

Interview date: Nov. 11, 1982
Interviewer unknown

INTERVIEW WITH KAETSU FURUYA

KT: How old are you, Mr. Furuya?

KF: Eighty-six.

KT: You don't look it (laughter). Are you an Issei?

KF: Yes.

KT: What part of Japan are you from?

KF: Mitajiri, Hōfu City in Yamaguchi prefecture.

KT: How many siblings do you have?

KF: I have two younger sisters, both living in Japan. I came to Hawaii at my father's request, when I was eighteen. He called me to Puunene, Maui.

(I came on the "Sanroku".)

KT: What year did you arrive?

KF: It was 1915. So it's been almost 70 years since I came (chuckles).

KT: Did you get your education in Japan?

KF: I left high school to come here.

KT: What kind of work did you do before the war?

KF: Before the war I was the principal of a Japanese language school in Koloa, Kauai.

It was during that time that the war started and I was interned. I think Koloa was the first place on Kauai to hear about ^{the war} because on the morning of December 7 the Hawaii

Koshu Kumiai was having its annual introductory gathering? (nenji shōkai) and the plantation manager, Mr. Moriya (?) MAUI flew to Honolulu in order to attend. But because of the bombing at Pearl Harbor, he wasn't able to land and was forced to return. He notified the military authorities right away that a war was going on, so Koloa was the first place to know about it. ("Gaichutoki ni (?) sore kara yoru wa ^{ima} shō ka no kankei ^{to} desu ne.")

The people of Koloa were, I think, the first on Kauai to know about the war.

That night around 7:00 PM a Koloa policeman named Tashima and an FBI agent (?) came to my house and said, "We have to see you—come with us," so I went.

At that time I knew about the war and there was the possibility of being imprisoned so I told my wife, "In case there is a war, a war like World War I, it might last four or five years and I might not see you for that long so take care of yourself," and then I left the house. At this time the FBI agent _____ and Officer Tashima did the driving. Next

door was a Hongwanji temple and at the temple was a priest, Naito Sensei.

They picked up Naito Sensei too and took us to the Koloa police station.

(Next sentence unclear.) All of the Japanese educators were picked up and taken there _____.

There were other Japanese from the region—Hayashi, a priest _____, Yamashita, Kawakami, Tahara, a Laue (? Lihue?)

Shinto priest—we were taken in three cars to a place called Waialua (spelling).

There's a military prison there. That's where we stayed.

KT: This was the night of the seventh?

KF: Yes. The prison had iron bars and the bed was an iron slab (teppan). They gave us each only two blankets, one we laid on the metal surface and the other we used as covering.

KT: Mezurashii, huh? (That's a new one, huh?)

KF: It was December—COLD!! I was one of the younger ones—there were two older

men in their sixties or thereabouts...we didn't have toilets. We had to call for a one-gallon can. That's what we used. There were a whole lot of mosquito since the prison was in a wet place... we all got swollen faces from mosquito bites. The day we were imprisoned people from west and east Kauai were brought to this place. In the morning when we saw each other (?) we'd say, "Don't ask me how it is!" ("Iya dōka to iu na!") At that time there were eighteen, twenty of us, about. All together there were over thirty people arrested on Kauai: those of us who were arrested on the seventh plus those who were arrested later. Of this group, twenty-seven were sent to the mainland (tairiku e daikkasen de okuraretan desu). Then two or three weeks later, the wife of the man involved in the "Niihau Incident", Yoshio Harada—her name was Umeno, and a man named Shintani were interned. Mrs. Harada told us about what happened to her husband and we sympathized with her. From what she told us we realized how Mr. Harada had been a victim of the war.

KT: Mrs. Harada was interned two weeks after you?

