

Box 48
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Item 7 P. 1

.18 J.A. Branch of Service
Chaplain

ASW 342.18 J.A. Volunteers
Yamada, Masao

16 February 1944

Chaplain Masao Yamada
Camp Shelby
Mississippi

Dear Chaplain Yamada:

I have your letter of February 14th. I sympathize with your desire for overseas service, knowing that it springs from a wish to be in the thick of things. However, I think you may have a more pressing duty in the States, at least for the time being, in offering your advice and encouragement to those of your race who are meeting the Army for the first time and in a strange land.

I feel certain that when the time comes when you are needed overseas more than you are here, you will be called.

Sincerely,

(SIGNED)

JOHN H. MALL
Captain, U.S.A.
Assistant Executive

16 Feb 44

OASW:JMH:MGB

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SW 342.18 J. A. Volunteers

Yamada, Masao

29 October 1943

Dear Chaplain Yamada:

I was very glad to receive your letter of 25 October 1943, which I found most interesting. The observations which you have made will be kept in mind. Mr. McCloy has already spoken to the Chief of Chaplains concerning Reverend Aki.

Sincerely,

(SIGNED)

JOHN M. HALL
Captain, F.A.
Assistant Executive

Reverend Masao Yamada
Office of the Chaplain
442nd Combat Team
Camp Shelby, Mississippi

OASW:JMH:MGB

x-
x-
342.18 J. A. Volunteers
Aki, Reverend

29 Oct 43

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29 October 1943

342.18 J.A. Volunteers

Yamada, Masao

Dear Colonel Scobey:

Enclosed is copy of a very interesting letter from Chaplain Masao Yamada, whom you will remember talking to at Shelby.

I hope things are going well with you. I will write you a longer letter when I have time.

Sincerely,

(SIGNED)

JOHN W. HALL
Captain, F.A.
Assistant Executive

Colonel William P. Scobey
Chief of Staff
103d Division
Camp Claiborne, La.

Enc.
Cy ltr 25 Oct 43 Chaplain M. Yamada to Capt. Hall.

OASW:JMH:MGB

X-1

342.18 J.A. Branch of Service
(Chaplains)

29 Oct 43

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Item 7 p.4ASW 342.18 JA VOLUNTEERS
Yamada, Chaplain Masao

.18 JA selective service

27 October 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL WHITE:

Herewith is a letter that Captain Full showed me which he received from a Japanese Chaplain of the 442nd Combat Team. You will note what he says about the formation of another combat team.

I have the feeling that these people have pretty well demonstrated that they can be made a real military asset and I would think that we would have just about enough for another combat team, although not enough for a division, if we had selective service and the normal screening process.

I should think we could without any difficulty get the Mainland Missi Chaplain appointed. They are over strength in doctors as it is, and the Secretary's prohibitions do not apply to Chaplains. The Mainland people do have different problems than the Hawaiians. Is this something you could take up with the Chief of Chaplains?

(SIGNED) JOHN J. McCLOY

J.J.McC.

Inc.

ltr 25 Oct 43 Yamada to Hall

MG Miller G. White
ACofS, G-1
3B-929 Pentagon Bldg.OASW
J.J.McC: jhs

25

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342.18 J. A. Volunteers

Yamada, Masao

3 November 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF, REVIEW BRANCH, EPR:

Subject: Review of Chaplain Yamada's Letter

With reference to your memorandum for Colonel Scobey dated 2 November 1943 on the subject of the publication of Chaplain Yamada's letter in the Hawaiian papers, it is felt that the only objection or controversial part of the letter is contained in the first paragraph. I believe that if this paragraph were deleted this open letter could serve a very useful purpose if printed in the Hawaiian newspapers.

Your recommendation on this basis is requested.

ADMITTED

HARRISON A. GERHARDT
Lt. Col., General Staff Corps
Executive to Ass't Secretary of War

x- Gerhardt
x- Yamada
342.18 J. A. Selective Service

3 Nov 43

Encl.

Ltr fm Chaplain Masao Yamada, 27 Oct 43
Ltr fm Oland D. Russell, Maj. PRO, 28 Oct 43.

Chief, Review Branch, EPR
2C 858
Pentagon

OASW:HAG:MDH

WAR DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
WASHINGTON

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2 November 1943



MEMORANDUM FOR: Colonel W. P. Scobey
4E886 Pentagon

Subject: Chaplain Yamada's Letter

1. Attached correspondence is for your information and any comment you care to make to this Branch.
2. This Branch feels it should object to publication because Chaplain Yamada is a member of the Army and participating in a controversial issue. Also, admittedly, he is not informed of all facts in this case.

For the Chief, Review Branch:



E. W. Davidson
E. W. DAVIDSON
Lt. Col., A. U. S.

Incls.

Ltr fr Camp Shelby to
Cont.Liaison Br.
Ltr fr Chaplain Masao
Yamada



OFFICE OF THE CHAPLAIN
 442ND COMBAT TEAM
 Camp Shelby
 Miss.

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October 26, 1943

Captain Hall, USA
 Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

It was a real pleasure to have the opportunity of meeting you and Col. Scobey. It gave me a great lift to know the originators of our Combat Team and hear for myself the confidence placed in this group. I can also state that our Nisei troops were thrilled to have had the opportunity to pass in review for Mr. McCloy. When I returned to the field that night, in most of the camps we had little groups singing songs around the fires as never before. They had gotten the news from their officers that they would be given combat duty when the time came.

As we spoke together in Camp Shelby for a few minutes regarding our unit I would like to follow up some of the items that concern us all. Please consider this correspondence personal and confidential. I want to share with your office some observations I have made.

