

T: Mr. Inouye, are you an issei?

I: You can consider me as being an issei and a half.

T: Where were you born?

I: Japan. Fukuoka.

T: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

I: I was adopted when I was small. My older sister was married and living in Hawaii. They didn't have any children for sometime and thought they wouldn't be able to have any.

I don't remember exactly, but I think I came here during the second grade. Second or third grade. Until then, I was known as Nimura. During the second or third grade, the teacher told me that I was to become Inouye from today.

I didn't think about it much then. I was actually kind of happy about it. It was like that until middle school. In the midst of middle school, I was told that I would have to hurry and go to Hawaii because something was happening to immigration. I had to immediately turn in my papers for emigration to Hawaii.

After I came here and settled in, three girls and three boys were born to them. Two of my younger brothers are living on Molokai, one is working for Standard Oil; the other is working for something like Mauna Loa pineapples. No, Del Monte Company. They have homes for the laborers and he's in charge of them. The remaining son is in Seattle working for the state.

My younger sister is working as a dispatcher.

You can call them brothers and sisters, but they are also nephews and nieces at the same time. My actual brother and sisters are all dead.

T: How old were you when you came to Hawaii?

I: I was 16.

T: How old are you now?

I: 76.

T: You came to Hawaii during the second grade?

I: No, it was the third year of middle school. Right after I came here, we were doing "joho jo" (consultant center) on Molokai. Right after I got there, they asked me to teach Japanese. I told them I wanted to learn English instead. They told me I could study English while teaching Japanese. So that started my Japanese language school career.

The day after the Pearl Harbor incident, the FBI came to get me. They pulled me over to the police station. I was gone until the end of the war.

When I returned I found that the military had disposed of the Japanese language school. The military didn't confiscate the school, but had sold the land and building to the Salvation Army for \$2,000. Everything for \$2,000. From that \$2,000 the military donated \$1,000 of it to the Hanapepe Hongwanji. The other \$1,000 went to the Hanapepe Christian Church.

So when I got back, there wasn't anything I could do. Everything was sold or cleaned out. I could sit and do nothing. I couldn't eat then. With a daughter, I wondered what would happen next.

My wife was a dressmaker at the time. She told me to relax for a while. She told me that she would feed me since I was faced with hardships while interned. After a while, there was an advertisement in the paper announcing that a company was going to start making miso. After a while my brother-in-law suggested that I become an agent distributing the miso over here. I thought that was a good idea and told him I would give it a try. I couldn't contact the miso maker right off the bat. Mr. Kawamoto from the Hawaii Times, we were in the internment camp together, was used as a contact man to see if they needed a Kauai agent. During the first couple of years, I would just walk visiting the small businesses on Kauai.

Most of the store bosses were people who were mostly interned with me. Takanoshi, Tokioka, and so on. So, the bosses were familiar with me and it was easier to approach them with my new line of business. Since it was right after the war, goods were scarce. For most of the businesses, the stores were open but the shelves were empty. If they had merchandise, they would have sold most of their goods. It was in that kind of situation where I talked to them. They told me just to bring the goods.

I could order the merchandise but I didn't have any capital when I started the business. I would order the miso but I needed to send payment for the miso right after receipt. Otherwise they wouldn't send the next shipment. So I asked them to pay me cash when I distributed the miso. They all agreed.

Everyone had cash then. During the war years the military spent money so lost of it was available. So when I asked them for cash it was readily there. That cash was sent to Honolulu for payment to ensure the next order of miso. These steps were repeated for a year or so. Slowly profit began to accumulate to a point where cash was no longer needed to ensure payment for the next delivery. Then I started to branch out to other merchandise. Produce from Maui such as eggplant; from Hawaii takuwan and vegetables, tangerines. Hawaii and Maui sources were my internee friends and they were really cooperative and would have my orders ready immediately.

In Honolulu Yama-no-sakaya (Honolulu Sake) told me that they would give me the Kauai dealership for Diamond Shoyu. Also the retired Saibe from Cherry Company asked me to distribute his goods. There was also a guy named Tadashira who was the Hawaii agent for Sunkist Orange who made some connections with Onouye from Shimaya Shoten and set up a distribution system for tangerines and abalone in Kauai.

