washington. According to Hyslop, the city block on Trent Avenue from Stevens to Washington Streets “was one of hotels” and “the enclosed court in the center of the half-block was known as Jap Alley, while the dedicated alley in the city block was called Trent Alley, and had addresses as such.” The J.A. Hotel was located in the middle of the block. Hyslop, Spokane’s Building Blocks, 134.

established a policy of restriction on sales of property not only to Japanese, but also Blacks. One of the areas of Spokane where Japanese could rent property was a few blocks southeast of downtown, near Lewis and Clark High School and the Japanese Methodist Church. This section was one of the least desirable residential areas as the homes were old and run down. Restrictions on where Japanese could reside coupled with restrictions on where their businesses could be located created a fairly dense Japanese population in the southeastern quadrant of the city.<sup>18</sup>

### BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES

Japanese in pre-World War II Spokane experienced limited business and occupational opportunities; most worked as farmers, laborers, or service business owners. Businesses tended to be service industries, such as hotels, laundries, restaurants, and barbershops. Located near the railroad tracks in the downtown core, these businesses catered to migratory wage laborers who lived in the city during the winter months and worked out in the surrounding area during the spring, summer and fall. Japanese businesses were interspersed with Chinese, Italian, Greek, German, and American establishments. A “Little Tokyo” did not form in the area because the number of Japanese was never substantial enough to form a tightly guarded ethnic enclave. This meant that the Japanese could not meet their own needs in their own community and had to interact with whites as well as other nationalities in their business dealings.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Spokane City Directory (1900, 1910, 1920, 1930); deYoung, JERS, W2.14, 23. A significant number of Japanese railroad workers also lived north of Spokane in the town of Hillyard, and a small number lived on farms on the city’s fringe.

<sup>19</sup> Wilbert, “Formation,” 31, 101; deYoung, J., JERS, W2.14, 2-3.

Unlike larger cities with substantial Japanese populations, the Spokane Japanese community before World War II did not have strong economic associations. For instance, in Seattle, strong hotel and restaurant keepers' associations as well as a Japanese Chamber of Commerce existed in the pre-war years. The Spokane Japanese business community formed a Japanese Commercial Club in 1910 and a Japanese Restaurant Keepers' Association attempted to control prices for a short time around 1915. But for the most part individual business owners made decisions on an informal basis.<sup>20</sup>

On the outskirts of the city, about twenty Japanese vegetable farms operated. Located in Hangman Creek and Bigelow Gulch, these "truck" farms supplied a large portion of the vegetable produce for local markets through the Spokane Vegetable Growers Association. The association served as a buyer for Japanese farm produce, which it then supplied to area grocery stores and restaurants. Unlike Japanese in other parts of the country, however, Spokane vegetable farmers did not dominate the produce market in the pre-war period; instead, Italians dominated the market.<sup>21</sup>

A large number of Japanese men in Spokane worked as laborers, mainly for the various railroad companies. Some worked as section hands repairing track in outlying areas; others found work in the baggage and mail departments. In order to supplement their meager wages, some *Issei* men worked for the railroad while their wives managed a hotel. Dick Yamamoto, who grew up as a "hotel kid" in Trent Alley, remembered his father working nights at the Union Station on Trent Avenue, while his mother ran the JA

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<sup>20</sup> Wilbert, "Formation," 53, 54, 102-3.

<sup>21</sup> deYoung, JERS, W2.14, 3; Michiho (Hirata) Sakai's father, Kazuma Hirata, served as manager of the Spokane Vegetable Growers Association in the 1920s and 1930s; Michiho and Richard Sakai, tape recording, 9 May 1981, Spokane, Washington, by Deborah Gallacci Wilbert, original in the possession of Wilbert.



Hotel, a single room occupancy (SRO) hotel on Trent Alley. A small number of women also worked out of the home as domestics.<sup>22</sup>

Almost no white collar or professional jobs existed for Japanese in Spokane, although the community included one Japanese insurance agency, one optometrist, and two dentists immediately preceding World War II. Unlike the larger Japanese communities on the coast and in California, the Spokane Japanese community could not support many Japanese professionals, and it was difficult to establish clients outside the ethnic community. Although several *Nisei* pharmacists graduated from Spokane colleges before the war, all moved to the West Coast in order to find jobs.<sup>23</sup>

### RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Spokane Japanese community before World War II included a select number of religious and social organizations. Most social and religious activities centered on the Japanese Methodist Church. The Central Methodist Church helped found the Japanese Methodist Church in 1902 as a mission for Japanese laborers and continued to support it into the 1940s. Because no formal Buddhist group existed, many non-Christian Japanese attended the church or church social functions; this was especially true for *Nisei*. In the

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<sup>22</sup> deYoung, JERS, W2.14, 3-4; Dick Yamamoto, interview by Rose Sliger Krause, tape recording, Spokane, Washington, 13 February 2005, Spokane Japanese American Community Collection, Joel E. Ferris Research Library and Archives, Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society (hereafter NWMAC/EWSHS), Spokane, Washington.

“... there happened to be a whole bunch of hotels in that area run by Japanese, and the people that came off the railroad, whether they were riding the rods or a paid passenger, would buy a room for the night or two or three. And that's where the business came from, primarily people traveling.” George Yamada interview, video recording, 15 and 16 March 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Visual History Collection, Densho Digital Archive, “Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project,” available from <http://www.densho.org>; Internet (hereafter Densho), accessed 9 June 2006.

<sup>23</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 22.

pre-war years, Japanese pastors, many of whom were missionaries from Japan, led the church. Pastors provided primarily Japanese-language services until approximately 1935 when Reverend Taro Goto guided the formation of a *Nisei* church. The *Nisei* church held English-speaking services and met at a different time than the *Issei* congregation. However, *Issei* still controlled overall leadership of the church. Church activities for *Nisei* included Sunday School classes, the Epworth and Junior Epworth Leagues, and the Busy Bee Club. The church also sponsored events featuring traditional Japanese dance, music and flower arrangement; in the 1930s these events became more open to the public and helped educate the Spokane community about Japanese culture.<sup>24</sup>

Social life for the Spokane Japanese community emanated from the Japanese Methodist Church. During the early part of the twentieth century a Japanese women's club (*nihon fujinkai*) formed. This group was largely connected with the Japanese Methodist Church; Caucasian women involved with the church taught *Issei* women cooking, English, and sewing to help in their everyday lives in America. A cemetery association formed which collected funds for the purchase and upkeep of a Japanese section in Greenwood Cemetery.<sup>25</sup>

For *Issei* men a Japanese Association (*nihonjinkai*) formed during the early part of the twentieth century to provide financial and social assistance to the Japanese community. Unlike Japanese Associations in other cities, the Spokane association was

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<sup>24</sup> deYoung, JERS, W2.14, 4; Sixty-five Years in Pictures, 154.

<sup>25</sup> Hokubei Nenkan [North American Times Year Book] (1936); Mii (Nishibue) Tai remembered going from Japanese business to Japanese business in downtown Spokane asking for money for the Japanese Language School or for the cemetery fund; her mother was a leader in the effort to pay for burial plots for *Issei* who could not afford or who could not purchase a plot: "... she'd give me a bag to put the money in, and then she had a book. I'd carry a book with a pencil, and they would write their name and how much they gave ... for the cemetery, *Bosankai* [Memorial Service] ...." Mii Tai, video recording, 14 March 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006.

not tied to a national organization, and for the most part did not actively promote pro-Japanese ideals. By the 1930s a group of local *Nisei* established a Japanese American Citizens Club (JACC), which served as a social club for *Nisei*. This group functioned as a subsidiary of the Yakima Japanese American Citizens League (JACL).<sup>26</sup>

The establishment of “ken” clubs or prefecture associations during the pre-war years also provided a support system for Japanese immigrants. Japanese immigrants from the same district (“ken”) in Japan formed these clubs as social and economic networks, which sponsored activities like picnics, while also assisting new arrivals in finding employment. Unlike in larger cities such as Seattle, Portland, or San Francisco, Spokane’s Japanese population could not support a wide variety of ken groups, and instead merged as one group encompassing all prefectures. The most significant prefecture in terms of numbers, however, was the Okayama ken, which was tied to a larger international organization.<sup>27</sup>

Other events for *Nisei* included sports and recreational activities. *Nisei* boys participated in baseball and basketball and traveled to play *Nisei* teams in tournaments in Portland, Seattle, Yakima and Boise. A local judo organization formed in the 1920s to teach *Nisei* martial arts; the JA Hotel on Trent Alley provided space in its basement for the *dojo*. Like the baseball and basketball leagues, Northwest judo tournaments were held in Seattle, Portland, and Ontario, Oregon. In 1930, the tournament was held in

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<sup>26</sup> deYoung, JERS, W2.14, 4; Hokubei Nenkan [North American Times Year Book] (1936); “Petition for Rehearing,” 9 July 1943, 2, “Closed Legal Case Files,” File 146-13-2-81-22, Box 685, Department of Justice (DOJ) (RG 60), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland (hereafter DOJ File 146-13-2-81-22).

<sup>27</sup> Hokubei Nenkan [North American Times Year Book] (1936); deYoung, JERS, W2.14, 4; Kazuma “Frank” Hirata, an *Issei*, served as president of the Okayama Prefectoral Association chapter in Spokane in 1940 and 1941; “Memorandum to the Chief of the Review Section,” 18 February 1942, 1, DOJ File 146-13-2-81-22.

Portland. The mission's pastor, Reverend Taro Goto, taught kendo for a time. In addition, a Boy Scout troop made up of Spokane *Nisei* sponsored by the American Legion existed during the 1930s.<sup>28</sup>

Most activities for *Nisei* centered on the Methodist Church. Mii Tai, a *Nisei* whose parents served as caretakers for the church building, remembered that one of the purposes for purchasing a new church building on Fifth Avenue and Grant Street in the 1930s was to have a place to keep the Japanese community together as a group, especially the Americanized *Nisei*. "Mr. Kasai ... he was our leader in this city. ... [T]he only way that he would work to help get that church and get the people to pay for it was that they let all the young people hold dances and whatever downstairs ... to keep us together."<sup>29</sup> In addition to providing space for church-related activities, the church was also the location of the Japanese Language School, which *Nisei* would attend after regular school hours to learn to speak, read and write Japanese, and to learn Japanese customs. *Nisei* brought up at the Methodist Church taught Sunday school classes and led church-sponsored groups. In addition, Young People's Christian Conferences gathered together *Nisei* (and some *Issei*) from around the Northwest at yearly conferences held in rotating

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<sup>28</sup> Dick Yamamoto's father provided the space in his hotel for the dojo; Richard Yamamoto interview, video recording, 27 April 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Tom Ikeda, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006 ; see photograph "Portland Tournament, Spokane Dojo, 1930," L2005-7.5, Hirata Family Collection (Ms 202), NWMAC/EWSHS; George Yamada, 15 October 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC; George Yamada interview, video recording, 15 and 16 March 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Mii Tai interview, tape recording, 25 November 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.

"And Mr. Kasai -- this is what I heard parents talking about -- insisted that the only way that he would help get people to contribute to it and everything -- he was sort of the leader of the group -- was if they allowed, forget about being Methodist and let it become a Japanese community center. So we held everything there. ... in those days the kids were growing up and they wanted to have dances and stuff, so they got to have their mixers at church." Mii Tai interview, 14 March 2006, Densho.

locations like Seattle, Portland, Yakima, Wapato, and Spokane. Seiko Edamatsu, who grew up in Seattle remembered:

A lot of the conferences were held in Seattle. We had people from Spokane that came. And every Thanksgiving, the weekend of Thanksgiving, we used to have what they called the Y.P.C.C., which was Young People's Christian Conference .... And so we knew a lot of the young people from Spokane and Yakima, Wapato.<sup>30</sup>

The Spokane Japanese community's use of the Methodist Church as its primary social institution was one of the unique features of the community in comparison to other Japanese communities, many of whom featured a Buddhist Church and Japanese Hall.

Spokane *Issei* were just as concerned with keeping in touch with their heritage as those elsewhere, but because of their small numbers, they accomplished this informally through the family or through their major social institution, the Japanese Methodist Church. That they used the church, a basically American institution, for this end indicates the more integrated nature of Spokane's Japanese community.<sup>31</sup>

It was perhaps the integration of Spokane's Japanese community, as well as its relatively small size, that in part affected whether the community was included in the evacuation and relocation orders of spring 1942. However, more than just its geographic location became important after Pearl Harbor. Its small but established Japanese community, businesses and social and religious organizations made it an attractive location for Nikkei leaving the coast during the evacuation and resettlement periods.

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<sup>30</sup> Seiko Edamatsu, tape recording, 24 September 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.

<sup>31</sup> Wilbert, "Formation," 104.

## CHAPTER II

### DESTINATION: SPOKANE, 1942-1946

For Japanese nationals and Japanese American citizens living in the U.S., World War II brought with it upheaval of communities and significant changes in the distribution of Japanese communities. Almost immediately after the declaration of war on December 8, 1941 discussion of what to do with Japanese living in the United States began, and a plan for evacuating thousands of individuals from the coastal states started in the spring of 1942.<sup>1</sup> Not until the summer did the Japanese community in Spokane gain assurance that it would not be evacuated along with the coastal communities. However, the movement of evacuees to the inland Northwest also prompted tension in the community. Spokane was located in Military Area 2 or the “Free Zone” and Japanese could “voluntarily” evacuate there through the end of March 1942. Toward the end of the war, Japanese resettling out of internment camps flocked to Spokane by the hundreds as they debated whether to return to their pre-war coastal homes or to start over again in the inland northwest. By the end of World War II, Spokane’s Japanese population had grown to over 2,000.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the planning of the evacuation program leading up to World War II, see Tetsuden Kashima, Judgment without Trial: Japanese American Imprisonment during World War II, The Scott and Laurie Oki Series in Asian American Studies (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> deYoung, J., “Japanese American Resettlement in the Spokane Area,” September 16, 1946, p. 6. JERS, Microfilm reel 108, Folder W2.14 (hereafter JERS, followed by the file and page number).

The first section of this chapter will describe the impact of Pearl Harbor on the Spokane community, will give an overview of the pre-war planning and implementation of the evacuation program and will describe the ways in which Japanese could voluntarily evacuate to inland areas like Spokane. The second section of this chapter will describe the process of resettlement, which allowed Japanese to leave internment camps to work, go to school, or to join family.

When the Japanese military attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the lives of Japanese Americans across the United States changed forever. In Spokane Japanese American *Nisei* and their Japanese national parents reacted to almost immediate confiscations, curfews, questionings, and arrests of community leaders.<sup>3</sup>

The Spokesman-Review newspaper reported on December 8 that “The city’s Japanese population of 250 was carefully checked by Police Chief Ira A. Martin and his men.” Most Japanese homes in Spokane were searched by the police for “illegal” or incriminating items, such as Japanese mementos, letters, or swords. Other items of interest included firearms, explosives, radios, and objects that could possibly be used to

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<sup>3</sup> George Yamada, a *Nisei* who grew up in Spokane during the 1920s and 1930s, remembered going to Lewis and Clark High School on Monday, December 8:

“I think I was a sophomore, junior in high school when Pearl Harbor came along. I sat in the very front row Monday morning after Pearl Harbor came—happened. I had a bunch of high school friends that I always sat with, ate with in the cafeteria. I lost a couple of friends because of my race. And, oh yeah, we still talked to each other, but my mind kind of goes back to December 8, Monday morning, the coolness that I felt from some of these guys, just a couple of them.” George Yamada interview, 12 November 2002, tape recording, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, Japanese American Alumni during World War II Collection, Whitworth College Archives, Spokane, Washington (hereafter JAWWIIC).

When her family’s Seattle home was broken into soon after December 7, Seiko Edamatsu recalled: “... I said to Dad, I said, ‘We’d better call the police.’ And he says, ‘It’s no use. Lot of our friends are having the house broken into. The police didn’t even bother to come.’ Because we were Japanese, we were enemies. And so he said, ‘There’s no need to call.’” Seiko Edamatsu interview, tape recording, 22 September 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.

aid in a Japanese attack on the United States.<sup>4</sup> By the end of December, the Justice Department authorized search warrants for alien enemy residences. Law enforcement officers and FBI officials searched for anything that might be used as a weapon, any explosives, radio transmitters, radios with shortwave bands and cameras. Mara Mihara, a *Nisei*, remembered her parents turning in materials to the local police: “[T]hey felt real bad. They had to turn in their *zasshi*, their magazines, and any kind of guns or knives or anything, or even pictures of the *Tennoheikai*, pictures or anything, had to turn ‘em all in to the police station.” Sam Ogo, a *Nisei* who spent three years attending school in Japan, remembered:

... somebody started spreading rumors that the FBI's were going to check up on all the Japanese people here in Spokane. ... I thought, "Oh, my gosh," and I had ... all my valuable credentials from Japan and everything, and I took 'em all down [to] the basement and threw it in the furnace. I burned it all up, [I] had a samurai sword there, and they said the FBI will throw you in jail if you have contraband, so [I] burned it, and of course, some of our clienteles, they had, they'd leave their packsack and things [at the hotel] and [suddenly] they die or something, and they'd leave guns, [clothing], and this and that. My dad [found] three or four pistols -- we didn't buy 'em, they just left them. And so I took them down to the [furnace], and burned them....<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Suzie Yamada, who as a child grew up in rural western Washington, remembered her brothers, who were Boy Scouts, being suspected by the FBI of sending messages via homing pigeons, which they were training for a scout project. The FBI summarily confiscated the pigeons. “My brothers were in Boy Scouts and they had homing pigeons as one of their projects they were going to do. .... I remember the FBI coming to the house and telling my Aunt Lois that those pigeons definitely had to go because they were probably sending messages to someone, you know. And we didn’t even know any other Japanese or anything, you know, so I don’t know who they’d be sending messages to. But it was pretty bizarre.” Suzie Yamada interview, tape recording, 15 October 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.

<sup>5</sup> *Zasshi*: magazines; *Tennoheikai*: the emperor of Japan.

Spokesman-Review, 8 December 1941, p. 3; Roger Daniels, Concentration Camps, North America: Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II (Malabar, Fla.: Krieger Pub. Co., 1993), 43; Mara Mihara interview, video recording, 27 April 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Visual History Collection, Densho Digital Archive, “Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project,” available from <http://www.densho.org>; Internet (hereafter Densho), accessed 9 June 2006; Sam Ogo interview, video recording, 25 April 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006.



Japanese living in the U.S. also had their financial assets restricted. On December 11, the Spokesman-Review newspaper reported that “Citizens Can’t Deal with Japs” and that “You can’t buy anything from or sell anything to a Japanese national in Spokane now without violating the law. ... An employer can not pay a Japanese, German or Italian national wages nor accept payment from any of these nationals for any account.” An article from the December 12 Spokane Daily Chronicle quoting United States Attorney Lyle Keith clarified the law by stating that “American-born Japanese have the same rights as any other United States citizens and are not included in the order. Asked how Japanese aliens could buy food and pay their bills, Keith said: ‘That’s for them and the secretary of the treasury to figure out. I just don’t know.’”<sup>6</sup>

The restrictions on funds affected the finances of the Japanese Methodist Church: “The treasurer is R. Funakoshi, who can neither accept funds nor expend them as an alien, even though the money is for church uses. ‘I’m providing what little is needed from my own pocket,’ said the Rev. Mr. Cobb....” A new order was issued December 14, which allowed each Japanese family to withdraw up to \$100 per month from its bank accounts, and limited Japanese merchants’ purchasing from wholesalers to no more in any one month than the average of the last six months. Japanese produce dealers were also affected by the orders: “Produce houses told Japanese farmers that the order prohibited them from buying Japanese-grown crops. At the Japanese-conducted vegetable houses, cased fruits and vegetables stood unused. Fortunately, it was said, the

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In addition to having their property confiscated, Japanese aliens were required to register with the Department of Justice by the end of January 1942, thus allowing the department to track their status. Daniels, Concentration Camps, 46.

<sup>6</sup> Spokesman-Review, 11 December 1941, p. 3; Spokane Daily Chronicle, 12 December 1941, p. 3.

Japanese have only a few winter crops. Their summer crops have been harvested and sold.”<sup>7</sup>

In addition to monetary restrictions, curfew restrictions were placed on Japanese living in Spokane. The Spokesman-Review newspaper reported “Curfew Comes to Rule Aliens: F.B.I. to Enforce Rigidly Curb on Activities of Dangerous Residents”:

Beginning Friday, all must be in their homes between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. If they aren’t they subject themselves to fine and imprisonment or to removal to a detention camp for dangerous aliens. ... One restricted zone in Spokane is bounded by Sprague and Fifth and Post and McClellan. Others are Felts field, Geiger field, Seven Mile camp, various railway bridges and radio stations.

Certain areas of town were designated off-limits, especially to Japanese nationals.

George Yamada, a *Nisei*, remembered Japanese nationals losing their jobs because of the restrictions:

[A]t the onset of war, all the first-generation, *Isseis*, were laid off from the railroad, because we were not permitted to walk under the Union Pacific railroad tracks .... [T]he FBI says, ‘You aren’t allowed to walk under these railroad trestles to get to work,’ so Great Northern [Railroad] had no choice but to lay off all the Japanese.

