Born in the USA
A STORY OF
JAPANESE AMERICA,
1889–1947

FRANK CHIN
Contents

Introduction xv

Part I: THE ISSEI

1. The Issei Are Here
   American Bookshelf Presents: BANZAI! by Parabellum (Theodor Weicher) 4

2. Shosuke Sasaki, Issei: Japanese American Conscience 5

3. James Omura, Nisei Newsman
   American Songbook Presents: Japanese Love Song 13

4. Sessue Hayakawa: Zen and the Movies
   American Bookshelf Presents: A Japanese Nightingale 17
   by Onoto Watanna (Winifred Eaton)
   Storytime for Children: Urashima Taro 19

5. Kentaro Takatsui, Kibei-Nisei: “I Have Pictures” 21
   American Bookshelf Presents: On the Duty of Civil Disobedience 22
   by Henry David Thoreau

6. Kentaro Takatsui, Kibei-Nisei: Japtown 24
   American Songbook Presents: I Want to Go to Tokio 33

7. Shosuke Sasaki, Japanese American Conscience:
   Father and the Prostitutes
   American Bookshelf Presents: The Story of the Caliph Stork 38
   by Wilhelm Hauff
24. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: Omura and Sakamoto
   Hot Off the Press! Los Angeles Rafu Shimpo

25. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: Tajiri Was a Shrewd Poker Player
   American Bookshelf Presents: Her Father’s Daughter by Gene Stratton-Porter
   Hot Off the Press! New World Daily

   Hot Off the Press! New World Daily

27. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: “I’m like Popeye”
   American Bookshelf Presents: The Great American Novel by Clyde Brion Davis

28. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: Exploitation—Betrayal—I Attacked It
   Hot Off the Press! Japanese American Courier

29. Gordon Hirabayashi, on Civil Disobedience: “I Knew about James Sakamoto of Seattle”
   Hot Off the Press! New World Daily

30. Dr. Clifford Uyeda, Traveler
   American Bookshelf Presents: Honorable Spy Exposing Japanese Military Intrigue in the United States by John Spivial
   Hot Off the Press! Rafu Shimpo
   Japanese American Citizens League Northwest Conference

31. Dr. Clifford Uyeda, Traveler: “There Was a JACL Convention”

32. Nobu Kawai, The Volunteer: Courting, Dating, and Radio

33. Gordon Hirabayashi, on Civil Disobedience: Golden

34. Frank Emi, Leader: Brothers and Sisters
   American Bookshelf Presents: Ford Manual Model T

35. Frank Emi, Leader: “Frank Showed Her How to Make Pumpkin Pie”
   Japanese American Citizens League Articles of Incorporation

36. Dr. Clifford Uyeda, Traveler: “I Really Didn’t Have Any Ambition”

37. Tom Oki, Fair Play Committee: Cosmopolitan
   Shhh! Hush! Hush! JACL Convention in Monterey
   Hot Off the Press! Current Life
Part III: DECEMBER 7, 1941—THE CLOSING PAPERS

38. Pearl Harbor Time
   American Bookshelf Presents: Artillary at the Golden Gate

39. Tom Oki, Fair Play Committee: December 7, 1941
   JACL Statement: by Joe Masaoka

40. Frank Emi, Leader: “Around Pearl Harbor Time”

41. Ike Matsumoto, Fair Play Committee: “Hey, Pearl Harbor’s Getting Bombed!”
   Telegram

42. Ben Kuroki, Boy from Nebraska
   Hot Off the Press! Japanese American Courier
   American Songbook Presents: Remember Pearl Harbor
   Ameriocan Bijou Presents: Air Force

43. Ben Kuroki, Boy from Nebraska: “I Felt Guilty Because I Was of Japanese Ancestry”

44. Dave Kawamoto, Fair Play Committee

45. Gloria Kubota: Nisei and the Zen Man
   Hot Off the Press! Current Life

46. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: “The Age of the Nisei”
   Shhh! Hush! Hush! Mike Masaru Masaoka: “Mr. JACL”

47. Nobu Kawai, The Volunteer: “I Always Admired Mike Masaoka”

   Hot Off the Press! Seattle Post-Intelligentser

49. Nobu Kawai, The Volunteer: “I Was President of the JACL Chapter”
   The JACL Anti-Axis Committee
   Hot Off the Press! Pasadena Star-News
   Hot Off the Press! Seattle Times
   “The Tolan Committee”

50. George Townsend, Project Director: “I Was Born and Raised in the Town Where John Dillinger Ended Up”
   Hot Off the Press! Japanese American Courier
51. Gordon Hirabayashi, on Civil Disobedience:  
“I Could Take a Stand”  
271
52. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: “Tokie Slocum Was Rough and Gruff”  
“The Tolan Committee”  
Hot Off the Press! Rafu Shimpo  
277
278
282
53. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: “Voluntary Evacuation”  
Hot Off the Press! Japanese American Courier/Seattle Times  
283
286
54. Shosuke Sasaki, Japanese American Conscience:  
From His Diary  
288
55. Shosuke Sasaki, Japanese American Conscience:  
Plot against Sakamoto’s Life  
Hot Off the Press! Independence Day, 1942  
292
294
56. Ike Matsumoto, Fair Play Committee  
297
57. Yosh Kuromiya, Fair Play Committee  
Hot Off the Press!  
American Songbook Presents: Shhh! It’s a Military Secret  
The WRA All-JACL Meeting  
299
300
302
303
58. Nobu Kawai, The Volunteer: “We Attended the Convention”  
Shhh! Hush! Hush! War Department Military Intelligence Division  
American Bookshelf Presents: If He Hollers Let Him Go by Chester Himes  
Shhh! Hush! Hush! From the Files of the Project Director  
305
307
309
310
59. Nobu Kawai, The Volunteer: Return to Gila  
The First Christmas in Camp: 1942:  
Manzanar, California  
Christmas at Heart Mountain by Floyd Schmoe  
312
314
316

