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ASW 342.18 J. A. Performance of Duty

(Japanese in Pacific)

342.18 J. A. Infantry Regiment, 475th  
352 Military Intel. Language School (Savage)  
201.4 Japanese in Pacific

a- Interior, Secy

15 June 44

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (E)

NWD 740062

By ERC NARS, Date 7-9-74

June 15, 1944

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I think you will be interested in this account of how some of the nisei are operating with the Army in the Pacific theatre.

I think that although this material might be useful for publicity, I cannot release it because it might very well result in trouble for the nisei and also acquaint the Japanese forces with the fact that they are operating in this way in combat, thus causing them to alter their tactics.

Although the President has decided not to undertake the large program that General Emmons had in mind, I do think that you should consider the advisability of relatively minor relaxations in the existing restrictions. The restrictions on close relatives of soldiers might be one of the first things we could deal with. As I gathered from the President, the important thing was to do it on a nationwide scale, intensifying if possible relocation activities in other areas, but at the same time infiltrating small groups into communities in California without publicity and after careful checking of the receptivity of the community itself.

Sincerely,

(SIGNED) JOE. J. ...

The Honorable  
The Secretary of the Interior

Enc.

WDOAS  
JJMcC:NZW



CORRESPONDENCE OF THE 100TH INFANTRY BATTALION  
(JAPANESE-HAWAIIANS)

(Prepared in Service Mail Section)

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  - A. The recent maneuvers
  - B. Comments of the officers
  - C. Advice to the volunteers from Hawaii
- VI. Evidence of unfair treatment
- VII. The 100th Infantry's patriotism and desire to prove themselves true Americans

W.D.DIST.

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23 Apr 43

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Colonel William P. Scobey

6 May 43

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From MID, Counter Intelligence  
Group, Censorship Branch

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## THE 100TH INFANTRY BATTALION

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This report has been compiled from letters written by members of the 100th Infantry Battalion to their families, sweethearts, and friends in Hawaii. The 100th Infantry, stationed at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, is a group composed of Hawaiians of Japanese ancestry. From March 1 through April 7, three hundred and eighty-eight of their letters have been studied in an attempt to give an accurate representation of the Hawaiian in his role of an American soldier.

For the most part, the characteristics of the 100th Infantry soldier are clear-cut and easily discernible. He is a faithful correspondent, writing often and at considerable length. His letters reveal him as a well-educated person who makes excellent if a trifle flowery use of the English language. Out of the entire collection, there have been only two of the letters written in Japanese and the percentage of use of Japanese words is very small.

The most outstanding single trait of the 100th Infantry is the mass opinion which is expressed in the letters. Each correspondent might well be considered representative of the entire Infantry. Allowing for some small shades of difference in individual personalities, the attitudes of the soldiers vary little at a given time. Letter after letter reflects similar beliefs, emotions, and prejudices prevailing among the group during that period. The 100th Infantry solidarity of opinion is comparable to D'Artagon and his famous "all for one and one for all" sentiments.

#### I. ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SOUTH.

In the earlier letters, the predominant emotion of the 100th Infantry seems to be an acute dislike for the South. The basis for this intensity of feeling apparently lies in the difference in attitude of the people of the North and South. In Wisconsin, where they were previously stationed, the 100th Infantry soldiers were welcomed and accepted. The South, they feel, does not show a similar alacrity in offering them hospitality or acceptance. Consequently, this lack of cordiality, the apparent root of all evil in the Hawaiians' case, brings forth a torrent of vitriolic comment. A typical statement:

"The people here in the South are generally not as generous with their smiles as we found it in Wisconsin—I can almost say they guard it almost as carefully as they do their sugar." (March 4)

The southerners are described as being "as cold as the snow of Wisconsin." and "They seem.....almost screening themselves behind

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thick walls of ignorance" (March 12) The dearth of hospitality is mentioned;

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"These people around here never think of doing things to help us feel at home. In other words they don't have the Hawaiian hospitality which all soldiers in Hawaii are receiving and yet expect the people back home do more for them. I personally think they are selfish. I hope they would begin to think a little instead of sitting on their brains. I know every parent expects their sons to have good treatment while away from home and they don't realize we expect the same." (March 17)

One soldier accuses: "The Southerners, from my observation, are a very prejudiced group. You can just sense the feeling whenever we approach them even though we have no trouble with them." (March 29)

Another makes the usual comparison: "I never came across any people like the one of the North yet you could see plainly the difference between the North & the South. The Northerners as I mentioned in my original letters; are frank, generous, and friendly." (March 23)

An often reiterated complaint is aimed at southern women: "In the North lot of girls were going steady by now with our boys but here no one has a chance." (March 29)

The soldiers lose few opportunities to declare their views on Camp Shelby and neighboring territory. Their enmity covers rather thoroughly the entire South, its inhabitants, both animal and insect, its climate and terrain.