Michi (Hirata) Sakai remembered that Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans could not go near the bridges and the armory building. Sumi Okamoto’s husband, Joe, managed a hotel near the armory building, and was not allowed to leave that restricted area except at certain times.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Spokane Daily Chronicle, 12 December 1941, p. 3; Spokane Daily Chronicle, 14 December 1941, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Spokesman-Review, 27 March 1942, p. 16; George Yamada interview, 12 November 2002, JAWWIIC. *Issei* railroad workers were later rehired; Michihiro Hirata Sakai interview, interview notes, 9 May 1981, Spokane, Washington, by Deborah Gallacci Wilbert, originals in possession of interviewer; Sumi Okamoto interview, video recording, 26 April 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006.

The arrest of Japanese community leaders, not only in Spokane, but in most Japanese communities, also occurred on December 7. At the wedding reception of Sumi Yoshida and Joe Okamoto at the Dessert Hotel, Spokane Japanese community leaders Umenosuke “Hugh” Kasai and Kazuma “Frank” Hirata were taken into custody by the FBI. “The wedding was in the morning and in the evening they had a reception at the Desert Hotel, in the banquet room. And about midway through the reception, we were descended [on] by the FBI ... and the Spokane Police Department.” “They had a whole bunch of Japanese there and they kept them there for hours.... And when they picked up Mr. Kasai, Mrs. Kasai told me later that they came in, wouldn’t say a word, and grabbed him and just dragged him right out and wouldn’t say where he was going or anything.” According to Department of Justice documents, Kasai and Hirata were both arrested at their respective residences late on the evening of December 7 by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), then sent to a Department of Justice camp in Missoula, Montana. Hirata, the president of the Japanese Association and the Okayama Prefecture Association, and Kasai, unofficial “mayor” of the Spokane Japanese community, spent much of the rest of the war in Department of Justice camps around the U.S., including Louisiana, Oklahoma, and New Mexico.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Shunji Yuasa interview, tape recording, 22 October 2002, Hansville, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC; Mii Tai interview, tape recording, 25 November 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC; “Closed Legal Case Files,” File 146-13-2-44-72, Box 685, Department of Justice Records (DOJ) (RG 60), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland (hereafter DOJ File 146-13-2-44-72); “Closed Legal Case Files,” File 146-13-2-81-22, Box 685, Department of Justice Records (DOJ) (RG 60), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland (hereafter DOJ File File 146-13-2-81-22). Hirata was released in 1943 and Kasai in 1944.

Department of Justice camps differed from internment or concentration camps in that they were only for aliens. By November 1942, the total number of aliens arrested included 5,534 Japanese, 4,769 Germans, and 2,262 Italians. These numbers included thirty-one *Nisei*, or American-born Japanese. Kashima, Judgment, 51, 64.

While the arrests of leaders was shocking to the Japanese community, many of these leaders had been watched by various government agencies even before Pearl Harbor, and contingency plans for what to do in the event of war with Japan were already being discussed in the 1930s. Although some planning was done before Pearl Harbor, implementation did not occur until spring 1942, with a program of voluntary evacuation from the coast, in which some Japanese voluntarily moved to Spokane. After the failure of the voluntary program in March 1942, a program of mass evacuation removed 120,000 Japanese to inland camps.<sup>10</sup>

Previous to the attack on Pearl Harbor, during the 1930s, U.S. officials, aware of future conflicts in Asia and Europe, established a surveillance program targeting nationals from select foreign countries, including Germany, Italy, and Japan. In September 1931, when Japan attacked Manchuria, U.S. agencies, including the Department of Justice (DOJ), Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), began compiling files on individual nationals whose daily activities and memberships in organizations appeared subversive. Japan's continued aggression in the Pacific, including the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, brought its nationals prominently into the view of U.S. officials. By 1940, the U.S. government required all aliens over the age of fourteen to register and be fingerprinted under the Alien Registration (Smith) Act. The information gathered under this act was used by the FBI to create lists of potential subversives which were to be arrested or interned in the advent of war with their country. According to the State Department, "When war breaks

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<sup>10</sup> For the purposes of this research paper only an overview of the evacuation and internment experience and process will be given. For an in-depth discussion of the evacuation process and the internment camps, see Roger Daniels, Concentration Camps.

out, the entire Japanese population on the West Coast will rise and commit sabotage. They will endeavor by any means to neutralize the West Coast and render it defenseless.”<sup>11</sup>

By July 1941, the Justice Department and War Department developed an agreement for interning foreign nationals which formed the basis for later coordination and cooperation between these two agencies during the evacuation and internment period. In the event of war with Japan they planned to scrutinize Japanese nationals in the U.S., Hawaii and Alaska, to develop a plan to intern Japanese nationals and select American citizens in Hawaii and the mainland, and to remove or imprison the entire Japanese population.<sup>12</sup>

While these agencies developed some pre-war strategies, they were still unprepared for quick action following the attack on Pearl Harbor. According to historian Roger Daniels, it was in a “panic-ridden amateurish ... atmosphere that some of the most crucial decisions about the evacuation of the Japanese Americans were made.” Important questions regarding when, where and how the evacuation program would take place remained to be answered at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack.<sup>13</sup>

A number of months elapsed before the exclusion program was officially implemented. Between December 1941 and spring 1942 confusing and changeable

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<sup>11</sup> Kashima, Judgment, 5, 15-16; Ito, Issei, 929; Daniels, Concentration Camps, 27; Memorandum, US State Department, quoted in Bob Kuramoto, “The Search for Spies: American Counter-intelligence and the Japanese American Community, 1931-42,” Amerasia Journal 6, no. 2 (fall 1979): 49, cited in Kashima, Judgment, 16.

<sup>12</sup> Kashima, Judgment, 7, 25-7.

<sup>13</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 38; Kashima describes the “mass incarceration of Japanese Americans on the mainland” as “more properly ... viewed as an action based on an existing plan to remove an undesirable ethnoracial group from the West Coast rather than as a sudden and confused reaction to the war.” Kashima, Judgment, 130.

information was released to the public by the Western Defense Command (WDC), the Army's Pacific coast unit. The first plan proposed by the WDC's head, General John DeWitt, limited the scope of evacuation to "all alien subjects fourteen years of age and over, of enemy nations" who would be removed to the interior and held "under restraint after removal" to prevent their return to the West Coast. Released January 29, 1942, this version of the plan was supposed to go into effect February 24. This proposal would have removed 7,000 German, Italian, and Japanese aliens, fewer than 300 of which would have been Japanese.<sup>14</sup>

Between the time DeWitt announced the details of his proposed plan and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, significant changes were made to the scope of the evacuation plan. The evacuation orders were expanded to include all Japanese aliens and their American-born children living on the West Coast. Not until March 1942 did Japanese living on or near the coast know which specific areas were considered prohibited. Public Proclamation #1 dated March 2, 1942 divided Washington, Oregon, California, and Arizona into two military areas. Area 1, the "prohibited zone", included the coast, a small strip along the Mexican border, and a larger "restricted" zone. Also included in this zone were ninety-eight limited areas, military installations, and power plants. Area Two, located east of Area One, was not restricted or prohibited; Japanese were encouraged to move eastward from Area One to Area Two or beyond. A second public proclamation dated March 16, 1942

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<sup>14</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 38-40, 46-50; Stetson Conn, "Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast," in Stetson Conn, Rose C. Engleman, and Byron Fairchild, United States Army in World War II: The Western Hemisphere: Guarding the United States and Its Outposts (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1964), 116-118, cited in Daniels, 39.

added four additional military areas in Idaho, Montana, Nevada and Utah and 933 additional prohibited zones.<sup>15</sup>

Although exclusion zones and an exclusion order had been announced, the plan for how to remove those included in these orders was still unknown. The first plan for removal was a voluntary evacuation program, instituted between late February and late March 1942. While this iteration of the evacuation program ultimately did little to move significant numbers of Japanese aliens and their American-born children east of the restricted zones, approximately 2,000 to 9,000 did voluntarily leave the coast. As many as 400 people of Japanese ancestry living on Washington's west coast may have voluntarily evacuated to Eastern Washington during this period.

... a group of voluntary evacuees moved into Spokane from the West Coast before the actual evacuation order was put into effect. No figures on this voluntary movement can be established. Estimates run to several hundred individuals. Some of these individuals invested in small hotels and other businesses.<sup>16</sup>

Japanese families sometimes chose to voluntarily evacuate east to live with family already established in the interior. Two branches of the Matsumoto family living in Seattle voluntarily evacuated to Spokane to an uncle's farm in March 1942:

It's my father's brother that had the farm in Spokane, as to where we moved. ... I have another uncle. My father's older brother was here [Seattle] with his family. So both families moved to the farm with my uncle in Spokane. So that was the only reason we were able to move. Otherwise there was no choice for us, but to go to internment camp. ... Both families left in their family car and then loaded up as much as they could take. And we moved to the farm. And my uncle there took us in.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> US Congress, House Report No. 2124, 77<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sess., pp. 293-351, WA, 1942, cited in Daniels, Concentration Camps, 3; Daniels, Concentration Camps, 84. See map Appendix D.

<sup>16</sup> JERS, W2.14, 5.

<sup>17</sup> Dan Matsumoto interview, tape recording, 21 October 2002, Seattle, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.

[W]e left everything. And it was just fortunate that my other uncle who lived in Spokane, he had a farm. And so we evacuated to his farm and stayed there until we got established.<sup>18</sup>

The Matsumotos worked on the farm just west of Spokane and eventually established a small café on Main Avenue in the city called Matson's.

Other Japanese voluntarily left the coast alone to relocate to the interior. Seiko Edamatsu, a *Nisei* in her early twenties, left Seattle to attend the Methodist Church's Young People's Christian Conference in Spokane in March 1942, and stayed on in Spokane to avoid internment. The following extensive quotation from an oral interview reflects the difficulties Edamatsu and other voluntary evacuees faced when relocating to inland communities:

... I had already been registered to come to a conference. I belonged to the Christian Youth Council and I was one of the ... secretaries [in Seattle]. And so I was already prepared to come to the conference the first weekend in March. See, one year it's in Seattle and then one year in Spokane and the third year would either be Yakima or Wenatchee. So the first weekend in March I told Dad, "I think I'll go to my convention like I had planned." I just went a day ahead, and took the train and came to Spokane. And I packed my one bag and I said, "I'm going to stay in Spokane and see if I can find [a] housework job and then remain in Spokane so I won't have to go to camp." I said, "You know, if I was put behind barbed wires," I said, "I don't know how I'd feel about my own county when I am let out. [Be]cause," I said, "I don't want to feel bitter against my country," because we're citizens and I didn't feel that we should be. But if they're going to put us behind barbed wire, I said I didn't want to go. So I said, "If I went by myself, ahead," then maybe I could find a place.

\* \* \*

But it was scary when I first came [to Spokane], because when I got off the train I didn't know where to go, so I took a cab and asked the cabbie to take me to some nice Japanese hotel. He drove around and around and went back to the one on ... Skid Row... [.] I paid him and went up to the hotel. And there was a[n] old Caucasian gentleman at the desk. And I said, "This a Japanese-owned hotel?" He says, "Yes." And I says, "What's the owner's name?" He didn't know. And so I

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<sup>18</sup> Sumio Matsumoto interview, tape recording, 10 September 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.



said, “Well, I’ll register.” And I took a room. Put my bag in the room and then went downstairs and went out to Cy’s Corner...there on ... Trent and Stevens. They sold magazines and cigarettes and cigars. And I went down there and I said, “There’re surely more Japanese hotels down here.” And so he sent me to the J.A. Hotel which was in the alley, Trent Alley. You know, it was like a city street, almost like. Trent Alley, they had businesses, laundries and things. And I went down there and went up to one of the hotels and there was a girl I knew.<sup>19</sup> And then so she called some of my friends and they immediately came and picked me up.<sup>20</sup>

So I had this friend, Miyo Migaki—they lived on Fourth Avenue, right near [First] Presbyterian Church...[.] [T]hey took me over to Mrs. Migaki’s and she greeted me and she found out that I had taken a room at a hotel. She wouldn’t even let me go down. She gave the boys the keys to the room and said, “Check her out and bring the bag.” And she said, “You can stay with us.” ... I stayed there until I found a job. So it was really something that Mrs. Migaki invited me to stay with her. ... And I think she was sort of ostracized because she had taken me in. You know, people thought that maybe the FBI’s checking on me, and why are they taking me in. So I don’t think she had it easy, but she was just a wonderful person. So she fed me and kept me until I got a job.

\* \* \*

... I had an awful time finding work, because this was an opportunity for a lot of these people for almost free labor. So they offered me two or three dollars a week to work for my room and board. ... And some of the people asked if I had a health card. And I said, “Do all the other people have to have health cards?” And she said, “No.” Then I said, “I don’t see why I should.” And then another place had the FBI check you. “Have you been checked by the FBI?” And I said, “I have done nothing. No ordinary citizen has to be checked by FBI to go to work in a home.” ... And so I was very discouraged.

Edamatsu finally found work as a housekeeper with the John Blaire family; Blaire was an attorney in Spokane. Near the end of March 1942, just before the end of the voluntary evacuation period, Edamatsu was able to bring her family to Spokane to avoid internment:

And then about two weeks after I’d started, that was when President Roosevelt said that all people of Japanese ancestry had to leave the coast by March 31 or [they] would be put in camps. ... So he [John Blaire] called me downstairs and he

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<sup>19</sup> Kazuko Hoyuchi.

<sup>20</sup> Edmatsu knew many other *Nisei* from around the Northwest because of her involvement in Y.P.C.C.

said, "Would you like to get your folks out of Seattle?" And I said, "I surely would." And he says, "Well, you call them and tell them to pack up," and give his name as reference. And they said they could come and stay at their [the Blaire's] summer home out at Liberty Lake until such time as they find permanent lodging. ... And so the family came. They came by train and they came up to the Blaire's house. And Dad said they were going to show them how to get to Liberty Lake and all, and Dad said he thought that he'll stay in downtown Spokane. Because he said he needed to find something to do. So he said if he was stuck out at Liberty Lake, he wouldn't be able to do anything. ... So he stayed at the Clem Hotel<sup>21</sup> on Trent Avenue. ... [T]hey came in March and they stayed at the hotel during that summer. But in the fall of the year, he found a hotel to run. ... It was called Boston Hotel at the time, but Dad had to have the U.S. Hotel, because the U.S. was in Seattle. So he called this the U.S. Hotel and he took over that. ... [H]e lived at the Clem Hotel till early fall and then he went into business.<sup>22</sup>

While some voluntary evacuees were able to leave the coast for the inland northwest, the Spokane Japanese community's response to the possibility of many coastal Japanese coming to Spokane was defensive. The Spokane Japanese community feared that Eastern Washington would eventually fall under the evacuation orders, especially if it welcomed too many Japanese fleeing the coast. Joe Okamoto, president of the Japanese American Citizens Club (JACC) led a discussion regarding the JACC's response to voluntary evacuees coming to Spokane. The meeting was held at the Japanese Methodist Church, with about 60 members in attendance.

Until the program is worked out the Spokane Japanese-Americans will adopt a policy, it was decided, of discouraging any Coast Japanese from coming over here. This is to be particularly aimed at those who have no business or means of making a livelihood. Relatives are planning to help their Coast relatives, it was pointed out. Thus far, however, only one case is known of a Coast Japanese coming here to live with his Spokane relatives.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The Clem Hotel, located at 317 W. Trent Avenue, was owned by Kazuma and Jun Hirata. Many evacuees and resettlers stayed there when they first came to Spokane.

<sup>22</sup> Seiko Edamatsu interview, tape recording, 22 September 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIC.

<sup>23</sup> Spokesman-Review, 16 March 1942. This newspaper article lists Okamoto as president of the local Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), however, a JACL chapter was not established in

The Spokane Japanese community's fear of what would happen if it was seen as welcoming coastal Japanese to Eastern Washington was not unfounded. Just one week earlier the North Side Post of the American Legion proclaimed "They Don't Want Japs" and "adopted resolutions asking that the Japanese aliens about to be evacuated from the Pacific coast be located in some remote area to the east of Spokane or else interned." The Spokesman-Review newspaper also reported "Aliens Coming, County is Told" in early March 1942:

[Spokane] County Prosecutor Carl Quackenbush reported Saturday morning that he had word from Coast authorities ... that Japan aliens will soon be moving into this part of the country. There would be no steps that the prosecutor's office can take regarding this .... He pointed out that he had been trying as much as possible to publicize this coming move, to arouse Spokane citizens to it. Under the plans it is understood that hundreds of the aliens will soon be coming here, and it is expected to create a considerable problem to handle them.<sup>24</sup>

The suspicion and hysteria created by the announcement of Japanese aliens coming to the inland Northwest were evident in other parts of the Pacific Northwest, as well. Robert Sims, a historian who has written extensively about the experiences of Japanese Americans in Idaho, notes that because of occasional outbreaks of violence in inland Northwest communities, "local Nikkei communities found themselves in peril if they welcomed friends and family to relocate inland." These inland communities also feared that they too would be sent to internment camps if they welcomed too many coastal

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Spokane until after the war. Instead, Spokane had a Japanese American Citizens Club (JACC), a subsidiary of the Yakima JACL.

Fred Shiosaki, a high school-aged *Nisei* in 1942, remembered thinking during the voluntary evacuation period: " 'I don't know why they're moving here. They're liable to move them out of here again.' " Fred Shiosaki interview, tape recording, 19 November 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.

<sup>24</sup> Spokesman-Review, 6 March 1942, p. 6; Spokesman-Review, 8 March 1942, p. 1.

evacuees; Idaho Governor Chase Clark publicly threatened, "...it is better to refrain from any activity in encouraging other Japanese to come into Idaho, because it might result in the exclusion of all":

*Governor Says Lock Up Japs!*

*Sell Them No Idaho Land, Clark Warns All Citizens of State*

[Governor Chase A. Clark] said he was endeavoring to prevent any "permanent widespread settlement (of Japanese) in Idaho," .... Clark, citing Pacific coast states' alien difficulties, said "California is crawling with Japanese. They contribute nothing to the standard of life—but undermine it. In a hundred years they will overrun us to the Rocky [M]ountains, unless checked. If they come to Idaho, I want them put in concentration camps and kept under guard so that they can be taken back under guard. If they purchase land in Idaho, and settle here, they will spread out, throughout our state. ... I am not ready to sell the state of Idaho to the Japanese for a few dollars, while our American boys are trying to prevent Japan from taking the state of Idaho and our entire nation by force of arms[.]”<sup>25</sup>

Consequently, Japanese community organizations, like the JACC, did not encourage coastal Japanese to relocate to their areas.<sup>26</sup>

Public outcry at allowing large numbers of evacuees into Spokane was also reflected in the actions of county officials:

*Protest Dumping Jap Aliens in Spokane*

In the hope of convincing army authorities that Japanese and other aliens being evacuated from the Coast should be excluded from Spokane [C]ounty, the board of county commissioners yesterday passed a resolution of protest. The resolution was based on their belief that the dumping of a large group of enemy aliens into

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<sup>25</sup> Spokesman-Review, 15 March 1942, p. 17

<sup>26</sup> Robert C. Sims, "The 'Free Zone' Nikkei: Japanese Americans in Idaho and Eastern Oregon in World War II," in Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds., Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century (Seattle: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest in association with University of Washington Press, 2005), 242, 243; the Boise JACL publicly discouraged coastal Japanese from relocating to that city in mid-March 1942. Spokesman-Review, 21 March 1942; according to Sims, in early March 1942, Paul Okamura, president of the Pocatello JACL indicated that the local Japanese community's "hands are tied so far as helping the Pacific coast mass evacuation problem to any great extent," because of the governor's attitude toward Japanese relocating to Idaho. Additionally, at the Idaho JACL presidents' meeting at Caldwell in March 1942, a resolution was passed "pledging all members of the league in Idaho to discourage all evacuee relatives, friends, and others" from coming to Idaho. Sims, "The 'Free Zone' Nikkei," 243.

this area would be dangerous because of the numerous Defense projects in the county. The resolution is to be sent to army authorities in Seattle.<sup>27</sup>

Additionally, during March 1942 newspapers emphasized coastal Japanese communities' attempts to relocate entire communities inland. This was seen as a direct threat to the safety of inland communities. A wholesale voluntary evacuation of the Seattle Japanese community was attempted for a short time in mid- to late-March 1942:

*Japs Plan Own Colony*

Plans to migrate en masse to "somewhere in eastern Washington" were announced Friday by Seattle's Japanese colony which numbers 4000 aliens and 6000 American-born members. A permanent model city of homes, churches, schools and industries has been planned, James Y. Sakamoto, spokesman for the group, said. Sakamoto would not disclose the location of the proposed settlement, but said no whites lived in the area. The plan has been transmitted to the government, but no reply has been received. "We are willing to put ourselves in voluntary exile," Sakamoto said, "but we will need some assistance from the government. We can put up temporary quarters quickly and then move them and build a permanent city."<sup>28</sup>

Their efforts, however, were unsuccessful, largely because of the opposition of inland communities to the mass relocation of Japanese to eastern Washington. Likewise, similar efforts by communities in Tacoma and Olympia were unsuccessful:

*Japs Can Find No Place to Go*

Because Idaho and Eastern Washington communities have opposed voluntary establishment of a cooperative colony of evacuated Japanese in their areas, I. Nagatani, a Japanese-American community leader here, said today most of the 270 Japanese ordered to leave Bainbridge Island will have to be evacuated by the army next Monday. "We have been looking for a place to establish a cooperative farm," said Nagatani. "We had three possible sites—two in Eastern Washington and the other in Idaho—but the plan fell through because residents of the districts opposed our coming." He said they had planned to take over abandoned farms, supplying most of the funds for re-establishment of themselves, and would prefer such a voluntary plan, but there is not now time to find a site where they would be unopposed by their neighbors, and complete the arrangements. ... James Y. Sakamoto, American born leader in the Japanese community here, said he had

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<sup>27</sup> Spokesman-Review, 10 March 1942, p. 10

<sup>28</sup> The Boise Capital News, 20 March 1942

heard nothing from federal authorities yet on the plan proposed last week that the Seattle colony move enmasse to Eastern Washington and re-establish themselves.<sup>29</sup>

While much of the response to relocating coastal Japanese communities inland was negative, some people living inland were prepared to assist in relocating these groups. Many of these people were associated with religious or social groups already supportive of the Japanese in general. In Spokane, the Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Charles E. McAllister, attempted to assist Japanese Christian congregations from Olympia. His suggestion was to utilize abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps in the Spokane area:

... Dean McAllister admitted the necessity for the evacuation of all Japanese, citizens as well as aliens, from the Coast area. He condemned as un-Christian and un-American the hysterical protests of certain inland sections against the presence of these Japanese soon to be evacuated.

