

Dr. Genevieve Carter
Interviewed by John G. Milner
In Los Angeles
February 24, 1987

MILNER: Today is the day after your 80th birthday. Dr. Genevieve Carter, this interview is regarding your experiences at Manzanar, and supplements the several other interviews CSWA has held with you regarding various phases of your professional life.

CARTER: The celebration party was last night.

MILNER: That's right. It was quite a party, wasn't it? Dr. Carter, this is a long time ago experience for you, but I wonder if you could briefly tell in general what the Manzanar Program was.

CARTER: The Manzanar Program was--let's put it this way--Manzanar was just one of among ten centers that provided a relocation facility for all the American-Japanese from the West Coast, following the Pearl Harbor attack. Is there anything more you want about it? There was one thing that's often confused, and that is that the detention camps were opened up earlier; that the FBI and other security agencies had made early arrests of males--Japanese males--most all of whom were Nisei, I think. There could have been a few Kibe there, but they were "picked up" early and detained. That's a different movement and a different kind of situation. That was a war-time move. However, the evacuation of the West Coast included the families. And the move went up above 100,000 or more American-Japanese from the West Coast. Also, it meant that those in the Middle West and East were not asked to move.

MILNER: I see. And what year was that the families were moved? Do you remember?

CARTER: 1941, I think.

MILNER: 1941. Yes. I know that you've made other tapes on your experience at Manzanar,

and I wondered, just for the record, if you could tell me where these might be kept at the present time.

CARTER: The first tapes I made were for the purpose of a gift for the Manzanar Museum located at Independence, because some friends of mine--one of them American-Japanese--wanted to have this added, because they had very little that had been given to them of record from the Caucasian staff. There had been several books, as you know, written by others on Manzanar, but nothing has been published that was written by the staff. There was a second copy of the tapes made for the University of New Mexico History Department, as a result of interest of one of the Smithsonian Institute visitors on their staff. Another copy was made, as far as I know, it went back with him to the Smithsonian Institute.

MILNER: So these will be kept for posterity and they might be available to anyone who has an interest in this.

CARTER: Also, the big repository has material in the University of California.

MILNER: At Berkeley.

CARTER: I think it's at Los Angeles.

MILNER: At UCLA?

CARTER: The large population in the Los Angeles area was the one, I think, that affected California the most. So that that was the reason why, I think, it was centered there. However, Fullerton must have received a good-sized grant, because they're engaged in quite a bit of research now with this repository of material on Manzanar, and also, all the other tapes, too.

MILNER: That's Fullerton State University?

CARTER: Yes.

MILNER: Yes. I didn't know that. Very interesting. Could you tell me how you became

involved in the program.

CARTER: I was just finishing up my doctor's degree in Berkeley, and I had been working at the Institute of Child Welfare--the child welfare center at Berkeley, University in California, with Dr. Harold and Dr. Marian Jones as director and assistant director. My job there was interesting in that they employed me as the person--as Dr. Jones said--who could get behind the counters. I did all of juvenile police, the courts, the families, and the agencies, the schools, for the Adolescent Study. I was a community person.

MILNER: I see.

CARTER: Which was a little different from being a theoretician or a mathematician, or some of the other members of the staff of the Adolescent Study. Whatever Dorothy Thomas--let me explain who she is; some of us remember her husband, I.W. Thomas. She was one of the well-known sociologists, a specialist in demography. The Federal Government had employed her to document the movement of the Japanese to the temporary restraining shelters--or the "race track" places, as they were often called--and to see one or two of the groups who went to a more permanent relocation residence. Manzanar was one of them because Manzanar was both a receiving center and a permanent center. I traveled with her, as her young assistant, to the centers up and down the coast. It was pretty rough. The accommodations were army cots; the environment wasn't too fragrant, and the people were upset--they had to leave home in such a hurry. There was distress but, I think, the greatest concern was keeping the family together, no matter what. Keep the family together and keep counting them all the time to make sure they had all the family; and the family could be anywhere from five or six to about twenty-three to twenty-five. They were from somewhere around the area in Los Angeles. A little later, I happened to go to Manzanar.

By that time, Dr. Thomas was beginning to trust me to go out on my own to follow the general outline that we had used in the study of the evacuation. I went to Manzanar and got along very well and enjoyed myself. I enjoyed working with the American-Japanese, and I visited around, made my notes and my report. They asked me if I'd come back to see them again, and the director of the camp also said, "What are you? A sociologist, a social worker, a teacher?" I think those questions have puzzled me all my life. I said, "Well, what do you want?"

By that time my husband was going into service and my little girl was four years old. In Virginia I was very free to move anywhere, and I didn't want to get into the War effort, which was one reason I came to Manzanar. I had collected credentials along the way. I think I must have had six or seven education credentials, including a superior education; I was getting a doctor's degree at a fairly young age, and women did not pick them up so easily in those days.

MILNER: And that was in social work?

CARTER: No. The School of Education at Berkeley. I had taken several social work classes. I'll digress to tell this part because it tells you something about the stage then of social work. At that time, there were a few classes under the Department of Economics at Berkeley. One of them--I remember so well--was called Psychiatric Social Work. At one end of the table sat the psychiatrist. At the other end of the table sat the social worker. They would take turns of about fifteen minutes each and give a short lecture. After about four of these, the class period was over, and we would look from one part of the table to the other--psychiatry and social work, as it was taught at that time. But the integration of the psychiatric and the social work was left to the students. We just hadn't progressed that far in social work. Then there were two or three other classes that I took at that time.