"Didn't I tell you that Mississippi is full of swamps, snakes and lizards of all sizes and shapes. And that the weather is "populi"--hot enough for sunburn and the next minute pneumonia weather--" (March 12)

Another irate Hawaiian sums up the opinion of the Infantry: "such is the south--give it back to the niggers free of charge, and I bet the niggers won't take it." (March 23)

The most logical analysis of the situation is given by a technical sergeant: "I can say Wisconsin was a far better state than Mississippi. We had many advantages there and traveled a lot. Of course, it was very cold but we liked it and the snow. Taking many snow pictures was something new and different. Well that is all past now as we can't have any camera here in Mississippi. Tough though but its getting to be serious after sometime. We had many passes and furloughs up in Wisconsin but couldn't get here. We are

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really training here and maneuvers after maneuvers. I guess we are making up for what we goldbrick in Wisconsin." (March 23)

This expression of overwhelming prejudice against the South lessens noticeably midway in the collection of 100th Infantry letters. A few of the later intercepts point to increased tolerance and deepening understanding, for example: "I thought we wouldn't be treated fair out here—but on the contrary the people met were very nice to us. Some of them knew we were Japanese but others thought we were either Chinese or Filipinos, after we told them most of them would say it doesn't matter what race you are but the course you are fighting for. Those things really makes us happy knowing that in the world there are some people who are broad minded enough to understand." (March 16)

There are additional admissions such as: "Hattiesburg has one of the best organized U.S.O for a small town," and that New Orleanians are "very nice people." (March 29)

## II. INDIGNATION OVER TREATMENT OF NEGRO IN THE SOUTH.

Later letters evidence an increasing awareness of and indignation over the treatment of the negro in the South. At first there was only disinterested comment on the segregation of the negro. The sender in one of the earlier letters mentions casually:

"The first thing I noticed is the different between the colored and white. They both have their own places to go, We are fortunate to be treated like the white." (March 15)

But the acute feeling is seen in the later intercepts: "I noticed that the negroes are treated just like rubbish down here esp. in New Orleans. I've mentioned some things I noticed but in New Orleans even the streetcars have negro sections. The rear part of the street cars are reserved for the negroes. Talk about democracy." (March 29)

Another outburst in similar vein: "One thing about the south—no matter where you go you see that the negroes are looked down on—and it makes my blood boil. No—not cause I like negroes but the principal of the thing. On the streetcars the last four seats (Honolulu's smoker seats) are for the negroes. They dare not sit in front of the Barrier (a sign—"For Colored—only"—and in the theatres—they have a "white" entrance & a "colored" entrance." (March 29)

Also: "Negroes are certainly an oppressed race & I never believed till I saw how they are treated. Still they say we are fighting for Democracy!" (March 29)

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These sentiments are reechoed in most of the later letters. "Down South I pity those negroes even if their in uniform," says one Hawaiian (March 23). Another expresses distaste: "Over here it colored or white separated even street car seats. Its really hard to believe sometimes." (March 22) The growing strength of this feeling is evidenced in subsequent correspondence.

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III. FEELING TOWARD JAPANESE--AMERICAN SOLDIERS FROM MAINLAND.

Throughout the study, there is recurrent indication of dislike for the Mainland Japanese-American soldiers who are also stationed at Camp Shelby. However, the comments were not sufficient in number to judge as to the prevalence of this opinion.

One 100th Infantry soldier says of the Mainland Japanese: "The Mainland Japanese boys who live next to our camp things the world of us and most every (mainland) boys know what the 100th Inf Bn is, they like to transfer to our unit but we won't except them, as they have their unit, more so they respect everyone of our boys, they never get tough with us, for they know what Hawaii boys are like. We never had trouble with them and they likewise." (March 21)

Another is more disparaging: "The boys here are not so friendly to the boys from the coast and parts on this continent. It seems that boys here don't like their attitude to the officers and act as if are too good to associate with. Some boys describe them as a cocky bunch of boys I am sure our boys that is coming in will have some action right here on the grounds." (March 28)

The strongest accusation is that of a 100th Infantry private: "Some of the boys from the mainland make things tough for us from Hawaii. Their actions towards the civilians around here and their idea of a good soldier is not at all satisfactory. Their conduct toward their officers is nothing to be proud of. We are trying our best to build a reputation for ourselves as well as the people from Hawaii but such conduct by these boys from the Pacific Coast makes it harder to convince the men from D.C. that we are 100% Americans." (March 27)

IV. IMPRESSIONS OF RELOCATION CENTERS.

All mention of relocation camps is favorable. A few of the more pertinent comments; "Many of the fellows have gone to visit their relatives at the two Relocation Centers in Arkansas. They all remarked that conditions are very good at the camps." (March 27)

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"Talked to Doc Tafukugi recently about his trip to Camp Livingston, La where most of internees of Maui are stationed and enjoyed what he had to convey." (April 6)

"I returned home a few days ago from a 12 day furlough. During which time I went to visit father in Lordsburg, New Mexico. It is my fortunate privilege to report to you at this time that he is healthy & looking fine. In fact, I found him to be much fatter & fairer in complexion since the last time I saw him. He is getting very fine treatment & according to him, he has come to like camp life. The barracks in Lordsburg are better than ours & they have the same food we eat daily in the service." (April 7)

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#### V. THE 100TH INFANTRY AS SOLDIERS.