“It is absurd to confine those Japanese designated as enemy aliens in commodious quarters at Fort Missoula, while the Christian Japanese and those who are citizens are driven from pillar to post,” he said. “Many of the Japanese-American citizens have relatives in the armed forces of the United States and their loyalty is unquestioned, but how long can that loyalty be expected if we treat them as enemies of the government?”<sup>30</sup>

Some Spokane officials also implored citizens to assist, rather than turn their backs on, the evacuees. Spokane County Assessor Don L. Thompson, in a letter to the editor of the Spokesman-Review newspaper stated that the evacuation issue was a “Real Chance to Demonstrate Americanism”:

They didn’t want this war any more than we, as they well know what hardships such a war would work upon them. What is more, a large percentage of them would have become citizens here long ago had our citizenship laws permitted.

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<sup>29</sup> Tacoma News Tribune, 23 March 1942, p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> Referring to Department of Justice (DOJ) camps for aliens arrested on or after December 7; one DOJ camp was located in Missoula, Montana.

America is their adopted home. They have raised their families here and it is the only home their children know. These children are proving their loyalty to us by joining our fighting forces whenever the opportunity is afforded. The loyal Japanese here are also helping the federal bureau of investigation to ferrest [*sic*] out those among them whom they have reason to believe might get them into trouble. On the other hand, I fully realize that we can not afford to take chances by permitting alien Japanese, or other enemy nationals to remain in important Defense areas. It is therefore up to all of us to coperate [*sic*] with our government to help remove them to other areas, which should be done with as little loss and discomfort to them as possible. We are not showing a true sense of cooperation to win the war when we who are living outside these Defense areas refuse to accept these unfortunate people who are forced to leave their homes. What is more, those among them who are not considered by the F.B.I. as being dangerous enemies should be given an opportunity to go to work under proper police supervision as soon as possible. ... It occurs to me that here is an opportunity for some of our civic organizations to take an active part in helping to find new homes for these evicted people. It is also a time for our religious organizations to offer them their moral and spiritual comfort in this time of need.

Some businesses also welcomed evacuating Japanese, although their motives were probably fueled by economic necessity as much of the seasonal labor force had been conscripted for the war effort:

A group of Japanese-Americans are moving into the Quincy country today to establish farm homes on a former orchard tract now devoted to raising produce for the Cedergreen Frozen Pack [C]ompany of Wenatchee. ... In Quincy there was some agitation against the arrivals but rumors that hundreds of Japs were moving in were unfounded. Those families that are moving have been raising vegetables near Woodinville. They have machinery and equipment, Cedergreen said.<sup>31</sup>

For Japanese American students currently attending school, there was the possibility of transferring to an inland school to avoid evacuation. Many students transferred to colleges and universities in the Midwest and on the east coast. Some students relocated to eastern Washington to continue their educations. Gonzaga College in Spokane announced in April 1942 that it would accept Japanese Americans evacuated

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<sup>31</sup> "Ask Abandoned Camps for Japs: Dean McAllister Suggests CCC Buildings House Christian Japanese," Spokesman-Review, 12 March 1942; Spokesman-Review, 22 March 1942, p. 8; Spokesman-Review, 31 March 1942, p. 1.

from the west coast. Other inland Northwest colleges accepting *Nisei* transfers were Washington State College in Pullman and Whitman College in Walla Walla.<sup>32</sup>

Heidi Kitayama, a student at the University of Washington in 1942, was encouraged by her dean to transfer to Whitworth College in Spokane.

But when this thing [evacuation order] happened that we knew we had to leave, the Dean of Women called me to her office and told me, you know, “Don’t feel bad,” and “It’ll turn out better.” And she says, “And keep a record of everything that happens. Keep a diary, now.” ... I said to myself, “My whole world’s coming apart and she’s asking me to keep a diary.”

Miyo McCoy, a nursing student at Seattle Pacific College, transferred with a fellow *Nisei* student to Deaconess Hospital’s nursing program in Spokane. She remembers being one of the first *Nisei* nursing students in the program, and that she did not always feel welcome.

Like I say, we were naïve, but the atmosphere was very strange, you know, and strained.... And then there was Dr. Snyder,... And I guess he could not stand the sight of us. And so whenever he was on the elevator and we want to get on, he’ll get off. Then if he—came to certain floors and he was waiting—we were in the elevator—he wanted to enter. He won’t enter ‘cause we’re there. And also, he taught some of the science subjects. He would not let us, you know, attend any of his classes. And then, also, he was the nurses’ doctor.... [A]nd he had nothing to do with us, so they had to get another doctor to come look at us.<sup>33</sup>

Many *Nisei* students at the University of Washington were aided by sociology professor, Robert O’Brien, who headed the Student Relocation Committee at the university. The purpose of the committee was to help relocate *Nisei* students to other colleges and universities inland, both before and after evacuation. Jim Mizuki and his

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<sup>32</sup> “Alien Students O.K. at Gonzaga,” *Spokesman-Review*, 10 April 1942, p. 5. I have divided the student relocation program into those students who transferred to inland schools during the voluntary evacuation phase, and those who came from internment camps to inland schools beginning in fall 1942. Description of the latter may be found in the section on resettlement.

<sup>33</sup> Heidi Kitayama interview, tape recording, 23 August 2002, Seattle, Washington, by Janet Hauck and Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC; Miyo McCoy interview, tape recording, 10 December 2002, Mercer Island, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.



sister Marion were part of this program and were first sent to the University of Idaho in Moscow. Jim remembered the ordeal vividly:

...[W]e were supposed to go to Idaho, originally. ...[T]hey were looking for some students, so my sister heard about it and then ... I says, "Well, let's go." And then [we got] some money from my father and—he didn't have much. He says, "Well, this is all I can give you guys." And so we went....[T]here was six of us. We left on April 13, 1942.... And we were assigned different families to stay with and I was with a family—Floyd Trail—and they were living outside of town. ... [B]ut I know the two gals had to spend a night in jail for protection. ... [B]ecause the town folks were threatening us, threatening they were gonna get rid of those guys.... And then I don't know what happened. University of Idaho wouldn't enroll us, so we moved over to Pullman [to attend Washington State College].

These students left behind friends and family in order to continue their educations. Many *Nisei* were urged by their parents to continue their educations by any means possible, even if it meant leaving the family to do so.<sup>34</sup>

Ultimately, the voluntary evacuation program did not successfully remove significant numbers of Japanese from the west coast. According to the War Relocation Authority (WRA) report, "Background for the Relocation Program," the most significant cause of its failure was the "quick and unmistakable" reactions of "inland communities ill prepared to receive large numbers of evacuees on such short notice, [who] were soon protesting vigorously against the influx and threatening forcible action against the evacuees." The voluntary evacuation program was officially discontinued March 27 by Public Proclamation #4 which forbade all Japanese from leaving Area One. On the same day Public Law #503 made it a criminal offense for anyone excluded from the prohibited areas to remain in these areas, thereby initiating the program for "orderly and systematic" evacuation to inland relocation centers. A civilian agency, the Wartime Civil Control

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<sup>34</sup> "Committee Formed to Assist Nisei," *University of Washington Daily*, 22 April 1942; Jim Mizuki interview, tape recording, 10 December 2002, Seattle, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC. See also "Nisei Girl Writes from Idaho Jail," *Pacific Citizen*, 11 June 1942.

Administration (WCCA) was established on March 14, 1942 to coordinate the transfer of Japanese to assembly centers and administer those centers. Four days later the War Relocation Authority was established to transport evacuees from assembly centers to interior relocation camps and to oversee these camps.<sup>35</sup>

The West coast was divided into 108 areas, each made up of 1,000 Japanese, which were systematically evacuated to area assembly centers before being transferred to inland relocation camps. By June 5, 1942, the Army announced Area One to be free of Japanese. By August 7, Area Two was also free of Japanese. In total, 120,000 Japanese aliens and their American-born children were interned in inland relocation centers at some time during the war. Of this number almost 65% were American-born citizens of the U.S. under the age of 25. Their parents, the *Issei*, made up less than 40% of the population in the centers; over 50% of the *Issei* were over 50 years old.<sup>36</sup>

The first evacuation in the State of Washington occurred March 27, 1942 with the evacuation of the Bainbridge Island Japanese community to the Puyallup Assembly Center. Instructed to bring only what they could carry, including bedding, toiletries, clothing and eating utensils, evacuees quickly sold businesses, liquidated inventories and disposed of property. Between March 31 and June 6, western Washington State's Japanese residents were sent to assembly centers, temporary holding points located at

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<sup>35</sup> "Background for the Relocation Program," n.d., 8, Victor McLaughlin Papers, Gonzaga University Special Collections, Spokane, Washington; Daniels, Concentration Camps, 83, 88.

<sup>36</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 88; it had been determined earlier in January 1942 that an attempt to evacuate Japanese nationals and their American-born children from the Hawaiian Islands would not take place. Because they made up the bulk of the labor force on the islands, and because it would mean evacuation and relocation to the mainland, fewer than 2,000 of the 150,000 Japanese in Hawaii were interned, Daniels, Concentration Camps, 73; US Department of Interior, War Relocation Authority, WRA: A Story of Human Conservation (Washington, 1946), 196, 198, cited in Daniels, Concentration Camps, 106.

fairgrounds, racetracks and other large facilities. By the end of April 1942, all of Seattle's Japanese community had been sent to the Puyallup Assembly Center and by the end of the summer were shipped to the Minidoka relocation center in south-central Idaho. In total, 13,391 Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans were evacuated from the State of Washington.<sup>37</sup>

While the stories of individuals and families who experienced the internment camps have been widely published, many do not contain connections to Spokane. A diary kept by *Issei* mother Tetsu Tsuchida reflects the evacuation experience of a Nikkei family from the Pacific Northwest who eventually resettled in Spokane. The Tsuchida family farmed near Auburn, Washington south of Seattle until May 23, 1942 when they were evacuated to the Pinedale Assembly Center in California. They spent time in both Tule Lake and Topaz relocation centers until October 1945 when they resettled in Spokane. The following are excerpts from Tsuchida's diary, which reflect the family's post-Pearl Harbor experiences, including evacuation and internment. Each entry includes the date, day of the week, weather and a short descriptive entry.

December 7, 1941: Sunday, Clear-Night Fog

Today the Japanese Forces attacked Hawaii by plane so all of the Japanese people are worried. Ohashi-san came to go squidding so Hitoshi<sup>38</sup> went. At night with Mae<sup>39</sup> driving I went to [Buddhist] church. There were a lot of Army vehicles passing by. Our car had engine trouble and Buss Haugen gave us a push.

December 8, 1941: Monday, Clear

War is declared between the United States and Japan. I am worried about what is going to happen to us. In the afternoon went to see Osen-san. Went to masseur

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<sup>37</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 88; Kashima, Judgment, 134; Kashima, Judgment, 132; Bertha Fegan, "Japanese-American History and Culture of the Spokane Area: Population Growth and Decline," n.d., 1, Vertical File, Northwest History Room, Spokane Public Library, Spokane, Washington.

<sup>38</sup> Son.

<sup>39</sup> Daughter.

but he was not in. Went to Japanese School to get overcoat that Papa<sup>40</sup> left there. School is closed. Immigration arrested Maekawa, Tsujikawa, and Iseri-sans. From today Papa was terminated from work. From tomorrow only Kiwamu<sup>41</sup> goes to work. Starting tonight from 1 a.m. to 8 a.m. blackout will be observed.

January 24, 1942: Saturday, Clear – Later Rain

From 2 o'clock Take Sakagami-san's wedding ceremony is held so we attend. Hitoshi put in the upstairs floor boards. Satoshi<sup>42</sup> came in the evening to get flower pots. He brought home the rifle because he was asked not to keep it at his work and to take it back home.

February 2, 1942: Tuesday, Intermittent Showers

Waited for Papa to come home at 4 o'clock and then went to Post Office to register.<sup>43</sup> Had Senji-san help us fill out form.

March 2, 1942: Monday, Clear

Yukimi<sup>44</sup> brought out Ohina-sama<sup>45</sup> dolls and decorated them. About 5 o'clock *hakujin* [FBI agents] came to our house to search.<sup>46</sup> I was very scared but they were very polite and although they didn't say anything we put the Ohina-san dolls away immediately. Papa answered the *hakujin*'s questions. The Shimazaki's horse came into our field during the night and Mickey barked and made so much noise that I couldn't sleep.

March 5, 1942: Thursday, Clear

We are worried about evacuation and are unable to do any work. Yukimi, Kiwamu, and Hitoshi went to Fukuda-san.<sup>47</sup>

March 24, 1942: Tuesday, Clear – Evening Rain—Night Hail

At 9 o'clock went to Seattle with Kiwamu to Fukuda-san to have an impression taken for my false teeth. Looks like Fukuda-san is going to close his office. On the radio they said that first and second generation Japanese will be evacuated starting on Friday.

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<sup>40</sup> Her husband.

<sup>41</sup> Son.

<sup>42</sup> Son.

<sup>43</sup> Alien Registration.

<sup>44</sup> Daughter.

<sup>45</sup> Girls Day Festival.

<sup>46</sup> *Hakujin* is Japanese for a person of European descent.

<sup>47</sup> Dentist.

April 27, 1942: Monday, Clear – Later Rain

Papa came home from work and went to register [for evacuation].

May 6, 1942: Wednesday, Clear

Tatsuo-san brought a person who was interested in buying our car. Ohashi-san brought a Filipino to show him our horse.

May 8, 1942: Friday, Cloudy

With Kiwamu driving, Yukimi and I went to see Akada-sama who is leaving for Puyallup [Assembly Center]. Went to Osen-sama [Mrs. Natsuhara] to ask her to store some of our things. Ohashi-san brought a *hakujin* to show our field to him.

May 16, 1942: Saturday, Clear

Washington Packers came regarding the farm. Finally bought it for \$900. Lola,<sup>48</sup> Ben<sup>49</sup> and Mae pulled weeds from the berry field. Yukimi did sewing.

May 28, 1942: Monday, Clear

From 1 o'clock in the afternoon we all reported to the high school for a physical examination. Borrowed Roe's car and took a trunk and boxes of dishes, chawans, etc. to Natsuhara-san for storage.

May 22, 1942: Friday, Rain

It rained from morning. We went to give Butch away. Washed the bath at noon. Before Hitoshi took the luggage at 2 o'clock, we stored a lot of things with Yuki-san and Natsuhara-san. At a little past 2 o'clock we left our house. The train departed at 6 o'clock. We arrived in Portland at 12 o'clock midnight. For supper we had halibut, ice cream, tomato soup, beans and although it was satisfactory, it was cold.

May 23, 1942: Saturday

We spent the whole day on the train seeing unusual sights such as volcanic rocks, sand mountains, snake tunnels and rivers. When you look out the window, you can see the front of the train as well as the tail end. It looks like a huge serpent and it was quite frightening. Heard that we will arrive in Fresno tomorrow morning. I am unable to sleep.

May 24, 1942: Sunday, Strong Winds – Clear

Reached Sacramento at about 2 a.m. It was dawn when we passed the Snake Tunnel. Yukimi is still unable to eat anything. We had breakfast on the train at about 10:30. We changed onto a bus and entered the camp at about 11 o'clock. Without delay we got a room and prepared our beds. Yukimi and I skipped lunch

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<sup>48</sup> Daughter.

<sup>49</sup> Son.

but the children went to eat. We went to see Kawase, Shigaya, Yuki and Natsuhara-san.

May 25, 1942: Monday, Intermittent Showers & Strong Winds

In the morning I stood watch first and then went to eat at about 7 o'clock. Corned beef, potato and a fourth of grapefruit. Went to see Jessie and sister Harai. Since I was visiting Harai-san, I missed lunch. Supper was meat and soup. Shigaya-san came to visit. Tasuo-san and George came too. This place is called Camp Pinedale [Assembly Center].

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July 14, 1942: Tuesday, Clear

Finally finished packing and we put out 10 boxes of freight. There was a sudden shower and we covered everything with canvas. In the afternoon they came to pick up our belongings. Today is our last day here and we went to say goodbye to Matsu and Eiza Natsuhara. On the way home, we watched sumo. They were dancing in the mess hall so when I returned home after watching that, Tatsuo-san was visiting. He stayed quite late talking. I am unable to sleep. George came home from the Fresno hospital but he still looks very pale.

July 16, 1942: Thursday, Clear

[Arrive at Tule Lake Internment Camp] We received 2 large rooms. ... The camp is so large it will be very difficult to walk around it completely. For the first time I slept comfortably. It is almost chilly in the evening. Sally [Nakagawa] came to see us.<sup>50</sup>

While the coastal communities were being evacuated inland, the Spokane Japanese community was still unsure as to its fate. As late as July 1942, the Spokane community believed it too would be evacuated to internment camps. Mii Tai, a *Nisei* high school student, remembered her father worrying what items they would need to take with them if they were evacuated: "My dad was wondering what we should throw out and what to bring and he was thinking already in [those] terms." Kazuma Hirata, writing from a Department of Justice camp in Louisiana, noted:

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<sup>50</sup> "Diary of Tetsu Tsuchida," photocopy of original in family's possession, JAWWIIC. Missy Tsuchida, granddaughter-in-law of Tetsu, provided a photocopy of the English translation of the diary for the collection at Whitworth College. The original diary is in possession of the Tsuchida family. In spring 1943 the Tsuchida family was transferred to Topaz Internment Camp, Utah.

I have learned a few days ago by the radio broadcast that the Congress passed up the fresh evacuation bill. That mean [*sic*] the Eastern Washington and Montana States don't need [to] worry that an evacuation for a time being or until such time the Congress takes the matter up again. But we must pay good attention [*sic*] about this all the time.

While the Spokane community breathed a sigh of relief by summer 1942 that it would not be evacuated, its members “nevertheless lived under humiliating circumstances. ...

Although they were not relocated, they lived under restraints as if put in a ‘mental camp.’” In addition, they were still faced with the effects of the evacuation program in the numbers of evacuees who had moved to Spokane since spring 1942, and faced further disruptions as the WRA began resettling Japanese out of camps to inland communities, beginning in fall 1942.<sup>51</sup>

Almost immediately after the evacuation program removed all people of Japanese ancestry from coastal areas to interior internment camps, the War Relocation Authority and Army developed a process for releasing people to non-prohibited zones to go to work, attend school, or join the army. The resettlement program was put into action in fall 1942. According to official WRA documents, one goal of the resettlement program was to ensure that the dense concentrations of Japanese previously located in coastal areas would not reform after the camps closed:

The so-called “Japanese-problem” in this country stems largely from the fact that our Japanese population has always been concentrated to a great extent along the Pacific Coast. Looking ahead to the post-war period, it seems clear that a return to these conditions will be neither wholly feasible nor satisfactory. If the American Japanese people are ever to assume their rightful place in our national life, free of discriminations and animosities, an effort must be made during the

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<sup>51</sup> Mii Tai interview, tape recording, 25 November 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC. Tai's father, Hidekichi Nishibue was the vice president of the Spokane Japanese Association and like Kazuma Hirata was under surveillance by the FBI. He very likely could have been arrested and interned had he served as president in 1941; Letter Kazuma Hirata to Michi Hirata, 1 July 1942, Camp Livingston, Louisiana. Hirata Family Collection (Ms 202), NWMAC/EWSHS, Washington; Ito, *Issei*, 683.

war to prevent the formation of “Little Tokyos” in the future. Under the leave regulations which became effective October 1, 1942, it is the policy of the War Relocation Authority to re-establish as many of the evacuees as possible in private life outside the relocation centers. Because of the widespread public apprehension toward all people of Japanese ancestry, individual relocation of the evacuees will obviously have to proceed slowly and without fanfare of publicity for many months to come. Wholesale discharge of the evacuees at this time would lead almost inevitably to the very type of situation that brought about curtailment of voluntary evacuation back in March. Within the limits of national security and administrative expediency, however, the Authority will work throughout the wartime period toward a gradual depopulation of the relocation centers and a dispersal of those evacuees about whom there is no question of loyalty. In the last analysis, the relocation centers should be regarded not as places of detention or confinement, but as way-stations on the road to individual relocation and reassimilation into American life.<sup>52</sup>

Beginning October 1, 1942, the WRA began implementing a leave procedure that screened Japanese who applied for clearance to resettle outside the relocation centers. This procedure involved a loyalty check, which was utilized not only by the WRA in determining the loyalty of Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans, but also by the Army to screen for *Nisei* recruits and draftees. The procedure determined the internee’s prospects for self-support outside the center as well as the general receptiveness of the community into which the evacuee would be resettled. Once their application was approved they could relocate to areas outside the restricted zones, including to the Midwest, East Coast, and inland Northwest.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Kashima, Judgment, 161; “Background for the Relocation Program,” n.d., 10, Victor McLaughlin Papers, Gonzaga University Special Collections, Spokane, Washington.

