Suspects in paradise: looking for Japanese "subversives" in the territory of Hawaii, 1939-1945

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LOOKING FOR JAPANESE "SUBVERSIVES"
IN THE TERRITORY OF HAWAII, 1939-1945

by

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of the requirements for the degree of
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PREFACE

For military authorities on the West Coast of the United States, the solution to that region's "Japanese problem" seemed very simple in 1942: Mass-evacuation. The prevailing sentiment of the Western Defense Command (WDC) was that the Japanese could not be trusted in such a sensitive area. Their complete removal to a region where their presence would not produce a security "risk" was thought to be necessary to the success of the American war effort.

But in the Territory of Hawaii, where the physical wounds of the attack on Pearl Harbor were fresher than the memory of that Sunday morning, a radically different program was initiated: Selective internment. Whereas the WDC found it necessary to relocate 112,000 Japanese from California, Oregon and Washington, the entire population of Japanese residents there, the military government of the Territory of Hawaii saw fit to intern less than one percent of its 157,000 Japanese men and women.

Although the Territory's military authorities feared -- as did those on the West Coast -- that an unchecked Japanese citizenry might react favorably to an invasion by Japanese
troops, they could not adopt a policy of complete evacuation. That would have been "economic suicide," for the Japanese were 40 percent of the Territory's work force and roughly one-third of the total population. But the impact of a peculiar local ideology, one governed as much by reality as it was by paradisal images of that reality, created a prevailing social order. Two previously competing elites, the military and the wealthy white landowners, called kamaaina haoles (pronounced Kah-ma-ina, as in dinah; How-leez), sought to govern the Islands during the war through an accommodation that would ensure security and stability. Each agreed that the removal of the Japanese from Hawaii could have potentially disastrous results. Yet each viewed the complications of such a measure from different vantage points. The military needed an enthusiastic

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war-production oriented population to reestablish the Territory's defenses. For them, the loss of Japanese labor could only be tolerated if sufficient replacements were provided. Hawaii's agriculturalists faced a slightly different problem. They had held a slight advantage before the war began, orchestrating a carefully watched society. A large, and heretofore pliable, labor force was the key to their strength. And although the Japanese in Hawaii had severed a significant number of economic ties with their former "stewards," the involvement of the latter in local affairs was such that virtually no one could suppose to live a life unaffected by the decisions of that powerful elite. Removing the Japanese would deprive Hawaii's civilian rulers of workers and spenders. Also there were no promises that the Japanese, if evacuated, would return once the war was over, nor that their replacements would chose to stay.

Furthermore, a selective internment program could demonstrate many things to citizens on both sides of the barbed wire, military and civilian. Because it was an ongoing program it would continue to demonstrate the military government's need for martial law, while reinforcing the belief that the Territory's Japanese required constant supervision and scrutiny in order to maintain internal security. It was also a message to the Territory's Japanese, a lesson on what were and were not
considered acts of an assimilated and "Americanized" population. And the program's selectivity, especially in a wartime atmosphere, served to underscore this point. By interning the existing local Japanese leadership, the military was free to substitute whatever version of patriotism it desired, and use it to maintain needed wartime industrial and agricultural production.

Such a rationale was the natural thinking of groups with a traditionally strong respect for place, order and authority. The Japanese, the Territory's white elite, and certain members of the local military community all brought to the Islands a coherent set of values. The Japanese believed in knowing one's place in the social hierarchy. The white elite maintained an ordered New England conscience and a feeling of unquestionable superiority. And to a lesser, but not insignificant extent, all of the ranking military officers, (as well as the director of the FBI's local bureau), involved in the governing of the Japanese during the war were from the American South.

Three social histories have significantly influenced my thinking: Lawrence H. Fuchs' *Hawaii Pono: A Social History*, Andrew W. Lind's *Hawaii's Japanese: An Experiment in Democracy* and Dennis M. Ogawa's *Kodomo No Tame Ni: For the*
Sake of the Children. Each provided valuable background information for the first part of this work. Fuchs' work, a broad overview of the social and political racial interaction in Hawaii's history, is a standard study of twentieth century Hawaii. Likewise, Ogawa's study of the Japanese-American experience in Hawaii. Lind's wartime sociological report of wartime Hawaii proved to be the most valuable source for the first chapter of this essay, for it provided the groundwork for further analysis of the military/Japanese/civilian relationship. His book is a valuable source for wartime quotes, themselves a helpful barometer of the period.

This study began with an investigation of internee case files at the Washington National Records Center in Suitland, MD. A huge mine of information exists there, and until the author's first visit, in August 1980, had only rarely been examined by scholars. The case files, arranged chronologically in 147 boxes, contain the records of every individual brought before an internment hearing board, and more importantly, transcripts of those hearings. Although the files do not contain material used by intelligence authorities against those brought before the boards, such "evidence" is consistently noted at the start of each hearing -- and often expressed verbatim at the hearing's conclusion. Federal privacy laws enforced by WNRC personnel
prevent the author from identifying anything more than the record group and box numbers involved. The author was required to sign a statement acknowledging his respect for the aforementioned privacy regulations and promising not to identify, without their expressed permission, those Japanese suspects apprehended and given hearings during World War II. (Procuring such permission involves a "Catch-22" situation, for the names of those with case files are also subject to privacy regulations.) The author, however, does not feel that his survey was made any less successful by this measure. In reviewing every tenth box of this collection -- 167 cases in all -- the author feels confident that the information examined reflects a certain consistency of opinion among the Territory's wartime decision makers. Although this is not meant to be a hard-nosed statistical analysis, some review of the percentage of suspects interned is enlightening. For example, 90 percent of the 147 cases containing the military government's final opinion -- internment, parole or release -- were internment decisions. Figures of 90 percent or better were also noted by years, in 1941, 1942 and 1943. In 1944, 50 percent of the cases in the author's survey were internment decisions. The author did not come across any decisions for 1945.

Much has been written about the relocation experiences of the West Coast Japanese. Historians have studied the
causes and ramifications, former participants have produced touching memoirs and the War Relocation Authority -- the government agency charged with the administration of the ten camps -- published a number of monographs and pamphlets during and after the war. In addition to this, the federal government is preparing to publish the testimony it gathered in the fall of 1980 as part of a Congressional study on wartime relocation and internment. Interest in congressional redress is more widespread on the West Coast. In Hawaii the post-war successes of Hawaii's Japanese residents, particularly those members of the Army's highly-decorated 442nd Regimental Combat Team, have tended to submerge, until recently, this wartime episode. The subsequent post-war restructuring of Hawaii's political power structure favored a more diverse ethnic environment. Many of Hawaii's prominent leaders, including its governor and some members of its congressional delegation, can attribute a large measure of their success to the social awakening the war produced.

This enthusiastic generation of Japanese-Americans has been lionized, at home and abroad, as a positive by-product of the war, but comparatively few works have focused on the government's nationwide internment program, and at present no one has devoted an entire study to the Territorial internment of Hawaii's Japanese residents. All of the three
social histories mentioned above contain brief sections on internment, but seldom is this subject addressed in more than a cursory way. This is possibly due to the fact that archival documents at the WNRC are little known and have only begun to be used. The present writer is among the first to be initiated into the mysteries of this important collection. Hawaii's Japanese language press has long been a source of "recollection" material for and by a shrinking audience of former internees. They have not forgotten the harshness of their wartime experiences. And neither should we.
ABBREVIATIONS USED

HDAPC -- Hawaiian Department Alien Processing Center
OMG -- Office of the Military Governor
ONI -- Office of Naval Intelligence
PMO -- Provost Marshal's Office
CHAPTER I

"YEP I LOOK LIKE A 'JAP'"
Some of the men confined at the Detention Barracks on Ala Moana Road envisioned an image shattering dawn: They believed that their lives would end before an angry United States firing squad as the sun rose to warm another December 1941 day in the Territory of Hawaii.

In handcuffs, and without an official warrant of arrest, these men had been taken throughout the day from their homes and brought by armed escort to the Immigration and Naturalization Service's "lounging shed," a building adjacent to its Territorial offices near Honolulu Harbor. Unaccustomed to this kind of treatment, these men felt humiliated. This was not surprising. Before their arrest they had been ordinary citizens: carpenters, butchers, bakers, merchants, farmers, preachers and teachers. They were respected in their communities for the contributions they had made to Territorial life. But most importantly, they had thought their daily actions to be honest. Their new status as prisoners left them with an empty feeling and they viewed their surroundings with acute dismay.

Huddled against a chilly Hawaiian night and crowded into a room filled with the odor of captive humanity, these men could do nothing but fear the worst. The small iron-barred windows offered little relief, for the 200-plus individuals were two-and-half-times the room's stated capacity. Bunk space having disappeared much earlier, many
of the men spent that first night in detention sleeping on the floor -- if they could sleep at all. It was a long night, one that none of them would ever forget.

The social fibres that bound these men were numerous and tightly interwoven, the natural signs of a group comprised largely of first generation immigrants. On this eventful Sunday night, December 7, 1941, only one shared trait was important: They were all Japanese. It was circumstance that had transformed them, made them the unwitting emissaries of The Enemy, the expansive and "treacherous" Japanese Empire. Not only did they have all the distinguishing physical characteristics of the enemy oriental -- the slanted eyes, the jet-black hair, the diminutive stature -- but they also spoke the same language, ate the same food and worshiped the same gods.

No one was executed at dawn, but Island race relations had changed overnight -- and forever. Joseph B. Poindexter, the Territorial Governor, declared a state of martial law on December 7, thus handing complete control of the Islands to the military. A somewhat reluctant Poindexter subsequently confessed that he was "not very keen" about such a transfer of power, but that it had been strongly recommended by the Army because Hawaii's large population of Japanese could be "better handled through martial law than by civil authorities." With the easy-going character of the Islands
now at strictest military attention, the Territory became a home front like none in America. Although martial law made possible the suspension of the writ of habeus corpus and authorized the military government to intern indefinitely whomever it wanted, the detention of "enemy aliens" was an entirely legal procedure under Section 21, Title 50, of the United States Code. A Presidential Proclamation, issued on December 7, stated that all Japanese aliens living in the United States or any of its Territories were to be considered "enemy aliens" and subject to possible apprehension. On the Mainland, the regulation applied only to alien Japanese, but in Hawaii the existence of martial law enabled local military authorities to apprehend United States citizens and dual citizens as well as enemy aliens. Within hours of the proclamation nearly 400 Japanese residents suspected of subversive activity were seized and placed under armed guard from one end of the Territory to the other: From the county jail in sleepy Waimea, Kauai to the Kilauea Military Camp on the edge of a rumbling volcano on the Big Island of Hawaii to the INS Detention barracks.² A handful of Germans and Italians were also arrested, but authorities clearly placed a greater emphasis on the danger

of a large Japanese population. This is the emphasis of my essay.

Hawaii's 157,000 Japanese residents now faced unpleasant prospects. As the largest non-white group in Hawaii -- 37.2 percent of the Territory's 422,770 residents\(^3\) -- they stood out like boldface type. Theirs was the unenviable task of having to answer for the hostile actions of a nation far across the Pacific Ocean -- a country from which thousands of them had emigrated a lifetime ago, and that still thousands more had never seen. True, the elder Japanese had left Japan for a better life -- and few would deny that it was better -- but they had nonetheless maintained a strong Japanese pride in cultural ties and business affiliations. Because of a traditional belief in filial obligation, the Japanese could never completely divorce themselves from the land of their birth, or more importantly, from the homeland of their ancestors. Yet it was this same sense of obligation, of duty, that also bound them to their new home. At first it was hard to think of Hawaii as a new home, as anything more than a place to make money. Plantation life was difficult, employers often cruel and impersonal. But slowly, stoically, the Japanese had grown to love the Islands, embracing them not as a replacement, but as a complement to their nostalgic feelings

\(^3\) 1940 United States Census figures.
for ancestral Japan. Hawaii had become more than just a place to make money; it had become a place to settle and raise a family. In doing so, the first generation proudly watched the seeds of their good fortune -- their children -- grow and blossom as bona fide American citizens. Their lifestyle was one of overlapping cultures, the best of both worlds fitted together as neatly as possible in a balmy tropical environment.4

This presented local authorities with a troubling picture, one that Hawaii's public image as a multi-cultural paradise5 could no longer camouflage. Skeptics before the war had questioned this dual nature of the Territory's Japanese, often portraying them as secretly desirous of taking control of the Islands for the Emperor.6 But the


5 The term "melting pot" refers to the belief that Hawaii's multi-cultural diversity greatly enhanced Island life. Paul Hooper, in Elusive Destiny (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1980), states that this "value impregnated" belief influenced the pattern of social interaction, but notes: "As is frequently the case with interpretations inspired by social myth, this view of the Hawaiian experience often clashes with the actual historical record, in the process glossing over a host of events and developments that are considerably more hellish than paradisal." Hooper, p. 16.