##### A. The Recent Maneuvers

Perhaps the 100th Infantry arouses greatest interest when viewed as participants in the actual Army routine. Their comments on the recent maneuvers reveal intense pride in their ability as soldiers. They do the normal amount of complaining but, in the main, appear well pleased with themselves and their work in the field. "It's not like the ukulele army any more." says one enthusiast, "This is the real stuff just like the commando's, guys with a lot of guts," (March 27) Another calls the training "tough but necessary." (March 16) A third exclaims cheerfully: "Oh, it aint so tough as that. It is moments like these you can smile with a secret delight that you took it all like a soldier." (March 14) There are a few who incline to the poetic in their description of maneuvers. For example, the nature lover who says: "Met up with a skunk, beautiful animal." (March 16)

##### B. Comments of the Officers

One especially noticeable characteristic of the 100th Infantry is the deep personal satisfaction taken by each of its members in praise from his officers. Discussing the recent maneuvers: "the Commanding General said that he'd never seen team work as good as ours in his whole army career. Coming from a General that's something any body can really be proud of." (March 29)

One of the soldiers tells an interesting story: "We had good news today from the commanding officer. It seems one of our officers thought the communication gang wasn't working as hard as it should so told the C. O. about it. The latter, however, told the other officer that we were the hardest working section in the company--working 24 hours at a time--at least there is someone back of us." (March 30)

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...other similar statements are proudly sent back to Hawaii, in a letter to his mother, a private boasts: "The general in command says that the men of the 100th Inf., were crack and ready troops." (March 16) "The officers say we are rugged" declares another, "and we can take what's coming to us." (March 16)

C. Advice to Volunteers From Hawaii

The 100th Infantry is ready with advice for the volunteers from Hawaii who are coming to one of the United States army camps. This advice, for the most part, is sound, sensible, and singularly uncomplaining. Speaking of the volunteers, one of the 100th Infantry members says: "I'm sure they are the true Americans with loyalty etc. sacrifice their life to the country." (March 16) Another tells his friend:

"I like your spirit in trying to enlist and show your stuff to 'Uncle Sam.' However I hope you won't be disappointed if you never come across the experiences we had at Camp McCoy where we had a swell time and were given furloughs to distant cities. You probably will be due for a lot of hard work, so expect the worse and train diligently to become a better soldier." (March 28)

"I had a letter from Manco the other day and he volunteered the poor sucker. I guess it must be pretty hard for them not to volunteer, Yeah! I know I would I was kidding when I said sucker 'cause there's more at stake besides one's own life, in fact everyones future living in the U. S. is at stake." (March 16)

Sagacious counsel is often given: "don't come here with the illusion of a pleasure trip for you'll be sadly dissappointed. Army life isn't so easy, and one must undergo many sacrifices. He'll do a lot of squaking and grumbling. For they say a good soldier always squaks and grumbles at least thrice a day. But if you think of coming here to train and smile it thru you'll find it okay." (March 30)

VI. EVIDENCE OF UNFAIR TREATMENT.

One of the most searched-for points in this study is the evidence of unfair treatment to the Hawaiian soldiers which might lead to undermining of morale. Of the three hundred and eighty-eight 100th Infantry letters examined, only a few reveal any possibility of bad morale or unfair treatment by fellow military personnel. The first two 100th Infantry letters read are of this type. The sender of the first letter complains that often the "white beanies" ride while they have to walk; that the whites laugh about the situation, but the Hawaiians become so incensed that they yell at them. The second intercept concerns a question asked one of the 100th Infantry boys by a chaplain at Camp Shelby:

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He went to commissary to buy some canned goods this afternoon. There was a chaplain (Lt. Col) who apparently knew we are from Hawaii. The first he asked whether we speak English. Then we started to talk about this southern cold weather. Then he said I want to ask you a question "In Japanese Army does priest followed like in the American Army." The boy who was asked the question replied I don't know, Sir. After we came out of the commissary, we were so angry about asking us such a foolish question. If he asked me that question, I would have replied "I don't know any more than you about the Japanese Army set-up. You will be surprised how people are ignorant." (March 2)

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Another of the Hawaiian soldiers remarks that he likes army life fairly well except that sometimes their only food is bread and water or grapes and coffee. (March 4) There is a reference in one of the later letters to the "raw deal" given to the 100th Infantry by the judges in a camp boxing tournament who: "gave the decision to a haole when he didn't deserve it. Everyone booed the referee and the other for the raw deal. How they are going to match the two again. Evidently the haoles realized the mistake they had made." (March 30).