<sup>53</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 110; Kashima, Judgment, 160-1; Robert Shaffer, “Opposition to Internment: Defending Japanese American Rights during World War II,” Historian 61(3) (Spring 1999), electronic version accessed through EBSCO 22 April 2004, 3.

While the leave clearance form was used primarily for those preparing to relocate, the form was also used to separate internees into “loyal” and “disloyal” groups, thus becoming known as the “Loyalty Questionnaire.” The WRA issued Form 126 to all Japanese over age 17 in relocation camps beginning in January 1943. The form included what are termed the “Loyalty Questions” numbers 27 and 28, which questioned the applicant’s loyalty to the U.S. and willingness to fight for the U.S. against Japan. The institution of these questionnaires forced Nikkei families to think about the possibility of repatriation to Japan. Kazuma Hirata, writing to his family from a Department of Justice camp in Louisiana asked, “Are



Leaving camp for employment, especially in wartime industries, afforded Japanese a steady income which could provide for their family's release from camp. Spokane developed a light metals industry due to the availability of inexpensive hydroelectric power provided by Grand Coulee Dam and the fairly close location of mining areas. A large Army air depot at Velox in the Spokane valley, as well as other war-time work, also drew people, including Japanese resettlers, to the area. Spokane was known as a "friendly city," which "offered a desirable site for early relocatees, because it was near their former homes, it already had a few Japanese, who had not been evacuated, and it offered a reasonably good opportunity to develop fruit and vegetable farming, as well as small industries in which Japanese had become successful along the West Coast." Two of the most popular areas of employment that drew Japanese to Spokane were railroad and farm work. Both were essential war jobs, which meant employees qualified for draft exemptions and wartime housing.<sup>54</sup>

Japanese had been employed in railroad work since the nineteenth century in the west, which continued during the war. The Northern Pacific, Great Northern, and Union Pacific railway companies' tracks and stations in Spokane and eastern Washington

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anyone in Spokane to go back to Japan? [I]n here about half of Internees would go back with their family or alone by second exchange boat. She will sail at [?] during August. How do you think about this matter? This is very importance [*sic*] according to our consideration. [E]ven at present or after War. We must study carefully about this." Letter Kazuma Hirata (Camp Livingston, LA) to Michiho Hirata, "Communication #30," 24 June 1942, 1, Hirata Family Collection (Ms 202), NWMAC/EWSHS.

In January 1943 when the Army decided to recruit 5,000 men for an all-Nisei combat team, it used DSS Form 304A, "Statement of United States Citizens of Japanese Ancestry" to question Nisei males 17 and older. This form also included the "Loyalty Questions" numbers 27 and 28. While many *Nisei* volunteered or were drafted willingly into the Army, others resented the request to fight for a country which had imprisoned them; Kashima, Judgment, 161, 162.

<sup>54</sup> JERS, W2.14, 7-8; Mas Akiyama interview, video recording, 15 March 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Tom Ikeda, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006; Tolbert H. Kennedy, "Racial Tensions among Japanese in the Intermountain Northwest," Research Studies of the State College of Washington, 14 (2) (June 1946), 145.

connected extractive industries, such as logging, mining and agriculture to shipping points on the west coast and in the east. During World War II, Spokane experienced a shortage of railroad laborers due to the high number of men engaged in the military and in other defense industries. “According to relocation office estimates at one time during the war years some 500 *Nisei* and *Issei* were employed by these transcontinental railroads.” Most Japanese worked as section hands, while others worked in baggage and mail rooms. One railway company employed over 60 Japanese Americans in its mail and baggage room in Spokane.<sup>55</sup>

Farming was the second area where many Japanese Americans could find employment in Spokane during the war. Japanese leaving camps had the opportunity to start truck farms or to work as laborers on existing farms. Resettlers with capital were able to buy or lease small farms. For families who had run farms before the war, this offered the opportunity to “carry on the old routine of vegetable growing.” Because farm work was one of the occupations that qualified people for the wartime housing, many resettlers chose farm work in order to provide a place for their families to live at a time when housing prices were high and housing was limited. Most of these laborers were hired by Japanese farm operators, although a significant number worked on the large Caucasian ranches in the area.<sup>56</sup>

With more Japanese moving to the Spokane area for employment on railroads and farms, as well as with the increase in population due to defense industries, Japanese-owned service businesses also increased. While some of these businesses catered strictly

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<sup>55</sup> JERS, W2.14, 7.

<sup>56</sup> JERS, W2.14, 5-6, 7.

to Japanese, others provided services for mixed clientele, or for strictly Caucasian clients. The loss of service workers to defense industries also opened up opportunities for Japanese Americans seeking employment. Most of the businesses were similar to those operating before the war, including hotels, laundries, pool halls, restaurants, and barbershops.<sup>57</sup>

Some service businesses did quite well during the war. The Clem Hotel, although a “little run down” had “people coming in from the farms and section gangs.” In addition to hotels, other Japanese-owned businesses also did well during this time: “[I]t is very good that Sunset and other several laundries are doing pretty good business and the farmers are too.” Service workers were in high demand and advertisements in camp newspapers were common. Local business owners could also “sponsor” Japanese in order to recruit workers out of camps. Sponsors reported the activities of their workers to local law enforcement.<sup>58</sup>

For young people desiring to attend school outside the camps, the resettlement program provided a way to further their educations. The Student Relocation Committee, under the leadership of Robert O’Brien of the University of Washington, continued to assist *Nisei* students in relocating to institutions of higher education. Over 4300 Japanese American students were able to attend college from camps and assembly centers during

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<sup>57</sup> JERS, p. ?.

<sup>58</sup> Letter Shingo Hirata to Edward J. Ennis, Director, Department of Justice, Alien Enemy Control Unit, 20 July 1943, 2, DOJ Files 146-13-2-81-22; Letter Kazuma Hirata (Camp Livingston, LA) to Michiho Hirata, “Communication #50,” 18 August 1942, 1, Hirata Family Collection (Ms 202), NWMAC/EWSHS; “Outside Job Offers,” Minedoka Irrigator, 8 May 1943, 3, Victor McLaughlin Papers, Gonzaga University Special Collections, Spokane, Washington. Mii Tai remembered “there was a Caucasian who sponsored quite a few *Nihonjins* [Japanese] [who then worked in his tire shop located at] Division and Sprague, very busy little street ....” Tai’s future husband was one of the young *Nisei* men who worked at the tire shop. Mii Tai interview, video recording, 14 March 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006.

the war. High school graduates could apply to colleges and universities through the release program in order to leave camp to attend institutions of higher education. Even more importantly, *Issei* parents urged their children to take advantage of the opportunity to leave camp to attend school. This was the case for two *Niseis*, Sadao “Corky” Kuroiwa and Mary Hosoda, who left camp to attend college in Spokane.<sup>59</sup>

Corky Kuroiwa was sent to Minidoka internment camp in south central Idaho along with his family in 1942. His mother greatly influenced his release from camp to attend Gonzaga College in Spokane in fall 1942:

I was one of the fortunate ones. ... Father Tibesar from Maryknoll Church [in Seattle] who interned along with the rest of the Catholics ... he spoke fluent Japanese and he had a large following in Seattle. And my mother was so worried of us being in the internment [camp] that she had said that, “We’re gonna go to waste here.” And so she approached Father Tibesar and Father Tibesar had the president at Gonzaga University sponsor me, so in—I believe it’s in October, I was allowed to leave to attend Gonzaga University. And, like I said before, I was on probation and so every month I used to have to go down to the police station and get an “Okay Slip” from the president. I was on probation. But that’s why I got out so early.<sup>60</sup>

Mary Hosoda graduated from high school in the Tule Lake internment camp in California when she applied to attend colleges in Washington State. She remembered her mother urging her to apply to college, especially to schools in Washington State.

She kept asking me almost daily, bless her heart. And I actually wanted to go outside the state of Washington. But Mother said, no, she thought that Washington would be good. Would be the place to go. ... the folks thought Spokane was good. And there was Whitman [College], too, you know, there was Walla Walla. ... And then one of the colleges was Whitworth and I don’t remember that I had a choice or that there were choices. I didn’t want to go to Catholic school, you know, and I just said, “Well, you know, Christians are kind.

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<sup>59</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 100.

<sup>60</sup> Corky Kuroiwa interview, tape recording, 23 September 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.

They'll be good to you." Or something to that effect, you know. She was quite comfortable with that. That's how it was chosen.

Mary left Tule Lake Relocation Center, California to attend Whitworth College in fall 1943. "[I rode] a bus all the way up to Spokane from Tule Lake. And that was the day after my folks had already been sent to ... the next camp. I stayed with a girl friend. ... They went to Minidoka, in Idaho. ... When I think about it now, wasn't I brave? It must have been hard for my folks just leaving me there, but, anyhow, it had to be." Once at Whitworth, however, Mary met other evacuees like herself who had come out of camp to attend school, as well as *Niseis* who were already attending Whitworth and lived in Spokane.<sup>61</sup>

Once students relocated to colleges and universities, it was likely that other family members would also relocate to the area. In addition, once parents relocated out of camp for work, their families usually followed. This meant an increase in the number of students at local schools. Sam Mitsui and his sister lived at the Park Hotel in Spokane in order to attend Lewis and Clark High School, while their family lived in Lamona in southern Washington. Sam's father resettled out of Wyoming's Heart Mountain Relocation Camp to work as a section hand near Lamona for the Great Northern Railroad in 1943. A perusal of the Spokane high school yearbooks shows a significant number of *Nisei* students attended Lewis and Clark High School from approximately 1942 through 1946. While many of these students came from the Minidoka internment camp, others came from as far away as California and Wyoming.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Mary Hosoda interview, tape recording, 21 October 2002, Bellevue, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.

<sup>62</sup> Sam Mitsui interview, tape recording, 5 November 2002, Seattle, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC; *Tiger*, Lewis and Clark High School Annual, 1942-1946.

By the end of 1943, 17,000 Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans had left the relocation centers. The majority of this group were *Niseis* between 18 to 30, and popular resettlement locations included Chicago, Denver, and Salt Lake City. The WRA also proactively assisted resettlers by forming local resettlement committees of volunteers from civic and religious groups in the receiving communities; these offices cooperated with field offices set up by WRA. As the United States military drew closer to defeating Japan in 1944 and 1945, the War Relocation Authority made several key changes to policies and began urging more people to leave the relocation centers. In December 1944, the Supreme Court ruled that American citizens of Japanese descent could not be incarcerated without due process, and the WRA changed its policy from mass incarceration to “a system of individual determination and exclusion of those individuals whose presence within sensitive areas of the WDC is deemed a source of potential danger to military security.” This change in policy led to the review of 122,000 *Issei* and *Nisei*’s files, resulting in 108,545 leave clearances. On January 2, 1945, the Western Defense Command announced the termination of the order of total exclusion of loyal Japanese American civilians from the West Coast.<sup>63</sup>

Although the WRA actively urged those in relocation centers to find places to relocate, only two-thirds of the total camp population had left by August 1945. With the end of the war on September 4, coastal areas were officially reopened to evacuees.

Many, however, had no businesses, homes, property, or other assets to return to. In

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<sup>63</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 110-11; Pamphlet, “The War Relocation Work Corps,” no date, WRA, in FBI File, F.N. 62-69030-61, Washington, D.C., cited in Kashima, Judgment, 174. Key cases decided by the court in December 1944 included the Fred Korematsu and Mitsui Endo cases. Kashima, 175; the remainder, whose freedom of movement continued to be restricted, were *Issei* and others still in DOJ camps, internees paroled to the WRA, those denied leave clearance such as WRA segregants and renunciants, plus 1,334 people in the “suspense” category. Kashima, Judgment, 175; Daniels, Concentration Camps, 157.

addition, coastal communities were not always happy to have Japanese return; in Seattle, housing shortages due to the influx of wartime workers exacerbated the problem.

Japanese temporarily lived in churches, temples and schools.<sup>64</sup>

With about 44,000 evacuees still in camps in fall 1945, the Department of the Interior began moving evacuees out of relocation centers, giving them train fare to their original point of evacuation. At the end of September 1945 over 2,000 people still remained at the Minidoka relocation center in southern Idaho, which officially closed October 28. The last internment camp closed in November 1945 and the WRA was discontinued in June 1946.<sup>65</sup>

Out of the 6,675 Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans who lived in Seattle before the war, only 713 returned to the Puget Sound region by June 1945. In mid-September this number increased to about 2,000, and doubled by March 1946 to 4,400. The slowness of the internees' return to the coastal areas highlights the significant role that Spokane played during the resettlement period. According to a 1946 report written for the Japanese Evacuation and Resettlement Study (JERS), conducted by the University of California at Berkeley:

The establishment of relocation centers and [the] relocation program shoved Spokane and the surrounding area into the spotlight. Many of the Northwest Coast Japanese in relocation centers did not wish to remain in the center[s]. Yet at the same time they did not wish to resettle in the East or Middle West for their plans anticipated eventual return to their Northwest coast homes. Spokane which was in Washington and which had by this time a community of at least 500 Japanese became a temporary resettlement area or 'straddle' area. This region is only several hundred miles from the Northwest Coast and was enough like the home regions to draw hundreds of temporary resettlers.

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<sup>64</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 110-11; Kazuo Ito, Issei, 932, 934.

<sup>65</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 167; Ito, Issei, 932, 934.

By the end of 1945, Spokane boasted a Japanese population of 2,500 or more; the increase was in large part due to the influx of resettlers coming out of camps and seeking temporary homes before moving back to the coast.<sup>66</sup>

Enroute to their former home in Auburn, Washington from an internment camp in Topaz, Utah in October 1945, Tetsu Tsuchida and her husband stopped in Spokane to visit several of their children who had resettled there. Tetsu's youngest son, Ben, who was attending Lewis and Clark High School at the time, remembered:

It was then that they decided that there was nothing in Auburn to go back to as we had lost everything during the war so they decided to live in Spokane. My brother Frank and I lived in a room in a hotel in downtown Spokane, Mae<sup>67</sup> was living with Florence<sup>68</sup> [at the Sunnyside Apartments] and my parents were living in an apartment near Lewis and Clark High School. In order to get the family together, Frank bought a house on Spokane Street near East 5<sup>th</sup>. My brother Tak came back from the war and Florence and he moved into an apartment on East 4<sup>th</sup> which was only a few blocks from our house. Finally, our family was able to live together. With the exception of my sister Lola who was still in Ogden, Utah, and Yukimi,<sup>69</sup> and my brothers Satoshi and Kiwamu who were still in the [U.S.] army in Japan.

The following excerpts from Tetsu's diary reflect the thoughts, feelings, and daily activities of a Japanese resettler family in Spokane during the immediate post-war period:

September 30, 1945: Sunday, Clear

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<sup>66</sup> Report, Committee on Resettlement of Japanese Americans, 6 July 1945, Box 15, Folder 2, Council of Churches of Greater Seattle, Accession No. 1358-7 (hereafter CCGS), University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, Washington; Report, Returning Japanese Housing Problem, 22 September 1945, Box 10, Folder 25, CCGS; Report, WRA-Relocation Committees for Wartime Evacuees, September 1942, Box 15, Folder 5, CCGS; Newsletter, "Resettlement Bulletin-'Finis?'," April 1946, Box 6, Folder "Japanese Relocation, 1942-45," Council of Churches, Washington and Northern Idaho, Accession Nos. 1567, 1567-1, 1567-2, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, Washington. All relocation centers had closed by May 1946. Daniels, *Concentration Camps*, 167. The WRA was officially discontinued June 30, 1946. Ito, *Issei*, 934. Ryokichi Nagasaka of Weiser, Idaho remembered "After the war was over, in November, 1945, a third of the Japanese residents returned to Wapato [Washington]." Ito, *Issei*, 685; JERS, W2.14, 5.

<sup>67</sup> Sister.

<sup>68</sup> Sister-in-law.

<sup>69</sup> Sister.



I am busy putting things in order. In the afternoon attended my final [Buddhist] church service in Topaz. Only 6 more days remain in my "Beloved Topaz." I am filled with mixed feelings of happiness, sadness, and a feeling of loneliness that I will miss this place.

October 5, 1945: Friday, Clear

Papa went and got the ticket for assistance money and salary. They came after the luggage and I gave them \$3. When I think that as of tonight it is "goodbye Topaz", it brings tears to my eyes.

October 7, 1945: Sunday, Clear

I slept late. Papa and Tatsuo-san went sightseeing around Ogden [Utah] and the farms. We departed Ogden at 12:05 at night. Again there were no seats and it was so cold that I was shivering. We changed trains at Pocatello [Idaho]. This time I had a seat. We changed our destination to Spokane so at Pendleton [Oregon] we bought our tickets. At 2:30 we got on the train again.

October 8, 1945: Monday, Clear

At Pendleton they disconnected the cars from those going to Portland. We passed by Ontario [Oregon] and Minnedoka. Today was a beautiful day. No matter how far we went the mountains and plains were all alike.

October 9, 1945: Tuesday, clear

Today there are tunnels every now and then like the Snake River tunnel. We arrived in Spokane at 8 o'clock in the morning. Mae was there to meet us. Went to Sunnyside [Apartments]<sup>70</sup> in a taxi. Called Hitoshi.<sup>71</sup> We had a meeting and decided to stay on in Spokane. Since Mae is going to the bank we went to Saeki-san and were able to rent a room. What a relief.

October 10, 1945: Wednesday, Clear

Mae went to the W.R.A. to ask them to not ship the freight to Auburn. Sent Natsuhara-sama a wire and \$20 to show our appreciation for their troubles. Sent \$1 to have package sent back to us.

October 12, 1945: Friday, Clear

On the way back from work Hitoshi goes to P[aul] Horiuchi-sama to look at a house and has supper and returns. Tomorrow he will go house hunting.

October 13, 1945: Saturday, Clear

Hitoshi took the afternoon off from work in order to ask Horiuchi-sama about a house for rent but the house was not very good so he gets a ride home. He asks

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<sup>70</sup> Sunnyside Apartments on Second Avenue were owned by Joe and Sumi Okamoto.

<sup>71</sup> Son.

the people working at the same place as he about the house on [5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and] Spokane Street. It is quite cheap and he thinks of maybe buying it.

October 15, 1945: Monday, Clear

Finally we decided to buy the Spokane Street house. In the evening Papa and Hitoshi went to look at it and paid \$150 for only the furniture. During the day, Hitoshi and Mae went and decided on what to buy and made a list.

October 18, 1945: Thursday, Clear

Mae went to W.R.A. to let them know that Papa is going to go to work in Idaho.

October 21, 1945: Sunday, Rain – Sleet

Went to see Papa off as he was going to go to work in Idaho. Kihara Jack-san was there so I was quite relieved.

October 22, 1945: Monday, Rain

Mae goes to the lawyer and tells them we will buy the house. Paid earnest money deposit of \$1,000. Banzai! Banzai!

October 23, 1945: Tuesday, Clear

At one o'clock in the afternoon went to pick up the house key. The former owners say they are leaving on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The W.R.A. had already sent our freight to Auburn so we have them send a wire.

October 28, 1945: Sunday, Clear

From early in the morning Ben and Hitoshi clean. Mae also came to help straighten things out. In the afternoon had Paul Horiuchi-sama move our belongings to our new address. We were all done by 3 o'clock.

October 29, 1945: Monday, Cloudy – Later Rain

Ben absents school in the morning and goes in the afternoon. Put an offering of flowers for the Hotokesama and told Hotokesama of our new residence. Cashed the \$50 money order received from Yukimi [daughter] at the Post Office. Bought drapes, shellac and groceries. On the way home had to wait 20 minutes for the bus and got soaking wet like a drowned rat.

November 30, 1945: Friday, Clear

The W.R.A. freight came. There was an unbelievable amount of magazines and cook books. The desk was broken and the compass, etc. were stolen. The sewing machine was also damaged quite a bit.

December 29, 1945: Saturday, Rain

Went to North Coast<sup>72</sup> with Lola to do some grocery shopping. On the way back stopped in at Florence's and Linda<sup>73</sup> was running a fever because of the vaccination. I stayed until 12 o'clock.

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<sup>72</sup> Japanese grocery store located at W. 27 Main Avenue.

December 31, 1945: Monday, Clear

Went to buy things for New Year's *gochiso*. Florence came and we all ate *soba* together. Received *mochigashi* from Florence so I gave it as offering to the Shinto and Buddhist altars in the place of *mochi*. A telegram came from Takeshi.<sup>74</sup>

By the end of 1945, the make up of the Spokane Japanese community was altered considerably because of the influx of evacuees and resettlers, like the Tsuchidas. These new residents brought with them diverse experiences and perspectives and were not always warmly welcomed by Spokane Japanese. However, evacuees and resettlers also helped expand the Spokane Japanese community to include new cultural organizations, businesses and professions in the post-World War II period.

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<sup>73</sup> Daughter and granddaughter, respectively.

<sup>74</sup> Son serving in the Army. *Gochiso*: a polite expression to give thanks. *Soba*: noodles made of buckwheat and wheat flour. *Mochigashi*: *Mochi* (rice cake) with or without sweet bean paste; usually eaten during New Year's.