By that time it wasn't a matter of going out to the stores to take orders. I would be getting phone calls with orders and inquiries for specific items. During that time, we began importing stuff like cans of bamboo shoots from Japan, dried black mushrooms, green tea. From New Orleans, an internment camp friend (Izumi?) started sending me dried shrimp in 50 or 70 pound batches. He also asked me if there was a market for frozen fish. He sent some over and it was gone as soon as it came in. We didn't even need a warehouse since things were moving so fast. Basically the kinds of things that I distributed were not available elsewhere. There was no competition.

Mrs T: We were about the first wholesalers in Kauai. Afterwards others came in like Carl Distribuors and Jimmy Azeka and lots of others. But we were the first ones who started.

I: We did that for 23 years. Our daughter got married and went to Germany. And we don't know if she is coming back home to Kauai. She says that there are too many school teachers on Kauai.

Mrs. I: She's been with the DOD (Department of Defense) so long that she doesn't want to lose all the benefits. She doesn't want to quit now when teaching jobs are so scarce. And they come visit every year so....

I: She's our only child. She's a school teacher and she told me that while she's working I don't need to worry about where the next meal is coming from. It's not like we have a lot of money but we're doing so-so. We don't have to work at this age in life. So I decided to retire.

- I: I thought at that time: "If I retire, it would be a waste of the business that I had built up." There was a young, hard working person that I thought of. I asked him, he was a vegetable wholesaler, if he wanted to try his hand at my business. He told me: "Let me try." Time dragged on, then Saburo Yoshioka came to me one day after having heard that I was about to give up my business. He asked me if he could take over. I asked him if he really wanted to give it a try. He was with Crown Insurance then as a business agent. He said that there was too much pressure in that line of work and he wanted to start his own business. I told him if he wanted to give it a try, it was okay. Talks were settled shortly and I gave him the business. Ever since then, we've been retired. That's my rough history.
- T: You didn't think about re-starting the Japanese school after the war?
- I: If there was a Hanapepe Japanese School existing, I would have probably gone back to teaching.
- T: But since you sold it.....
- I: Since it wasn't there...
- Mrs. I: That was a MP headquarters right after the war broke out. Our school ... so, everything, in and out, we had to go through presenting our cards. And my father was in Hanapepe. You remember the former Judge Toshiro. We were all living in Hanapepe....
- I: These old things (Inouye takes out pictures/ clippings/ old letters) came out a while ago.
- T: 1935....
- Mrs. I: Sparky Matsunaga, he was one of them.
- I: He's one of my students.
- Mrs. I: Judge Toyofuku is another one. You (motioning the Mr. Inouye) were the in-between when they got married.
- T: The nakodo?
- Mrs. I: Do you know Richard Odan? From Kapaa? The Odan family from Kapaa?
- I: In Hanapepe, a Buddhist monk later started a Japanese school. I kept a picture, but in moving back and forth, I don't know where it went. I lost it and I don't know where it went.
- Mrs. I: This is Robert Ozaki, was he your pupil, too?
- I: No, Goro...
- Mrs. I: The wife...
- I: Yeah, the wife was.
- Mrs. I: Yeah, it's a long, long story. 50 years back.
- I: Until the war, Furuya (Kaetsu) was a teacher in Makaweli and Koloa. We taught together. And the former editor of the Hawaii Hochi, Toshiaki Morita, he was teaching in Waimea just at that time. That's how I know Morita well.
- T: Mr. Morita is still working part time.
- I: He's still there. Oh!
- Mrs. I: Mrs Morita is a Rose Kamori's place on Fort St. She was working there.
- I: Ethel's. That's where Mrs. Morita was working.
- Mrs. I: And we know Mr. Morita's brother. He used to be a carpenter and the wife used to go to school together. Whenever she comes, she calls me. But Mr. Morita's brother passed away not too long ago.
- I: When I was just about to start distributing Diamond Shoyu on Kauai, just about that time Tsuneichi Yamamoto was the manager. When

I: he quit, this guy named Nomura took over. It was through him that I got the distribution franchise for Kauai. Tsuneichi Yamamoto and I were at the camp together. Also, there was a Hideo Tanaka at the Hochi. He died recently. He was also with us. Comrades.... (Conversation continues about the Hochi and the Hawaii Herald.)

T: I want to return to the war days. What were you doing on Dec. 7, the day the war broke out?

I: That was a Sunday. I liked to fish. So on that day, I went to gas my Ford. There I heard, "Inouye sensei, this is no time for fishing. The war has started!"