6 Congressional hearings during the 1930s on the possibility
attack on Pearl Harbor brought a heightened sense of urgency to the "Japanese problem," and more significantly, provided the impetus needed to bring the loyalty question into sharper focus. The war would serve as the most decisive test of loyalty ever given to Hawaii's Japanese; but also, for those who sometimes waxed nostalgic about their homeland, it prompted answers that would break their hearts.

No one seriously expected the Japanese to attack Pearl Harbor, and an invasion of the Islands seemed as far removed from the realm of possibility as the stars were to Hawaii's sandy shores. It was an "academic" subject best left for unofficial conversations among local military strategists. Instead, a profound sense of uncertainty dominated the thoughts of Island military authorities. Prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, the local intelligence community believed organized sabotage was a far greater and more likely threat than Japanese military aggression. Their pre-war surveillance of the Japanese community had been organized to prevent subversion, its primary objective to identify those believed physically and ethically capable of

of statehood for Hawaii, often brought to issue the structure of local political and social power. John F.G. Stokes, a long-time Island resident, testified against statehood in 1937 because the Japanese in Hawaii were "directly under the thumb" of the Emperor. Stokes noted Japanese military aggression, oriental patience and the separate nature of the Japanese community; Ogawa, p. 235, 257-64.
subversive activity which a war with Japan might stimulate. But the dawn raid created a radical shift of opinion as both civilians and the military prepared for the invasion each felt was imminent, the logical next-step for the advancing Japanese Navy. The war dramatically raised the level of fear in the Territory and fueled it with questions about possible local Japanese subversives.7

Military officials conceded prior to the war that they were not exactly sure how the Territory's Japanese would respond to a United States military conflict with Japan -- that possibly "90 percent" would wait patiently "until they saw which way the cat was going to jump." But after Pearl Harbor, with the fear of an imminent invasion, there was another level of concern, one whose assumptions spoke to a much deeper feeling of doubt. The "mere fact" that there were 157,000 Japanese in the Territory, of and by itself precluded, in the eyes of the military, any hope of a loyal population. That pre-war efforts to uncover subversive activity were unsuccessful did not influence the military; the uncertainty about how Hawaii's Japanese would respond to the war provoked the declaration and maintenance of martial

law, and in particular, the military government's internment program.\(^8\)

So it was not surprising then that many Islanders asked, this time in syllables tinged with nervous anxiety: What about Hawaii's Japanese? Would the Islands' "loyal" Americans be forced into hand-to-hand combat with...the smiling Japanese yardman, his wife, the housekeeper? The widely publicized rumors of Japanese saboteurs wreaking massive destruction on December 7 only increased the chorus from "fifth column"\(^9\) prognosticators. Although those tales were proven false, both official and unofficial sources felt the possibility of future local subversion could not be eliminated. Said the Territory's Provost Marshal's Office:

No hesitation could be brooked in taking severe actions which might, then or later, help in the defense of our country. What additional plans the Japanese had for the Hawaiian Islands were unpredictable...<and> preparation was advisable for any type of further move which might be made by the most remote stretch of the imagination. Secretly made plans involving use by the Japanese government of a portion of the 157,000 Japanese on the Islands fell into the category of possible surprises. It was a surprise the authorities determined must never be faced.\(^{10}\)

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\(8\) Allen, pp. 82-83; PHH, Part 22, p. 79; Part 28, pp. 1539-540; Anthony, p. 9.

\(9\) The term "fifth column" refers to the planned use of the local population by an invasion force. Rarely used today, it was a popular term in the 1930s and '40s; Ogawa, pp. 227-28.

\(10\) HPMO, pp. 15-17.
What startled many Mainland authorities, was that an island population, seemingly threatened by Japanese military aggression, would consider an overwhelming majority of its Japanese residents to be a "vital" and trustworthy component in the American war effort. That less than one percent of the Territory's Japanese were suspicious enough to warrant internment further astounded Mainland military authorities whose Department of Justice-run internment and relocation programs would eventually apprehend 5,000 Japanese aliens (and at least that many Germans and Italians), and force, through Presidential Exeuctive Order No. 9066, the exclusion and relocation of nearly 112,000 Japanese from the West Coast. The Territory's military government interned 980 of the 1,441 suspects it picked up for questioning throughout the war, releasing or paroling those Japanese considered less dangerous by a set of hearing boards and reviewing authorities. Local military personnel defended their program as the surest way to "neutralize" the subversive element they feared, stressing that they possessed a superior understanding of the local Japanese.\[11\]

Clearly, something in Hawaii had created a different perception of the threat of possible Japanese subversion. Although local authorities would not deny that it was there, they were nonetheless unwilling to launch a program of mass evacuation. Why? Perhaps it was the essential role the Japanese played in the Islands' economy -- a point reiterated throughout the war -- or the impracticality of shipping several thousand persons to the Mainland when shipping space was already scarce. Others preferred to believe it was something more intangible, some inherent power of the Islands to lull its inhabitants into compatibility.

In retrospect, more powerful forces might have been at work, forces dictated not only by some unique and inspiring local social characteristic, but also by the changing demands of the war. Before martial law was declared, the Islands were governed by a small group of kamaaina haoles. These men and women, wealthy descendants of solid New England missionary stock, had established a governing stronghold in the Islands through a system of interlocking directorates in a score of local businesses. The haole elite, as they were sometimes called, influenced nearly every aspect of Island life, for they felt it their responsibility to guide Hawaii's people. They had become the

Territory's benevolent stewards. Although socially not at odds with the Territory's haole elite, the military was not cut from the same cloth, and consequently, there were differences of opinion as to the necessity of an organized defense of the Territory, especially when it was time to harvest local crops.

Both groups had privately stressed the virtues of a limited democracy, but each defended its particular versions for differing reasons. In some ways Hawaii was reminiscent of the Ante-Bellum South. Status in the Territory was determined by unspoken rules of conduct and white racial supremacy. The kamaaina elite paternalistically interpreted its right-to-rule as an obligation to serve society, stressing Americanization among those it sought to govern. Yet it rarely accepted orientals as anything but inferiors, and strict controls strengthened feelings of separateness and exclusivity among groups such as the Japanese. Democracy, as interpreted by the kamaaina, meant properly spoken English, American clothes, hot dogs and Christianity -- not social or political opportunity. The military, by contrast, was not as willing to mask its feelings on the subject of Island rule. It felt threatened, during the 1930s, by Hawaii's large Japanese population, which it considered an untested variable. Military officials believed that a commission government was the best possible safeguard
against potential Japanese subversion. But such a radical change would surely disable the social and economic monopoly the kamaaina had so carefully constructed. That elite had ruled the Islands for 40 years and had no desire to relinquish its power -- to the military or anyone else.12

Two distinct and thoroughly established generations of Hawaii's Japanese found themselves perched atop an ideological fencepost in 1941: the Issei (pronounced E-say) or first generation, and the Nisei (pronounced Knee-say), the second generation. The Issei were first brought to the Islands in the 1880s to work in the expanding sugar industry. The majority of the Issei were aliens, because American citizenship had been legally denied all but a handful who had served in World War I. The Nisei had a different problem. Since Japan recognized the principle of jus sanguinis -- citizenship derived from one's parents regardless of location of birth -- the Nisei could possess dual citizenship: Japanese citizenship through their parents and United States citizenship because of their birth in the Territory. At first Japanese citizenship was awarded automatically, but a subsequent legal change by the Japanese government required parents of potential dual citizens to

register with the local Japanese consulate within a period of three weeks, or forfeit their Japanese citizenship. Some Issei parents chose this option.\textsuperscript{13}

A sub-group of the Nisei was the Kibei (pronounced Key-bay). Although a tiny part of the total population, about 0.34 percent, the Territory's Kibeis were singled out for particular scrutiny by local intelligence authorities, and with good reason too. If anyone was to be considered a questionable, and possibly dangerous group, it would have to be the Kibeis. Born in Hawaii, the Kibeis were sent at an early age to live with relatives in Japan. Consequently, they acquired a much stronger sense of Japanese culture than their fellow Island-bound Niseis. Many Kibeis knew little about America until they returned to the Islands, usually just before their twentieth birthday so as to avoid Japanese conscription. So total had their Japanese indoctrination been, that in some cases returning Kibeis learned of their United States citizenship while standing on the docks in Honolulu harbor.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13} Lind, pp. 3, 10-11; Ogawa, pp. 228-30; Fuchs, pp. 106-07.

There were nearly 120,000 Nisei in the Islands, many more than the 37,000 Issei. Within the Territory's population, Hawaii's Japanese made up roughly 40 percent of the work force. They constituted: 75 percent of all domestic help; 73 percent of farmers and farm managers; 62 percent of the owners of all retail and trade establishments; 59 percent of those employed in food and dairy stores; 53 percent of employees in restaurants and bars; 51 percent of Island craftsmen, including 90 percent of the Territory's carpenters; 39 percent of the clerical and sales force; and finally, 30 percent of the plantation work force. The Japanese had broken away from the harsh plantation life they had first known, gaining an enviable economic security by rooting themselves in a number of skilled and semi-skilled occupations. They had become full-fledged participants in the American Dream.15

Hawaii was a complicated community by 1941. For many Americans, Hawaii was an exotic tourist destination, a place where, prior to the war, 22,000 visitors came to spend 20 million dollars annually. Consequently, Hawaii assumed the image nurtured by its tourist bureau, a land of "Massive mountains," "sun-kissed beaches" and "soft-voiced hula maidens." Islanders readily accepted these attractive ideas and ignored or suppressed disruptive racial clashes that

15 Lind, pp. 14, 78.
might threaten the steady flow of free-spending tourists.\(^{16}\)

As an economic marketplace, Hawaii was a world leader in sugar and pineapple production. The two were highly profitable crops and led to an expanding business empire involving a small group of local businessmen, the haole elite. The wealth and success they enjoyed in agriculture spread like the tentacles of an octopus into banking, insurance, wholesale and retail merchandising, utilities and shipping. In reality, however, this stronghold was based on a fragile single crop system. The failure of either sugar or pineapples could trigger disastrous complications and possibly topple the local economy. Military strategists viewed this with particular alarm. The Territory, dependent on Mainland sources for 60 percent of its food supply, (and ironically, 95 percent of its rice came from California), could very easily be held hostage by a Japanese submarine blockade. The military appealed to local planters to experiment with diversification before a war could threaten the success of such an endeavor. But the response was a token gesture by men who thought the military's planning for a wartime food supply "highly theoretical."\(^{17}\)

\(^{16}\) Fortune, pp. 31-33; Hooper, pp. 23-24.

