

Fumio Fred Takano
33-5-D
Gila River Relocation Center
Rivers, Arizona

June 23, 1943

Interviewing Committee
War Relocation Authority
Gila River Relocation Project
Rivers, Arizona

Dear Sirs:

I am writing this letter to you as an earnest request for a reconsideration of my answers to Questions 27 and 28 as contained in the special questionnaire, "Statement of the United States Citizen of Japanese Ancestry" filled by me on February 17, 1943. My answers are recorded in the negative and I desire seriously to change them to the affirmative.

I am submitting the following data as to my background and intention in order to make my position of loyalty clear.

PERSONAL BACKGROUND.-- My whole life has been centered in the United States. I was born on February 2, 1914 in Los Angeles, California and lived in the same neighborhood all my life. My residence prior to evacuation was located at 217 East Avenue 38, Los Angeles, California where our family resided for the last ten years.

I went through the Los Angeles Public Education system, graduating from the Franklin High School and then from the Frank Wiggins Trade School. I worked since that time as a truck driver, produce worker and a mechanic.

I was married on March 22, 1942 to Yoneko Meguro by the Rev. C. Unuora of the Los Angeles Christian Church. She was born in Colorado, and was living in Los Angeles since 1936.

At present I am employed as the foreman of the Plumbing Department of the Public Works.

FAMILY BACKGROUND.-- Our family was brought up in a normal American neighborhood in an American manner. We did not have much contact with the general Japanese community and none of us ever intended to go to Japan. Our parents never registered us with any agency of Japan and we have only a singular citizenship in the United States.

Family Composition:

Father: Itsuhei Takano 31 - 9 - D (54 years)
Mother: Tomoe (Kodama) Takano (54 years)

My parents came to the United States from Japan in 1906 and have never put their feet out of the state of California since (up to the time of evacuation). They have never gone back to Japan.

Sister: Mrs. Akiko Nakashima (28 years) 31-12-C Rivers, Arizona. She is a housewife living with her husband and baby boy. Mr. Nakashima answered "Yes" to questions 27 and 28.

Brother: Staff **Sergeant** Seiji Takano (25 years) now stationed at Ft. Sheridan, Illinois. **Sergeant** Takano volunteered for the U.S. Army before the War. Date of induction was May 19, 1941.

Sister: Mrs. Mariko Hirashima (24 years) living in Manzanar Relocation Center. Her husband, Mr. Takeo Hirashima (30 years) volunteered for the AJ Combat Unit from the Manzanar Relocation Center.

Brother: Kiyoshi Takano (22 years) Answered "Yes" to questions 27 and 28. He left the Gila River Center for the ~~Art Institute of Chicago~~ in Chicago, Illinois. This was done through the help of the National Student Relocation Council. Kiyoshi was an honor student at the Otis Art institute, Los Angeles, California, where he attended up to the time of evacuation on a scholarship from the institute. Upon his acceptance to the ~~Art Institute of Chicago~~, the Otis Art Institute, forwarded recommendations as well as scholarship for continuing his studies.

Brother: Hideo Takano (21 years) 31-9-D At present he is working in the Evacuee Property Division in the Gila Center, as truck driver. He has given a "Yes" answers to questions number 27 and number 28.

In short, my whole family, parents, brothers, sisters as well as their respective husbands, have all showed that they are loyal in their background. I am the oldest in the family and have a definite stand of loyalty to the United States; from this position I had never expected nor expect to change.

HISTORY ON MY ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS 27 AND 28.-

I was notified to register on February 17, 1943 at the Registration Office here in Gila Center to fill the Statement of United States Citizen of Japanese Ancestry.

This I did, with the intention of answering "Yes" to question number 28, but for the sake of conscience "No" to question number 27.

Reason for "Yes" on 28.- I am a citizen of the United States. I was born here; never went to Japan, nor ever registered in Japan or with an agency of Japan. In short I do not have a dual citizenship, but only a singular citizenship. In that sense I can swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America. And in my case I do not even have to forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese Emperor, for I have never given allegiance to him or any other foreign government, power, or organization.

Why I put "No" on 27.- As a citizen, and one who had enjoyed the rights and opportunities of citizenship, I am always ready to meet any obligation of duty and responsibility. But as a citizen who has been deprived of his rights, work, friends, and property without proper hearing, and for no particular reason of crime or negligence, it was difficult to give a "Yes" answer. To fight for freedom and justice is the justification for bearing arms. I could not do justice to myself or to my country by merely expressing my feelings with a "Yes" answer. I felt that as a loyal citizen I had the duty to express myself. There was no channel for this expression at the time.

Why I have on record a "No" answer to both 27 and 28.- I explained to the registration officer, a Sergeant, that I would like to put "Yes" on question 28 and "No" on question 27 for the same reasons I have stated above. However, he said that, if I answered one of the questions in the negative, I must answer "No" to both of the questions. In a special interview with Captain Thompson of the Registration Team, I presented my case giving the same reasons, but I was not allowed to answer "Yes" on 28 and "No" on 27 as I had desired, but was required to answer both in the negative.

Why I wish to change my negative answers to the affirmative. - As I have stated above, my intentions for the negative answers were never an expression of disloyalty. After much thought and disturbance of mind, I came to the conclusion that my negative answers would wrongly mark me as a disloyal citizen. Furthermore, I was convinced that I was not making an effective plea for justice by my negative answers. At the same time I became aware of the fact that there was an effort made by certain rightful minded leaders of this nation to restore the citizens of the Japanese ancestry to their rightful position and bring them back to the normal stream of American life. I am making this request for a change to *the* affirmative, so that I might be considered loyal as I have always been and intend to be.

The above data as to my background and intention are presented as my simple and sincere confession on the matter of my negative answers to questions 27 and 28. I would be very grateful if you can understand my position of loyalty. I have never been disloyal nor ever had intentions of being so when I answered the questions in the negative. I am making this request to change my answer to the affirmative with a sense of gratefulness. It has given me an opportunity for the first time to explain why I had put a negative answer on the questions. It has also given me a chance to express my loyalty in such a manner, so that those in authority might know that we are relying on the government to keep our faith strong in democratic principles and procedures.

Sincerely yours,

Fumio Fred Takano
38 - 6 - D
Gila River Relocation Center
Rivers, Arizona

Note: I am enclosing with this letter, references written on my behalf by my superiors in the Division of Public Works of the Gila River Relocation Center, Rivers, Arizona.