I. The problem of the Hawaiian and the Mainland Niseis not getting along is not serious anymore. It was at the beginning, but with the Hawaiian boys given NCO ratings, the schism is not anything to worry. There is still some friction, but it is more of a natural process. I know definitely that there is just as much friction between West Coast Niseis and those from Colorado, Utah and elsewhere as there is friction between the Hawaiians and the Mainlanders.

But to solve the many intricate personal problems of the troops I believe it would be a practical necessity to have a Mainland Nisei chaplain. Both Higuchi and I are from Hawaii, and will most likely return to Hawaii after the war. It would be beneficial in the long run to have a Mainland Nisei chaplain for that reason. We must have someone who might aid in the solution of problems when the war is over. I suggest that Rev. George Aki, Jerome WMA, Denson, Arkansas, be aided so that he could become the Mainland Nisei Chaplain. He has made the application in Arkansas. I do not know exactly how much he is succeeding, but I am sure without some such it would take a long time.

II. The problem of the Air Corps men and men from other units who have been transferred to this unit.

There are definitely two opinions among the men themselves. One group which is a highly intelligent group says that they do not mind being sent here. They understand the problem of the War Department as far as

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the Niseis go. However, due to transfers with rank they fe be desirable to form an infantry company composed of all Ai. The other group complains that the government is inconsistent, for they misuse manpower ability. They think it is most unfortunate in the transfers for just that reason.

Both groups are thoughtful and you can see their side of the argument. Before going further to make the proper adjustments, may I relay to you some suggestions that we are getting from the mainland Niseis themselves. The above is after all a minor problem if the following suggestion could be materialized.

III. This concerns a complicated question of morale of our mainland Nisei troops, the growing unrest in terms of delinquent tendencies of the youths of the relocation centers, and the future of the whole Nisei problem in the United States. This certainly is not for your office alone to solve, but from what I have heard, there is a grand opportunity for your office to take the initiative toward the best solution.

A. The morale of our Mainland Niseis have not been as high as our Hawaiian lot. I believe the furloughs have had a great deal to do with it. Many have returned to their respective relocation centers and other cities and have been told that they were "suckers". Their college friends have argued with them that even if they gave their lives for America, the future for the Niseis would not be bright. I had four mainland soldiers tell me exactly that. I have heard some Niseis ask me in camp whether there is a future even after they volunteered in the Army.

This is a disturbing element of morale. The one solution would be to make another combat team of all Niseis. I asked you about it when you were here but it was unfortunate that I could not very well give you adequate reasons for it. I told you that on this question of an all Nisei team, there were two opinions among our men. One group is pleased to be in this special unit. The other (minority) would prefer to be "dispersed" among the White units and become "ambassadors of goodwill". I think both opinions have merit, but when one considers the total picture and the future of the Japanese-Americans in the USA, we must use our horse sense and choose the policy that would solve as many problems as possible.

B. The prevalent opinion among our men is a desire for the formation of another Combat Team at the earliest possible moment. I believe in and heartily endorse this new unit because of the following reasons:

1. The fact that the 100th Infantry is doing well psychologically times the formation of a new team.
2. The youths that were in doubt about the opportunity for actual combat in relocation centers now can see for themselves that the U. S. means business and that they should be positively and actively engaged in the service of their country.

A recruiting team sent from the 442nd can bring a lot of encouragement to the youths and parents of these centers and at the same time encourage enough volunteers to form a new unit in a short time.

3. This act would alleviate the "sucker" feeling volunteers and boost the morale of this unit. They solve in many ways the increasing social problem of delinquent tendencies among youths in the centers, restore confidence in themselves and the United States, and be a positive force to repel pressure groups who still distrust them.

4. In the long run, the best way for a Nisei to be a real American in every sense of the word, is to be put together in an all-Nisei team. This is a startling statement, but it is an observation made right in Camp Shelby. For example, before our Hawaiian boys came to Camp Shelby, they thought they were good Americans. At Camp Shelby they discovered that their White soldiers questioned their Americanism. This has made many of our men think deeply into their own hearts as to the meaning of this word. They have discovered faster in a month what it means to be an American than all the courses taught in their high school history classes.

Being in an all-Nisei team places the responsibility on each Nisei to be "on the ball", making the outfit the best. In spite of some "gold bricks" and gripers, the majority will be on guard to do more than mere duty. The natural sense of "so living" that by their group performance they could win their places in America is a definite asset.

Many of them even hesitate to speak Japanese, or think Japanese in our camp just because they want to be a true American. In relocation centers and in Hawaii, such rapid transformation could never take place.

I speak out of my experience of ten years in the field of Americanisation. The Army has actually done more in one month than any group of people or institution did in ten years. The Army has made them proud of the "Old Glory", their uniform, and their national anthem. Say what you will of the un-Americanism of having an all Nisei combat team, the argument is against it from my observation and from what many of our men have experienced here.

I would beg you for activating another team. Your office did a lot but I am sure you could do more to the best interests of all concerned.

IV. As another item of morale, may I add this observation. I know that this matter is quite touchy. It concerns the present location of our team. If it is at all possible, both the men and officers would be happy to be moved to some camp further north or east. You know the difficulties our men experienced in Camp Shelby.

From my observation in this unit, the problem concerns the officers as much as the men. At times I think the officers complain more about Shelby than the men. I want you to know that the general desire for change is a fact. It would be very beneficial if we did move north to a more friendly environment. The ideal thing would be to have our troops train in a community which would open its doors for resettlement after the war. Americans, knowing the Niseis in uniform, would go a long way when the time comes to aid the Niseis to find a new home.

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Well, I said everything. It was a chaplain's turn to weep
Thank you for giving me this chance to pour out my heart.

Please share this with Col. Scobey and continue to fight for us. We, on
the other hand, will do everything to be the best. We shall not fail!

Sincerely yours,

/s/ MASAO YAMADA

Chaplain