To military strategists in the 1920s and '30s, Hawaii was a "604-square-mile fort," a bastion of American impregnability, "the Gibraltar of the Pacific." Still, although military authorities had often publicly stressed the Territory's defensibility, certain weaknesses presented themselves to planners wary of Japanese aggression in Manchuria and the Pacific, particularly those problems associated with Hawaii's geographic isolation, and the perceived potential threat of a large resident Japanese population. Thus alarmed, the military spent millions of dollars to build up its Territorial defenses -- an estimated 204 million dollars in 1941 alone -- ringning the Islands with gun emplacements and sentries. That year thousands of troops and eager defense workers swelled a previously tranquil population. The Army's 25,000 troops formed the largest single concentration of military manpower in the United States. And with all signs pointing toward war, it was an anxious, defense-minded citizenry that viewed the growing tension between the the United States and Japan. By the end of the war the military could boast of 4,000,000 feet of barbed wire and 4,000 concrete pillboxes.\(^1^8\)

Another, more pervasive image had made itself apparent by 1941, one that clouded certain aspects of Island life, and lent to it a mythical countenance that served as

\(^{18}\) *Fortune*, pp. 31-33, 82; Allen, pp. 65-72, 90.
Hawaii's most identifying (and most enduring) metaphor. Some Islanders felt that Hawaii was warmed by the fires of "aloha," the Hawaiian word for love and brotherhood. It was this sense of cross-cultural kinship that Islanders attributed to Hawaii's idyllic tropical image. Hawaii was a picture postcard come to life, a theme reinforced by American writers, moviemakers and photographers who had stopped long enough to gaze at lush green valleys, walk along hotel beachfronts, smell the flowers and receive a carefully managed Hawaii Tourist Bureau tour. More than anything else, the kamaaina elite sought to maintain this image of a magical "aloha spirit," for it lent unofficial credibility to the social structure they had created for Hawaii. This perception also ensured its grasp on the Territory,\(^{19}\) for the kamaaina elite did not view itself, as one haole apologist wrote before the war, in August 1940, as:

> part of any grand scheme of U.S. defense...they do not see themselves as part of any Pan-Pacific problem involving the whole U.S. economy...Hawaii is neither a tourist's paradise nor the military man's clenched fist, but just a darn good place to live, to make and invest money, and to hand on in all its wealth and loveliness to satisfied sons and daughters...The haoles like their Island paradise -- and are praying that the great Pacific war is still a Sunday supplement's bad dream.\(^{20}\)

\(^{19}\) Fuchs, p. 46; Hooper, pp. 15-16, 22-24; Lind, pp. 15-16, 60-61.

\(^{20}\) Fortune, pp. 31-34, 82.
Caught in the midst of this confusing tangle of conflicting images were Hawaii's Japanese residents. They had been given their own image, one grimly enhanced during the 1930s with each incident of Japanese military aggression. It was not unusual for commentators to describe Hawaii's Japanese as "enigmatic" and "inscrutable." The question of their loyalty, a favorite after dinner topic among local haoles during the 1930s, could only be answered in an actual military confrontation, many believed. As a potential fifth column, the Japanese in Hawaii posed a clear and present danger, one strategists could not ignore, and one that many journalists did not. Hawaii's Japanese residents had heard so many "slurring comments" by the time World War II started, that they had become accustomed to the idea that they were suspicious characters.21

Moreover, it was not too difficult to find incriminating, although superficial, evidence of pro-Japanese sentiment in the Territory. Japanese habits and customs, which were considered by the non-Japanese community to be social "irritants," were maintained in a variety of ways. Japanese newspapers and radio broadcasts spoke to an audience of Japanese speaking individuals. A well-established Japanese language school system filled its rosters with 80 percent of the available Nisei youth.

21 Lind, pp. 1, 38, 130; Ogawa, pp. 227-28.
Following a day at an American public school, the Nisei would spend the rest of the afternoon studying Japanese language and customs at a Japanese language school. Many Nisei regularly attended Japanese language schools for ten years or more. Finally, the Japanese Consulate placed hundreds of sub-consular agents, the Toritsuginin, throughout the Islands. These agents kept track of the paperwork involved with citizenship abroad: The recording of births, deaths, expatriations and military deferments. Serving in this manner the Toritsuginin became highly visible community leaders and an individual's main connection with Japan.22

Earlier in the 1930s, when newsreels depicted Japanese soldiers in Manchuria, persons were prone to shout "Banzai!" Young Nisei girls might stand on street corners asking passers-by to place another stitch in a senen-bari -- the Japanese good luck charm of a thousand stitches to be worn in battle -- or to contribute to the Japanese War Relief. Some observers could point to these actions and quickly conclude that Hawaii's Japanese were loyal to Japan and hence acting in an unneutral manner. But before December 7, 1941 there was no reason why American citizens (including Japanese-Americans and Japanese aliens) could not support

22 Lind, p. 24; Fuchs, p. 110; MANUAL, pp. 45, 56-57, ROPMG; Ogawa, pp. 141-42.
Japanese belligerency and still maintain fully patriotic Americanism.\textsuperscript{23}

This situation shifted dramatically after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The Island-wide humiliation felt after December 7 unleashed latent aggressions previously held in check by Hawaii's relative tolerance. Post-attack confrontations instilled fear in Hawaii's Japanese community and rumors that a Japanese fifth column had played a significant role in the dawn raid were eagerly accepted by Hawaii's non-Japanese civilians seeking a scapegoat for Pearl Harbor's failure to provide promised security. Wrote a local haole schoolteacher: "We white people are more suspecting of the Japanese race. Before we used to be so sure. Now we wonder. We do not trust them."\textsuperscript{24}

Trust was the central issue among members of the nation's intelligence community long before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Island authorities acted swiftly after the attack with the kind of precision that indicated a well-planned operation. The roundup of suspects began shortly after martial law was declared, and a majority of those were apprehended within three hours of the declaration because plans for handling Hawaii's "dangerous element" had

\textsuperscript{23} Ogawa, pp. 233, 237-38, 258-59; Lind, p. 39; Allen, p. 82.

\textsuperscript{24} Lind, pp. 57-60.
been given constant consideration since June, 1939. Despite numerous expressions of public confidence and promises of fair treatment in the event of war, military authorities secretly had made their preparations. They began with a set of lists of those thought to be potentially dangerous in the event of war, and expanded their coverage to include surveillance, searches, a network of informers and finally, in the months just prior to December 7, 1941, a dress rehearsal of suspect identification, arrest and transportation to internment camps.25

These intelligence activities, while clandestine, nonetheless produced a wave of rumors among Hawaii's Japanese residents. There was a definite fear of mass-internment, either to the Mainland or to semi-desolate Molokai, an island 40 miles southeast of Honolulu known for its colony of exiled lepers. Such fears were so strong that when war became a reality, many Japanese were mentally prepared for internment. The Japanese had a phrase for such fatalistic notions: Shikata-ga-nai (it cannot be helped). For some Islanders the coming of the war in 1941 was an ominous portent of the erosion of local values, including the "aloha spirit" and the cultural diversity that

presumably had existed in Hawaii. Other observers sincerely
felt that a healthy fear of internment was a necessary and
desirable "social expedient," especially for a population
thought capable of subversion.26

Feelings of fear and dislocation slowly unraveled the
fabric of the Japanese community's well-ordered existence,
despite previous public affirmations of trust between
military and civilian leaders and Japanese leaders.
Throughout the summer of 1941 intelligence officials
expressed their beliefs in racial unity at luncheons, school
assemblies and meetings called by independent civilian
advisory groups. Also that summer, a group of civic leaders
met with the military to draft a number of statements on
loyalty that stressed a "united citizenry." One widely
publicized statement was made before a group of 500 Isseis
by Lt. Col. Eugene M. Foster on behalf of the Commanding
General of the Hawaiian Department.27 Said Foster:

The Army feels it can depend on the people of the
Japanese race for full support, basing its
conclusions on the fact that most of you are loyal
to our government and its principles, and those of
you who are not sure of your own loyalty will
support our institutions because your own
self-interests dictate that you would not want to
change your present way of life...You are
considered part of the team for defense.28

27 Allen, p. 83; Ogawa, pp. 272-73.
28 Lind, pp. 67-68.
A few days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, these sentiments were echoed by G-2's Lt. Col. Kendall J. Fielder. The Japanese community, he said, should be commended for its "spirit under fire." Said Fielder:

You may rest assured that the constituted authorities will handle subversive and unlawful elements swiftly, adequately and fairly. A number of enemy agents have been apprehended and detained. Many others have been apprehended on suspicion but most of them were found to be innocent and released. There is no desire on the part of the authorities to organize mass-concentration camps...The loyal citizens of all racial ancestries must work to fight together to the end.29

Before the end of 1941, Army command of the Territory passed to Lt. Gen. Delos C. Emmons. He too embraced a similar stance, urging the Island population to continue to conduct itself in "the American way." Hawaii, long considered an "outpost of friendliness and goodwill," now had the responsibility to prove that reputation true, Emmons said. "In accepting these responsibilities it is important that Hawaii prove that her traditional confidence in her cosmopolitan population has not been misplaced." Nevertheless, loyalty was the true test, and Emmons' declarations left little doubt that war had made the test even more difficult. Said Emmons:

We must distinguish between loyalty and disloyalty among our people. Sometimes that is difficult to do, especially under the stress of war. However,

29 Lind, pp. 69-70.
we must not knowingly and deliberately deny any loyal citizen the opportunity to exercise or demonstrate his loyalty in a concrete way.\textsuperscript{30}

In February 1942, members of the haole civic hierarchy continued to express their trust in the Japanese. The president of the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce paternalistically told a group of Rotarians that:

We have brought these people <the Japanese> too far along the road to full partnership with us to drop them now...Our best protection against the few who might be disloyal under pressure is the strength of the many united in our common cause.\textsuperscript{31}

Riley Allen, then editor of the Honolulu Star Bulletin, "quietly" reassured Japanese community leaders that the chances of mass-internment "were practically nil" and they could safeguard that possibility by practicing self-restraint in politics and labor.\textsuperscript{32} The outpouring of faith must have bewildered the Japanese when it continued into the war, especially when their neighbors, community leaders and friends began quietly disappearing.

While Islanders maintained a public atmosphere of trust, the tragedy at Pearl Harbor produced a different reaction on the Mainland. The nation's leading journals sought revenge and spoke of continued crises. Asked Time Magazine: "Who was a friend and who was foe? In Hawaii, no

\textsuperscript{30} Lind, pp. 70-71.

\textsuperscript{31} Lind, p. 64.

\textsuperscript{32} Fuchs, p. 302.
one could be sure of that answer." With the Japanese "everywhere" the "problem" was "overwhelming"; another case of "the white man's old shortcoming -- of not <sic> being able to tell one yellow man from another, nor the loyal from the disloyal." Albert Horlings, writing in the July 1942 issue of The Nation, accused the military of surrendering to the economic pressure presumably being applied by the Territory's haole elite for "business as usual." Horlings favored mass-evacuation, stating that it would not disrupt the Island economy if plantation owners switched to less labor-intensive crops.\(^{33}\)

These verbal attacks left an indelible trail among Hawaii's Japanese residents. Fears of internment, unemployment and the threat of physical violence at the hands of angry vigilantes preyed on the minds of many Issei. Initially, they had found it hard to believe that Japan had engineered such a "ruthless" surprise raid, or that the Emperor had allowed it to happen. Now, with most of their cultural and community leaders detained or interned, the Issei began to react irrationally. Many feared that the slightest representation of anything Japanese, no matter how innocent, would lead to internment. Rumors spread that it was illegal to possess literature -- of any type -- written

in Japanese, even such innocuous an item as a book on Japanese flower arranging. Every neighbor was considered a potential informer, perhaps an agent of one of the local intelligence agencies. Conversations were held in hushed tones and guilt by association was a constant threat, leading many Japanese to avoid homes where family members had been interned.34

Where their loyalty lay became a painful question for Hawaii's Japanese to answer, for they had never adopted a single set of values or culture. Many had worked, amidst numerous expressions of Japanese culture, to be "good Americans." The Japanese had respected the laws of Hawaii for those laws had offered them a bright future, yet they cherished and practiced ancestral traditions of honor. The war had changed all that. It had stripped them of one identity, "American," and forced them to renounce another, Japanese. Almost overnight the kimonos disappeared as did the carefully folded letters from relatives, the worn photographs of vacations in Japan. All of these things were burned or buried in the backyards of older Isseis, for them a traumatic and tearful act of severance.35

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34 Lind, pp. 103-04, 142-43; Allen, p. 137; Ogawa, pp. 316-17.

35 Ogawa, p. 316; Fuchs, p. 304.
The questions also rang in the ears of the Nisei, when they turned to scold their parents for speaking Japanese in public. They were Americans and they sought desperately to prove it. Said one young Nisei:

Before I knew I was Japanese, but I used to think of myself as an American or Kanaka <local>...but after they kicked us out <of the Territorial Guard>, I saw myself as a 'Jap.' I don't blame the Haoles for what they did -- I look at myself in the mirror and take a good look. Yep, I look like a 'Jap.' I say to myself, 'You're a Jap. No wonder they won't trust you.'