Email, Ben Tsuchida to Missy Tsuchida, "Spokane," 30 March 2003; "Diary of Tetsu Tsuchida," photocopy of original in family's possession, JAWWIIC.

### CHAPTER III

#### SPOKANE'S JAPANESE COMMUNITY AFTER WORLD WAR II

While the evacuation and relocation program did not officially affect the Spokane Japanese community in a geographic sense, it did impact and change the makeup of the community, its businesses and occupations, and its social and religious organizations. The demographics of the community shifted greatly during the war years from one of tight-knit “old Spokane” families to a community which included evacuees from more cosmopolitan and integrated coastal areas. These years saw the birth of the Buddhist Church, the Spokane chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), and other Japanese cultural organizations. The community also transitioned from being led by the first generation to one headed by the second generation. *Nisei* made significant strides into white collar professions, which had not been open to them before the war. While many things changed for members of the Spokane Japanese community, other aspects of their lives remained much the same. Spokane Japanese still could not purchase and own property outside of the downtown core and adjacent areas, and the main businesses and occupations were in service industries and labor. The Japanese Methodist Church remained one of the strongest social and religious institutions within the community, but its primacy was challenged by Spokane's first Buddhist Church. The following sections will review the state of Spokane's Japanese community after World War II in terms of its demographics, businesses and occupations, and social and religious organizations.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

The make-up of the Spokane Japanese community changed in many ways, but also remained in a similar position in reference to the larger Spokane community. The number of Japanese residing in the Spokane area increased to six times the prewar number by 1945 and sustained over three times that number in 1946. The community became more diverse with people from western Washington, California, Oregon and Alaska; many of these people also came from more cosmopolitan and diverse communities. The “family” atmosphere decreased. The Japanese community was still not noticed much by the white majority. Japanese were still unable to purchase homes outside the prescribed color lines set by the Spokane Realty Board.

The evacuation and relocation program shifted significantly the demographics of the Japanese population in the United States. Before the war, almost 90% of the Japanese living in the U.S. resided on the West coast. In 1947, only 55% lived in coastal areas. This percentage increased slowly into the mid-century with 58% in 1950 and 69% in 1960. In the Spokane, the total population boomed during the war, growing by 27% to 155,000 in 1946. According to the 1946 Japanese Evacuation and Resettlement Study report, the Japanese population in the Spokane area grew exponentially during the war:

It is estimated that between 1943 and 1945 some 2500 Japanese Americans moved into the Spokane region. This estimate is slightly larger than official WRA statistics but it is generally accepted that these WRA statistics particularly for this area are very inaccurate. Hundreds of Japanese who relocated to other Mountain state areas moved into Spokane without contacting WRA. In addition, the first WRA office in Spokane did not have a high reputation amongst the evacuees and large numbers did not bother to contact the office. Then as the Japanese group grew larger, resettlers especially in 1945 largely ignored the local WRA office. Some of the Japanese in the area who worked with large numbers of resettlers put this estimate much higher than 2500.

While Spokane's Japanese population decreased 1946 from its peak in 1945, "Most observers ... felt that a much larger percentage would leave and that [the] Japanese population would dwindle fast. Thus far, the return has been slower than expected":

There is a small but steady trickle back [to the coast] going on constantly. Many resettlers still talk of going back to the West Coast. Since Seattle and Portland are only hours away, most of the former residents have had opportunity to revisit the Coast. The housing shortage and job situation at present brings many such prospectors back to Spokane. In many such cases return to the former area is placed two or three years in the future when things are more settled on the Coast. In the meantime these resettlers continue to buy property in Spokane.

The 1946 JERS report projected an additional 25-30% of the resettlers would eventually "drift back to the coast cities or areas from which they were originally evacuated."

According to the report, a group of about 500 to 600 would probably remain settled for the next five to ten years as "many who talk of going back will never do so." The report predicted about 1,000 Japanese in the Spokane area in 1947.<sup>1</sup>

The large influx of Japanese resettlers was not without its problems, however, and in the early resettlement period some "friction" developed between "old" Spokane Japanese and resettlers:

The old time Japanese were worried about their own status and the influx of resettlers appeared at first to be a serious threat to them. Then, too, in the very early days many young, single Nisei men drifted into the area and the oldtimers were afraid trouble would result. The local Japanese complained that the resettlers were lazy, were over aggressive and had lost all family solidarity. The resettlers accused the local Japanese of being ignorant, of lacking initiative, of being non-aggressive and not sticking up for their own rights. The resettlers on the whole tended to look down upon the Spokane Japanese and it was held that the only reason the local Japanese had settled here was because they couldn't compete with the coastal Japanese.

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<sup>1</sup> Roger Daniels, Concentration Camps, North America: Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II (Malabar, Fla.: Krieger Pub. Co., 1993), 166, 168. The percentage in 1960 was 69% percent. deYoung, J., "Japanese American Resettlement in the Spokane Area," September 16, 1946, p. 1, 6, 26-27. JERS, Microfilm reel 108, Folder W2.14 (hereafter JERS, followed by the file and page number).

According to a 1946 study published by Washington State College, the influx of resettlers caused an increase in “class feeling” among Spokane’s Japanese residents. “The real reason for the differences is probably that the presence of too many relocatees is a threat to the security of the other Japanese. It means keener competition for the few existing jobs, the focusing of the attention of Caucasians on them, and eventually a change in status.” In response, the relocatees “maintain that the previously established Japanese are ignorant, culturally stagnant, complacent, lacking in initiative, condescending to whites, and nonprogressive.” While the study admitted that Japanese in the “Intermountain Northwest” were “a somewhat stagnated cultural group,” he posits that their conservatism was probably due to a “desire for security [rather] than unwillingness to advance culturally or integrate with Caucasians.”<sup>2</sup>

By 1946, however, these two groups, the “old” Spokane Japanese and the resettlers, had merged and began cooperating in community projects. Both groups were represented in the newly-founded JACL chapter, which was led by local Spokane *Nisei*, and in the two main religious organizations, the Japanese Methodist Church and the Buddhist Church:

Within a year or so most of these differences had died down. The local Japanese business men profited greatly by the influx of resettlers and as more and more family groups came in the resettlers began to participate in the various Japanese community activities. The influx brought many other benefits besides economic to the oldtimers. A Buddhist church was established and the few old time Buddhists for the first time had a priest and services close at hand.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> JERS, W2.14, 27; Tolbert H. Kennedy, “Racial Tensions among Japanese in the Intermountain Northwest,” Research Studies of the State College of Washington, 14 (2) (June 1946), 149-50. Kazuma Hirata, writing to his daughter in June 1943 warned, “I learned that many peoples [*sic*] moved in Spokane and some of them are bad culture that are spoiling old peaceful groups. Protect our family.” Postcard Kazuma Hirata (unknown location, possibly Santa Fe, NM) to Michiho Hirata, “Communication #9,” 25 June 1943, Hirata Family Collection (Ms 202), Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Spokane, Washington (hereafter NWMAC/EWSHS).

<sup>3</sup> JERS, W2.14, 28.

Tensions within the Japanese community, as well as difficulties with the wider Spokane community, were attributed to the characteristics of the resettlers who left camps at the end of the war. According to the Washington State College study, “Much of the tension between Japanese and Caucasians, as well as among Japanese themselves, can be traced to the resettlement program. Early in this program, the more Americanized evacuees were resettled with a minimum of problems, but later removals experienced increasing difficulties in community adjustment.” In a speech given at the Minidoka Relocation Center late in the war, Dillon S. Meyer, head of the WRA reiterated the necessity of leaving the camp early:

A good many people, here and in other centers, are talking about staying for the duration. It won't be any easier after the war, it will be harder, for two reasons. One is, the longer you stay, the harder it is to make the move.... Second, the longer you stay, the better foothold you are giving your enemies to serve this whole thing up again ....

Indeed, resettlers encountered many problems in settling outside the camps. These included public hostility, boycotts, housing shortages, job discrimination, denial of business and professional licenses, extortionate insurance premiums, legal barriers, lack of personal funds and governmental assistance, and the loss of ambition and enterprise among Japanese because of their age, emotional upsets and idleness in centers. All of these factors, except for boycotts, were important in the resettlement period in the Inland Northwest. Additionally, some concerted efforts were made in coastal communities to prevent the return of Japanese resettlers. In Seattle, in particular, housing and job shortages made return to the city very difficult for resettlers, most of whom had few



financial resources besides the meager travel allowance granted by the WRA. Occasional outbreaks of violence also occurred.<sup>4</sup>

Relations between the Japanese community and the larger Spokane Caucasian community also suffered during the war period because of the evacuation and resettlement program. According to the 1946 JERS report, the Spokane community as a whole was quite conservative, evidencing stereotyped reactions towards minorities, including African Americans and Japanese Americans. "A Race Relations Council was formed during the war to deal with racial tensions that were mounting because of the influx of Negroes and Japanese into the region." Representatives from the Spokane Church Council, the YWCA, and welfare groups sat on the council, and the group wielded significant influence in community affairs. However, the council met only occasionally to discuss problems, and "on the whole appears to be a[n] ineffectual group."<sup>5</sup>

For resettlers, the disconnection from the larger Caucasian community was different from many of their pre-war coastal communities.

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<sup>4</sup> Kennedy, "Racial Tensions," 146, 147, 150; Speech [typescript] Dillon S. Meyer to Minidoka Relocation Camp Residents, Minidoka Project Gymnasium, 19 February 1945, 6, copy found in Whitworth College Archives, Spokane, Washington.

Mas Akiyama, a *Nisei*, remembered being assaulted in downtown Spokane during the war years: "I went down on Main Street there, right off of Bernard, and I run into a great big Norwegian fellow. Oh, he must have been a good six foot tall. And he says, "Oh, you dirty Jap," and he started to beat me up. And I got a bloody nose and fell to the ground, and there was a great big Russian, he saw me laying there and he came rushing over and he started beating up on this, on this Norwegian. And he knocked him down and ... kicking him, and I said, "My God, don't kill the guy." So, so we took off and left, you know, and he was still laying there. Then we were around the block, we saw all the police cars there. They were picking him off the street there, so we didn't get near there, we just took off. And I was very thankful for this Russian person -- I can't remember what his name was. He was from Ritzville, Washington, and I was very thankful to him." Mas Akiyama interview, video recording, 15 March 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Tom Ikeda, Densho Visual History Collection, Densho Digital Archive, "Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project," available from <http://www.densho.org>; Internet (hereafter Densho), accessed June 9, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> JERS, W2.14, 29.

Except in an economic sense there is little or no social contact with the larger Caucasian [*sic*] community. The pre-war Japanese group in Spokane was used to this type of relationship and are not bothered particularly by it. Many of the Northwest Coast Japanese, however, had much more contact with the Caucasian community and feel the difference in Spokane. It is partly because of this that they characterized Spokane as cold and unfriendly.

The local Japanese feel that the relationship with the larger community is better than ever. The resettler group still feels that Spokane is an unfriendly town. There is no discrimination in restaurants, movies, service establishments, and stores. But the resettlers point to such things as the rigid real estate segregated areas, the attitude of the VFW group and the anti-Japanese utterances of the mayor and city council during the war.

The Spokane community was also not used to seeing Japanese “who smoke, and drink and conduct themselves in the manner so characteristic, shall we say, of certain Los Angeles elements which we all know,” according to Mike Masaoka, president of the national JACL in 1942. Masaoka’s remarks reflected the cultural differences between local Nikkei and those who had come from the West Coast, particularly from urban areas.<sup>6</sup>

Even with these tensions, anti-Japanese movements were not successful in organizing the Spokane population against the Japanese. While there was anti-Japanese feeling, there was also little interest shown in the group as a whole by the larger Spokane community. The 1946 JERS report states that there was general indifference as long as the Japanese did not “encroach too closely on the larger communities’ horizon.” “As long as the Japanese businesses stay in certain categories where there is little competition

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<sup>6</sup> JERS, W2.14, 29, 30; Robert C. Sims, “The ‘Free Zone’ Nikkei: Japanese Americans in Idaho and Eastern Oregon in World War II,” in Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds., Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century (Seattle: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest in association with University of Washington Press, 2005), 247.

with Caucasian businesses, the large[r] community does not concern itself with the Japanese business group. The same holds true for residential distribution.”<sup>7</sup>

The one area in which Japanese were purposefully excluded from integration with the Spokane community was in the local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) chapter. Approximately 100 Nisei veterans lived in the Spokane area in 1946, including several members of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the American Veteran Committee and the American Legion World War II post. According to the 1946 JERS report, the Spokane VFW refused to admit Richard Naito, a wounded Nisei soldier, while he was a patient at an army hospital in Spokane. At about the same time, two other Nisei soldiers applied for membership with the local post, but were denied. Again, in May 1946, four Nisei soldiers were refused admittance. “A group of young World War II veterans within the [VFW] has attempted to break this discrimination but has not succeeded.” The VFW supported segregated posts, including a Chinese-American Cathay Post with about 25 members. In contrast, the Military Order of the Purple Heart’s adjutant, a *Nisei* veteran, noted that acceptance of segregated veterans groups would not help end discrimination by the VFW.<sup>8</sup>

Not all associations with the Caucasian community were negative, however. Seiko Edamatsu, a voluntary evacuee from Seattle, remembered being welcomed warmly by women from the Garden Springs community on the west side of Spokane. When she was expecting her first child in the late 1940s, her husband told her that some people

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<sup>7</sup> JERS, W2.14, 29.

<sup>8</sup> JERS, W2.14, 21-22.

would be visiting her that day. She expected them to come for dinner and was cleaning that afternoon:

So I was on my floor with my hair up in rollers and big as [a] house and scrubbing the floor. And a lady came to the door and she says, 'Is this the house where the shower is?' 'Shower? What shower?' And then she says, 'Well, the people are coming.' So I invited her in here. ... I had never met most of the neighbors, and they brought gifts, baby gifts. So it was an interesting experience. ... we were just country people, just plain country people, and they were so nice. Most of them were elderly ladies, but we had a great party. And that's how I met my neighbors....

Edamatsu's experience speaks to the "friendly" atmosphere in Spokane toward Japanese resettlers.<sup>9</sup>

As in the pre-war years, Japanese housing and neighborhoods continued to be concentrated near the downtown area, to the southeast. The most pressing problem for Japanese resettlers was the housing shortage caused by the influx of war workers into the area. In Spokane, it was

nearly impossible to find housing for most Japanese families. Only those which were eligible for government housing projects or who had sufficient money to purchase houses at greatly inflated prices have been able to find satisfactory locations. Local hostels have accommodated many Japanese temporarily, but they act only as a stopgap while relocatees seek housing and work.

One hostel run by the American Friends Service Committee and the Fellowship Center Committee operated in Spokane as of November 1945. The Federal Housing Authority did not provide housing for Japanese relocatees, and private organizations could provide

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<sup>9</sup> Seiko Edamatsu interview, tape recording, 14 October 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, Japanese American Alumni during World War II Collection, Whitworth College Archives, Spokane, Washington (hereafter JAWWIIC).

limited assistance because they were blocked by the “actions of vested interests or prejudiced individuals.”<sup>10</sup>

Many Japanese families lived in Government Housing projects, such as Victory Heights on Spokane’s west side, if their head of household was employed in an essential war industry, such as farm or railroad labor. When farm labor was removed from the list of qualifying employment, many Japanese changed occupations and began working for the railroad in order to qualify for wartime housing. One government housing project strictly excluded Japanese, but permitted African Americans in a segregated section. As more defense workers moved back East and soldiers demobilized, more space opened in the government housing projects, however, the Federal Housing Authority did not actively accept Japanese resettlers into these projects. In 1945 this housing project had 200 unoccupied units, and “Japanese workers were eligible for these units but the local officials refused admittance.” Another housing project, however, accepted both Japanese and African Americans and had no segregated areas.<sup>11</sup>

Japanese resettlers who did not qualify for the government housing projects were forced to rent or purchase homes at high prices. The Alien Land Law prohibited *Issei* from purchasing property, but their American-born children could. According to the 1946 JERS report,

Property values were still fairly low two or three years ago especially in the restricted areas. Today [the] property in this region like the rest of the town has increased from 25 to 45%. Since 1943 a small community of 50-60 families has grown up in a two or three block section surrounding the Japanese M.E. Church.

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<sup>10</sup> Kennedy, “Racial Tensions,” 147-8; Matsumoto, Toru. Beyond Prejudice: A Story of the Church and Japanese Americans (Friendship Press: New York, 1946), page ?.

<sup>11</sup> JERS, W2.14, 25; Kennedy, “Racial Tensions,” 148.

The Episcopal chapel and Buddhist chapel (also homes of ministers) are located in this section. Several blocks are solidly Japanese.

Historically, several Japanese families lived in the southeastern section of town, but because of the influx of relocatees, the area became more densely populated with Japanese families during the war years. The Tsuchida family purchased a home on Fifth Avenue and Spokane Street in this district in 1946. Mara Mihara's family purchased a home on south Chandler Street after the war; they could easily walk downtown to their jobs or to Lewis and Clark High School for school. Kazuma Hirata purchased a home on south Grant Street in 1944; the family continued to run their hotel on Trent Avenue until the 1960s and could easily travel to and from the hotel to their home. Kanichi Yonago lived on east Pacific Street during and after the war; his home was a gathering place for young people.<sup>12</sup>

As in the pre-war years, Japanese could only purchase or rent homes in certain areas of Spokane. These restrictions were also leveled at African Americans by the Spokane Realty Board.

Segregated areas were arbitrarily agreed upon by the Spokane Realty [B]oard. The area in which the M.E. church was located was one such area in which Japanese could purchase property. With the outbreak of war the local Realty [B]oard clamped even tighter restrictions on sale of real estate to Japanese. In 1945 no Japanese in Spokane could buy property until the proposed sale was reviewed by a special board set up by the Spokane Realty Board.

A circa 1950 brochure for the Manito Club Addition housing development located east of 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Grand Boulevard reflected the Spokane Realty Board's restrictive

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<sup>12</sup> Kennedy, "Racial Tensions," 148; JERS, W2.14, 24; Mara Mihara interview, video recording, 27 April 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006; Michiho Hirata Sakai interview, interview notes, 9 May 1981, Spokane, Washington, by Deborah Gallacci Wilbert, originals in possession of interviewer; Kanichi (Leo) Yonago interview, interview notes, 13 July 1981, Spokane, Washington, by Deborah Gallacci Wilbert, originals in possession of interviewer. See map, Appendix D.

policies. Its deed restrictions stated that “No race or nationality other than the White or Caucasian shall purchase any of these homes” and “A high standard of future building, together with protection from undesirable elements is assured by the Deed Restrictions.”<sup>13</sup>

Even with these housing restrictions, local Japanese residents and resettlers continued to purchase houses in Spokane. Local residents and resettlers realized that with the outbreak of war they might not be able to return to Japan in the near future, if ever. Many resettlers with investments in local businesses speculated they might not be leaving the inland northwest quickly:

The local residents were forced by the outbreak of war to make a decision as [to] whether they would remain in the U.S. or return to Japan after they retired. Many of the business people who had money to buy property had lived for years with the thought of going back to Japan when they retired. Most of them would probably not have gone back to Japan for their children and grandchildren were here, but until the war broke these Issei fondly dreamed of such a return. The war shook this dream apart. Many decided that they would invest money here. Then, too, the influx of resettlers had created more business and many made more money than ever before.<sup>14</sup>

By 1946, only about 1,200 to 1,500 Japanese were living in Spokane and the surrounding area. This decline in population was due to about 50% of the resettler population returning to the coast. According to one report, “Of the remaining group most of them would seem to be firmly rooted for the immediate present in Spokane.” Compared to Spokane’s 1940 Japanese population of about 300, this was an increase of

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<sup>13</sup> JERS, Folder W2.14, 23-24; Pamphlet, “Manito Club Addition,” [ca. 1950], Vertical File, NWMAC/EWSHS.

<sup>14</sup> JERS, W2.14, 23-24.

four to five times. These numbers remained relatively steady with 1,171 Japanese in Spokane County and 1,018 in the city by 1950.<sup>15</sup>

### BUSINESSES AND OCCUPATIONS

By 1946 significant changes had taken place in the Spokane Japanese business community. The number of service businesses and farming operations had doubled since 1940, mostly due to the influx of resettlers into the Spokane area. This growth was not without conflict, according to the 1946 JERS report, which reported widespread discrimination during the first year of the war until a labor shortage occurred. Some of the greatest change occurred in service businesses, such as hotels, restaurants and laundries, as well as in farming operations and in the number of Japanese railroad workers and white collar professionals. Japanese gained ground in the produce business and as white collar workers. The majority, however, remained within service businesses, railroad labor, and farming.<sup>16</sup>

By 1946, Japanese-operated service businesses in Spokane were doing well. Many of those who had moved to the city during the war and started service businesses planned to stay in Spokane for the immediate future and not return to the coast. Before the war, about 20 service businesses existed; in 1946, between 70 and 75 service-business operators ran hotels, restaurants, laundries, and other businesses downtown. Most of

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<sup>15</sup> JERS, W2.14, 6; Bertha Fegan, "Japanese-American History and Culture of the Spokane Area: Population Growth and Decline," n.d., 1, Vertical File, Northwest History Room, Spokane Public Library, Spokane, Washington. The total Japanese population in the State of Washington was 9,615 in 1950.