I told them "Don't lie! Nothing like that could happen."

"Really, really," they told me.

Then I rushed home and I turned on the radio and listened. This is confidential, but that night I burned all the material that connected me with Japan and the Japanese consulate. I took those valuable documents to the bathroom and burned them.

The following morning, about 5:00 or so, two FBI agents and a Japanese detective came. They told me that they had a few things they wanted to ask me and to accompany them to the Waimea police station for questioning.

I washed my face and brushed my teeth. I was going to put on a necktie, but they told me that I didn't need to wear one. But since I was a schoolteacher, I had to dress properly.

When I went to the police station, there was a Mr. Crawl there. He was the police officer in charge of the station. I knew him from before when gathering the kids around Hanapepe for the school. He told me that he was sorry for me and that they had declared martial law. He asked me to accompany him to the jail. It was really small.

When I got there, seven or eight of my associates were already there. They greeted me, "Oh, Inouye--you came too!" Once I entered there, that was it! I could go to the toilet, but they only had a bucket for urinating and defecating. There was no place to hide. We continued like that for three days.

Mrs. I: We had no contact. I wanted to send him toothbrushes, but I had no way of sending it to him.

I: I couldn't talk to even those at home. On the third day, we were placed on a dump truck and taken away without a word. I think there were 10 of us. We were wondering where they were going to execute us. Some thought the graveyard that we were nearing was going to be the place. But then we went by it without stopping.

Then we thought Koloa, but we didn't stop there either. We finally stopped in Lihue by the government building (county building) I had a friend who was working for the government. He came by the truck and said "You're all right, but I don't know where you're going from now." I said "Have you notified my wife?" But my friend feared repercussion, so he didn't.

We were ther for 30 minutes and then we were off again. Where were we going? To the mountains where they would kill us?

We finally wound up in the Wailua jail. They told us to get off there. When we got there, there were people from the eastern and central parts of the island. All together, there must have been 70 to 80 people there. Priests, Japanese school teachers, leaders from the Japanese associations.

While we were there, I think that I was called in once or twice for hearings. From the government, there was a guy named Tyser (?) or something like that. From the Lihue plantation, there were three managers. They asked all kinds of things.

They asked me three times if I was conducting Japanese language

classes. They really probed me. They told me that I went to Japan three times and asked me where I got the money. I was able to save enough money to make those trips by working at the school. But eh, they said "Didn't you get the money from the consulate?" They kept on asking the same question. They thought that there was a definite connection with the consulate.

Finally, a captain said "We don't think that you are a spy." If you looked in American magazines, you could tell what Pearl Harbor was like. How many ships it was the home port for. You didn't need spies to know that. So, we don't think that you are a spy. We at war with Japan now and we brought you here for your own protection. If you were left alone, do you realize what could happen to you? Do you know what the locals can do to you? You folks are here for your own protection," he said.

In February, we were placed in the hold of a ship and locked in. Was it a week, I can't remember exactly, when we reached San Francisco. During that time, once or twice, they let us out on the deck. It was good to see the sun. We could see the sun regularly because we were in the hold of the ship.

T: How long were you at the Wailua jail?

I: I went there on December, was in the tens (10-19) and there until February.

Mrs. I: You should have seen when they were taken to Nawiliwili. They were put in a truck and we couldn't...they put all the inteenees on one side and the families on the other side. And my daughter was three years (old) then. She even could go to see the daddy on the other side.

They were dumped into a truck, so we just followed that truck. And saw him off at Nawiliwili, but we weren't able to talk to him.

T: Then you went to Sand Island?

I: At first, we went to the Immigration station and stayed there one or two nights. I told them that my underwear is dirty and I wanted to wash them, but there wasn't anyplace to wash them. Finally, I went to the toilet and washed them in the water in the commode.

When we had lunch, we had to go out to the yard to eat. Even then, there were guards with fixed bayonets. After we finished eating, it began pouring rain and we tried to get under cover. The guards yelled out "Hey!" and stopped us. We were there two or three days and then sent to Sand Island.

We were loaded onto trucks and were guarded by men with machine guns. Then we were put into camp.

T: How long were you at Sand Island? You were sent to the mainland in February....

I: I think it was about two months.

Mrs. I: I don't think that you (Mr. I) were there long. I remember his sister used to visit him.

T: How did you feel when he was picked up?