KF: Two or three weeks later. Around December 20. Around that time we used to have for breakfast a hard cracker—I don't think you know the kind—it was so hard that it wouldn't break even if you bit it, and coffee. That's all. And the coffee was black—no milk or sugar. Around December 10 a minister named Wittington (spelling?) came to minister to us. He told us that some mistake must have been made and, since the place looked like the White House, to imagine that we were at the White House at the request of the President and to thus live there peacefully. At the same time he talked with the military and as a result our food improved markedly and so did the way they treated us. All of us who were interned on Kauai are very grateful to Rev. Wittington. When we heard of his death—he passed away in Louisiana or Santa Fe—all of us Kauai internees got together and sent a condolence gift (o-kōden) to his funeral. He took care of us and we were extremely grateful. Even Americans—of course there were those who weren't that grateful, but I was very aware of those who were. Around February twenty-seven internees, those who were imprisoned first or were considered dangerous by the authorities (?) were sent to Honolulu by dai-ikkaisen (?). At the time of departure it was impossible to leave without pain and tears, especially in the case of Mrs. Harada, who had two or three young children, about five years old or younger. Her older sister folk who was taking care of the children brought them to see her off, but when it was time to go they wouldn't let her—they couldn't stand to see her go. But there was one soldier...we all felt grateful to him. He was a Korean. When he saw the difficulty Mrs. Harada was having, he took her in the back and brought her children and older sisters to her for a last meeting together—that made it less painful. We were all touched by how a Korean, who by rights should despise the Japanese (the Japanese invaded Korea, and have been hostile to the Koreans) was so sensitive and thoughtful—all of us who witnessed the incident cried. All of the people who came to see us off, including my wife, had to watch us leave from a distance. All we could do was look at each other face to face eye to eye, tears in our eyes. Those of us who left Kauai first had to go to the immigration office for two or three days. Then we were sent to Sand Island. We stayed there for a while. The boss there made us, us men, really cry. It was February and it was rainy—the rain would come down from the mountains and this boss would make us stand in the rain, practically naked, in our undershirt and underpants. It was because of this that we who left Kauai had our first casualty. It was a person named ~~called~~ Takara (?) on Kauai—first name was Kokubo. He had a cold to start with and then he became constipated...he was constipated for a week and we had no medicine or means of

helping him, so he died. This was the first internee casualty.

KT: On Sand Island?

KF: Yes, he died on Sand Island. His body was quickly sent back to Kauai, but there were no priests to conduct the funeral because they were all interned. So one of the priests with us, Ōdate, a priest from Higashi Hongwanji, went back to Kauai to conduct the funeral service and then returned to Sand Island. This was the daikkaisen (first part of the war, the first battle?) Those people who were pulled out (arrested) were split up...

KT: Excuse me, but I can't read kanji. I can speak it OK but unless it's hiragana I can't read or write (chuckle)...

KF: We didn't stay on Sand Island very long. March 20, 1942, those of us who were in the daikkaisen from Kauai and those who were in the daikkaisen from Maui and Hawaii, and those who weren't taken in the daikkaisen from Honolulu—the dainikaisen, were rounded up and sent to the mainland. Before we were sent, we had to undergo a physical examination. We had to be stark naked and then—you know the kind of beds they have in an examination room?—we had to lie down naked on the bed and then we had our nose, mouth, hands, feet of course, anus, genitals, everything was examined carefully and then we had numbers written on our bodies. In red ink. Mine was "13". Actually, I hate the number 13. I thought, "Oh, no, I'm going to go there (to the mainland) and get sick." I had a premonition. I take premonitions seriously. I had one on the boat—they're scary. When I was on Kauai I used to play softball. I was a pitcher. A straight ball would come and I'd catch it... it was exciting. Right then I pinched my intercostal nerves (?) I had intercostal neuralgia. I was laid out—I had it when I was on the metal bed, at the immigration center, ^{and} on Sand Island. There was a doctor, Dr. Mori—he helped me. That was the first time (I was treated). The next time was in Santa Fe. I had to go to the hospital for intercostal neuralgia and stomach ulcers. But that was later on. When we first arrived on the mainland, we docked at Angel Island in San Francisco. It was around February so it was cold. We boarded a train in San Francisco and got off at Fort Shelby in Oklahoma. We arrived on the third night or fourth day. The train was like the old Japanese "tomaru kado"(?)—the windows were stained black and the glass had wire mesh in it so you couldn't see out, and the train was slow—"koton koton"—all the way to Fort Shelby, Oklahoma.