<sup>16</sup> JERS, W2.14, 16.



these businesses served mixed or all-Caucasian clientele, but a few catered strictly to the Japanese community.<sup>17</sup>

While many service business operators found Spokane a successful location, there were difficulties in obtaining business licenses. “Japanese aliens were not granted business licenses until after September 1, 1945 and all business[es] established during the war had nominally *Nisei* operators. In actuality, however, these businesses were *Issei* controlled and operated. Licenses were issued in names of *Nisei* members of [the] family.” Discriminatory practices also relegated Japanese to operating service-type businesses such as hotels, rooming houses, cafes and hand laundries, because they could not obtain leases for other types of businesses. As before the war, most of these businesses were located near railway lines in the “Skid Row” area of town. According to the JERS report, the end of the war lessened restrictions on business licenses and after September 1945, Japanese aliens, not just Japanese American citizens, were allowed to take out business licenses. This also made it easier for *Nisei* to start their own businesses independent of their *Issei* parents.<sup>18</sup>

The hotel trade developed significantly during the war years. According to the 1946 JERS report, the number of small Japanese-run hotels increased dramatically from about half a dozen at the beginning of the war to twenty-three in 1946:

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<sup>17</sup> JERS, W2.14, 11, 26.

<sup>18</sup> JERS, W2.14, 10-11. “It was rumored that the local Japanese sent a delegation to the city council indicating that the local group felt it was allright [sic] for the city council to bar the newcomers from securing business licenses. This rumor was never substantiated.” JERS, W2.14, 27-8.

Mas Akiyama worked at the Mount Fuji Tavern on Bernard Street before the war; just after the war started, their liquor license was taken away, and they were forced to close: “They said it was subterfuge, that ... ‘You should have never gotten a license to sell liquor.’” Mas Akiyama interview, video recording, 15 March 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Tom Ikeda, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006.

Two or three of these hotels are medium priced hotels of good size. These few larger hotels cater almost exclusively to a transient Caucasian trade. Several of these are owned by Japanese individuals who also hold large real estate holdings back on the West Coast. These owners have returned to the West Coast and operate these Spokane hotels through managers.

Most of the Japanese-operated hotels, however, were “small, semi-rooming house affairs.” While a few of the hotels were occupied exclusively by Japanese, most had mixed clientele, including Caucasian railroad workers and retired railroad pensioners. Because of their location on or near Main Street, a few blocks from the Union and Great Northern stations, the hotels attracted many railroad workers and transients.<sup>19</sup>

Several Japanese-operated hotels profited from the influx of resettlers into the city in 1944, 1945 and 1946. Many resettlers leaving camp stayed at the Clem because it was owned and operated by Japanese proprietors Kazuma and Jun Hirata. As a teenager, Kazue Yamamoto stayed at the Clem with her family just after leaving Minidoka Relocation Center in September 1945:

...we stayed there three months. And that's ... five of us in one room. ... Most of the camp people all stayed at Clem Hotel. I don't know why .... Maybe Mr. Hirata knew a lot of people .... It wasn't a nice hotel, that's for sure. I remember it wasn't a very clean place. ... But that's another no-choice, we had to stay there.

After three months, Kazue and her family moved to the Insley Apartments on East Pacific Avenue where they rented a one-bedroom apartment with a small kitchen and living room from the Mukai family, who were also resettlers.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, with the approximately twenty-five percent increase in Spokane's population during the war years, rooms of any sort were in high demand. Even small

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<sup>19</sup> JERS, W2.14, 8.

<sup>20</sup> Kazue Yamamoto interview, video recording, 8 June 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Densho, accessed 11 September 2006.

leased hotels “are bringing a fair return on the initial investment. Several local operators have invested large sums of money in businesses. One hotel operator in addition to running two hotels has a café and a pool room also under his management. The operators of these hotels for the present at least are making money in Spokane and have no immediate plans of leaving.”<sup>21</sup>

While the boom in business was good for many Japanese hotel operators, including resettlers, it was not easy to run a business as a Japanese person during the war. Kinshichi and Hisano Migaki opened a 120 room hotel in May 1941. When the war began they were told that the city would not issue them a license to operate a hotel because they were “Japs.” They kept the business open, but hired whites to work at the hotel and tried to “keep our faces out of public view as much as possible.” In fall 1943, the Spokane City Council received a petition signed by 249 residents living near 1626 East Pacific Avenue, protesting the sale of property in the neighborhood to “alien Japanese.” The petition was received three days after a complaint regarding the issuance of a hotel license to a Japanese evacuee who planned to manage the Temple Court Hotel. Seiko Edamatsu, whose father was the evacuee in question, remembered vividly the conflict with the City Council:

...when all the Japanese that were running hotels in downtown Spokane, even if they had a lease, their lease was taken away from them. And they [the City] said that they wanted those hotels for wartime housing. And they never used it for that. They just remodeled the hotel and went back to renting it out. So quite a few Japanese hotel owners were losing their hotels. So my father was looking for another place. And there used to be a hotel called Temple [C]ourt Hotel on Riverside and Washington, ... and it was a good-sized nice hotel. ... [T]his commissioner, his name was Colburn ... he was safety commissioner on the city council. He sent his deputies to retrieve the license, and my brother-in-law gave it to him, which he never should have, because they already paid for it and he had it

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<sup>21</sup> JERS, W2.14, 8-9.

in his hands. So Mr. Blaire [Seiko's employer and a local attorney] felt the injustice of this and so he asked for a special hearing of city council. ... [T]hen he took me down as an interpreter for Dad .... They told them about my dad's background and everything and they all felt there was nothing illegal or unpatriotic about my dad running the business. So they all, this whole city council agreed, except this safety commissioner Colburn who had retrieved the license. He said that, "We don't want anymore Jap money in downtown Spokane." And that's what he said. And my dad was livid with anger. He said, "It's just because this is such a small town!" So the next morning, after he was rejected, he packed his bag and climbed on the bus to get to Chicago, Illinois.

Once in Chicago, Seiko's father located a hotel to manage and called the rest of his family, except Seiko, to help run the hotel.<sup>22</sup>

This incident was not the only one that occurred with regard to licenses for Japanese businesses. In 1945, when many Japanese were resettling out of camps and coming to Spokane, a similar conflict erupted:

It was partly in connection with the increase in Japanese businesses that the Mayor of Spokane and the City Council early in 1945 publicly made strong anti-Japanese statements. ... the Mayor with City Council backing released to the newspapers a statement to the effect that "There were too many damn Japs in Spokane. If Spokane is being made a mecca for Japs who are not wanted elsewhere, we don't like it and we won't stand for it." At the same time, however, the City Council admitted that Japanese citizens would have to be granted business licenses on the same hotels as any other citizen.<sup>23</sup>

Instances such as these highlight the difficulties faced by resettlers in the inland northwest.

In addition to hotels, resettlers also started service businesses such as restaurants and laundries. Located in the same area of town as the Japanese-operated hotels, the restaurants and cafes opened by resettlers catered to both Japanese and Caucasian

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<sup>22</sup> Kazuo Ito, *Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America*, trans. Shinichiro Nakamura and Jean S. Gerard (Seattle: Executive Committee for Publication of *Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America*, 1973), 532; "Official Gazette of the City of Spokane, Washington," Vol. 33, No. 41, October 6, 1943, Spokane City Hall, Spokane, Washington; Seiko Edamatsu interview, tape recording, 22 September 2002, Spokane, Washington, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC.

<sup>23</sup> JERS, W2.14, 11.

clientele. The number of Japanese-operated eateries increased from about two in 1942 to 10 in 1946. A few of the cafes specialized in Japanese food and served mainly Japanese customers, while the majority served American and Chinese-American food and their main customers were Caucasian railroad workers. Most of these establishments were run by families; the *Issei* father and mother worked in the kitchen or behind the counter while the *Nisei* son worked as manager and cashier. While many *Nisei* girls worked as waitresses during the war years, most of the waitressing jobs by 1946 were filled by *Issei* women, often relatives, whose husbands worked on railroads or farms.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to hotels and restaurants, other Japanese-operated service businesses sprang up during the war, including laundries, a dyeworks and cleaning establishment, a Japanese bakery, a Japanese-operated garage and fender works, and a radio repair shop. Japanese-operated hand laundries “mushroomed” during the war years. Before the war about three or four hand laundries were in existence; by 1946, twenty-three Japanese-operated hand laundries catered to lower class white clientele, including transient workers. Most of these laundries were family businesses, with about three or four family members working at various tasks at the laundry. Located nearby were about four Japanese barbers, several grocery stores, one drug store, and several pool halls. Most of these businesses were located near Main Avenue just west of Division Street in the “Skid Row” area of town.<sup>25</sup>

While many businesses experienced success during the war years, it was a period of discrimination. Seki Maeda, a Spokane *Issei*, remembered that her barber shop was

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<sup>24</sup> JERS, W2.14, 9.

<sup>25</sup> JERS, W2.14, 10-11.

affected adversely by World War II. Her Caucasian customers stayed away; one day she only made 65 cents. Similarly, Leo Yonago, a Spokane *Issei*, remembered the war years were bad for his tailoring business. It was dangerous to go downtown, so he stayed home and did not go to work at his downtown tailor shop. He left his machines in the shop, and gradually returned at the end of the war. He lived off his savings during these years.<sup>26</sup>

Railroad labor was a significant type of employment for Japanese men coming out of internment camps. "According to relocation office estimates at one time during the war years some 500 Nisei and Issei were employed by these transcontinental railroads." Along with farm labor, railroad labor attracted large numbers of resettlers because "Both were essential war jobs and draft exempt. Holders of such jobs were also eligible for the war housing projects and these jobs carried housing assurance which non-essential jobs lacked." Most Japanese railroad employees were section gang workers. Another sizeable group worked in the local railroad baggage and mail rooms.<sup>27</sup>

Like railroad work, farming also provided an incentive for Japanese to relocate to Spokane. Before the war, about 25 Japanese farm families operated farms on the outskirts of the city. Resettlers with capital leased or bought farms and by 1946 about 55 to 60 Japanese farmers leased or owned small farms in the Spokane area. About 40% of the total group owned their farms, with the remainder leased. All the farms produced vegetables on about five acres of land. The farms were also irrigated, mostly from small creeks or wells. In the Hangman Creek area, about ten Japanese produce farms were

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<sup>26</sup> Seki Maeda interview, interview notes, 13 August 1981, Spokane, Washington, by Deborah Gallacci Wilbert, originals in possession of interviewer; Kanichi (Leo) Yonago interview, interview notes, 13 July 1981, Spokane, Washington, by Deborah Gallacci Wilbert, originals in possession of interviewer.

<sup>27</sup> JERS, W2.14, 7-8.

developed “from wasteland.” Several hundred farm laborers also moved into the area and worked on both Japanese and Caucasian farms.<sup>28</sup>

During the war, a significant shift occurred in the Spokane produce market. Once dominated by Italians, Japanese farmers controlled ninety percent of the produce market by 1946. Only one Italian farmer successfully raised vegetables in the area. “To all purposes, however, he operates as a Japanese farmer for he sells most of his produce to the Japanese Association.” As for the Japanese farms:

Much of the produce is locally consumed. The Japanese vegetable associations supply vegetables to all the big hotels, big grocery and fruit and vegetable stores as well as the small local merchants. Some farms contract to supply certain stores only. For example, the Safeway Grocery Chain has contracts with two Japanese farmers who grow only for the Safeway Chain.

Because the market was controlled by the Japanese growers association, there was little competition between Japanese and Caucasian growers, as there were in other parts of the West. Almost all Spokane’s Japanese farmers made money during the war years, including the 1945-46 season, when losses were anticipated. According to the 1946 JERS report, there was no indication that the number of Japanese farmers would decrease in the late 1940s due to people returning to the coast. Some effort was made to boycott vegetable farmers in Hangman’s Creek near the end of the war. The effort failed, mainly due to lack of bad feeling toward the Japanese in the area, since many were farming there before the war. During this period, the Inland Northwest was also experiencing a food shortage, which may explain why boycotting of producers was unsuccessful.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> JERS, W2.14, 7. Both pre-war Spokane Japanese farmers and resettlers tended to purchase farmland by 1946, rather than lease it. JERS, W2.14, 14.

<sup>29</sup> JERS, W2.14, 12, 13-14, 16; Kennedy, “Racial Tensions,” 147. Kazuma Hirata, writing to his daughter in October 1942 remarked on the good business the Japanese Vegetable Growers Association was doing that year. Letter Kazuma Hirata (Camp Livingston, LA) to Michiho Hirata, “Communication #69,” 3 October 1942, 1, Hirata Family Collection (Ms 202), NWMAC/EWSHS.

By 1946, the work opportunities for Japanese and Japanese Americans were very good and “far better than existed before the war” in Spokane. However, Japanese Americans still found great difficulty in obtaining professional and white collar jobs. Job opportunities for *Nisei* increased beginning in 1942: “Some of this very likely would have occurred regardless of whether resettlers had come into the area as a result of war time conditioners. But those resettlers especially the whitecollar workers demonstrated the ability of the Nisei. As a result local Nisei are now working in jobs that were formerly closed to them.” By 1946, one pharmacy student was employed by a drug company, an “event that was unheard of before the war.” A dentist, an attorney, an accountant, an architect, and an insurance broker opened offices in downtown Spokane by 1949.<sup>30</sup>

Difficulties for Japanese professionals, however, did occur during the war years. Three *Issei* doctors settled for short periods in Spokane during the war. One in particular was prominent in one of the Northwest coastal cities and part of his former clientele was Caucasian:

His experience with the local authorities is indicative of the sentiment of the larger professional community. The Spokane County Medical Association refused to accept him for membership. Reasons given for this refusal were based on technicalities. One of the religious hospitals refused to accept a patient if this Japanese doctor handled the case. He was only able to secure office space in [an] undesirable location. Yet this man was one of the better known doctors in Seattle. Part of his former practise [*sic*] had been Caucasian [*sic*]. The other Japanese doctors ran into the same type of discrimination. Part of this seems to have been professional jealousy [*sic*] on the part of one prominent Spokane doctor who previously had a corner on all the local Japanese trade and also on the trade of the railroad pensioners who inhabited the Japanese hotels.

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<sup>30</sup> JERS, W2.14, 17, 28; Zenbei Nikkeijin j<sup>u</sup>shoroku [The New Japanese American News] (Rafu-shi : Shin Nichi-Bei Shinbunsha, 1949), 466; JERS, W2.14, 15-17.



The Japanese doctor, as well as the two other *Issei* doctors, returned to the West Coast as soon as the ban was lifted in 1945.<sup>31</sup>

One area in which *Nisei* made great strides was in the secretarial field. Before the war, Spokane business colleges produced several *Nisei* secretaries and stenographers, but like the pharmacy students, they could not get jobs in Spokane. By 1946, the demand for *Nisei* secretaries was so great as to end this type of discrimination. Due to the shortage of Caucasian secretaries because of defense work, *Nisei* secretaries were employed at the YWCA, church organizations, and the local school district. Some citizens protested the practice, but the need for secretarial labor was too pressing. According to the 1946 JERS report, "At present, the demand for *Nisei* secretarial help cannot be met by the Japanese group. All the qualified local *Nisei* secretaries [sic] are working and several jobs are available. Two or three *Nisei* have been placed as clerks in the better stores which [is] a far cry from the pre-war days." *Nisei* girls also found employment cleaning houses: "The South Hill was [a] wealthy area, and ... back in the '45 and '50 era, there was a ... Japanese girl doing housework in every other home up there. [T]hat's all we could do is do housework after we came out of camp, there was no jobs. So I remember ten kids that were working up there doing housework." While housework jobs provided income, they were also considered service industries.<sup>32</sup>

Some *Nisei* also worked in local defense plants. For the most part they were accepted readily, however, in 1942, one union did threaten to strike if Japanese were

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<sup>31</sup> JERS, W2.14, 16.

<sup>32</sup> JERS, W2.14, 16-17; Kazue Yamamoto interview, video recording, 8 June 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Megan Asaka, Densho, accessed 11 September 2006. Tetsu Tsuchida, an *Issei*, cleaned for a *hakujin* (Caucasian) woman, where she learned how to use a vacuum cleaner, Diary of Tetsu Tsuchida, 4 October 1948, JAWWIIC.

employed by the plant. *Nisei* working in other jobs were also fairly readily accepted. A *Nisei* employed as head baker at one of the large hotels in Spokane could not become a member of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) union, but her relationship with her co-workers was nonetheless excellent.<sup>33</sup>

### SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

By 1946, the social and religious organizations that served the Japanese community in Spokane had expanded and diversified. Most activities still revolved around the Japanese Methodist Church, but its influence lessened in the face of a burgeoning Buddhist Church. A small congregation of Episcopalians also existed for a short time. In terms of social groups, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) took the lead in providing activities for *Nisei*, who had taken over leadership duties for the community. While *Issei* groups existed, they were not as powerful as before the war, and tended to be social organizations, and not political in nature.

Just after the end of World War II, the largest religious organization for the Japanese American community in Spokane was still the Japanese Methodist Church. Membership in the church rose to almost 150 during the latter war years, and the church remained the center of religious and social activity. While the church retained a Caucasian minister from 1939 through mid-1945, a Japanese minister was assigned to the church in the fall of 1945. Other organizations that proved somewhat competitive with the church included a group of Episcopalians and the newly-formed Buddhist Church.

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<sup>33</sup> JERS, W2.14, 17.

During the war years, the Japanese Methodist Church saw an increase in membership, as well as an increase in services to resettlers. “The large numbers of Japanese Americans that poured into Spokane created many problems especially in the fields of social activity of recreation for the *Nisei* group. The YWCA sponsored a few activities but most of the social life revolved around the M.E. church young people’s groups.” Even as early as 1943, the church reported increased “opportunities and responsibilities to the Mission, for the Japanese population of Spokane has increased greatly as a result of the government plan for resettlement of loyal Japanese. There are increased problems, too, and some of our best people have had to suffer from prejudice and injustice.” The increase in the Japanese population, however, brought more *Nisei* to the area, which increased the number of people attending the Young People’s Church to between 60 and 100 each week; 25 attended the Japanese service.<sup>34</sup>

As more people left the relocation centers, Spokane’s Japanese population continued to increase:

Among the newcomers are some who are released on paroll (sic). Your pastor is cooperating with Immigration authorities by acting as paroll (sic) officer for several. Some of our more ambitious young people are moving to the Mid-West and East. While they can make a living in Spokane, they find the door closed to opening up business of their own and to government and war jobs. Further east they find these opportunities open to them.

Church attendance continued to grow, with 90 attending weekly English-language services and about 40 attending the Japanese-language services by the end of 1944. By May of 1945, the church reported over 200 members. Attendance remained steady

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<sup>34</sup> JERS, W2.14, 19; “The Spokane Japanese Methodist Mission,” [1943], 1, Box 1, Highland Park United Methodist Church Records, Whitworth College Archives, Spokane, Washington (hereafter HPUMC).

through the end of 1945 with about 70 to 80 attending the English-language service and about 60 attending the Japanese-language service. The increase in Japanese-language service attendance in 1945 may be due to the demographic of people who left the relocation centers closer to the final deadline; these tended to be less “Americanized” and usually of the first generation. The church benefited from the influx of resettlers in many ways. A Sunday School Orchestra formed and “Mr. Sato, formerly a member of the Seattle Church” took on the responsibility of coordinating an *Issei* choir. The community also sent care packages to the relocations centers. “An old resident was of the following opinion...: ‘This church is now in her full blossom.’”<sup>35</sup>

The Methodist Church connected the Spokane Japanese community and the resettlers to some of their greatest allies. Reverend John B. Cobb led the church from 1939 until 1945. As a former missionary to Japan, Cobb spoke fluent Japanese and was often called upon to interpret for Japanese and city and federal officials. He traveled several times to Missoula, Montana to assist in the Department of Justice hearings there. When Kazuma Hirata and Hugh Kasai were released in 1944, Cobb served as Kasai’s sponsor. Both Cobb and his wife served as surrogate parents for the Nisei living in Spokane as evacuees or resettlers. After her parents moved to Chicago, Seiko Edamatsu remembered Mrs. Cobb hosted a groom’s dinner for she and her husband. They acted like “mother and father and helped us. ... they were very, very good to all the Japanese

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<sup>35</sup> “Report of John B. Cobb, Pastor of the Spokane Japanese Meth. Church, Aug. 7, 1944,” 7 August 1944, 1, Box 1, HPUMC; “The Spokane Japanese Methodist Mission,” [1943], 1, Box 1, HPUMC; “Report on the Spokane Japanese Mission,” 1 May 1944, 1, Box 1, HPUMC; “Report of John B. Cobb to the Spokane Japanese Mission Board,” 7 May 1945, 1, Box 1, HPUMC; “The Spokane Japanese Methodist Mission,” [Fall 1945], 1, Box 1, HPUMC.

that came in from the coast and made all of us feel welcome.” Mr. and Mrs. Cobb were fondly remembered for their kindness more than thirty years later:

We will remember for our entire lives the favors Mr. and Mrs. Cobb showed us at such times. They gave our children free tickets to the playground. They helped us with a kind of care more for than our own parents could have done. We thank them because with their help we could continue our business even during the war years in spite of our coming from the enemy nation. We take off our hats to their help of each of us whether we were of the Church or not.<sup>36</sup>

By the fall of 1945 leadership in the church was transferred from Reverend Cobb to Reverend Taro Goto. “Until the evacuation, he [Taro Goto] was pastor of the San Francisco Japanese Methodist Church. Since then he has been in the Central Utah Relocation Center, Denver, and, Ontario, Oregon. Having suffered humiliation and discomfort of life behind the barbed wire, he has a deep understanding of and sympathy with Japanese evacuees who are coming into Spokane.” This was a critical period for the Japanese community in Spokane as “On January 1<sup>st</sup> the Government closes the Relocation Centers and our people must find homes. Many are coming to Spokane until they can decide on the future. So the church ministers to many transients.”<sup>37</sup>

The connection between the Japanese Methodist Church and the Central Methodist Church provided support and assistance during the war years and into the post-

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<sup>36</sup> Seiko Edamatsu remembered Cobb speaking Japanese with a Southern accent; Seiko Edamatsu interview, tape recording, 14 October 2002, by Rose Sliger, JAWWIIC; Ito, Issei, 684; Seiko Edamatsu interview, 14 October 2002, JAWWIIC; Takaichi and Kikue Hayashi in Ito, Issei, 683.