Mrs. I: You should have seen all my neighbors. Sparky Matsunaga, he lived right across me. When all the friends, when they see me, they coming this way, they just step aside. They were afraid to talk to me. Later on it got better. They thought anything could happen to them, so they tried to avoid me.

I: This is ...

Mrs. I: Even the correspondence, we kept all the letters, but a lot of windows.

I: This is from Sand Island. They used to cut it up like this.

Mrs. I: Especially the date and what you did that day. They would just cut it out.

I: My wife saved all the letters. I couldn't write English but she insisted that I write in English. She told me that Japanese was not good.

T: I heard that your letters were limited to two a week.

Mrs. I: Yeah, they were only allowed two. See, look at all the windows. The latter part weren't too bad but in the beginning was all... Just about the same time, my brother, he was a lawyer then, he was recruited for Ft. Snelling, the interpreters group with Marumoto. He served a couple of years too. So my whole family were all on the mainland.

I: This is from Montana.

Mrs. I: My daughter was 3 years old when he was interned. When he came back, she was in the third grade.

I: There are things like this left. This is from Santa Fe. We formed a golf club there. This is a booklet of the club members. Someone did a fine job in printing this.

I was thinking about straightening up this material for a long time. I just think about it but never ....

Mrs. I: And when we used to visit them at the jailhouse, we had to carry the gas mask. On the way, when the siren blew we had to get into the cane fields. Those experiences we went through. That was the early part of the war. Ohhh, the terrible.

I: Now that it's finished, we can laugh about it, but it was hard going through it. I worried about dying on the mainland since it's so far from our home in Hawaii. I just didn't want to die on the mainland. But a number of people died on the mainland. There were a lot of older folk there. But I was young still so... 40 something.

T: When you left you weren't allowed to bring anything, right? Such as books or things like that?

I: I think we allowed to bring a few things. When we got to Waialua jail, the MP came to get us and he opened the suitcase and searched everything in it. I had carefully packed a dictionary because without one I couldn't write a letter. But "No" I couldn't take the dictionary so I was in a difficult situation to write letters because I can't write English. But somehow I got by and wrote them.

T: Which camp did you go to?

I: Angel Island was the first place. We were there for about two weeks. We were stripped down naked for physical examinations. Then our clothes were returned to us. It was at that time my watch was missing. Boots were missing...they didn't even investigate it. We were classified as prisoners of war. We thought that we could cut our nails with knives but the weren't allowed. What we did was pick up some rough stones and grind out nails on them. They questioned us while we were picking those stones. There were a lot of people who had money and watches stolen at that time. From there we went to Oklahoma -- Ft. Sill. I think we were there for two or three months. That's where we met a lot of people from the mainland. I think that there were about 2,000 people there.

Then we were placed on a train to Louisiana. Camp Livingston. I was there close to a year -- 11 months. Then to Montana, close to the Canadian border. By the time we got there they didn't treat us as harshly as they did in the beginning. The director of the camp was a real gentleman, too. That's where we started playing golf. We built our own golf course.

I: We had to negotiate with the director to let us play golf outside. He said: "Alright" but the government can't build a golf course for you. "But if you wanted to build your own, you can use as much space as you need."

The director told us that he considered golfers as gentlemen and he would consider us as gentlemen. He didn't put guards on us and told us not to forget that we are gentlemen. Anyone with sense knew that even if we ran away from camp, there wouldn't be any place to go. So nothing happened.

Then we were sent to Santa Fe. It was while we were there that the war ended.

T: Wasn't work divided up at the camps?

I: Yes, it was. If you did anything at the camps, we were paid 10 cents an hour. People who didn't do anything weren't paid. They only got toothpaste and clothing. I think the doctors were being paid about \$24 a month. We wroked off and on, but even then we were being paid about \$10 a month.

T: Cigarette money .... what kind of work were you doing?

I: I used to clean buildings. So I didn't work the full day. Later on, I would play golf. Later on, I also started taking drawing lessons when the classes started.

There was a Japanese school teacher from Kailua who also was an art instructor. He taught us how to drae. His name was Ikeno. Art lessons... Then there was a guy names Soga who taught us bookkeeping. I attended that. And then golfing. Lots of golf ...

T: What was the atmosphere like when you left Santa Fe?