Part IV: US AND THEM

Shhh! Hush! Hush! Mike Masaoka: The JACL vs. Japanese America  
321

60. Gordon Hirabayashi, on Civil Disobedience:  
“To Whom It May Concern”  
Shhh! Hush! Hush! Japanese Located in Strategic Areas  
324
332

61. Kentaro Takatsui, Kibei-Nisei: Will You Volunteer for the Army?  
Will You Renounce Japan?  
337
62. Joe Kurihara, Veteran from Hawaii
   War Relocation Authority: Application for Leave Clearance
   Statement of United States Citizen of Japanese Ancestry

63. Frank Emi and Frank Inouye

64. Nobu Kawai, The Volunteer: “Without a War Record I
   Wouldn’t Have a Leg to Stand On”

65. Min Yasui, Resister or Turncoat?

66. Assimilation: Another Word for Racial Extinction?
   Hot Off the Press! The Pacific Citizen

67. Ben Kuroki, Boy from Nebraska: Mission over Ploesti

68. Dr. Clifford Uyeda, Traveler

69. James Wong Howe, American Cinematographer

70. Frank Emi, Leader: “Say, This Guy Knows What
   He’s Talking About”

71. Shisei Tsuneishi: Block Head
   Restoration of the Draft: 1944

72. Frank Emi, Leader: “That’s When I Took Over”
   Hot Off the Press! Rocky Shimpo

73. Gloria Kubota, Nisei and the Zen Man
   Fair Play Committee: February 24, 1944

74. Hajiime “Jim” Akutsu, “No-No Boy”

75. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: At the Denver Rocky Shimpo
   Hot Off the Press! Rocky Shimpo

76. Err-Rocky Shimpo!
   Fair Play Committee: March 4, 1944

77. Gloria Kubota, Nisei and the Zen Man
   Hot Off the Press! The Pacific Citizen

78. Mits Koshiyama, Fair Play Committee

79. Frank Emi, Leader: “You Got a Pass?”
   Hearing Board for Leave Clearance

80. Fair Play Frank Emi vs. JACL Nobu Kawai
   Letter to Kiyoshi Okamoto
   Hot Off the Press! Heart Mountain Sentinel
81. Gordon Hirabayashi, On Civil Disobedience: "I Got Off at Spokane"  • 425
   Hot Off the Press! Wedding Bells and Jail Cells  • 426
   Letter from Kiyoshi Okamoto  • 427
82. Frank Emi, Leader: Letter to a "No-No Boy"  • 428
83. Ben Kuroki, Boy from Nebraska: A Visit to Heart Mountain  • 433
   Song of Cheyenne, from a County Jail  • 436
84. Min Yasui, Resister or Turncoat?  • 438
85. Yosh Kuromiya, Fair Play Committee  • 439
86. Ike Matsumoto, Fair Play Committee  • 440
87. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: "Mr. Yasui Isn't In Yet"  • 441
88. Yosh Kuromiya, Fair Play Committee  • 443
89. Mits Koshiyana, Fair Play Committee  • 444
90. The Sixty-Three Men from Heart Mountain  • 445
91. Kozie Sakai: Letter to Frank Emi  • 446
92. Gloria Kubota, Nisei and the Zen Man  • 449
93. Arthur Emi, Little Brother  • 450
94. Frank Emi, Leader  • 451
   Hot Off the Press! Wyoming Tribune  • 452
95. Nobu Kawai, The Volunteer: "Am I In, or Am I Out?"  • 453
   Hot Off the Press! The Pacific Citizen  • 455
96. Frank Emi, Leader: A Surprise Witness  • 456
   Hot Off the Press: Wyoming Eagle  • 457
97. Frank Emi, Leader: "Why Was He Up There?"  • 458
   Hot Off the Press! Wyoming Tribune  • 459
98. Frank Emi, Leader: "We Lost Our Case"  • 460
99. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: "Vindicated as a Person, Vindicated in My Profession"  • 461
   Hot Off the Press! Wyoming Eagle  • 462
100. James Omura, Nisei Newsman: "It Was No Fun"  • 463
101. White Bigot, Where Are You?  • 464
102. Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee  • 466
103. Grace Kubota Ybarra, Daughter of Zen Man  • 468
   Hot Off the Press! Stars and Stripes  • 469
## Contents

104. Frank Emi, Leader: "The Proudest Thing I Ever Did" 470  
Draft Resisters Pardoned, Convictions of Leaders Reversed 471

105. Hajiime "Jim" Akutsu, "No-No Boy" 472

106. James Wong Howe, American Cinematographer: "I Have a Story. It's a Beautiful Story." 474

### Appendixes

| Numbers | 479 |
| From Proclamation 2762 | 481 |
| After the War, What Happened to the JACL? | 486 |
| To the Issei? | 489 |
| To the Kibei-Nisei? | 490 |
| To the Draft Resisters? | 490 |
| To the Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee? | 492 |

Index 495

About the Author 501