36 Lind, p. 182.
CHAPTER II

"WE JUST DON'T THINK THE WAY THEY DO"
Given the trend of events in November 1941, Curtis B. Munson reached a rather startling conclusion regarding the Japanese residents in the Territory of Hawaii. They comprised a group marked by strong loyalty -- loyalty to Hawaii. Noted Munson in his final report:

It may be well to state here in a general way that everyone in Hawaii, especially the dark-skinned laboring classes, places loyalty to Hawaii first, and the United States second. This is not meant to impugn their loyalty -- but they love the Islands.\textsuperscript{37}

Munson was an experienced government investigator sent as a Special Representative of the State Department to ascertain the loyalty of Hawaii's Japanese residents. His nine days in the Territory followed a similar investigation of Japanese populations along the West Coast. Already that year Munson had undertaken other confidential investigations for the State Department, examining German interests in General Motors and analyzing the attitudes of French Canadians toward the war in Europe. His trip to Hawaii was meant to assuage concerned Washington officials, including President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who, distrusting local investigators, wanted further analysis of the Territory's Japanese.\textsuperscript{38}

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\textsuperscript{37} Ogawa, p. 299.
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\textsuperscript{38} Michi Weglyn, \textit{Years of Infamy} (New York: William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1976), pp. 34, 49, 283, 285; Daniels, p. 28.
\end{flushleft}
Munson suggested that a majority of the Japanese in Hawaii were "actively loyal," kept "quietly at their tasks" by an overwhelming military presence. Still, Munson could not discount the possible emotional impact of an invading Japanese armada; the humble acquiescence of Hawaii's Japanese might suddenly vanish, swallowed by a chorus of Banzais. "Under those circumstances," shrewdly noted Munson, "if this reporter were there he is not sure that he might not do it also to save his own skin..."\(^{39}\) By itself, the Munson report might not have warranted serious consideration. Yet other intelligence agents had encountered similar difficulties in trying to draw fixed lines of loyalty in an ethnic community that found refuge in a flurry of distinctions. While the report ably demonstrated the difficulty that local authorities encountered in predicting the behavior of a "typical" Japanese, it did not examine the basis for this unpredictability. Munson had sought a clear-cut picture of American loyalty, an abstract concept to a group that had subscribed to American notions of freedom and equal opportunity, but had nonetheless found difficulty associating them with the Islands. Understanding the prevailing influences of Territorial life was the key to solving the loyalty paradox. Simply put, those who lived in the Territory -- including a majority of the Japanese --

\(^{39}\) Ogawa, pp. 302-03.
placed Hawaii, and not the United States, at the center of their world.

A similar survey, released in October 1942, presented a more detailed account of local Japanese sentiment than did Munson. In doing so, however, it only reaffirmed the complexity of the situation. "Culturally, socially and racially," the survey reported, the average Japanese resident in Hawaii:

was sympathetic with Japan, not as a political entity, but as a nostalgic symbol of the 'good ole days.' In it was bound up all the thoughts and ideas of honor, beauty, etc. in which he could seek mental refuge from the harsh realities of everyday life.

There was a strong feeling of kinship and an obvious pride in Japanese military might, the survey reported, but they were undermined by conflicting emotional and intellectual acknowledgments. Concluded the survey:

Intellectually, he knew he should be loyal to the United States because this was now the country of his children. Emotionally, he revolted at the thought of war between Japan and America as much as if it were a mortal fight between two equally beloved members of his family. He preferred not to think of the possibility.40

That these two reports offered valuable but different insights is certain; how they were understood by authorities stymied by the loyalty question is not clear. Munson's report, for example, was not made public until 1946,

40 Lind, pp. 118-20.
although copies were originally sent to the State, War and Navy Departments.\textsuperscript{41} Local investigators acknowledged that understanding the Territory's Japanese was a difficult task, that the overwhelming Japanese presence might camouflage actual Japanese espionage agents from Japan -- agents perhaps even unknown to the local Japanese. Perhaps they might never be able to say with certainty just how the Japanese would react. Noted G-2's Lt. Col. Fielder:

\textit{The queer thing about the Japanese is that you cannot differentiate between those who are potentially loyal and those who are potentially disloyal...We just don't think the way they do; we can't solve their minds...You can't draw a definite conclusion.}

This tone of uncertainty characterized Territorial investigative work before and during the war. It was as if a veil of Oriental inscrutability really did exist.\textsuperscript{42}

\textit{As the nation's most important island outpost, Hawaii had for 20 years been a central concern of military planners and intelligence officers. Both G-2 and the Navy's Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) had maintained small local bureaus -- the Navy's larger and more sophisticated -- but they seemed to lack a sense of purpose, of urgency, and had


\textsuperscript{42} PHH, Part 23, pp. 649-50, Part 28, pp. 1535-536.}
produced little substantial evidence of subversive elements beyond lists of those considered potentially dangerous in the event of hostilities with Japan. Much of the information was either unsubstantiated or contradictory. Fearing a war in the Pacific and the possibility of unchecked subversive elements within the United States and its Territories, President Roosevelt in June 1939 ordered a nationwide counterespionage campaign involving the FBI, G-2 and ONI. The president sought to avoid the "confusion and irresponsibility" that might result from an uncoordinated effort. Cooperation and a free-flowing exchange of information therefore became important and necessary for the success of this program.\(^4\)\(^3\)

In Hawaii this meant re-opening the Territory's FBI offices, the Bureau having had to close them twice since 1931, largely due to a lack of funds. To re-open the Honolulu Field Office, the FBI sent Robert L. Shivers, a veteran of 19 years experience. Shivers arrived in August 1939. As a newcomer to the Territory, Shivers felt obliged

\(^4\)\(^3\) Lewis Coren, "Memorandum of Interview with Lt. Col. Byron M. Meurlott" on 9 March 1945, Executive Section, Subordinate Offices, Sections and Subdivisions, Research and Historical Section, Memorandums of Interviews with Officers Connected with the Military Government of the Territory of Hawaii, Box 894, RMGTH, (hereafter cited as MEURLOTT), pp. 1-3; Capt. Stanley D. Arnold, "Memorandum For Colonel Claude B. Washburn, Officer in Charge, Civil Affairs Division, Western Defense Command," 29 May 1945, (hereafter cited as ARNOLD), p. 3, Box 1723, ROPMG; Allen, pp. 70-71; FBI, pp. 1-2.
for several months to rely on G-2 and ONI for background information. He was especially anxious to learn of their tantalizing suspect "grab lists." These were rosters of individuals considered potentially dangerous during a war between the United States and Japan, but because they contained little factual information other than the names of the suspects involved, Shivers was not convinced of their validity, stating:

I made a tour of all the Islands in Hawaii, asking the so-called haole populace -- the businessmen, the plantation managers, the plantation owners -- about the Japanese conditions and the Japanese situation. I got just about as many different answers as the number of people I talked to. So far as I could learn the haole populace in Hawaii was not in a position to give any accurate information about the Japanese populace because there had been very little discourse between the two. They could only give you surmises, they could only tell you what they thought would happen, but for factual information, it didn't exist...To a large extent, the average haole does not know the Japanese psychology, he does not know the Japanese mind, and for that reason he did not know what was going on within the inner circles of the Japanese community. 44

In September, President Roosevelt placed the FBI in charge of coordinating all activities involved with his counterespionage campaign. Taking this cue, Shivers organized weekly intelligence conferences where local representatives could meet to discuss their respective investigations, propose future, possibly joint, programs and

exchange pertinent information on the status of the Territory's alleged "subversives." Shivers also instituted a program of quarterly surveys in order to analyze "trends in the subversive movements," uncover "focal points of danger" and identify persons whose internment was deemed "necessary to security in the event of hostilities." Washington officials further expanded the role of the FBI in the Territory by negotiating a delimitation agreement in June 1940. The agreement, signed by the heads of the FBI, G-2 and ONI, put the FBI in charge of "ascertaining the location, leadership, strength and organization" of all civilian groups suspected of possible fifth column activity. And there was no mistaking who the principal suspects were: The Japanese.45

The agreement also clarified the role of military intelligence work. G-2 and ONI would be responsible for counterespionage activities as they pertained only to their Territorial installations. This drew an angry response from ONI officials in Washington. Such an agreement would be unwise, they argued, because a lack of background knowledge would handicap the FBI's investigations into Hawaii's Japanese. In their defense, ONI officials noted that they had long been interested in maintaining a surveillance of the Japanese in Hawaii, and claimed to have accumulated a

45 FBI, pp. 1-3, 100-03, 200.
large body of information and a network of Japanese informants. Competent translators were difficult to obtain, and simply forwarding copies of ONI information, assuming the FBI could interpret it, would be an unwieldy task in itself. Despite Shivers' lack of confidence in their capabilities, the Territory's Naval intelligence officers possessed a strong feeling of self-confidence and clearly wanted an equal, if not larger, role in local counterespionage activities. On a purely local level, the sharing of evidence is precisely what had happened. Local intelligence agents frequently discussed coverage of the Japanese community and no one openly questioned ONI's participation, for it had already assumed "primary" responsibility for such investigations before the delimitation agreement. As for Shivers and his Honolulu Field Office, they would "continue to expand their activities in this field."46

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover quickly acknowledged that the Navy had delved more deeply into the Japanese situation than anyone else, and recommended that ONI continue to do so. But the Navy unexpectedly declined full responsibility, stating that it did not have sufficient manpower. After a brief discussion by Washington officials, the two agencies agreed to conduct concurrent investigations, the FBI doing

46 FBI, pp. 102-05.
what it could to expand its operations under the tutelage, when needed, of the Navy.  

Shivers initially planned to use the suspect dossiers maintained by G-2 and ONI, but decided against any complete adoption of them because he was not convinced of their credibility. Working closely with a specially-formed espionage unit of the Honolulu Police Department -- formed at the request of the FBI to supplement Bureau manpower -- the FBI began its own investigations into the backgrounds, reputations and current activities of local suspects. The FBI often referred cases to the five-man police unit, whose rapport with Hawaii's Japanese community was already established. All of the local police officers used were long-time local residents and three of them spoke Japanese. Gradually, Shivers began to feel that there were "very few people, if any" in the Territory that knew what plans the Japanese government had in store for Hawaii -- if such plans indeed existed. Shivers was also convinced that the Japanese Consulate in Honolulu held the key to any proposed Japan-directed espionage. Legally, the Consulate was exempt from investigation; diplomatic immunity prevented that. But the possible global repercussions instilled an even stronger moral check on Shivers, who did not want to shoulder the blame for starting a war with Japan. Working then in other

\footnote{\textbf{FBI}, p. 103.}
directions, Shivers discovered anew just how complicated the local Japanese were.\

48 Said Shivers:

It is a very tight ring...and it is almost next to impossible to get one <Japanese> on whom you could rely who is sufficiently well informed or close enough to the alien enemy to actually be in a position to know what is going on.\

Yet, of all the assumptions then being made in the Territory, one in particular was correct: There were spies in Hawaii. And many of them were Japanese. But what was never mentioned publicly was that those spies were working for American interests -- working as informers for the FBI, G-2 and ONI. By November 1941, for example, despite the problems it had encountered, the FBI had threaded itself fairly well into the intricate social net of the local Japanese community, largely on the strength of Japanese informers. The Honolulu Field Office had developed 1,139 sources of information, including 172 "confidential" informers, 73 of whom were Japanese reporting on the activities of other Japanese in Hawaii. In fact, just a few weeks earlier, in September, 1941 Shivers received the names of 135 Japanese residents who, according to the "reliable contact" providing them, were more than willing to serve as


"listening posts" for the FBI, noting anything unusual in their communities.\(^5\)

As their investigations continued, local military authorities estimated that no more than 1,500 Japanese residents presented a potential threat -- and of that group only 500 were suspect enough to warrant immediate and unquestioned internment. Authorities had focused on the most visible leaders in the Japanese community, those whose occupations, organizational ties and background not only linked them technically with Japan -- many of them were aliens -- but also gave them a prominent social standing among their peers in the Territory. Authorities reasoned that the leadership abilities of these individuals presented a dangerous question: Given a general Pacific war with Japan, or worse, an outright invasion of the Territory, in what direction would these suspected men steer the loyalties of their friends and followers? What would they tell the people that had so often before sought them out for guidance, even spiritual advice?