KT: Was this the first time you'd ever been to the mainland?

KF: Yes. In the train we had to prepare our own food, so those of us who could cook volunteered. Then we got to Oklahoma. Oklahoma was, compared to other parts of the country, a poor state but at that time it was especially wretched. Before we arrived we always used to have coffee and bread for breakfast.(?) But there wasn't any in Oklahoma. Together with us in the train were Japanese who had been plucked from their homes on the mainland. These were apparently people who had started their own businesses all over the country. At the request of the inmates a meeting was held and we asserted, "We Japanese who are gathered here ^{are} influential people (pillars of the community) and therefore we shouldn't have to subsist on this stuff. Give us better food." According to the Geneva Accords, internees were supposed to be receiving the same kind of rations as the soldiers. We told the authorities this and from the next day we got eggs, fruits, coffee with milk and sugar, and so forth. During this time internees from Mexico were coming in.

KT: Mexico?

KF: Yes. We were all put together. The area was very rocky. Lots of stones.

The internees had nothing to do. We had to do our own cooking, but that involved only a certain number; the rest of us, after eating, would gather stones. We'd pick up stones and rocks that were lying around, and there was the barbed wire fence—we weren't supposed to get closer than 6-shaku (6 Ft.) of the fence, but we were so absorbed with gathering stones that we'd forgetfully wander very close to the barbed wire fence. Then the guard in the tower—you know, the kind they use for "bon odori"...

KT: Watchtower.

KF: Yes, watchtower. The guard in the tower fired his pistol, his gun, and one of the internees was killed. This was our first casualty on the mainland. The person was an internee from Kona, Hawaii.

KT: Do you remember his name?

KF: His name was...I forget. I remember mainly the people from my own island. According to the Geneva Accords, a guard was not supposed to fire at a prisoner right away. The first shot was supposed to be a warning, fired in the air. The second one, too. Only if the prisoner didn't heed these two warning shots was the guard permitted to shoot directly at the prisoner. Since the guard violated the Geneva Accords, we called in the Spanish consul who investigated the matter and confirmed that the Accords had been violated. He sent a petition stating this but, before it arrived (to exonerate us) we were moved to Louisiana. Camp Livingston in Louisiana. There people from the first shipment (daiikkaisen) and the second shipment (dainikkaisen) were brought together. At this place we had to clean the premises as well as prepare our own food, so we'd go around cleaning up the camp. But not just within the camp grounds—they had us go outside the barbed wire fence and told us, "Cut your own firewood" so, having no choice, we went out to chop down trees. We took sickles. But the way we cut trees was different from the way they wanted us to. They wanted us to cut even the large trees straight through instead of circling it (?)—this we thought was strange. On top of this they wanted us to build a crematory (kasōro). We were appalled (thought it was "keshikaran") and complained to the Spanish consul about this. He was going to write a letter of complaint in our behalf but shortly after this incident we were again moved, this time to Santa Fe, New Mexico.

KT: You stayed a relatively long time in Santa Fe?

KF: Yes. This time we weren't in an internee camp but a detention camp, so conditions were much better. At this time I had a recurrence of stomach ulcers. I was hospitalized at the army hospital and stayed there about a month. After I was released I was in ^{rather} good health so I started working at the hospital as a nurse's assistant. Every day for about three months I used to take ^{the} patients' pulse and help serve their food.

After that...the families of the internees—there were those who had businesses or owned homes and were financially secure with places to live. They continued to live where they were. On the other hand, families that depended on the internee, especially families of priests and teachers, had to depend on Welfare since their chief breadwinner was gone. These families were sent to the mainland. The families of priests and teachers from Hawaii were sent to Jerome (spelling?), Arkansas. The families in Arkansas wondered about how their men in the Louisiana camp were doing. To put their minds at ease the Spanish consul arranged for families to meet with their members in the internee camp.