I: Just about everyone was happy to leave. We were bussed to the train station from the camps --Albuquerque, Santa Fe-- and caught the train for Los Angeles. There was a port near Los Angeles where we boarded the ship for Hawaii.

T: Weren't the mainland people released first?

I: Yes, and there were local people who were released early, too. They went to Chicago and other places. They must have had good friends that they could trust to go to those places. Two or three guys that I knew did that. I was among the last to leave. Mr. Yamamoto was there with me. Mr. Sumida too. I was among the very last group to leave.

Mrs. I: There were two different groups that came back. The first group came back and they (the second group) came back about a month later. And Kauai people, it was he and another person from Kalaheo. The rest of the people came back earlier.

During that month, oh, how I waited. I thought he would never come back, but he came back.

I: They used to joke that our guilt was heavier, so that was the reason for our delay. I really don't understand, but I guess they didn't have the ships at that time.

Mrs. I: A couple of people from the first trip said that there was plenty of room in the holds. I don't know why. About a month later, they came back.

T: Were you asked if you wanted to return to Japan?

I: I put in my name for repatriation. I was in Louisiana when I heard of the first exchange ship. I put my name in there. That followed me wherever I went. I was called to the office once or twice at Santa Fe too. They kept a big file on me and asked me a lot of questions. They would ask me on such and such day, you talked to someone. Do you remember who? How can I remember those things? No matter how much they checked, I haven't done anything wrong. I guess they considered me as an espionage agent.

INOUYE (8-8-8-8)

All I was trying to do was to bring up the nisei to be good citizens. I worked hard to bring up the kids to be good American citizens. I just couldn't understand the people here. (He shows pamphlet of essays his students wrote.)

I: Life must have been pretty hard while he was in camp.

Mrs. I: Oh, yes. But somehow...I used to have a dress shop. I used to do sewing, and we had a little shop. My father used to run it and I used to help him.

Since that (Hanapepe) was the Army headquarters, all the Marines and soldiers used to come out to town and our sewing was busy because they want a badge on or wanted to shorten a sleeve. Really, we were kept busy. And there were a bunch of soldiers up Kalaheo. When they came, they bring a stack of 'em (clothes).

You know how the Haoles are. They want it real pretty. They don't want baggy shirts. So we used to fix the shirts and shorten the trousers. All the work, really! They come out in the evenings to shows, movies. They come downtown and drop in (the store).

I: I have some pictures to show you.

Mrs. I: So it was rugged for us. The one that was here was a three-star general. He used to go around Hanapepe town on a jeep.

I: This is the internment camp's golfers and baseball players. This is the one when we learned to draw. This is what I drew.

T: Is this in the camp?

I: These are all in the camps. This is Tanji. His son, William Tanji, is running Garden Island Motors.

T: Is this Santa Fe?

I: I think it's Santa Fe. At other places, we really didn't have much time to take leisurely pictures. It was Santa Fe, just before the end of the war. Everyone came to visit their parents. This is the father. He was a Japanese language school teacher in Waimea. This is Honolulu's Palama Gakuen's Ohama. This is a teacher from Makiki. This is the Hawaii Times Kauai bureau chief. This is Honolulu's Principal Serizawa from Kalihi. Nothing but school principals and priests.

T: And this is the golf club?

I: Yeah! Those were golfers, too.

T: There were quite a few.

I: Many. There were people from South America--from Peru. This big picture must have been taken by a photographer. I can't remember who took them.

Mrs. I: If you think back, you had all the chances to brush up on your English. But at that time, all you did was play. You don't know what is going to happen the next day, so you enjoy yourself.

T: That's true. Enjoy life.

Mrs. I: I keep telling him that he had all the chance.

I: Most of them are dead. There aren't too many of them left. It was about 30 something years ago, huh?

T: Were you able to let your wife know that you were returning?

I: My father-in-law met me in Honolulu. Then we got a military plane to Manani by Barking Sands. At that time in Honolulu, I thought that I really wanted to see my wife. But the old man showed up to greet me. Boy, was I disappointed.

Mrs. I: I was in business and I had a daughter, so I couldn't go see him. My father was still healthy then. And my brother was



still in the service then, the one whose a lawyer.

I: Oh, that port by Los Angeles was Wilhemina. That's where we got on.

Mrs. I: So during the war, all the men folks were away. He was away, my younger brother, he was teaching Japanese school in Ala Wai, so his family was all had to be (interned), and my older brother was...My father was the only one left with us. But somehow we managed.