There were two major categories for those 1,500 suspects, with several sub-groupings in each one. The 500 most suspected of subversive tendencies were officially known as the "A" group, "blue card" suspects "dangerous to the internal security of the United States." The remaining

\(^5\) FBI, pp. 300-01.
1,000 formed the "B" list, or "buff card" suspects, those of "doubtful loyalty" who would be kept under close surveillance during a war with Japan. Nearly half of the "blue card" suspects were local Toritsuginin, the sub-consular agents whose civic duties linked the Japanese government with its citizens in the Territory. Shivers had been suspicious of the more than 200 Toritsuginin since September 1940 when he suggested that Washington officials render an opinion on the possible illegal actions of the Toritsuginin due to the failure of most of them to register with the United States State Department. Roughly 90 percent of the Toritsuginin were aliens, Shivers learned, selected from the ranks of prominent local Japanese. He also discovered that the Toritsuginin were active in collecting comfort kits for Japanese soldiers and money for the Japanese military, actions, Shivers decided, suggested something more than an administrative love for Japan.51

Lt. Gen. Walter Short, then the Commanding General, Hawaiian Department, registered a vigorous protest to any proposed pre-war prosecution of the Toritsuginin. His opinion, when it was delivered in July 1941, also bore the signed approval of Henry L. Stimson, the Secretary of War.

51 Walter C. Short, Commanding General, Hawaiian Department, "Report to the Adjutant General, re: Disposition of crews of foreign merchant vessels and other alien enemies in the event of war," 3 July 1941, p. 2, ROPMG; MANUAL, p. 3, ROPMG; MEURLOTT, pp. 6-7; PHH, Part 23, pp. 858-64.
Short did not want to harass unnecessarily the local Japanese. The Army's "counter propaganda campaign" encouraged United States loyalty among the Japanese and promised fair treatment in return. Short stated that if successful, his program would greatly reduce:

our defense problem...<and> I believe that development of loyalty among the Japanese population more important than punishment of a few individuals. It is impracticable to place <the> total Japanese population of one hundred sixty thousand in concentration camps.52

Subsequently, no action was taken against the Toritsuginin until December 7, 1941, when nearly the entire group, as well as many Japanese language school teachers and Japanese religious leaders, were apprehended for detention and possible internment.

Attracting nearly as much concern were the Territory's Japanese language school teachers, whose presence in the Islands had stirred an almost continuous debate since the turn of the century. Shivers said the language schools were among the most "subversive elements in Hawaii," and they had prevented the Japanese from assimilating "the American way of life." Issei parents wanted to see their children given a proper Japanese education, and for those who could not afford to send their children to live with relatives in Japan, the language schools provided a partial answer.

52 PHH, Part 23, pp. 859-60.
Taught mostly by aliens and Kibeis, the Nisei dutifully went to language school, arriving each afternoon after a day of public school education. There were lessons in the Japanese language, morals and culture, even attempts to foster a reverence for the Emperor. Since most of the language school teachers were Japan-educated aliens, the Nisei found the tone of instruction "dull," "rigid" and at times fervently pro-Japan. Ironically, the schools had very little lasting influence on the increasingly American-oriented Nisei.53

Perhaps the most unsettling question of loyalty, however, was that which was directed at the Territory's Kibeis. The Kibeis were, in many ways, more Japanese than their Issei parents. Their knowledge of the English language and American customs, minimal at best, was overshadowed by a majestical pride in things Japanese. Many locals considered them a class of social misfits, for as recent immigrants to the Territory, the Kibeis were simply more "Japanesy" than anyone around them. Their firmly established Japanese acculturation certainly set them apart from the eager-to-be-American Nisei. Some Issei parents even rejected the Kibei for a lack of Americanism. Shocked, disappointed and thoroughly confused, the Kibeis adopted a low occupational profile, working as laborers, but sometimes as

teachers in the Japanese language schools. With their identity and self-image skewed by the dual citizenship question, the Kibeis developed a near-paranoid "counter-suspicion" toward anyone but fellow Kibeis. They became quiet and unobtrusive members of the Japanese community, searching among their own emotions as the distressing idea of a war with Japan moved closer to becoming a reality.\(^54\)

Although local intelligence authorities were more suspicious of established community leaders -- and to a lesser extent, Island Nisei, who some military authorities feared "never comprehended the full meaning of citizenship" -- they were also very concerned about the Kibeis, calling them the single most dangerous element for a variety of reasons. Those who considered Kibeis a potential threat believed they would be more dangerous once a war began, partly because an education in Japan stressed Japanese nationalism through student military training programs, but also because their ties with Japan -- as much a homeland as Hawaii -- were recently reinforced and might prove unseverable during an invasion. For many Kibei there were strong family ties in Japan, where they had received most, if not all, of their education. In many cases, Kibeis had come to Hawaii to make enough money to make a prosperous

\(^{54}\) Lind, pp. 74, 188; Fuchs, p. 127.
return to Japan.\textsuperscript{55} Noted G-2's Lt. Col. Fielder:

We consider them the most dangerous group because they are young, they are smart, and they have been indoctrinated with this fanatical worship of the Emperor and willingness to die for the Emperor.\textsuperscript{56}

Having at this point, in the fall of 1941, already publicly expressed confidence in the American loyalty of most of Hawaii's Japanese residents, local authorities were nonetheless definitely concerned that any potential threats to the safety and internal security of the Islands be "neutralized." During that tense month of November, with diplomatic relations between the United States and Japan coming to a crossroads, Shivers and a G-2 representative collaborated to plan a suspect apprehension agreement. When approved on November 22, the apprehension program wedded decisive action to the core assumptions of the entire counterespionage campaign: That there might very well be a dangerous element within Hawaii's Japanese community and that element, no matter how small or large it might prove to be, had to be dealt with decisively and before it could do any harm. Relatively little concern was given to the very real possibility of apprehending innocent individuals, and although authorities would later justify their program as a wartime necessity, pre-meditated and vital to the safety of

\textsuperscript{55} MANUAL, pp. 20, 47-48, ROPMG;

\textsuperscript{56} PHH, Part 28, p. 1536.
the Territory, they would also acknowledge that much of their evidence was circumstantial. That they had to act on their instincts in the absence of specific evidence was rationalized by the expressed urgency of the situation. In a post-war statement, Lt. Gen. Emmons noted that "undoubtedly, mistakes were made. We leaned over backward in interning people in order to achieve as much security as we possibly could." The plans devised by Shivers and his G-2 counterpart envisioned three progressively worsening scenarios, each with different priorities regarding the detention and possible internment of suspected Japanese. When war finally came it was Plan II -- a scenario in which there was a threat of surprise raids on the Territory during a general Pacific war -- that provided for the internment of all suspected Japanese residents.57

Hesitant Immigration and Naturalization Service officials had also agreed by this time to lease some of their Honolulu facilities to the Army. The INS maintained two compounds in the Honolulu Harbor area -- the Immigration Station along Ala Moana Road, where the INS kept its main offices, and the Sand Island Quarantine Station on the western end of the harbor. Immigration authorities would allow partial use of the Immigration Station, but refused

57 HPMO, pp. 13-17; MEURLOTT, pp. 3-4; FBI, pp. 214-16; Allen, p. 134.
use of the quarantine station unless the Army provided a suitable replacement facility. None was forthcoming as martial law on December 7 eliminated the need for such politics. The Army just took what it wanted.\footnote{Coren, "Memorandum of Interview with Major Edward E. Walker" on 9 March 1945, Executive Section, Subordinate Offices, Sections and Subdivisions, Research and Historical Section, Memorandums of Interviews with Officers Connected with the Military Government of the Territory of Hawaii, Box 894, RMGTH, (hereafter cited as WALKER), pp. 3-4.}

In the immediate aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor, military officials acted decisively, proceeding with a thoroughness justified by panic-stricken urgency. The broad authoritarian control of martial law seemed the best way to harness the fears of a population plunged into war. The declaration of martial law did more, though, for it also amplified pre-war suspicions of subversive Japanese behavior. When urged by military officials to relinquish his control of the Territory, Gov. Poindexter did so in part because the United States was at war with Japan, but also, in larger part, because the presence of thousands of local Japanese pointed to threats the military felt it alone could handle best. Subsequently, the military became the final authority on anything that might affect the safety of the Islands, its powers all-encompassing and unquestionable.
A lack of written warrants of arrest became a relatively minor point on December 7, a legal hurdle easily cleared by mid-week when officially prepared warrants were sent by Washington authorities who had post-dated the documents in order to ensure their "validity" and shield them from possible judicial scrutiny.\(^5\) Perhaps on that eventful Sunday local intelligence agents paused briefly to take pride in their preparedness, at the wall-sized map of Oahu they had created in their joint headquarters in downtown Honolulu. Hundreds of stick-pins peppered the map, each one identifying the name and location of a suspect and color-coded to indicate Issei, Nisei and Kibei. "It was a regular dragnet affair," said G-2's Lt. Col. Fielder, "...a comparatively simple matter..." Thirteen Squads of Special Agents and local police officers fanned out across the Island of Oahu and discovered a surprising lack of resistance. Some suspects had even packed suitcases in anticipation of the "dreaded call." Hawaii's Japanese had their own set of assumptions concerning a war with Japan: Their freedom would be one of its earliest casualties.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) N.A. Townsend, Acting Assistant Solicitor General, "Memorandum for Mr. Amberg, Special Assistant to the Secretary of War," 9 December 1941, ROPMG; WALKER, pp. 4-5; MEURLOTT, pp. 4-5.

\(^6\) PHH, Part 23, p. 1539; Lind, p. 108; Ogawa, p. 299.
CHAPTER III

"IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY"
It hadn't taken Capt. Edward E. Walker very long to realize that no one working around him really understood the potential size of the internment program. In less than a week it had already become an administrative mess, nearly everyone involved caught unprepared by the very suddenness of the war.61

Still, the roundup itself had gone well, almost without incident. Intelligence authorities apprehended the majority of those considered the Territory's most dangerous Japanese residents within a week of "the Blitz" on Pearl Harbor, netting about 400 suspects on the first day. Moreover, at the "Skunkworks," the Sand Island Quarantine Station, the Army was working overtime to transform part of the island's 300 acres of sand and coral into an internment facility. By the end of the first week of war nearly 300 Japanese suspects were being held at Sand Island while military authorities reviewed their cases. The Quarantine Station was nearly an ideal facility, the military reasoned, but fearful times called for serious measures and further, stricter precautions were needed at Sand Island in order to protect both the Territory and those detained there. Galvanized military personnel endeavored to ensure internal security through careful, although sometimes extreme, measures. Eventually, half a million dollars worth of

61 WALKER, pp. 2-3.
"improvements" enabled officials to house and feed approximately 450 internees, about double what they had been able to handle during the first week of the war. Hundreds of feet of "manproof" fencing encircled the camp by the Spring of 1942 -- a trio of ten-foot high fences topped with barbed wire, the centermost one charged with 2,200 volts of electricity.62

If anything marked the early development of the internment program though, it was a felt necessity to put plans into operation as quickly as possible. Walker, the Liaison Officer between the Provost Marshal's Office (PMO) and the Office of the Military Governor (OMG), was assigned to organize what would finally be known as the Hawaiian Department Alien Processing Center (HDAPC). His number-one priority was to set up some form of review that would enable the military to segregate the "disloyal" from the "loyal." Walker was called to active duty on Friday of that first hectic week, and told on Saturday by the OMG to form three internment hearing boards using a list of potential board members given to him by the OMG. Walker had the groundwork -- including a "hastily" prepared set of questions and guidelines -- ready on Monday. By then hundreds of suspects had already received some form of official scrutiny at the

Immigration Station. Many of them were released, however, when questioning revealed a lack of solid evidence to warrant continued detention. Early attempts to limit the amount of confusion were up to this point unsuccessful. Some suspects were arrested more than once and by different intelligence bureaus, despite the fact that the Army was supposed to be coordinating all apprehensions. Three separate branches of the military were responsible for much of the internment program: G-2 supervised suspect identification and apprehension; the PMO maintained all detention facilities; and the fledgling OMG initiated all general policies concerning internment. In addition, no recommendation for internment was considered final unless it had been approved by the OMG.63

Military authorities were fully cognizant of the fact that the questions given to the hearing boards were incomplete, perhaps even inadequate, and that many of those apprehended would not be found dangerous; in their minds the uncertainty of the entire local situation precluded any

other format. Local intelligence agents built their investigations on a suspect's possible motives, the opportunity to engage them, and the means with which to carry them out. Yet, the will to engage in subversive activities, while a powerful determinant, was not an altogether incriminating piece of information. And, because suspects were given a pre-hearing screening by representatives from each of the local bureaus, it is not unlikely that by the time a suspect stood before a hearing board, a certain amount of guilt had already been levied.  