* He says 'Louisiana' but doesn't he mean Santa Fe?

Families staying in Jerome could come to the camp and visit. Even if it was just seeing their faces, the joy of being able to see each other in person was beyond words. Is there anything else you'd like to ask me?

KT: What were the conditions under which you left the camp? Was it after the war was over?

KF: Yes. What was it like after the war? What it was like when we left the camp?

KT: Yes. When we left a camp; for example, when we left Oklahoma, we went by train to Louisiana. Then we got on a taxi or bus—that kind of thing—from the station to the camp. Then from Louisiana we went to Santa Fe by train and then (from the station) to the camp. Every time we entered a new camp or moved, all our possessions were confiscated. Diaries, answers to letters we sent...everything was confiscated (bosshū). However, when we were released from the last place, New Mexico, they did not confiscate our things, so what written material I possessed after I left New Mexico were the many notes (memoranda) that I took during my internment. Those are what I have here today. (Fluttering of paper) I have a lot of memos here...and this here is the diary I kept every day. And in the camp we printed a newspaper...like this one. We printed news about important things happening outside the camp, and (rustling of paper) all of this...this kind of thing inside the camp. And this is the diary I kept every day. This here are letters, correspondence with my wife, children, and friends—this was in 1943, after we'd moved to Santa Fe, so my diary and notes were not confiscated. This was when I was in New Mexico. While in New Mexico I wrote about the state of affairs there and then had it printed in the camp. This includes the names of all the internees and where they were from, whether it was Honolulu or someplace in California or wherever. So if you look at this you'll see the names of all the people interned in New Mexico. After New Mexico we were sent to Tulelake*, and at Tulelake we prepared the Yamaguchi Prefecture Association (Yamaguchi Kenjinkai) mail(?). While I was there most of the internees were strongly pro-Japan. They were the ones who wanted to be repatriated. So, since they figured they'd get into trouble if they didn't know Japanese when they got back, a Japanese school was started.

KT: Did you go to Tulelake after Santa Fe?

KF: Yes. From Santa Fe I went to Jerome. I was reunited with my family there, and together we went to Tulelake. As I said, at Tulelake Japanese language study was a must, so I taught Japanese there. The Japanese school was very Japanese—when we entered the classroom—the classroom was actually the barracks kitchen—we'd bow very formally and when the class was about to start, the class president (kyūchō) would yell, "Stand up! Rei!" and the students and teacher would bow to each other. It was, you might say, Japanese military style education. First graders included seven-year-olds and even marriage-age women, because women raised in America couldn't speak Japanese if they were sent to Japan—they'd have trouble, so they were in the first grade. Of course there were seven-year-olds and older children, but everybody studied together.

KT: Is that so.

KF: They didn't want to have problems later, so they studied hard. When the war ended, a lot of people wanted to be repatriated. At Tulelake they were in the majority. But the head of the camp (?), a woman, said, "You'll cause trouble

* Tulelake, a small town on the California-Oregon border

if you go back now. Don't. Go back to Hawaii. Japan's been defeated and the less mouths there are to feed there, the better. Don't go back." So the number of people that actually did go back to Japan from Tulelake by repatriation ship was tiny. But a lot of people from other camps returned to Japan. People we knew who went back to Japan had heard the rumor that Japan had won the war, so when they arrived they were shocked. I know many who returned to Hawaii about a year (?) after the war ended. Our camp boss, the woman, told us, "Even if you've submitted your application, you can have it cancelled. Don't go back." She did us a favor, that boss. Among the Americans we met during our internment, there were some who were extremely kind and thoughtful. I really felt this. (Pause)

KT: You were reunited with your wife in Jerome, weren't you.

KF: Yes.

KT: What year was that?