I: So when he came back, did you folks have to make some kind of values adjustment? You had to make all the decisions while he was away, right? Then all of a sudden he comes back.

Mrs. I: You know, he's out of a job and living with my folks. If it was his his side, it's okay. But since it's my side, he enyroo. Somehow, I thought that we have to be on our own. That's when we saw the ad in the paper. My brother suggested it. He said "How's about starting some kind of business?"

So he wrote to Hawaii Times's Kawamoto-san. That was the first ad that came out. They were looking for someone.

I: Well anyway, I returned without getting sick. But I didn't get even a nickel from the American government for help.

Mrs. I: And then, we were broke, too. I worked, but I had my daughter with me. And all the savings that we had during the pree-war, the year the war broke out, we took all our savings and brought three lots in Kobe.

I: Houses!

Mrs. I: Houses, not the land. That's why...they all burned down. We've got nothing left. Everything went. During the four years time, I used to save up little bit, I didn't even borrow a cent from my brother folks. But somehow we managed. We started and he goes and says that we are penniless, so try to make your payment as fast as can.

I: Lucky thing that we had a \$1,000 worth of savings. I need the car to start my business.

Mrs. I; We got a second-hand car.

I: With the \$1,000, I bought the second-hand car.

Mrs. I: How many times we had to borrow \$500 from Onizuka from Hanapepe. He used to have a cleaning shop in Hanapepe. We borrowed \$500 from him. You know, I was particular. I didn't want to borrow from my father folks. But in one month's time, we paid it back. It was really rugged then, but somehow. And time was good, you know. Whatever we had, really used to go out fast, because everyone was looking for nani.

Once he goes out to town, he buys whatever he can. Not only grceries. He used to buy curtains and leather shoes. All those things.

I: Even takuwan, we used to bring it in from Hilo. Not by pieces you know. Five tubs. And in one day, they were all gone.

Mrs. I: Now, they put it in a glass jar, but not in those days. He Used to go to the stores and get a bucket from the stores. And used to go out like that. So the time was good.

I: And lucky, too! Just the right time, I started too.

Mrs. I: And even kamaboko, we used to take, not from Honolulu, but from Hilo. By plane, you know. And New Year's time, yokan from Kaneko Jelly Factory. They don't have that now. Practically everything, we started getting from Hilo. And this Honolulu Diamond Shoyu was way later. And we had Eagle macaroni, they don't have that now. And we used to do magazines, too. Japanese Magazines. We did very good in magazines. Right now, they have

it in the libraries, but in our days...He had to work hard. While he made deliveries on the West side, I readied orders on the East side. By the time he comes back, I'll have all the orders ready for him. On Wednesdays especially, perishables you know. He had to deliver fast. In the afternoon, he goes to the golf course. The margin (profit) was pretty good too. We were the first ones, so there was no competition. But afterwards, it was a different matter.

I: I did that for 22 years. Only one time we hired...

Mrs. I: One time, we hired two, but it was like wholesale. Every week we asked them how much they wanted...not like retail stores.

I: Even Kapaa, Kojima Store, Nakamoto Store, Nakamura Store, Atagawa Store, Kawamoto, Wakamoto, Urabe, Yasuda, all my customers. So, if I go there now, they call me "Hey, Inouye, Inouye."

Mrs. I: Of course, Hanalei side was only once a month. Used to go to Keiilia, too.

I: Our big customer was Lihue Store. They used to give me the big orders. If I think of it now, it is like a dream.

T: Do you think it was better that you decided to go into business? Than continuing Japanese school?

Mrs. I: He had no intention of going back to Japanese school.

I: You know, Japanese school--no more income. Small pay, eh!

Mrs. I: You know how much...I thought the last year while he was interned, I was teaching. That was the first year that I taught. You know, all the years that they wanted me to teach, too. But I didn't want to.

You know, he and I, we used to make \$120 a month...that's all. Only \$120 a month. Of course, everything would be paid for, thanks to them. But still, we were able to save a little. Not like now.

I: Even now, Japanese school teachers' pay is so small, I pity them.

Mrs. I: As soon as the war broke out, the very next month, we didn't have income at all from the school. So other places they paid for quite some time, but not our school. When the war broke out, that was the very first year that I was teaching.