As fact-finding panels limited to making recommendations only, the hearing boards based their opinions on summary evidence and cross-examinations. Each board was comprised of three civilians — one of whom was always an attorney, and all of which were considered "leading citizens of the community of unquestionable loyalty" — and an Army officer whose job was to monitor procedure and prevent security leaks. In action, the boards functioned more like a grand jury than a trial. The accused was not allowed to confront his accuser, nor was he allowed to cross-examine in his defense. There was no jury and no standard system of appeal, although the OMG did set up the Military Governor's Review Board, in the Spring of 1943, to review its earlier decisions. But because of their

64 WSCH, pp. 42, 52; MANUAL, p. 8, ROPMG.
quasi-military status and the relative freedom under which
they were allowed to operate, the hearing boards developed a
peculiar kind of wartime authority, a cross between the
suspicions of the military government and their own
assumptions of what constituted proper American conduct.
Walker's guidelines fell under three headings: loyalty,
citizenship and the suspect's past activities. These
categories suggested a superficial and simplified approach,
but they also allowed the hearing boards to focus on -- and
subsequently apply -- matters of presumed importance while
ranging over a wide spectrum of suspected activities.
Indeed, given the broad definition of past activities,
practically anything could be used if the hearing boards
thought it particularly useful to pursue. Suspects were
judged "on <their> personalities and their utterances,
criminal and credit records, and probable nationalistic
sympathies."\(^{65}\)

Much of the military's concern stemmed from the basic
assumption that the Territory of Hawaii had little time to
waste. "Security is essentially preventative... and security

\(^{65}\) "Report on Department Activities," Hawaiian Department
Alien Processing Center to the Office of the Military
Governor, T.H., 20 July 1942, (hereafter cited as Report:
HDAPC), Executive Section, Subordinate Offices, Sections
and Subdivisions, Research and Historical Section,
Outlines, Reports, and Related Working Papers Pertaining
to a History of the Military Government of the Territory
of Hawaii, Box 893, RMGTH, p.1; Allen, p. 135.
measures should be applicable in an anticipated situation rather than an accepted one," declared ONI analysts. "It is in a sense an innoculation rather than a cure." To ignore the local situation because the Territory's Japanese had not committed acts of sabotage, ONI warned, was like "leaving a car unlocked because no one had yet stolen it." Internment then, allowed the military government the opportunity to remove potential threats from anticipated situations, what the military called "a sound resolving of doubt in favor of security."66 The Provost Marshal's Office echoed similar beliefs: "If there existed even the slightest doubt about an individual's loyalty, internment first and investigation second was the correct priority of action." There were just too many more vitally important problems, stated the PMO, "...<and> any isolated cases of unduly severe treatment of individuals are to be regretted."67

The hearing boards, meanwhile, fervently insisted on unbridled Americanism, an abstract concept that seemed to simultaneously demand and defy exact formulations for its very existence. For example, suspects were routinely told by board members that their "character" was not an issue pertinent to the discussion of loyalty, yet those same board members often launched into moralistic and self-righteous

66 MANUAL, pp. 6-7, ROPMG.

67 HPMO, pp. 16-17.
tirades, badgering suspects about what they ought to have done to become "good" Americans, and noting that nothing short of a complete severance with Japanese tradition could be even remotely considered "pro-American." One board member asked a 38-year-old Kibei:

Are you truly an American citizen or are you partly loyal to Japan? It appears by reason of the fact that you act Japanese, and you have all habits and customs of the Japanese which indicates that you are not wholeheartedly American, and if you are not you should be somewhere where you cannot harm the United States.  

Protestations to the contrary accomplished little; truth -- if that is what it was -- seemed an inadequate defense. Suspects were either deemed to be "evasive," "shifty" and consciously concealing what they really felt, or of being ignorant and "easily swayed" individuals whose cow-like demeanor made them a "potential tool" in the hands of the enemy. And finally, as if to reinforce their role as the stewards of American patriotism, the hearing boards emphasized at the start of each hearing that a suspect's presence had nothing at all to do with "rights," but was instead a "privilege" granted by a benevolent government.

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68 Executive Section, Subordinate Offices, Sections and Divisions, Alien Processing Center, Internee Case Files, 1941-45, Boxes 143-289, (hereafter cited as ICF), Box 199, RMGTH.
This reversal of accustomed court procedures stemmed from the premise that there were several gradations of loyalty to the United States: active, passive and "middle category" loyalty. Active loyalty implied an unswerving allegiance, presumably to one's mother country, while passive loyalty expressed a more nebulous quality, "a tolerance of constituted authority," and nothing more than an obligation to good behavior before the laws of one's current state or nation. In judging those suspects in the "middle category" it was important, the military stated, to determine how a suspect responded to Japanese influences, and noted that mere exposure to such influences should not determine the issue.\(^6^9\) Local agents were given this cautious warning:

Theoretically, in wartime, an individual is disloyal if he is not loyal. However, as a practical matter, a middle category has been delineated. This class includes those individuals whose background is strongly pro-Japanese, but who have demonstrated no positive pro-Japanese sentiments.\(^7^0\)

As a "practical solution" to the loyalty question, the pre-hearing board interrogators accepted passive loyalty as a sufficient determinant of pro-American sympathies, but set

\(^{6^9}\) The Navy's local "Manual for the Evaluation of Japanese Cases" was apparently circulated among local intelligence officers, for parts of it are expressed verbatim in the HPMO, an Army history. MANUAL, pp. 4-7, ROPMG; HPMO, Appendix A, p. 1.

\(^{7^0}\) HPMO, Appendix A, p. 1.
some rather strict limits as to just what passive loyalty meant. Calling attention to long Island residence, financial and family interests in the Territory, and few trips to Japan, the military and civilian pre-hearing board members looked unfavorably at community activities that suggested "pro-Japanese" sympathies. Given the scope of Japanese life in Hawaii, such damaging notations could very easily be made. But military authorities, stressing the possibility of a "deteriorated" situation, concluded that passive loyalty bore only a "superficial" resemblance to the kind of allegiance required to assure internal security. Reported Major Louis F. Springer, the officer in charge of HDAPC in 1943:

Obviously an alien does not owe loyalty in a strict sense to the United States, but it is felt that an alien owes temporary loyalty, or must prove by his actions or expressions that he is not inimical to the interest of this country.\(^{71}\)

And although local authorities acknowledged that the Issei were legally denied naturalization privileges, they continued to define United States citizenship in terms of a powerful magnet: Its presence was an undeniable draw for everything that was American; its absence a clear signal

\(^{71}\) Undated report on "Hawaiian Department Alien Processing Center," Executive Section, Subordinate Offices, Sections and Subdivisions, Research and Historical Section, Outlines, Reports and Related Working Papers Pertaining to a History of the Military Government of the Territory of Hawaii, 1942-45, p. 7, Box 893, RMGTH.
that an individual harbored other loyalties.\textsuperscript{72} Thus, in passing even an advisory judgement on Japanese suspects -- one's length of residence in the Territory notwithstanding -- the hearing boards attached certain corollaries they had made between Japanese citizenship and patriotic loyalties. Many hearings concluded with remarks that noted a suspect was more than an alien, he was an "enemy alien" and as such "technically loyal to Japan," although ironically, "not necessarily subversive" or "un-American."

These opinions were not without reason, for a significant number of suspects, when questioned by intelligence agents or hearing boards about a desired outcome of the war, could not couple an American victory with a Japanese defeat. Some even wanted Hawaii to win the war. Authorities had hoped that by asking the Japanese to choose sides, they could reveal clear lines of loyalty, but instead discovered what they viewed as an impossible wartime paradox -- loyalty to both the United States and Japan. "As I am living in Hawaii, I want America to win the war," stated an alien Japanese priest whose allegiance, he confessed, would be very different were he living in Japan.\textsuperscript{73} Such a statement was typical, even predictable given the complex nature of Hawaii's inter-cultural

\textsuperscript{72} MANUAL, p. 13, ROPMG.

\textsuperscript{73} MANUAL, pp. 4-5, ROPMG.
relationships, yet it was not the sort of comment board members expected to hear from suspects with such a high potential for subversive behavior and promises of loyalty were usually greeted with suspicion. Said one board member:

But speaking of promises, let me remind you that you are a subject of a country that does not know the meaning of the word 'promise.' If your country does not know the meaning of the word 'promise' what makes you think that you, its subject, can be trusted?\textsuperscript{74}

That suspect Issei failed to register total allegiance to Japan seemed nearly incomprehensible. Theirs was not a patriotism based on citizenship alone, however. Years of laboring in Hawaii had combined with traditional Japanese values to produce an obligation to the Islands, a primary allegiance dictated by residence. Noted a 57-year-old Issei carpenter:

Well, now you speak of different desires...I have lived here <in Hawaii> such a long time that this question is like asking me 'Do you want your mother or your father to win?' I can't say which. All I do is pray everyday that things will return to normal and that there will be peace...\textsuperscript{75}

American patriotism was a by-product of a strong emotional attachment to the Islands, one subordinated but not suppressed by Hawaii's social hierarchy. Although the kaamaina elite governed the Issei and Nisei with calculated authority before 1941, they could not suppress the growing

\textsuperscript{74} ICF, Box 219.

\textsuperscript{75} ICF, Box 199.
attachment Hawaii's Japanese residents felt toward the Islands as a permanent home.  

There were a number of grounds that could warrant a suspect's internment. Indeed, all a suspect had to be was slightly "indiscreet" -- one too many visits to the Japanese Consulate, a careless "Banzai!", too many children in a Japanese language school; all or one might be reason enough to incarcerate him "for the duration." Military authorities were careful to note, however, that each case was an "individual problem" and suggested that investigators greet promises of loyalty with an imaginative interrogation, a careful assessment of a suspect's family, financial and sentimental ties. Background activities and possible motives for subversive behavior had to be weighed against these promises in order to determine a suspect's sincerity.  

Noted ONI analysts: "Carefully chosen leading questions may show that such protestations are not valid."  

A variety of themes were pursued, apparently with as much common sense as there was active imagination, an odd and almost ironic wartime blend:

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76 Lind, pp. 30-36.  
77 Brian Nicol, "Interview: Col. Frank Steer," Honolulu Nov. 1980, p. 81; MANUAL, pp. 7, 11, ROPMG.  
78 MANUAL, p. 60, ROPMG.  
79 These questions, although not all of them quoted verbatim, were put together from the author's survey of
* How did the suspect feel about bombing raids over Tokyo? Did he have any relatives there? Did that matter?

* What kind of job did the suspect have and did it place him in any kind of position to hinder the United States war effort? Did the suspect own a car? Was he able to travel freely, possibly to gather information for the Japanese government?

* What about his financial holdings? Any Japanese investments? Would he inherit property in Japan? Did he bank at an American bank? Did he have accounts in Japan?

* How many of the suspect's children (assuming he had some) were made dual citizens? Hadn't the suspect found United States citizenship sufficient?

* Did the suspect decorate his home in an American or Japanese fashion? How many Japanese customs did he retain? What kinds of Japanese possessions did he own?

* How did the suspect feel about the Emperor? Did he believe him to be of divine origin? Would the suspect go so far as to spit or step on a photograph of the Emperor?

* Had the suspect made frequent trips to Japan?

* Whom had the suspect associated with -- Japanese language school teachers, Buddhist priests or members of the Japanese Consulate? Just who were his friends? Were any of them considered dangerous enough to question? Were any of

internee case files, Boxes 143-289, RMGTH.
them already interned?

* Had the suspect visited the Japanese military training ships that used to frequent Hawaiian ports before the war? Had he entertained their crew members?

* Had a suspect received student military training in Japan? Had he actually served in the Japanese military before emigrating to Hawaii?

* Was a suspect "sympathetic" enough with Japanese military aggression to have sent comfort kits to Japanese soldiers? Had the suspect made donations to any of the Japanese military relief funds?

* Would the suspect bear arms against Japan, or would his conscience only allow him to fight against Germany? Would a suspect defend the Territory against Japanese invaders? Shoot down Japanese paratroopers? And if he had to, would he kill his own brother in defense of his adopted home?