KF: 1943.

KT: So you'd been on the mainland about a year and a half?

KF: Yes, a little over a year. I had submitted a reunion application. I have all the papers for that reunion application. When I look at them, I remember the people and the circumstances of that period—it all comes back. (Pause)

KT: When you went to Jerome, were you given some sort of job? Did you have a job?

KF: Yes. In Jerome when we internees (were in the other camp) this settlement was formed—the Jerome Kyodo what's-it. The Jerome Kyōdō (Jerome Community). This was in 1944. My wife got there in January of 1943. Although I got a letter from my daughter on January 1, 1943, it said that she would be leaving Honolulu for the mainland on December 22, so she must have arrived in either January or February of 1943. We were united there in 1944, then together we went to Tulelake.

KT: While you and your family were separated, was there a limit to the number of times you could contact them?

KF: The internees could write two letters and one postcard per week. This was the rule. But since we had nothing to do, we felt like writing a lot of letters. However, there was a limit. The letter checkers were the late Sawajiro Ozaki, myself, and the Daijingu (Shinto shrine)'s Mr. Kawasaki (?). The three of us were checkers. Internees would beg us to permit just one more letter but we had to turn in the letters to the letter checking superintendent who'd check how many letters each person sent. At this time we could not write that we'd gotten sick or lost weight...if we did, the letters would be confiscated. So instead we'd write "the leaves are falling off the trees", "the trees have no leaves" to describe the camp conditions. If we wanted to say we lost weight, we'd have to write "my pants is getting bigger and bigger" or "my pants is loose"—anyway, we couldn't say, "I've lost so much weight that my pants is falling down." So this was an education for all of us (how to get around the system.) Meals, too. We couldn't say, "the food doesn't agree with me" so instead we'd write something like, "after dinner I took the salad with me, since I didn't want to waste it". I couldn't say I didn't like the food. Reverend Fujihara, the former head of the Jōdōshū, was at Tulelake, I think, when his son passed away in Puunene. When we heard about it we wanted to give a monetary condolence gift (koden) but we had no money so we gave our postage stamps. And while we were there some grandchild would be born—there were all sorts of events that required money. It was around 1944, when the war ended...was it 1945?

KT: Yes. 1945.

- KF: On December 23, 1945 I returned to Honolulu. This means I spent four years and two or three weeks in the camps.
- KT: That must have been tough. When you look back, how were you treated?
- KF: While we were interned we were treated badly when Japan was victorious and America had lost a battle. After the battle of Midway we were treated very well. Then when General Yamamoto died in New Guinea we were treated even better. While we were at _____ (unclear—Fort Seal? Fort DeRussy?) we gathered in the mess hall—it must have been a Japanese holiday—we sang "Kimigayo" (Japan's national anthem). By then end of the first time we were all crying and the second time around half of us couldn't sing. Then when we heard that the war was over, this was at Tulelake, we were beyond tears. We couldn't cry, we couldn't say anything. Everyday we used to get the Asia Newspaper. We kept up with the news so we knew that Japan's situation was getting worse. We hadn't anticipated the atom bomb but when the bomb was dropped and the Emperor issued his edict—we heard it on the radio—we couldn't cry. First we thought, "what's going to happen?" then we wondered, "should we go back to Hawaii or Japan? Every family had to make their own decision. Most of the people at Tulelake opted for Hawaii, however the ones who were from the mainland had a difficult time. They didn't know if they still had jobs or homes, but the Hawaii people had relatives and friends waiting for them. The mainland internees had their whole family interned, so they suffered.
- KT: What about religion? Were you free to worship any way you wanted to?
- KF: Yes. Various religions were represented—Buddhist, Christian, etc.—but most of the internees were Buddhist, the reason being that mainly Buddhist priests were interned. There were hardly any Christians. There were some from the mainland but I know of only a few from Hawaii.