Cobb, along with Mrs. Butler, also assisted Jun Hirata, the wife of Kazuma Hirata, when she was left to run a 130-room hotel by herself in 1941: “During the war, my husband, Kazuma Hirata, was arrested as an enemy alien. Since we were running a hotel with 130 rooms, it was inconvenient for me when my husband went away. One day an official came and said, ‘I’d like to talk with you confidentially.’ So I led him into a room. He kindly said, ‘You just be in trouble because your husband is taken away. Tell me if there is anything that I can do for you. I’ll help you as much as possible.’ At first I suspected that ‘even the devil might have tears in his eyes,’ but later I realized that all of this was arranged thoughtfully by Mrs. Butler and Mr. Cobb. And was I thankful to them!” Jun Hirata in Ito, Issei, 684-5.

<sup>37</sup> “The Spokane Japanese Methodist Mission,” [Fall 1945], 1, Box 1, HPUMC.

war period. According to the 1946 JERS report, “The Caucasian Methodist group sponsored a hostel for the resettlers and tried to meet other needs of the group.”<sup>38</sup> From all accounts, the Central Methodist Church was the only church that actively tried to assist the Japanese:

A Church Council exists and this Council did a little ground work among the various pastors. In general, however, the church groups except for the Methodist group did little actual work for the resettlers. Resettlers who attended church services were treated politely but there was apparently little effort made to encourage Japanese Americans to become members of Caucasian church groups. This attitude of the local Christian church groups seems [in] sharp contrast to the attitudes [sic] of church groups in the Middle West and East. A general pattern of indifference on [the] part of the local church groups seems to have been the case. Probably this indifference has been [the] result of ignorance of various problems that existed.<sup>39</sup>

Several people involved with the above-mentioned “Methodist group” were “influential and sympathetic” Caucasians who had served the Japanese Mission for years. They included Mrs. Alfred D. Butler and Katherine Clausen.<sup>40</sup>

Mrs. Alfred D. Butler served on the Japanese Mission Board of the Central Methodist Church for many years prior to the war. She coordinated a kindergarten that provided childcare for working *Issei* parents. One *Issei* later remembered that “whenever running into any of us on the street, she spoke warmly to us,” but was referred to by some local residents as a “white Jap.” Katherine Clausen worked before the war teaching Sunday School to *Nisei* living outside the city of Spokane. Affiliated with the Catholic church and the Japanese Methodist Mission, Clausen sponsored some Japanese resettlers

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<sup>38</sup> JERS, W2.14, 19.

<sup>39</sup> JERS, W2.14, 18-19.

<sup>40</sup> Deborah Ann Gallacci Wilbert, “A History of the Formation of the Japanese American Community in Spokane, Washington, 1890-1941,” Master’s Thesis, Washington State University, Pullman, 1982, 100-101.

during the war. She checked on them weekly and reported to the authorities. She remembered later using these visits to provide moral support to the Japanese she knew.<sup>41</sup>

While the Methodist Church remained the primary religious and social gathering place for Spokane's Japanese community during and after World War II, a small Episcopal congregation existed for a short time. During the war a Japanese Episcopal minister was assigned to Spokane to work with resettlers. A small congregation of about 25 *Issei* and *Nisei* formed and met at the minister's home. By 1946, however, the Episcopal minister was awaiting reassignment to a different area, and a short time later the formal Episcopal congregation died out.<sup>42</sup>

By late 1945 or early 1946 the Methodist Church's monopoly in the Japanese community was tested by the advent of a Buddhist Church:

Sad News. We have always been so happy that our church was the center of all the Japanese activities in Spokane. But that can no longer be said. The Buddhists have purchased an old residence [*sic*] and are holding services. They have regular meetings for Sunday School, youth group, and evening services. They have had several weddings and funerals. In this land of religious freedom there seems to be little that we can do except to support more diligently by our prayers our Japanese Christian brethren. This new movement is a direct challenge to us for more consecrated service to this minority group.

Eryo Terao, a Buddhist monk from Seattle who was interned at Minidoka, served as the founder and first priest. Services were conducted at his home at 625 South Cowley Street, and membership was made up mostly of people from Seattle and California, although "the few old time [Spokane] Buddhists for the first time had a priest and

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<sup>41</sup> Ito, *Issei*, 682-3, 673.

<sup>42</sup> JERS, W2.14, 19.

"Bishop Reifsnider (former missionary) and Rev. Tsukamoto, both Episcopalians, were here Aug. 16. The latter preached for us in Japanese. The bishop preached in the Cathedral in Japanese on Sunday evening." "Report of John B. Cobb, Pastor of the Spokane Japanese Meth. Church, Aug. 7, 1944," 7 August 1944, 1, Box 1, HPUMC.

services close at hand.” Terao remained the priest for 16 years. In addition to religious services, the church held a Young Buddhists Association (YBA) picnic and showed Japanese-language movies.<sup>43</sup>

While the Methodist and Buddhist Churches provided for much of the religious and social activities of the Spokane Japanese community, a recently-formed chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) also provided for the social life of *Nisei* and *Issei*. Organized in 1946, Spokane’s JACL may or may not have been directly linked to the pre-war Japanese American Citizens Club (JACC). An overall Council was set up which included representatives from the *Issei* and *Nisei* sections of the community, and also several Caucasian professional and businessmen. In addition, an *Issei* JACL supporter’s group was organized. A JACL picnic in June 1946 drew a crowd of 500 from Spokane and the vicinity.<sup>44</sup>

According to the 1946 JERS report, “JACL seems to be the important coming group here and its success will be due to dynamic and responsible local leadership.” The formation of a JACL chapter met with some resistance among the region’s Japanese. “Most of the [Spokane] Nisei are Northwest residents and remember the pre-evacuation leadership of the Northwest JACL. However, most of the Northwest JACL leaders have now relinquished positions of national office. The present secretary of JACL who is

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<sup>43</sup> “The Spokane Japanese Methodist Mission,” 26 January 1946, 1, Box 1, HPUMC; JERS, W2.14, 28; Wilbert, 111-112; Diary of Tetsu Tsuchida, 27 April 1947 and 11 August, 1946, JAWWIIC.

According to JERS, W2.14, 18 and Kennedy, “Racial Tensions,” 150, divisions within the Spokane Japanese community included those between evacuees and non-evacuees, and between Christians and Buddhists: “Christian Japanese, who are in the majority in the Intermountain Northwest, believe that Buddhists will never become Americanized, maintaining that, so long as they cling to highly formal Buddhist beliefs, their real loyalty must be in some measure to the Japanese Empire. ... Whether true or not, it creates dissension and tension among an already disturbed minority.”

<sup>44</sup> JERS, W2.14, 20; Diary of Tetsu Tsuchida, 21 July 1946, JAWWIIC.



often criticized by Nisei was well received by the group on a recent visit here.” The Spokane chapter also made the decision to organize its own chapter rather than combine with the Snake River Valley JACL because it felt that the geographic distance was too great to make the group a cohesive whole, although the communities had much in common.<sup>45</sup>

The formation of the JACL chapter signaled the increased leadership role played by *Nisei* in Spokane. With the disbanding in 1941 of the Japanese Association and the Japanese Language School, both *Issei*-led organizations, the power structure in the community shifted to the *Nisei*. While *Issei* social groups, such as the women’s club (*fujinkai*), continued to exist, the *Issei* never recovered their pre-war roles as community figure heads.<sup>46</sup>

As the Spokane Japanese population grew, it became more diverse, which was not without tension. While some *Nisei* broke into white collar professions, the majority of the Japanese population remained within service or labor industries. The formation of a Buddhist Church challenged the dominance of the Japanese Methodist Church and the leadership of the community was transferred from the first to the second generation. By

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<sup>45</sup> JERS, W2.14, 20. Northwest JACL leadership was criticized because they aided the FBI in locating Japanese, usually *Issei*, whom they considered “suspicious.” Daniels, “The Exile and Return of Seattle’s Japanese,” Pacific Northwest Quarterly (Fall 1997): 168-9; deYoung, J., “Japanese American Resettlement in the Boise Valley and Snake River Valley,” September 30, 1946, p. 14. JERS, Microfilm reel 107, Folder W2.04 (hereafter JERS followed by the folder and page number). The Spokane Japanese American Citizens Club (JACC) was active throughout the war years, sponsoring activities, like a basketball tournament organized in 1945. Program, “J.A.C.C. Basketball Tournament,” 7 and 10 March 1945, Spokane Japanese American Community Collection, NWMAC/EWSHS.

<sup>46</sup> Wilbert, 109-110; Mas Akiyama interview, video recording, 15 March 2006, Spokane, Washington, by Tom Ikeda, Densho, accessed 9 June 2006. The 1949 New Japanese American News Year Book lists only two out of six community organizations which could have been led by *Issei*. Zenbei Nikkeijin jūshoroku [The New Japanese American News] (Rafu-shi : Shin Nichi-Bei Shinbunsha, 1949), 465-6.

the end of the 1940s, the Spokane Japanese community had undergone a tremendous change due to the influx of resettlers and evacuees to the inland northwest.

## CONCLUSION

Spokane's Japanese community was forever changed and shaped by the events of the World War II era. While the larger narrative of evacuation and resettlement did not necessarily apply to Spokane in the strictest sense, the Japanese community was still changed in terms of demographics, businesses and occupations and social and religious organizations.

The Spokane Japanese community grew from one of about 300 "old Spokane" Japanese, to a community of over 2,500, which included evacuees and resettlers from Washington, Oregon, California and Alaska. The newcomers brought with them a more cosmopolitan and integrated life-style. Like the pre-war years, Japanese were relegated to certain areas of the city; their businesses were mainly located just west of Division Street and south of Trent Avenue; their homes were concentrated in the southeastern quadrant of the city.

Although the number of Japanese-operated businesses in Spokane grew due to the influx of resettlers, the types of businesses remained the same as those that operated before the war. Due to the benefits of war housing and draft exemption, many Japanese resettlers worked for the railroads and on produce farms where they dominated the market by 1946. Japanese-operated hotels expanded exponentially in response to the need for temporary wartime housing and housing for resettlers. Restaurants and laundries also expanded in the downtown area. Japanese in white collar professions gained some footing during the war, and Spokane boasted a Japanese attorney,

accountant, dentist and optometrist by 1949. *Nisei* women expanded their roles as secretaries because of the shortage of trained secretarial help during the war. Although Japanese made some progress in terms of professional jobs, they still faced discrimination, including in the medical field. *Nisei* women continued to be employed in service industries, such as housekeeping.

The war years saw expanded religious and social offerings within the Japanese community. Although the Methodist Church continued as the main social and religious entity during the war years, it also experienced competition from a small Episcopalian group and the establishment of a Buddhist Church in 1946. *Issei*-dominated organizations like the Japanese Language School and Japanese Association did not resurface immediately after the war. Instead, Spokane established its own chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) in 1946 in order to provide social support for the expanded community.

With the end of World War II, Japanese communities in the United States struggled to stabilize, even as evacuees continued to slowly return to their coastal homes. From 1948 up to the 1980s, various pieces of legislation were passed which attempted to recognize the injustices levied against Japanese and Japanese Americans during the war. In 1948, the Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act was established in order for evacuees to reclaim some of their assets lost during the internment period. In reality, the act only covered damaged or lost assets at 1942 prices, excluding interest, and ended in 1965 having appropriated less than 10% of total evacuee losses. Historian Roger Daniels noted that “The *Nisei* are paying the price today in the loss of opportunity and gain which they would have made had [the government] not taken this outrageous action

[evacuation]. Losses are still being compounded because of constantly increasing evaluations of often valuable lands they were forced to let go.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1952 the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act allowed all Asians currently residing in the U.S., including *Issei*, to become naturalized citizens. The act was not completely positive, however; it banned further immigration of Asians, provided quotas for all immigrant groups, allowed for greater scrutiny of visiting scholars, and made deportation and revocation of naturalization rights simpler.<sup>2</sup>

Eight years later, in 1960, the movement to abolish Washington State’s Alien Land Law began; six years later the law was rescinded. Not until 1979, however, was Executive Order 9066 revoked. A campaign for redress of the wrongs committed by the government against Japanese and Japanese Americans began in the 1970s, finally culminating in the 1988 Redress Bill (House Resolution 442). The bill provided an apology and partial compensation to those who were affected by the evacuation and relocation program.<sup>3</sup>

The redress legislation, however, overlooked those Nikkei who were affected by the evacuation and relocation program, but who did not go to internment camps. While focus on the internment experience is important to an understanding of American History and the history of the Pacific Northwest, a focus only on internees narrows an

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<sup>1</sup> Roger Daniels, Concentration Camps, North America: Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II (Malabar, Fla.: Krieger Pub. Co., 1993), 168-9; Kenneth Hansen in Girdner and Loftis, The Great Betrayal, pp. 436-7, cited in Daniels, Concentration Camps, 169.

<sup>2</sup> Kazuo Ito, Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America, trans. Shinichiro Nakamura and Jean S. Gerard (Seattle: Executive Committee for Publication of Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America, 1973), 938; Daniels, Concentration Camps, 170.

<sup>3</sup> Ito, Issei, 944, 948. The redress bill also provided funds for public education, such as Washington State’s Civil Liberties Public Education Program.

understanding of the broader consequences of the internment program. It creates a false sense that Japanese and Japanese Americans who did not go to camp did not experience racism, restriction and prejudice. Additional studies of non-evacuated communities located in the same states as evacuated communities, which received large numbers of evacuees and resettlers, would provide further data for understanding communities located in the “Free Zone.”

Focusing only on the internment experience discounts the significant role that inland communities played in offering or not offering assistance during voluntary evacuation in spring 1942. Had inland communities allowed for the relocation of entire coastal communities, perhaps the internment camps would never have been created. According to historian Robert Sims, “In 1979, during the campaign for redress, a Seattle *Nikkei* noted that Seattle Japanese Americans ‘remember that the concentration camps might not have been built if Idaho Japanese Americans had not opposed the immigration of Seattleites from the coast.’” Likewise, the Spokane Japanese community and the Spokane community as a whole publicly discouraged evacuees from voluntarily evacuating to Spokane in spring 1942.<sup>4</sup> A greater understanding of why more Japanese did not leave the coast before the imposition of mass evacuation can be gained by understanding the barriers created by both inland Japanese communities and inland communities in general, which prevented more coastal Japanese from voluntarily relocating inland. This understanding provides a greater context for the evacuation

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<sup>4</sup> Robert C. Sims, “The ‘Free Zone’ *Nikkei*: Japanese Americans in Idaho and Eastern Oregon in World War II,” in Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds., *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century* (Seattle: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest in association with University of Washington Press, 2005), 249.

program and its impact on Japanese and non-Japanese communities in the Pacific Northwest.

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## APPENDIX A

### JAPANESE POPULATION IN SPOKANE, SPOKANE COUNTY, AND WASHINGTON STATE, 1890-2000

## JAPANESE POPULATION IN SPOKANE, SPOKANE COUNTY, AND WASHINGTON STATE, 1890-2000

Year	Total Population, Washington State	Total Japanese Population, Washington State	Total Population, Spokane County	Total Japanese Population, Spokane County	Total Population, Spokane	Total Japanese Population, Spokane
1890	349,390	360 (0.1%)	37,487	23 (<0.1%)	19,922	23 (0.1%)
1900	518,103	5,617 (1.1%)	57,542	418 (0.7%)	36,848	51 (0.1%)
1910	1,141,990	12,929 (1.1%)	139,404	428 (0.3%)	104,402	352 (0.3%)
1920	1,356,621	17,387 (1.3%)	141,289	360 (0.3%)	104,437	168 (0.2%)
1930	1,563,396	17,834 (1.1%)	150,477	473 (0.3%)	115,514	393 (0.3%)
1940	1,736,191	14,565 (0.8%)	164,652	362 (0.2%)	122,001	330 (0.3%)
1950	2,378,963	9,494 (0.4%)	221,561	1171 (0.5%)	161,721	1,018 (0.6%)
1960	2,853,214	16,652 (0.6%)	278,333	1,399 (0.5%)	181,608	1,174 (0.6%)
1970	3,413,244	20,335 (0.6%)	287,487	1,323 (0.5%)	170,516	985 (0.6%)
1980	4,132,353	26,378 (0.6%)	341,835	1,516 (0.4%)	171,300	916 (0.5%)
1990	4,866,692	34,366 (0.7%)	361,333	1,744 (0.5%)	177,165	927 (0.5%)
2000	5,894,121	35,985 (0.6%)	417,939	1,875 (0.4%)	195,629	1,686 (0.9%)

## APPENDIX B:

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Alien Land Laws.** Laws enacted by several Western states, including Washington, Oregon, and California, that barred Japanese and other Asians immigrants from owning land.

**Alien Registration (Smith) Act.** Act established in 1940, which required all aliens over the age of 14 living in the U.S. to register and be fingerprinted.

**Assembly center.** Temporary camps, administered by the Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA) and usually located within the exclusion zones, whose purpose was to provide temporary holding places for Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans who had already been removed from their homes in the exclusion zones. Nikkei were transferred from assembly centers to more permanent inland internment camps or relocation centers by August 1942.

**Chinese Exclusion Act.** The act which, in 1882, barred immigration of Chinese men to the U.S.; as a result, thousands of Japanese laborers immigrated to the U.S. and Hawaii to work as inexpensive laborers.

**Concentration camp.** A term generally used to refer to the hastily constructed facilities that housed Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans who had been “evacuated” from the West Coast during World War II. Also called “relocation centers” in the literature of the day. The term was also used to refer to Department of Justice camps which housed enemy aliens only. The term is also commonly used to describe the Nazi slave or death camps operated during the same period in Europe. Although both types of camps were barbed-wire enclosures where people were forcibly detained under armed guard, there were significant differences in the purpose for the Nazi camps (forced labor and extermination) and for the U.S. camps (forced removal from a geographic location for a certain period of time).

**Department of Justice camps.** For the purposes of this paper, this term refers to the detention camps administered by the Justice Department, which held enemy aliens deemed dangerous during World War II. Most of the people held in these camps were Issei and Kibei who were detained just after the Pearl Harbor attack and were deemed potential threats to the security of the U.S. mainland in the event of an attack by the Japanese military. Some historians argue that the more accurate term to use when describing these camps is “internment camp” because “internment” technically refers to the detention of enemy aliens during a time of war.

**Evacuation.** The term used by the U.S. government to describe the forced removal of Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans from the West Coast beginning in spring 1942 and ending in August. Some historians prefer the terms “mass removal” and “exclusion”, which reflect the fact that the U.S. systematically attempted to “rid itself of unwanted citizens and foreign nationals.”<sup>1</sup>

**Executive Order 9066.** The order signed on February 19, 1942 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt which authorized the War Department to designate military areas from which “any and all persons may be excluded.” Although written as if it included all aliens of enemy nations, the order provided specifically for the exclusion and internment of Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. Revoked February 19, 1979.

**Gentleman’s Agreement.** The agreement between the U.S. and Japan that halted migration of Japanese laborers to the U.S. in 1908.

**Gochiso.** A polite expression to give thanks.

**Hakujin.** Japanese for “white person”; the term is used to refer to a person of European descent.

**Internment.** The term generally recognized term used by the U.S. government to describe the period of forced removal and detention of 120,000 Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans in camps administered by the War Relocation Authority. These camps were surrounded by barbed wire and manned by armed guards. Commonly referred to as “relocation centers” in government literature, some historians prefer the term “incarceration camps” or “prison camps” to more accurately describe the harsh conditions and forced confinement of the period. The technical definition of the term “internment” refers to the detention of enemy aliens during a time of war; since two-thirds of those incarcerated during World War II were U.S. citizens, “internment” is not necessarily the most accurate term, except when describing aliens.

**Issei.** First-generation Japanese immigrants; translated as “one” “generation”; ineligible for U.S. citizenship beginning in 1922. Further generations are as follows: *Nisei* (second-generation; U.S. citizens), *Sansei* (third-generation; U.S. citizens), *Yonsei* (fourth-generation; U.S. citizens), *Gosei* (fifth-generation; U.S. citizens), and *Rokusei* (sixth-generation; U.S. citizens).

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<sup>1</sup> Tetsuden Kashima, Judgment without Trial: Japanese American Imprisonment during World War II, The Scott and Laurie Oki Series in Asian American Studies (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 8.



**Japanese.** For the purposes of this paper, the term “Japanese” is used to describe the *Issei* and the Japanese community as a whole previous to 1952, when Japanese aliens were allowed to become naturalized U.S. citizens.

**Japanese American.** For the purposes of this paper, the term “Japanese American” shall refer to the Japanese community after 1952, when Japanese aliens were allowed to become naturalized citizens. “Japanese American” is also used to describe the second generation *Nisei* before and during World War II.

