-TITLE-SUSUMU ISHII

-I\_DATE-

-SOURCE-HAWAII HOLOCAUST PROJECT

-RESTRICTIONS-

-SOUND\_QUALITY-EXCELLENT

-IMAGE\_QUALITY-EXCELLENT

-DURATION-

-LANGUAGES-

-KEY\_SEGMENT-

-GEOGRAPHIC\_NAME-

-PERSONAL\_NAME-

-CORPORATE\_NAME-

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I live in Hawaii. I was born on Jan 2, 1918. I was born here. I

am second generation Japanese American. My parents were Nissei,

they were Japanese citizens. I was 24 years old when Pearl Harbor

was attacked. I was drafted into the army a few months before Pearl

Harbor. The Commander told us Japanese Americans that we were

related to Japan and couldn't be trusted. Nevertheless we served

like other nationalities. I did not feel good about it but we were

in the army of our country. We were there to serve and we adjusted

like anyone else. I felt I was an American like anyone else. I did

not speak to my parents about this during or after the war.

I went to a Japanese school. It was not anti-American. Japanese

Americans in the service were sent to the islands to serve. They

did not hire Japanese Americans to serve in Pearl Harbor in the

military installations but after the war they did. They needed men.

I trained in Camp Shelby, Mississippi and in Wisconsin. I went to

a relocation camp to visit a friend and did not like what I saw,

barbed wire fence, machine guns. My friend worked as a Japanese

schoolteacher and was taken to a relocation camp. My parents were

plantation workers and were not bothered. Anyone connected with

Japan was picked up and put in a relocation camp. I did not like

it. I talked to some people about it. I feel that people should

be compensated for their losses and some sort of apology should be

given to them. Redress should go through court and through

Congress. It is wrong and nothing like that should happen again.

This was done under the law..

When I finished training, I served in Italy and France. I did not

experience any discrimination in Mississippi. Once on a bus a 1st

Lt. , Black, came on the bus on his way home. The white driver

stopped and told him to get on the back of the bus. A white

private could sit anywhere. He went to the back and said nothing.

One time a black soldier who was going home on furlough, got on a

bus, the bus driver hit home, kicked him out of the bus and used a

blackjack to hit him.

The police wagon came and picked him up and the other bus drivers

came up and shook his hand and congratulated him. Nobody did

anything, white or black soldiers, or they would get the same. We

were treated like white soldiers..

They called us Japs and there were a few fights. As a Japanese

American I saw discrimination against blacks. White soldiers did

nothing. If I interfered I would get the same treatment. As long as

I did not do anything I felt they would treat me right.

American troops called us Japs, you were an American soldier and

you accepted. You should be equal since we were going to fight the

same people. I do not have any trouble in Hawaii with

discrimination.

I became aware of the Holocaust through newspapers. Films and TV

reports of concentration camps. I was really surprised that

anything like this could happen. My daughter went to Dachau on the

way back from Israel and told us what she saw. Something like this

should never happen again. We try to attend the annual Holocaust

Memorial services. This issue should be alive so that it will not

happen again. Something like that could happen again unless it is

kept alive. People should know about it.

Five years ago we started going to the Holocaust Memorial Service

at the Temple. I feel that by going, more people will be aware of

what happened and it won't happen again. I do not discuss this too

much with my friends. If they are interested I will discuss it with

them. I do not know if my Japanese American friends know I attend

the services.

When my daughter was in high school, she always talked about going

to Israel. After graduation from the University of Hawaii I gave

her permission to go to the Hebrew University. I felt if she

wanted that experience, she should have it. When asked if she was

Jewish, her replied no she is Japanese.

To prevent the Holocaust from happening again I attend the Memorial

Service to keep it alive. I learned about the Holocaust more from

TV than from reading about it. Something has to be done so it will

not happen again. In University of Hawaii my daughter studied

Hebrew and then attended Hebrew University. She admired the Jewish

people and their achievements. I am not too sure why she is so

interested in the Jewish people.

With regard to the relocation camps in America. I told my family

about these camps. My daughter had a Jewish friend who was a West

Point graduate and she brought him to the house. We talked about

the Jewish military and Entibe and how they have to keep themselves

in top shape, surrounded as they are by unfriendly nations.

In the Kibbutz where my daughter is there are students from all

over the world. She is not the only Japanese.

I believe that those who were relocated to camps in the U.S. should

be recompensed and the government should apologize to them.

I entered the Army shortly before Pearl Harbor. I took training in

Shelby, Miss. and Mc Crory.

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