(END OF SIDE ONE)

- KF: At home on Kauai there were people who wanted ^{us} to help around and there were others who wanted ^{us} to play. There were those in the world who didn't—there were all kinds, but on the whole, most people ignored us. There were people in Honolulu, other passengers (sailors?) who didn't like to hear about the internees they looked down on us, and ignored us. When we got back some people were treated well and others weren't. Among those I knew some were well treated—they had stoves, beds, and even refrigerators bought for them. And I knew others who weren't helped at all. Especially people who moved to a new island and didn't know anybody and had no connections. It's a cold world.
- KT: Did you start another language school when you got back?
- KF: When I got back I had financial problems. All I had was \$125. Also, I was physically in bad shape—I had ulcers. I went looking for a job and became a yardboy at Punahou School. My wife joined me at Punahou School. Six months to a year later, I started doing sheet metal work. I thought it would be a good skill to know if I returned to Japan. But since it didn't seem like the time to return to Japan, I went to work at the Hawaii Hochi—before your time. It was when Kunichi (?) Yamamoto was the president. Mr. Watanabe was the publisher (?) and after him Yempuku-san came in. I knew his father, who referred to him as "Washi no son, washi no son." After that I worked at _____* (Queen's Hospital? the tape is slightly slurred). My youngest sister was taking care of my parents, so

* OLD FOLKS HOME

I felt that in turn I should do something for other old people. So I worked at the (old people's home?) for about three years. The old men folks used to delight in having me there...I would clean their behinds (?), clip their nails, give them a bath, that sort of thing. Old people have to have just about every-thing done for them—have their hands lifted for them, practically. (Laughter) Perhaps because of this experience at the old folks home, I'm now working at _____ . But before this I worked as a kamaboko maker. That was in 1946. I did that for seven years. After that I worked at the Hawaii Hochi and at the old folks home. Then I worked for two to two and a half years at Kaimuki Japanese Language School.

KT: Takahashi-san...

KF: Yes, Takahashi-san was the principal. At the time Katsuya Miho (Kats Miho)'s father was a teacher there. (?) Then in 1960 I went with a tour group to Japan. I thought a lot about things. As I said before, the hardship, the treasuring of what little we had, this was all for the good of humanity. I'll never forget the pain of my internment. And I know that I am a better person because of it.

KT: Before the war you were a Japanese school principal. What role did you play as such? Did you sometimes teach or take role...

KF: I was 29 when I started. About 50 years ago. In those days the Japanese schools were shimaguni (?) (islands, insular). The children knew Japanese but they didn't know English. In the beginning when I was in _____ (?) I gave the children tests; I'd ask them "what is this?" and I'd show them a flower. "What is this in Japanese?" and they'd all respond, "Hana!" Then I'd ask them to say it in English. Of ten students one would say "flower". I'd show them a swallow and ask, "what's this?" and they'd answer "tsubame!" "What is it in English?" About half the students would reply, "bird". This was out in the country, and Japanese was the first language. The principal before me explained the situation: the problem was that the Japanese children didn't know English. Another problem, he said, was that the takuan (pickled radish) that the kids had in their home lunches stunk (laughter). Then after the war when I went to a Japanese school and showed the students a flower, all of them would know the answer, but when I showed them a swallow, only half of them knew it was a "tsubame" but they all knew it was "bird" in English. This was because during the war they weren't allowed to speak Japanese and also, when a country becomes weaker, its language likewise loses ground. The Japanese language is being studied more today because Japan has become an economic power. English is studied in other countries because America is powerful. If you know English you'll be able to join the system, be a success. I became very aware of the parallel between a nation's power and the influence (pervasiveness) of its language.

KT: Before the war, Japanese language schools played an important role in the Japanese-American community; in the lives of the children, didn't they?

KF: Yes. An important point is that children who attended Japanese language schools did not commit crimes. So at that time children who committed crimes and were picked up by the police were extremely rare. Another thing is that when a teacher got mad and scolded a student, the child wouldn't go home and tell his parents because they'd scold him some more for having been bad in school. So children were obedient and, from a sociological point of view, kids who went to Japanese school didn't get themselves into trouble. Also, if something was beyond our jurisdiction, we (teachers) would call in the school superintendent (kyōikuchō) who would serve as the arbitrator. (next sentence unclear.)