A non-commissioned officer complains bitterly over lack of promotion and says that they will never get anywhere at Camp Shelby but will be "duration corporals." He continues:

"If you can see those who earns more and have higher ratings (grades) than us you'll understand. What really burns us up is that the officers think we can't do anything but push pen or pound a typewriter. And these new "kodonks" here don't know a stick from a rifle nor anything about administration and yet they are promoted to Master Sgt. 1st Sgt, staff and what nots." (April 5).

Some pertinent statements pointing to prejudice toward these Hawaiians was taken from two letters which were not written by the 100th Infantry group. In the first, from New Orleans, the sender tells of a visit to La Garde General Hospital and her meeting with one of the 100th Infantry boys who is a patient there:

"Last night while I was at the hospital one of the older patients asked me if I wouldn't go over and speak to a soldier boy by the name of "Matsuko". All the boys said he was a "jap" & they didnt like the idea of me talking to him, so anyway I went over & spoke to him & found him to be a very educated boy & it just made him feel happy because I went over & spoke to him. His mother & Dad & his grandparents were all born in Honolulu. To-day the Red Cross from La Garde called me and tole me that they heard that I broke the ice for "Matsuko" and it seems as though all the boys are now mingling in with him." (March 20)

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The second letter, from a private in the 338th Infantry, Camp Shafter is grimmer in tone: "we also have Japs in this camp. They come from across and are Americans. But I don't care for any of them. They were on maneuvers with us. On the problems we had and Japs were the enemies.....We had a problem with the Jap's and we had to attack them. Well we did, and had a fight with them. Some of the fellows in our company and in other one's really gave it to them. I mean some of them were full of blood. The Captains and Lieut. couldn't even stop us. The fellows here really hate them." (March 28)

These two intercepts were chance correlations with the mail from the 100th Infantry. They are included in this analysis for any value they may have in relation to the activities and sentiments of the 100th Infantry as revealed in their own correspondence.

VII. 100TH INFANTRY'S PATRIOTISM AND DESIRE TO PROVE THEMSELVES TRUE AMERICANS.

The strongest emotion expressed by the 100th Infantry throughout their letters is their sincere patriotism combined with an ardent desire to be of credit to Hawaii. The letters indicate a prevalent awareness of the "hades" distrust of their group because of its ancestry. Their reaction, however, is not one of resentment, rather it prompts expressions of loyalty and pledges to prove themselves true Americans. Most of them seem anxious for overseas actions, and consider it the best way to prove their worth. One says earnestly: "Us soldiers are different from the others, we have our goal to look for and for this goal lots of us guys, in fact every body of us must sacrifice our lives to this task to show the rest of the Americans that we soldiers or rather I should say we Americans of Japanese ancesteries are as loyal as any of them. And this must be proven in reality." (March 4)

Another tells his sister: "you will put your chin up and do your best for old Uncle Sam. For my part I'm the same as usual putting my heart and soul for him and you folks at home." (March 16)

"Let it be known that whatever we do we'll make Hawaii proud of it's own (March 28) proclaims a 100th Infantry soldier. The chief aim of the 100th Infantry is defined: "Wherever we go--whatever we do, always uppermost in our minds are--we must prove ourselves of credit to our friends and folks back home." (March 4)

In another letter, the sender says: "Truthfully speaking --our main thought is to do a good job on the Battlefield--but until that time comes--our behavior on the training field and in these strange cities must do." (March 4)

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The views of the battalion are best expressed in the following intercept; "When you come down to cold facts, I think this eagerness to serve our country in time of need is the only way of showing the rest of the Americans that we too can be trusted and be depended upon to defend America from all enemies." (March 27)

One boy, in a letter to his mother, recites the creed for which he is fighting: "As you have said long before this war ever started to me I know "This is your country so when It needs your service do serve it well." Now being this far away from home these words are always my only guiding words.

This country I know do have its right and too its wrong but it has I know given me a lot of dear things and so too for these dear things I shall serve. As for the wrongs I know one day she will correct herself. For what is a country or man without a little wrong to correct someday. This is the way I think people learn to love and not to hate." (March 16)

The patriotism of the 100th Infantry might be summed up in the words of one of its soldiers; "I certainly will give all I've got for my country and it is not for no emperor or a sun goddess, but for God & my country." (March 27)