**Japanese American Citizens League (JACL).** Formed in 1930, the JACL was an organization for Japanese Americans (i.e. U.S. citizens of Japanese descent), which emphasized assimilation and Americanization. During World War II, the JACL assisted the U.S. government in identifying potential “dangerous” or “subversive” elements, usually *Issei* and *Kibei*, who were then detained in Department of Justice camps. This stance regarding assistance to the government during the war earned the JACL criticism from the Japanese community both during and after the war. Today the JACL is the largest and most influential Japanese American political organization in the U.S.

**Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act.** The 1948 act which ostensibly assisted Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans with recovering financial and physical losses during the evacuation and internment period. In reality, the act appropriated less than 10% of evacuee losses and only covered damage and loss of real or personal property at 1942 prices without interest. The program ended in 1965.

***Kibei.*** Second-generation U.S. citizens of Japanese descent who were sent to Japan for the majority of their formal education. *Kibei* were seen as “dangerous” or “subversive” because the U.S. government believed they might assist in a Japanese military attack on the U.S. mainland, based on their connection to Japan during their formative years.

**Loyalty Questionnaire.** The questionnaire distributed to Japanese and Japanese Americans in internment camps to screen internees for resettlement out of camp to inland locations and for service in the U.S. military. Internees who answered “no” to two particular questions known as the “loyalty questions” were considered “disloyal” to the United States; these people were segregated to Tule Lake internment camp for potential repatriation to Japan. Those answering “yes” to the two questions became eligible for release and resettlement, as well as military service.

**McCarran-Walter Act.** Also known as the Immigration and Nationality Act and passed in 1952, this legislation allowed Asians to become naturalized citizens of the U.S. The act, however, also provided quotas for all immigrant groups, made deportation and revocation of naturalization simpler, and allowed for greater scrutiny of visiting foreign scholars.

*Mochigashi.* *Mochi* (rice cake) with or without sweet bean paste; usually eaten during New Year's.

National Origins and Immigration Act. The 1924 act that reduced immigration generally and barred immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe and “aliens ineligible for citizenship”. Those eligible for citizenship under the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment were “white persons” and aliens of African descent, not Asians.<sup>2</sup>

*Nihon fujinkai.* Japanese Women's Association; a social organization formed by *Issei* women.

*Nihonjin.* A person of Japanese descent.

*Nihonjinkai.* Japanese Association; a social organization formed by *Issei* to educate Americans about the Japanese population and to lobby against discriminatory laws.<sup>3</sup>

*Nihonmachi.* Literally “Japan Town”.

Nikkei. People of Japanese ancestry living outside Japan; includes immigrant and later generations. Used interchangeably in this paper with the term “Japanese” to describe the Spokane Japanese community in the pre-World War II and war periods.

*Nisei.* Second-generation U.S. citizens of Japanese descent. The children of the *Issei*.

Redress. The term used to refer to the apology and monetary compensation provided by the U.S. government to Japanese Americans (*Issei* and *Nisei*) who were affected by the evacuation and internment programs during World War II. The “Redress Movement” occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s and resulted in a public apology and monetary compensation in 1988 under House Resolution 442.

Relocation centers. The term used by the War Relocation Authority to refer to internment camps. The two terms are frequently used interchangeably. See the entry for “Internment” for further discussion.

Resettlement. The term used by the War Relocation Authority to describe the program which allowed Japanese and Japanese Americans to leave internment camps for work, school, or to join family in areas outside the West Coast exclusion zones. The “resettlement period” began in October 1942.

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<sup>2</sup> Daniels, Concentration Camps, 19-20.

<sup>3</sup> Kashima, Judgment, 15.

*Soba.* Noodles made of buckwheat and wheat flour.

*Tennoheikai.* Japanese word for the emperor of Japan.

Voluntary Evacuation. The period from late February through March 27, 1942, which allowed Japanese and Japanese Americans to voluntarily move outside the exclusion zones. Between 2000 and 9000 Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans voluntarily evacuated during this period.

War Relocation Authority (WRA). Established March 18, 1942 by the U.S. government for the purpose of organizing transportation from assembly centers to internment camps and for administering the internment camps.

Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA). A civilian agency, established March 14, 1942 and responsible for the 16 assembly centers in which Japanese and Japanese Americans lived between the time they were ordered to leave their coastal homes and the time inland internment camps were opened.

Western Defense Command (WDC). The U.S. Army unit responsible for the western part of the United States, established December 11, 1942. Commanded by General John DeWitt.

*Zasshi.* Japanese word for magazine.

## APPENDIX C

### PHOTOGRAPHS

Spokane Japanese Association (*Nihonjinkai*) banquet at  
the Round-up Room, Dessert Hotel, 1938



Source: Libby Photography Studio Collection, L87-1.13402-38, Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Spokane, Washington.

Spokane Vegetable Growers Association and Imperial Trading Company,  
162 S. Stevens Street, 1924



Source: Libby Photography Studio Collection, L87-1.25993-24, Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Spokane, Washington.

*Issei Congregation, Spokane Japanese Methodist Church, 1944*



Source: Leo's Photography Studio Collection, L96-72.59, Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Spokane, Washington.

Looking West on Trent Avenue from Division Street, 1937  
(Great Northern Station to far right; Union Pacific Station on right side of street)



Source: Libby Photography Studio Collection, L87-1.12191-37, Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Spokane, Washington.

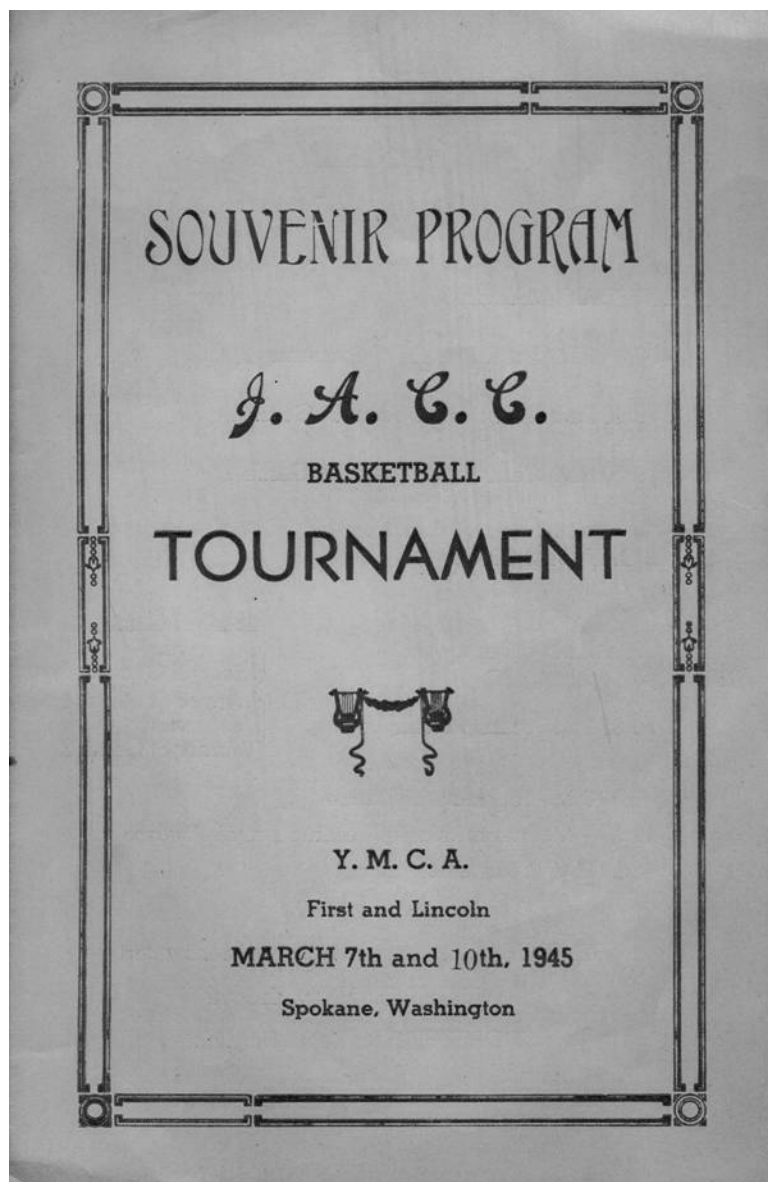


“Rally Day”, Japanese Methodist Church, 1943



Source: Hirata Family Collection (Ms 202), Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Spokane, Washington.

Program, Japanese American Citizens Club Basketball Tournament, 1945

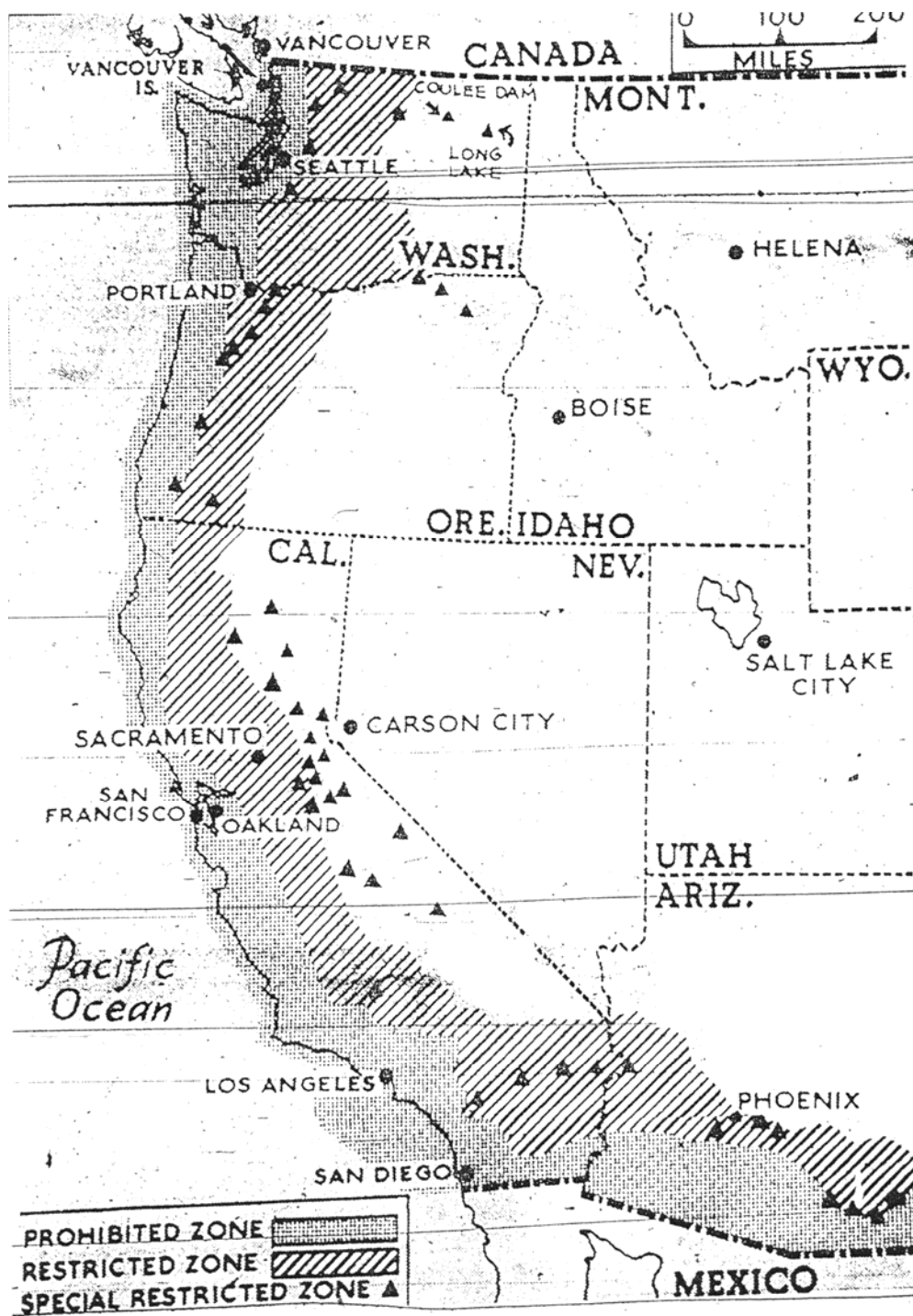


Source: Spokane Japanese American Community Collection, Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Spokane, Washington.

## APPENDIX D

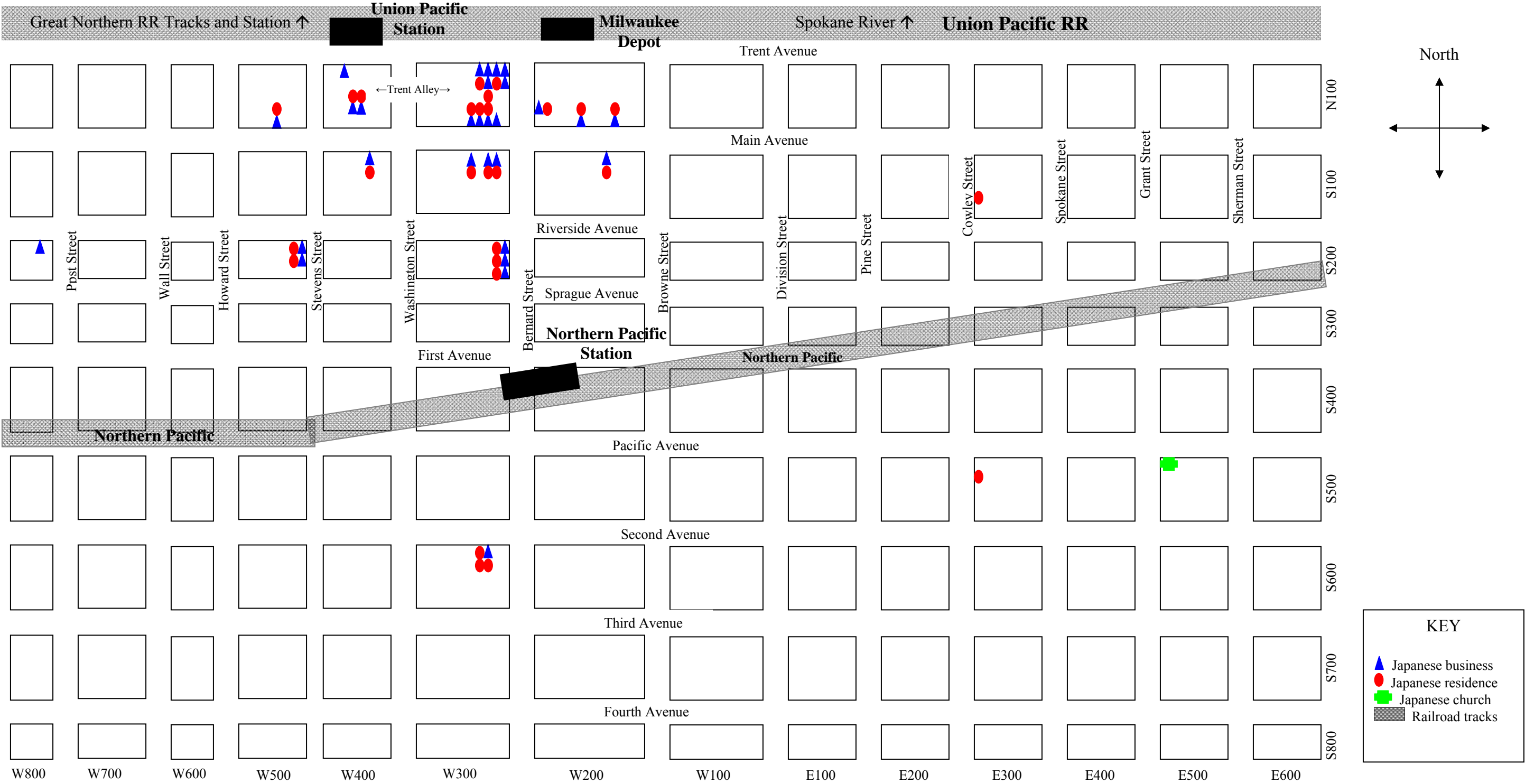
### MAPS

Restricted Zones, 1942



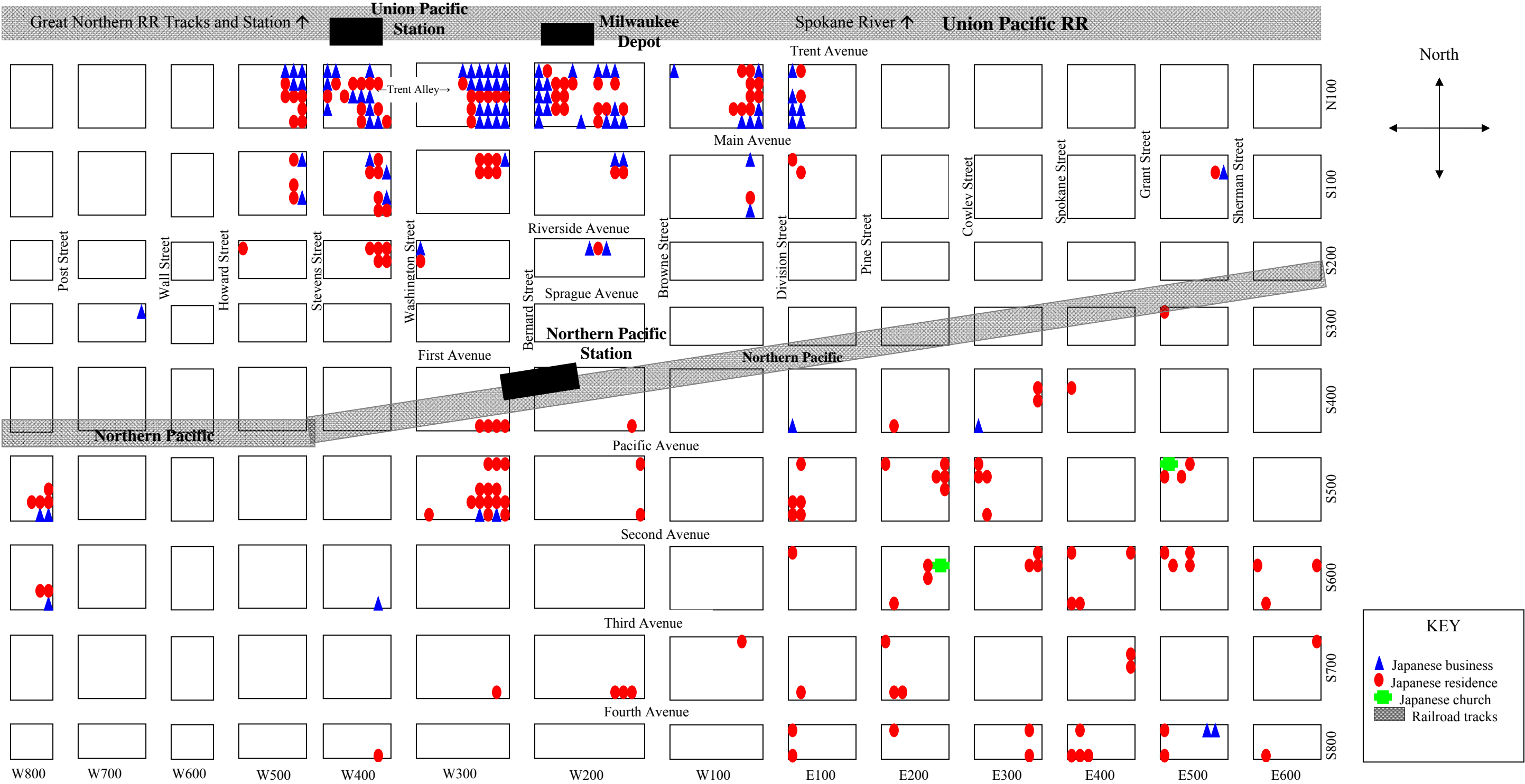
Source: Spokane Daily Chronicle, 3 March 1942.

Spokane Japanese Businesses and Residences, 1936<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Spokane City Directory (Spokane: R.L. Polk & Co., 1936); Hokubei Nenkan [North American Times Year Book] (Shakō [Seattle]: Hokubei Jijisha, 1936), trans. for the author by Ryosuke Suzuki; Robert B. Hyslop, Spokane's Building Blocks (Spokane, Washington: R.B. Hyslop, 1983). Because Japanese businesses and residences moved frequently, they may not have been listed in either directory; therefore, there are probably more than represented on this map.

Spokane Japanese Businesses and Residences, 1949<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> *Spokane City Directory* (Spokane: R.L. Polk & Co., 1949); *Zenbei Nikkeijin jūshoroku* [*The New Japanese American News*] (Rafu-shi : Shin Nichi-Bei Shinbunsha, 1949), Robert B. Hyslop, *Spokane's Building Blocks* (Spokane, Washington: R.B. Hyslop, 1983).

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Museum Association Conference, Seattle, 2006

“From Coast and Camp to the Inland Empire: Japanese-American Evacuation and  
Relocation to Eastern Washington during World War II”, Pacific Northwest  
History Conference, Olympia, 2004

“ ‘You Know How Much He Wanted Money’: Jane Austen’s Persuasion and the Role of  
the Masculine”, Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association Northwest  
Regional Conference (Sigma Tau Delta), Missoula, Montana, 2003

“Mary Eliza Whitworth: Perceptions of a Missionary Wife and Pioneer Woman”,  
American Academy of Religion Pacific Northwest Regional Conference,  
Moscow, Idaho, 2003, and Phi Alpha Theta Pacific Northwest Regional History  
Conference, Spokane, 2002

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