The country to which they owed they loyalty (chūkō) ~~to~~ was the land of their birth—the United States. That's what we emphasized to the students. (Fuzzy, car noise obstructs words) Then the 100th Battalion and the 442nd Combat Team were formed (?) We felt that it wasn't Japan but America that the students should be ready to lay down their lives for, so as a result they formed the 100th and 442nd combat units. I am proud of them. (Pause)

KT: When war broke out between America and Japan, how do you think your life would have been had you not been interned?

KF: That's a difficult question. (Pause) There were indeed people who were persecuted, who lost their jobs...the Japanese language school teachers were in the heart of this category, since all the schools were closed. The people in this group would probably have been persecuted. Japan had a reputation for expansionism—spreading out everywhere, so Japanese language school teachers and officials of Japanese organizations were suspected of being Japanese spies; consequently, we were interned. Had we not been, we probably would've been persecuted. Maybe not so much outside the city in the rural areas, but in Honolulu, where people had seen first hand the destruction of Pearl Harbor, families(of internees) would have been persecuted, I think. (Lots of car noises) So the teachers living in the city were interned but few outside (the cities) were (?). Before we were interned, there was a hearing. The panel for the Kauai hearing was made up of altogether five men: Mr. Farrar(?) (Fye? Fire? Faya?), the Kekaha plantation manager; the Koloa plantation manager, Mr. Molia (spelling?); the Lihue plantation manager, Emerson (?); and two others. Of these five, the Koloa manager understood the Japanese well. He said, "Furuya is not the kind of person who would spy." He said that in my defense and I was overjoyed. Then somebody asked me, "Do you think it is part of the students' cultural education to have a picture of the Emperor on display?" That sort of thing. This was just like the Christian "sunae" (sand picture? I think KF means the questioning of Christians in Japan—the interrogation and persecution that occurred esp. in Nagasaki and Kagoshima)—they questioned us like that. "Which side do you think should win the war—Japan or America?" They asked us a lot of varied questions (to test our loyalty.) Generally speaking, in those days there were few executions and little use of torture, unlike nowadays. There probably were some instances of persecution, but not many.

KT: (Difficult to understand due to outside noise) After the schools were closed what happened to the schools? Were the buildings sold?

KF: After the Japanese language teachers were interned, there was nobody left to teach the students. That was one development. Another was that Japanese could not be used. It was forbidden—at gatherings, of five people or so, nobody was allowed to speak Japanese. However, those who could speak Japanese used it. Regardless of what country you're in, you'll use the language which comes easiest to you. So, law or no law, Japanese continued to be spoken even during the war.

KT: If you had not been interned, do you think the Koloa community would have opposed the closing of the school, or do you think they would have accepted it as being inevitable due to the war?

KF: I think they would have considered it inevitable. Shortly after I was interned all of the schools were taken over and used by the government. Our homes were taken. Since I was gone, the plantation manager, Mr. Molia told my wife that he'd lend

her one of the plantation houses, so she went to live on the plantation. I think he sympathized with us. Otherwise he wouldn't have gone out of his way to lend (rent?) my wife a house. He did the same for the wives of the priests. There were schools, depending on the place, where the teachers' families weren't forced out but, as I mentioned before, they had no means of supporting themselves other than depending on the Red Cross or Welfare, so they were sent to the mainland right away. There were very few of us from this area who felt victimized. The only problem was that people would keep away from us internees for fear that they themselves would be interned.

