

WWII Japanese Internment Camps: Using Primary Sources

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Hon. Delegate Samuel W. King
Washington, D. C.

March 12, 1942
L. T. Kagawa
Camp McCoy
Sparta, Wisconsin

My dear Delegate King:

Will you pardon my writing you a personal letter when you are so busy and the country needs you most.

You will notice from the above address that I am detained in the camp now, transferred from our beloved city, Honolulu.

As you know, Mr. King, I am always and have been a good American citizen and I am still good American in my heart. I don't know why I am detained. If I am detained here because of my dual citizenship then it is no fault of mine. Constitution gave me the absolute sacred right as American citizen upon my birth. I am one of the citizen of 30,000 that signed the request to Secretary Hull in regards to the simplification on dual citizenship expatriation method, which you kindly presented in behalf of the group to Secretary Hull. As a law abiding citizen my five children are not registered with any other country of their birth, they are all educated in every way as fine American citizen. Because I had some dealing with Japanese business that can't question my loyalty disqualified my right as good American citizen. As you kindly helped so much towards to our undertaking of new store located at King and Bethel St; International Enterprises, Ltd. (I have resigned from the company as president on December 1940, since I am the General agent for Occidental Life of California) if this is the reason of my arrest, then it has nothing to do with my loyalty. If I am allowed to say, this is the time for unity and every well thinking American's responsibility is to uphold the principle of democracy and liberty, which we Americans treasure most. I have preached and lead all these years among my race of American citizens to know and understand the spirit of our country and after declared war, I wrote so many letters including my brother at Tulane University to stand by and give our life to American. I wrote so many letters to the fact that our beloved America is standing on the crossroad to defend American democracy and the American citizen of Japanese descent should give their life to defend the country, not only from the standpoint of American citizen but this is the time and only chance to show our absolute loyalty to the country so that the next generation of our race will be accepted as fine Americans without prejudice or suspicion.

I still believe the above stated reason and pray for fairly on the part of other American and praying every day for my freedom so that I'll be able to serve the country properly because we owe so much to the American.

As to my character and ability please refer to Occidental Life Ins. Co. of Los Angeles, Calif. The entire officers of the company are my business personal associates for many years.

Thanking you for your kind consideration, I remain,

sgd. Lawrence T. Kagawa

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