

AUG 21 1943

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Floyd W. Schmoee
3959 15th N.E.
Seattle 5, Wash.

Dear Floyd,

Finally, after three weeks of financial negotiations with banks, etc., Mrs. Suzuki completed arrangements to become the house owner. (Mrs. Klein, the seller, had changed the downpayment plan to cash.) Mrs. Suzuki has gone back to Hunt and expects to return here about the first of the month.

Today, while I was mowing her lawn, I encountered something which may cause some unpleasantness for awhile. A man stopped and wanted to know if Japs had purchased the house. Then he informed me that they won't be allowed to stay, so tell them to move out if they wanted to remain healthy. Boy, oh boy! Was I near being a non-pacifist! This fellow, named Burk, said that a committee had gotten together that morning and decided that they weren't going to allow any Japs. "Lower the property value." I suggested to Burk that he wait until the owners arrived, and then discuss it with them; I didn't feel it my responsibility to carry such a message. "There's nothing to discuss. They're moving, that's all; if they want to stay healthy."

Mrs. Klein informed me that Burk is a real estate man who wanted to sell the house for her, but she had turned him down because of personal distaste for his approach. She also told me of an old nosey woman living near there who had come the night before to ask a lot of questions. We think maybe these two are the instigators, and who may cause some trouble. Other neighbors had told Mrs. Klein that they had no objections to a Japanese moving in. Another reason may be that Mrs. Suzuki's house is definitely the best in that mediocre district. It must hurt the pride of some lofty old-timers to see a dirty Jap living in the best house. There is ground for this feeling because there are Negroes right in the same block. And a few blocks away there is a Japanese couple in residence.

Arthur D. Jones Real Estate had assured Mrs. Klein that there would be no trouble on race issue, that everything was on the up and up. Monday, I'll know more. Mrs. Klein is moving out Wednesday, and I'm moving in until the Suzukis arrive.

That is definitely not an exclusive or restricted zone. There is very little reason but Burk's personal vindictiveness to warrant his threat. I am of the feeling that this sudden protest will die down in time, and hope that the Suzukis are willing to take a little and overcome it.

APR 24 1942

The Spokane University Building is still a question mark. Mr. Thomas said that court procedures have begun on legal definitions on whether the government can lease for seven years without being liable for the mortgage. The court argument will continue for two or three weeks.

I followed up about six houses for rent this month. No luck on any. Most of them said the house was just rented; quite a few of them were honest statements. One came out flatly and said he wouldn't rent to Japanese. Reason: Opposition to miscegenation. A dentist from Hunt, Dr. Nakamura, is looking for a house for rent or purchase. Maybe I can help. Couple of others are looking for good buys.

The local FOR is seriously considering a Fellowship House of our own. We are looking over likely looking run-down church (building). The members are anxious to work on it; Mrs. Wogman had a lead for a church on the south side. As you know, this is a result of the Yakima conf.

I am still working on the placement of the Japanese kids at the Wash. children home. Most of the older boys (high school age) prefer placement in caucasian homes. They think they will be more at ease; I think I can understand their feelings. I don't think there are very many Japanese families who can or are in a position to take on a boarder. Three of the oldest boys wanted to batch together, and Miss Boone felt that may be permissible under the circumstance if an older person like myself would be willing to move in with them. I want to do something like that very much, but had to tell her I would be leaving town very soon. Maybe there is someone else who could be considered.

Since there is absolutely no inter-race or international groups, that is, groups with wider fellowship, I have been trying to plant a few seeds here and there. The FOR is definitely interested in expanding their membership. I think they need to sponsor some group that is not necessarily pacifist to attract a larger group. We are not quite sure what sort of purpose we should have, what basis for meeting regularly. We certainly do not want such mixed groups to meet simply because they are of different races. We are thinking on the matter. Rev. Cobb is not so enthusiastic about mixing. If these Japanese clubs, to encourage members to participate in other organizations in the city, they would be playing a positive role. But usually, they function merely as an escape group, and try to become self sufficient. Perhaps, right now, they cannot do much more.

Have you any definite word concerning when Fumi will be arriving? The WRA office is expecting her, but don't know when. And they don't know how long they can expect to keep her. Mrs. Wogman would like to take Fumi in if Fumi is willing. At least Fumi can stay there until she is better situated.

Tom Bodine writes of visiting Weiser. He also drove down to Nyssa with Jim to meet with the College of Idaho group with Miss Peet. He says that you and I were the only outside visitors those students had last year.

Did you visit Tule Lake? Have not heard from Mrs. Van Buskirk for quite sometime. Heard from Howie Scott.

cc to Homer Morris

Sincerely,

Gordon Hirabayashi