- KT: The situation on the mainland and the situation in Hawaii weren't the same, were they? On the mainland, ALL of the families were interned while in Hawaii it was just the Japanese language school teachers, the priests, ministers, and newspaper editors; that is, the leaders who were interned. Do you think there was a difference between the Hawaii and mainland internees?
- KF: Generally speaking, the internees from Hawaii were members of the intelligentsia. (chishiki kaikyū). They were the one who were well educated—the schoolteachers, temple priests, store boys (?), and presidents of organizations. However, the mainland internees included farmers and people who couldn't read, so on the whole the intellectual level of the Hawaii internees was much higher. But among the mainland internees were people who graduated from topnotch universities and were professors—these individuals were more outstanding than the Hawaii internees, but in general the intellectual level of the Hawaii people was higher. Americans were aware of this and they respected us. School teachers and Kibei Nisei—they had a reputation for being educated; the Hawaii internees were more highly regarded, however, than their mainland counterparts.
- KT: When you returned after the war, you resumed teaching Japanese—what made you decide to do that?
- KF: It was because Mr. Tadaichi Miyamoto, the director of the Hongwanji, convinced me Japanese should continue to be taught. He maintained that learning Japanese would aid in character building and that in the future Japan would be stronger and thus, a country to be reckoned with. (?) (Fuzzy sound) Through his influence Japanese schools started popping up here and there. There was the Hawaii Kyoiku Kai (Hawaii Educational Association)—the organization had a fund of several "man" (man = 10,000) dollars. They had to decide how to use the money. All of us who were in the organization before the war were called upon to help investigate the situation. I was the representative from Kauai. We got together and planned how to use the money—whether to use it on textbooks, etc.—in order to found a new Hawaii Japanese Language Education Association).
- KT: Was this for the good of the children?
- KF: It wasn't just for the Japanese. Gradually, more non-Japanese are learning the language and the number of people studying it has, basically, gone down. Yet the number of people planning to study Japanese has gone up. For example, the nurses at Kuakini Hospital are studying Japanese. If you go to a store, you can use Japanese. This is because Japan's economic power has increased and it has become advantageous career-wise to speak Japanese. As I said before, if Japan becomes an economic power, people will continue to speak Japanese. So even if there aren't that many Japanese students now, the stronger Japan becomes economically, the more reason there will be to study Japanese. Japanese teachers must continue to research ways of teaching, improving their methods in order to encourage language study.

KT: If you look at the Japanese-American community, how it was before the war and how it was after, there's quite a difference, isn't there?

KF: Yes.

KT: Is it because of the war that Japanese-Americans now enjoy a higher social status? The governor, two senators...they're Japanese-Americans. Is it thanks to the war?

KF: There were two reasons for the change. One was that the first-generation Japanese (Issei) put the welfare of their children before their own. They were mainly uneducated, the plantation workers and on top of that they were immigrants, which meant that they were treated like slaves. The reason they had to endure such hardship was because they had no education—to spare their children this life (laboring in the fields) they made them study hard, gave them an education. The other reason was due to the education itself: in school we emphasized to our students that their loyalty belonged to the country of their birth. As a result they fought courageously as members of the 100th Battalion and the 442nd Combat Team. Consequently, the American attitude toward the Japanese-Americans improved. Before the war, all Asians except Japanese were able to become naturalized citizens. Takao Ozawa, a lawyer, told the government that he'd studied in America and was practically an American so he ought to be granted citizenship. But he was rejected—they told him Japanese couldn't be naturalized. But thanks to World War II, the Japanese gave their lives in defense of their country (America) and exonerated themselves. We proved that we deserved citizenship. At the same time the status of the Niseis and Sanseis went up. Therefore, it was due to education and blood sacrifice (during the war) that the Japanese-American community is where it is now. If not for this, if the Japanese had been like the Hawaiians and had lived just day to day (with no thought for the future) our Japanese-American community would never have evolved. But the Nisei and Sansei studied hard—they obeyed their parents; that's what I think.

KT: I've taken a lot of your time...

KF: Oh, no, no...If this helps at all to illuminate how it was, or what it was like for people from Kauai...let me help you with that.

KT: That's OK, I can manage...

END OF TAPE