Questioned relationships between patriotism and family ties elicited what must surely have been painful answers; and those recording the hearing board proceedings were told to "let the record show" any hesitancy on the part of the suspect. One suspect answered that, yes, he would kill his own brother, but then he would have to commit suicide. And when a hearing board member asked a 28-year-old former dual citizen what was more important to him, his family or the
government, he said: "I can't separate one from the other. They're just as important to me. Without my family, the government doesn't mean anything." 80

Unfavorable answers to these questions -- questions the boards felt were not that difficult to answer -- represented the worst flaw in a suspect's background, a lack of demonstrable Americanism. Although it drew generalizations and ambiguous evidence that was weighted quantitatively rather than qualitatively, the hearing boards used Americanization as a handy gauge with which to measure assimilation and the sincerity of a suspect's response.

As the hearing boards saw it, Americanization reflected a certain kind of lifestyle, a package of habits whose origin was unmistakable, one that encompassed a slightly surprising intimacy with the finer points of American history, geography and national/geopolitical affairs. But there were strong spiritual overtones as well. Americanization was nothing less than the oxygen for an individual's national existence and the hearing boards charged that atmosphere with its importance; patriotism was not a hat -- or a halo -- that one donned to suit the occasion. Having adopted a condescending posture, the boards concluded that the privilege of residence in a United States Territory called forth certain responsibilities, and

80 ICF, Box 209.
subsequently judged suspects on their ability to divest themselves of all Japanese mannerisms -- to do anything less was unthinkable and unacceptable before the boards. This rigid standard was easy to apply at first, for the most visible leaders were made suspect by their involvement in activities that smacked of Japanese culture. Realistically though, the boards knew alien Issei were not bound to abandon their past, but still felt that a lack of United States citizenship should not have prevented them from acquainting themselves with "American customs and ideals." Queried one board member: "Why do you cling to Japanese customs and habits? Why haven't you cut off your connection with Japan and try to act and think exclusively as an American?"81

Suspects were also asked to explain the meaning of the Constitution, to name bordering American states, identify rivers in the United States and politicians in Hawaii; they were asked to name national holidays -- Japanese and American -- and to explain what the stars and stripes of the American flag symbolized. In doing so the boards were trying to determine if a suspect had really wanted to become an American or if his protestations were merely an attempt to avoid incarceration. Concluded one board member: "Some of his answers...are not sincere as he

81 ICF, Box 259.
knows none of the history, or ways of Americanization upon which to found any loyalty."³²

Constructing an exclusively American frame of reference meant maintaining non-Japanese friendships and associations, a difficult, if not impossible achievement considering the stratified social structure of the Islands. Since their arrival in the Territory, the Japanese had sought and found solace in the comraderie of group activity. It had strengthened their natural sense of community, but it also contributed to a kind of exclusivity that drew suspicion from board members and military authorities. By 1941 there were approximately 1,800 separate Japanese organizations in the Territory. A local counterintelligence survey before the war determined that all island Issei, "almost without exception," held membership in one or more of these organizations. The revelation carried dangerous implications for local authorities who believed that some of these organizations might be influential enough to rally support for Japanese fifth column activity. Many of the organizations were innocuous groups formed because of a common regional background in Japan or to promote educational and religious principles. Other groups, some bestowed with a semi-official bureaucratic status by the Japanese government, were viewed by local intelligence

³² ICF, Box 219.
authorities as possible sources of Japanese nationalistic propaganda, and as focal points for fund raising drives to aid the Japanese military. The authoritative nature of many of these organizations also prompted local authorities to suspect their leaders and many of the latter were picked up for questioning.83

An unusually large amount of criticism revolved around a suspect's ability to speak English. The issue drew from a very simple equation: The better a suspect's spoken English, the more Americanized he was presumed to be. Perhaps this was a natural extension of prevailing local sentiment, including that of the majority of Japanese residents still at large. Their wartime efforts included participation in a Honolulu Police Department's sponsored Americanization Program and in a number of community-initiated "Speak-American" campaigns. One outspoken local schoolteacher of Japanese descent, stated publicly that an individual's "usefulness" depended largely on his ability to speak English:

I do not believe that the ability to use the English language is the only factor in one's Americanism, but it is...the main tool with which one acquires the true meaning and appreciation of what America is and stands for.84

83 FBI, p. 200; MANUAL, p. 50, ROPMG.
84 Ogawa, pp. 316, 329-31.
Yet, while most agreed on the importance of such a program, the military issued an ironic warning that appears to have been heeded by virtually no one on the hearing boards:

'Americanization' is a loose term; to say that an individual is 'not Americanized' is to damn him without specification. Generally the term is an evaluation of the quality of the individual's spoken English rather than as a notation of specific habits of the suspect.85

More than habits trapped the Territory's Kibeis. The fact that they had not chosen American citizenship before the war was viewed by the hearing boards as a declaration of loyalty to Japan. No compromise was thought to be acceptable, even though the existing rules of citizenship had not previously prescribed a singular lifestyle as the only and acceptable sign of loyal Americanism. One board member provided an appropriate simile when he said:

Being, or rather owing allegiance to two countries at one and the same time, is very much like trying to love two women at the same time. You can't do it, especially if one of them gets wise.86

Scattered like bits of flotsam in the wake of those Issei leaders detained when the war started, the Kibei eventually became a primary target of military concern during 1942 as apprehensions, and internment in general, intensified. Unlike the Issei apprehended, the Kibeis were largely blue collar laborers, although some were picked up for having

85 MANUAL, p. 61, ROPMG.
86 ICE, Box 289.
taught in Japanese language schools. Their potential for subversive behavior seemed predicated not on their ability to lead, but to follow. Whereas the Issei presented a subtler form of potential danger, the sort based on elderly influence and such innocent and diversionary "weapons" as matches and wire cutters, the Kibei summoned images of hidden infantrymen; capable youths trained and sent to the Islands to await their fellow patriots. No matter how they might actually respond "under pressure," the Kibei could not deny their youthful exuberance for traditional Japanese culture. That worried local authorities who wondered how much fervent Japanese nationalism existed among the Territory's Kibeis. Because time had not tempered their pride with local obligations, as it had the Issei, the hearing boards became particularly wary of Kibei responses and were quick to fault the suspect that had returned to earn a living for having placed "a dollar and cents value" on American citizenship. Often, and usually in response to claims that a suspect's United States citizenship made him a loyal American, the hearing boards placed suspicion on the "evil" nature of dual citizenship. Although they recognized that an individual was not a Kibei by choice, the boards could not give the benefit of the doubt to those suspects who had not chosen which side of the hyphen they sought to favor through expatriation. Said one board member:
The very things which could make him potentially dangerous are, in the main part, caused by actions over which he had no control as a minor, but the board feels that it does not reduce the dangerousness of having a person free to be used as a potential tool in the hands of the enemies of the United States.87

Some Kibeis, it should be noted without surprise, expressed openly their devotion to Japan and acknowledged their approval of all Japanese military aggression; they were, of course, interned. But not all Kibeis were ardent supporters of the expanding Japanese Empire, although many of them planned tentative return trips to Japan, either to visit or to re-settle when they had earned enough money to make life easier there. Many Kibeis -- and likewise, Niseis with dual citizenship status -- sought to avoid Japanese conscription by filing annual exemptions with local Toritsuginin. Some believed that filing for an exemption was needed to avoid being drafted and were apparently unaware that Hawaii was outside the scope of Japanese legal jurisdiction. Military analysts stated that filing for such exemptions expressed a "tacit recognition of Japanese authority," but cautioned against noting these feelings of obligation as outright evidence. Filing exemptions were, they stated, "often far removed from anything <having> to do with nationalism or pro-Japanese sympathy." Many Nisei and Kibei, quite understandably, did not want to serve in the

87 ICF, Box 239.
Japanese military, but wanted to ensure their good standing as Japanese citizens while also escaping the suspected wrath of a government thought capable of plucking them from happy livelihoods in Hawaii and sending them overseas to fight in steaming jungles.\(^8\)\(^8\)

Insofar as the hearing boards were concerned, the litmus test of American loyalty as applied to Hawaii's Japanese community was indeed comprehensive. Previous associations with Japanese culture -- language, religion, and education -- were often deemed inimical to Americanism. If Issei, Nisei and Kibei expressed outward signs of sympathy for Japanese actions in China during the 1930s, when the United States was neutral, this constituted a clear sign of loyalty to Japan that the military government viewed as grounds to suspect anti-Americanism.

\(^8\)\(^8\) MANUAL, p. 28, ROPMG.
CHAPTER IV

"ANGLO SAXON COMMON SENSE"
Honolulu attorney Frank E. Thompson wasn't saying, in June 1942, that the military government had the right to intern local citizens. Then again, he wasn't so sure that they didn't either. Thompson knew that the internment hearing boards bore little resemblance to the traditional judiciary system, that their purpose was to investigate, and that those boards could (and often did) "use any kind of evidence, rumor, surmise, conjecture or anything else" to reach a decision. He knew too, that while the United States was also at war with Germany and Italy, there was not the same degree of local animosity toward Germans and Italians as toward Japanese-Americans and their alien parents. The entire process, he noted, had been placed in the hands of those who thought differently than he did.

In June 1942 Thompson received a letter from a neighbor island associate seeking Thompson's opinions about a suspect Thompson had known for many years. Generally, Japanese suspects appeared before an internment hearing board without legal representation, although they were told they could hire an attorney to help articulate their feelings of United States loyalty. Suspects were also encouraged to call witnesses, and usually there was a ready army of friends and employers willing to testify.\(^8^9\) In accepting the military's

\(^8^9\) Frank E. Thompson, Letter to Harry Irwin, 15 June 1942, ICF, 169, (hereafter cited as THOMPSON); Report HDAPC, p. 1; WALKER, pp. 6-8.
control, Thompson revealed a somewhat startling view of due process of law, especially given his standing as a man of the legal profession. Replied Thompson:

Under the military idea of the situation, it makes no difference whether one is a citizen or a Hottentot. The question is: 'Is he dangerous?' If so, they contend they have the right to incarcerate him...without anything else but their 'We say so.' I'm not so sure there isn't a good deal of Anglo Saxon common sense in that view of it. What is there so sacrosanct about citizenship that makes its possessor immune from arrest and invulnerable from investigation?

And of his long-time friend, Thompson wrote that he:

might just as well make up his mind to take his medicine, keep sweet and figure his present predicament as the cross he has to bear in this war and as part of the price of his American citizenship.90

Thompson was not alone in this reasoning, for other members of the Territory's legal fraternity, in and out of the military, had reached the same conclusion, despite the presence of legal questions regarding the government's authority to intern citizens. In a three-page report Capt. William B. Cobb, J.A.G.D., Assistant Acting Deputy Chief of Staff, stated that the internment hearing boards were "in no sense constitutional or legal." Nevertheless, he noted that loyalty and the safety of the nation were important matters, and "any doubt should be resolved in favor of the government and internment should follow." Cobb was impressed, he

90 THOMPSON.
stated, with the ability of board members to "sit calmly"
with "individuals of most dangerous tendencies...<who were>
equally as <sic> potentially dangerous as spies..." Finally,
Cobb expressed the importance of "common sense":

The members of the boards should be made to understand that in assuming membership thereon they should not throw all of their reason and common sense out the window and permit themselves to become entangled in legal technicalities, but on the contrary they should exercise their sound common sense.91

From the outset, legal questions had in fact marked the hearing boards' procedures. On their first day of review, December 16, 1941, the boards were unsure as to whether martial law empowered them to make recommendations on cases involving dual citizens or American citizens. Board members decided to postpone making any final decisions that day until the OMG could render an opinion -- which it did the next day in a penciled note from the military governor's executive officer, Lt. Col. Thomas H. Green, to Capt. Edward E. Walker, the PMO's Liaison Officer. Although the boards were not officially directed to consider American citizens as "enemy aliens" in interpreting Roosevelt's presidential proclamations, they were to judge them anyway. Authority for such action, Green stated, was "an incidental power of

91 William B. Cobb, "Memorandum For: Colonel Phillips," 10 March 1942, Executive Section, Subordinate Offices, Sections and Divisions, Alien Processing Center, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Binder No. 1, Box 325, RMGTH, (hereafter cited as COBB), p. 2
martial law." The subject was still unresolved as late as the summer of 1943. It was given further review by the Judge Advocate General of the Army who concluded then that, despite confusion and error, the legality of the program had not been destroyed by interning citizens. Martial law enabled the military governor to do whatever was necessary to maintain peace and security, "including confinement of citizens without trial."92

But what was the "price" of citizenship?
Where was the "common sense" in it all?