I went to business school, you see. Every since then, I went to the Hongwanji, you know. At that time, when I graduated, all Japanese school teachers had to take an exam. Without the diploma you couldn't teach. That was the new law that they passed... That's the year...We passed with flying colors, you know. But when we came back here, there were so many places that was looking for teachers. I was forced to teach there.

Japanese school was only in the afternoon. So I used to keep the books for a half a day. But the last year, when the war broke out, I was forced to teach school. Just like a dream, but it was really that rough.

My daughter used to go to this Christian Sunday school. And when he wanted to go back to Japan, I can't remember his name, Masao Yamada, Rev. Yamada was there. He told me that you might think that...you really, I'm just telling you this and you don't like it, but some day you'll appreciate it. "Don't join your husband. If I were you, for your child's sake, don't go to the mainland." You know, all our friends went to the mainland, but he said don't go.

Mrs. I: Really, I'm thankful that I didn't go. Rev. Yamada, he's still around, huh?

I: I don't know.

Mrs. I: So my daughter, during the war, she used to go to Christian Sunday school, although I'm a Buddhist. When we joined a Buddhist church, she would never join us. We just don't talk about religion.

I: This Rev. Otsumi, he was interned from here.

Mrs. I: He was the reverend from Lihue Christian Church.

I: He was a good man...This is the first interview, so I don't know what I should talk about. I don't know...I don't know if this is of benefit.

T: If there wasn't a war, would you have continued to teach Japanese school?

I: (Laughs and nods.)

Mrs. I: In a way, it was good.

I: If things continued that way, I'm not too sure if I could have sent my daughter to college.

Mrs. I: We would have probably sent her to college, but...

I: I was saved because I was doing the business.

Mrs. I: All his friends are gone already. Very few are left. He *had*

T: *two or three this side (of the island)* There's a difference between Hawaii's case and that of the Mainland U.S. The Mainland's case was when the entire community was interned.

Mrs. I: But over here, they were just selected. You know...leaders. School teachers, ministers. Mostly school teachers and ministers. Some Christian ministers--Rev. Okamoto--he was interned. He was about the only one...eh? (Asking Inouye)

I: No. One more from Koolau or someplace.

Mrs. I: Christian minister?

I: Yeah. I think he already died.

T: Do you see any difference? Where the leaders were taken into camps and where the entire community was put into camps? Would there be any difference in those societies?

I: There must be at least a little.

T: For example, in Hawaii's case, the Japanese schools were abundant and there were many students. If you look at them now, they are comparable to baby sitters.

I: That's true!

Mrs. I: Yeah! In those days, the children were told not to speak English. You know, when you entered the school grounds. But now days, they all speaking English.

I: Even the teachers mostly use English.

Mrs. I: Otherwise the children wouldn't understand. But in our days, as soon as you got into the school grounds, you are not supposed to speak English.

Even this book--he was showing me the other day--the ones who wrote this, they wrote themselves. But (now) they hardly could read (the compositions).

I: They wrote these compositions. I told them, "I would make a book of the best compositions that they wrote during the year." I selected these from their composition books. I made them write these (shows collection of writings) with the hard pencil.

Mrs. I: Not too long ago, he was showing these to one of his students. "Oh, did I write this?" (was the student's response).

- I: (I said) "You wrote this." (Recites composition) It's good.
- Mrs. I: The person who wrote this was the "Man of the Year." He's working in the county building. His name is Fujita.
- I: He told me "I wonder if I can write like this?" He's forgotten already. It's been 30 years.
- Mrs. I: Those days were really strict. Nowadays, if you go to Japanese school, they all speak English...
- T: Personally, you see the war years as being of benefit.
- I: I can't speak for the others, but to me I'm glad. If there wasn't a war, I would be teaching somewhere and making \$200-\$300. We were forced into a position, when they closed the school, to eke out a living with no livelihood. Everything worked out well.
- The internees are complaining to the U.S. government, but I don't expect anything.
- T: Do you think that Hawaii's Japanese society became better off because it went through that experience?
- I: I think so.
- T: If they didn't have the war, would the Japanese still be considered second-class citizens?
- I: It's because of the war, the Americans recognized that the Japanese were highly educated. It's come to the point where Japanese Americans are equal to the Haoles. They no longer fear them.
- Mrs. I: When we were kids, we really had to look up to them (Haoles).
- I: I think that this (change in attitude) was extremely important to the Japanese Americans...