Above all, the military's internment program sought to fulfill a spirit of preparedness. Such an effort was propelled by a felt need to neutralize potential subversives -- Japanese or otherwise -- in the presence of an anticipated threat. The stated purpose of the internment hearing boards was to segregate and prevent "disloyal" individuals from influencing "loyal" individuals, an action that was not intended to deprive suspects of their freedom. Still, no one specifically required the boards to labor under the restraints of an objective judicial investigation.93 Their modus operandi was to incarcerate on

92 WSCH, pp. 57, 61; WALKER, p. 9, RMGTH.

93 COBB, pp. 2-3.
the slightest doubt rather than beyond a reasonable doubt. In essence, then, what developed was a program based not on hard evidence but on often fuzzy abstractions, innuendos and twisted logic. Under martial law, internment of suspects "on suspicion only" became an "inherent right" claimed by a government at war, an act of "self-preservation" regardless of consequence.94

Yet, to damn the hearing boards for propagating social injustice would be to take them out of context, for, without the war's inflamed citizenry, and at a time when Hawaii was seemingly threatened by imminent invasion, any examination of Hawaii's internment experience would be unrealistic. The war made most Americans acutely conscious of a heightened sense of patriotism. It amplified, as nothing else could, the sense of national mission. The war became a crusade, a struggle to save democracy and cherished American traditions. Likewise, this study would be remiss if it failed to note the military's propaganda program, one that had skillfully manipulated traditional Japanese values to its advantage.

Paradoxically, local military authorities viewed Hawaii's Japanese population as a source of potential danger, and as a rich mixture of wartime boosterism and economic strength. The Japanese community was governed by

94 WSCH, pp. 1-6, 57, 70.
an extremely well-organized system of social checks and balances, an unspoken moral code reinforced by gossip and tradition. The minimum incarceration policy decided upon by the military, was vastly different from the mass-evacuation of Japanese from the West Coast. It took advantage of Japanese beliefs in obligation, hard work, unity and deference to authority in order to produce a remedy for certain war-aggravated problems associated with Hawaii's relative isolation. By successfully wooing a sizable portion of the Japanese population, local authorities could avoid an impractical, costly and time-consuming mass-internment or mass-evacuation program -- two options that Mainland authorities, including the president, vigorously favored.95

What Territorial authorities believed more practical was a closely watched and strictly governed population that could be shaped into a pliable and inspired work force. They thus reasoned that a selective internment program would

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95 President Roosevelt, as Roger Daniels and Stetson Conn have noted, was convinced that the Japanese were a threat to United States internal security. Stated the president, in a memo to his most "vocal Japanophobe," Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox: "Like you, I have long felt that most of the Japanese should be removed from Oahu to one of the other Islands. This involves much planning, much temporary construction and careful supervision of them when they get to the new location. I do not worry about the constitutional question -- first because of my recent order <Executive Order 9066> and, second, because Hawaii is under martial law. The whole thing is one of immediate and present war emergency." Daniels, pp. 72-73; Conn, p. 209.
frighten a majority of Hawaii's Japanese into maintaining American loyalty, and at the very least restrain those who were perhaps unsure of their own sympathies. Obligation was a powerful tool in the hands of those who knew how to use it. The December 7, 1941 internment of a majority of Japanese community and cultural leaders not only served to lessen the local military authorities' fears, it also intensified the military's control over those Japanese still at large. Having removed their leaders at a time when the Japanese needed them more than ever before, the military government -- strengthened by the powers of martial law -- could take advantage of an eager patriotism among individuals searching for leadership. Selective internment thus left a vacuum for new leaders in Hawaii's Japanese community.

Such a policy was still further justified by official assertions that subversives were now readily identifiable -- a notably different position from that adopted before the war. Outspoken and critical of the Western Defense Command's (WDC) mass-evacuation program, G-2's Lt. Col. Fielder, and other Hawaiian Department staff members, "repeatedly" and "vehemently" argued for the merits of selective internment. Fielder and his staff stated that all one needed to determine a suspect's loyalties was a fifteen minute interview. This candid expression startled WDC personnel who
subsequently felt such an idea was an "oversimplification," and hinted that the Hawaiian Department did not possess an understanding of of the Japanese mind.96

But Fielder was essentially arguing for something more than a Mainland official's literal interpretation of wartime emergency. In Hawaii the military made the Japanese an "integral" part of their defensive strategy and thereby strengthened their obligations to the Territory. True, this was also a policy derived from the urgent demands of wartime, but it was more complex, and in the long-run, more beneficial than those policies enforced by the WDC. The military felt it unwise and impractical to remove most or all of the Territory's Japanese in a mass-evacuation or mass-internment program. The magnitude of the task prevented this from ever being carried out: Shipping space was scarce, reserved for other items of higher priority, and there was neither the necessary civilian replacements the military required to rehabilitate damaged defenses, nor enough troops to guard the Japanese if a mass-internment program were instituted. Yet, throughout 1942 Territorial military authorities experienced mounting pressure from Mainland authorities insisting that a different approach be taken against the Japanese. Lt. Gen. Emmons privately stated that he believed most of Hawaii's Japanese residents would

96 SRCC, pp. 174-75.
adopt a pro-Japanese stance during an invasion. He preferred to have the Islands' Japanese evacuated to the Mainland, but only if the War Department could guarantee adequate replacements to perform needed labor. Since that did seem likely, Emmons argued that such a "delicate and dangerous" question be handled by "those in direct contact with the situation." In a secret radiogram to the Adjutant General in February 1942, Emmons responded to the then growing chorus of pro-evacuation interests by stating how troubling such a move might be:

The discharge of these workers in a body will either stop almost all high priority and non-defense work, or cause pro Japanese sentiment, disloyalty, a feeling of desperation and encourage sabotage. An idle Jap with a family to feed is more dangerous than one under supervision and working with other races.

Eventually, Emmons agreed to the proposed removal of 1,550 potentially "dangerous" Japanese, although Mainland military authorities suggested removing as many as fifteen to twenty thousand. A compromise measure by Emmons in October 1942 would have evacuated 3,000 Japanese whose

97 Conn's step-by-step outline of the arguments between the WDC and the Hawaiian Department over the mass-evacuation issue provides a basic look at some of the practical reasons against such a measure. But Conn focuses primarily on the physical needs of the military rather than the interaction of those needs with the prevailing social sentiments of Hawaii's people; Conn, pp. 206-14.

98 Delos C. Emmons, Secret Radiogram to Adjutant General, 11 Feb. 1942, 291.2, Hawaiian Department, ROFMG.
presence in Hawaii was draining the Islands of valuable war resources. By 1945 only 1,875 Japanese residents -- primarily family members of those singled out for internment -- had been sent to Mainland internment or relocation facilities. Included in this group were internees with United States or dual citizenship status who were given a "gangplank" release; they would be freed from continued internment only if they chose to join other Japanese in Mainland relocation centers.  

This system of benevolent paternalism, enforced by occasional surprise block-wide "spot checks" and a continuous, selective internment program, instilled a measure of fear in the protected population and resembled the labor tactics employed by local plantation owners before the war. Their sense of stewardship rested on a system of obligations and a hierarchy of place and respectability. The military program was not all that different. In need of an emergency labor force to rebuild piers, hangers, airfields and ships, military authorities turned to the Japanese, who were both eager and industrious. It was to the military's advantage to keep free as many Japanese laborers as possible, for their skills were "badly" needed.

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99 Conn, p. 214; ARNOLD, p. 6.
But if the military government seemed to seek a spirit of patriotic cooperation on the surface, it was the specific and sinister nature of its internment program that made an unmistakable impression on the Territory's Japanese. And while the local military authorities may not have been wholly conscious of the effect of their security measures, they were nevertheless aware of what internment itself could do. The philosophy was simple and direct, reported the PMO:

Fear of severe punishment is the best deterrent to commission of crime. Because of prompt, severe punishment of offenders, and stringent, forceful detention of anyone remotely suspected of sympathy for the enemy -- it is certain that many contemplated crimes and offenses were never committed.100

Internment was just as much a message to those still free as it was to those interned. And conversely, parole would inform the Japanese community of what was considered acceptable conduct -- even in the absence of various badges of American patriotism. But the military government was also wary that widespread parole might signal the Japanese still at large. At no point did the military want to appear to be relaxing its vigilance and thereby avoided releasing internees in large numbers. Likewise, prominent community leaders were not released, even though military authorities knew -- and admitted among themselves -- that for many of them they had no evidence of specific subversive

100 HPMO, p. 17.
Internment was the toll exacted for having somehow compromised patriotic sympathies, for failing, in the eyes of the military government, to register complete allegiance to the United States. Citizenship became a direct reflection of loyalty, and language was its foremost component. An individual could not be half-loyal to one country and half-loyal to another, especially when the two countries were at war. Loyalty simply was not divisible. Similarly, neither was language. As far as the boards were concerned, language represented an individual's true feelings. Yet, as local authorities saw the situation in December 1941 and thereafter, such dual loyalties often encompassed the past more than the present. After the initial roundup of those with highly visible links to Japanese culture, military investigators still felt uneasy -- even as the Pacific war moved farther away from the Hawaiian Islands -- and so scrutinized a much broader pattern of behavior. Wartime hysteria led to increasingly close attention to daily actions, possessions, and acquaintances, as previously unrestricted and innocuous activities became indicators of subversion.

101 Robert C. Richardson, Jr., Military Governor, Secret Radiogram to John J. McCloy, Asst. Sec. of War, 11 Feb. 1944, ROPMG.
Certainly those who served on the hearing boards viewed their work as a patriotic mission, a mandate necessitated by the war. Their status assured by the identification of subversives, and by righteous broadcasts of Americanism to those under suspicion, the hearing boards could do nothing less than find fault with the Japanese brought before them. In a manner reminiscent of the Territory's pre-war paternalism, they were duty-bound to protect and govern all that was traditionally American. They did not consider the internment of Japanese residents as an infringement of rights or a form of punishment, particularly since martial law existed in the Territory. Instead, they looked upon their actions as providing "protection," a form of benevolence. To quote one hearing board member in February 1944:

The board realizes that...<an alien> Japanese owes allegiance to Japan; that normally he should desire his country to win; that he is not supposed to do anything directly against his country nor to aid the United States in waging war against Japan...but also realizes that in time of war each citizen of a warring nation is the enemy of each citizen of a hostile nation; that under international law each citizen of a hostile nation may be interned; that the extreme liberality of our treatment of alien enemies and their freedom of living in their homes and earning of money undisturbed, are matters which are not theirs of right but of sufferance and privileges for which they, as alien enemies, become obligated to this nation to the extent of exemplary conduct...in the strictest manner.102

102 ICF, Box 143 -- This is an extra box sampled by the
In a real sense, martial law legitimized the pre-war attitudes of the haole community toward the Japanese in Hawaii.

The military government capitalized on the anxieties of local Japanese, interning some for not having made patriotic gestures that no one had previously asked them to make, and manipulating others through wartime guilt. But the actions of the military government were themselves a reflection of similar fears and concerns, for the suspicion attached to Hawaii's Japanese residents was present well before the war, and especially after 1939. The pre-war "grab lists," no matter how loosely drawn, demonstrate this. The lists reassured local intelligence authorities whose efforts to analyze the Japanese community left too many questions unanswered. That the lists existed, however, should not come as any great surprise; neither should the military government's December 7 roundup of Japanese leaders. It is easily conceivable that any nation threatened by war might initiate such actions. If there is to be any shame found here one must look at the hearing boards. They were blinded by caution and failed to recognize the sincerity of those suspects they judged. It was their job, given their familiarity with Hawaii's social structure, to see beyond

author that was not used in the every-tenth-box sequence and is quoted here because it is illuminating.
superficial interpretations. Fairness might have been too much to ask of a society with such a rigid social hierarchy, and the complex system of images masking Territorial life in the 1930s and '40s may have made fairness an impossibility. The internment hearing boards found it difficult to understand the wartime plight of Hawaii's Japanese because they were trying to construct an either/or situation devoid of nuance and mixed emotions. Attorney Frank E. Thompson may have been partially correct when labeling these actions as "common sense" precautions. He was no less exposed to an atmosphere of perceived threat to the Islands' internal security than the Territory's military leaders. But Hawaii's internment program was more than a security measure; it represented an extension of the Territory's interracial relations, established roles and accepted images into an emotionally charged wartime atmosphere.
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