That was my first classroom contact with social work except in New Mexico, where I had

been at school before I went to Berkeley to school, with my husband. There were two professional social workers in Santa Fe; the only ones in the state. They were very good people. One was the Dean of the School of Social Work in New Orleans, and the other was a very fine child welfare expert. They offered a few classes after work, and I took those. It was a catch-as-catch-can in those days. It was quite a while before Berkeley got its School of Social Work organized.

MILNER: Yes.

CARTER: Now, where were we?

MILNER: Yes, I had experience at Berkeley at the same time. I used to go over and lecture, and it always had to be in their Criminology Department.

CARTER: Yes, they boot-legged here and boot-legged there.

MILNER: Right. I wonder--could you describe the administration of the camp.

CARTER: Yes. Most of the staff came from the Bureau of Indian Affairs: Civil Service. It was a matter of moving over people who were experienced. The whole camp was laid out with a philosophy of--not Socialism--but we had a co-op; and there was a block manager from each block; they would meet together as a council. The police force had an outside, trained police chief, but the staff was made up of people from around the camp who had had, perhaps, some background in law or police work; they were trained. The schools were set up by what was called a community-based philosophy, a school-centered community. There was a plan for the total community. There were about nine or ten people you'd call "chief staff." I was the only woman. It was always interesting, whenever we had congressional committees or so on--and I'll speak to that later--that I was the only woman, and I found out I shouldn't sit on a footstool; you're low enough in esteem. (Laughter) Always get a good, high chair when you're in a meeting with

government officials and you're the only woman.

MILNER: (Laughing) Good advice. Did you live in the camp itself?

CARTER: The Army built the camp in typical Army style. They were all regulation Army barracks with black tar paper. Now, each barrack--I've forgotten how many--would have about seven to nine beams. You would then say, the Matsumoto family with nine or ten would have so many beams for the number of people they had in the family. It so happened that sometimes they would be assigned a floor space in the barrack, but the family grew larger and they got more fearful and were so afraid of being divided; they'd bring in a couple of cousins that they hadn't in the beginning--so some of them were overcrowded.

At the beginning there were no partitions. You hung up a quilt or a blanket. It was very primitive; the Army cots were there, there were cardboard boxes and cartons and no locks at the beginning. Of course, everybody had the coal-oil stove. The Caucasian barrack did have a coating of white boards on the outside, and we did have a tiny kitchen with a kind of an oil stove, but you had an oil heater. It had one bedroom that was so small, you could hardly get a big bed in there. It had linoleum on the floor. It was very much like the American-Japanese side. Some people think there was a division or a borderline where you couldn't cross over; there was not anything like that. It was all together except that the Caucasian buildings were at one end.

Around the total Manzanar area, the barbed wire was in front--I don't recall other wires except as a marker, but there were towers at the corners. We see so many pictures of the towers because--and the Army Base. We were always told that they were 4-F's: I don't know if that was a derogatory title or not. (Laughter) They weren't such snappy soldiers, as we found out later, whenever they came over for the riot. It was an easy life, and they had their barracks--just like the Japanese--and mess hall. So that on the whole, it was an Army design. The children's village we'll come to

later--nothing was built for children. The hospital was supposed to plan for a delivery room. Their delivery room was a big covered platform covered for the trucks to drive up and deliver. For our purpose, the Army design was not very suitable; but in war time, I suppose, it worked out about as well as could be expected, considering the scarcity of material.

MILNER: Yes. The food was served in mess halls to the Japanese. And was it Japanese food?

CARTER: Oh, yes. There was no question about food--although there would be rumors from time to time, that food was running scarce, and they'd save rice to put up in a bin. But that was just the beginning period, when life was very uncertain there. Each kitchen had its own chefs and helpers, and the foods were distributed to the various kitchens. Actually, for the first time, a lot of the women who had worked in the fields so hard, didn't even have meals to prepare. That was a time when all the families and the people got together. On the side, they had quite good control of the distribution of the food. There was certainly plenty of it.

One interesting angle has to do with the bootlegging and making of saki. There were about three or four kitchens that had a dugout underneath the kitchen, and that was part of the trouble. They took more than their share of sugar, of course. Everybody knew where they were, and the Caucasian staff knew. The saki always found its way to the parties and weddings and so on, which I'll mention later. Some of the residents were disgruntled, and then they were fearful if a mess hall seemed short of sugar--even though everyone knew where it was going. You just didn't talk about it; staff didn't talk about it either. If they wanted to, that was their problem.

MILNER: Socially approved bootlegging.

CARTER: You just more or less didn't see it.

MILNER: Yes, yes. Overlooked. (Laughter) Very good.

What was the organization among the Japanese, themselves?

CARTER: You mean like the social organization?

MILNER: Social organization.

CARTER: Well, it's interesting how, with everybody leveled off at the same level of \$16.00 a month allowance for ordinary work, \$18.00 a month if you were a lawyer or a professional person or teacher or nurse or doctor or something like that. The pea jackets, very warm and up to the head and neck, were issued; everybody wore those navy blue pea jackets, so that made everyone even look alike. But very soon, social class could be distinguished, rising up from those tar-papered barracks that all looked alike. The economic range was from millionaires to fishermen in San Pedro, so that you wouldn't think it would happen so quickly there, especially, when they all had equal suffering and deprivation. But before long, in the high schools and fraternities and sororities--I remember some of them were called the Golden Dukes, and the girls had something with a gardenia name. And how they managed! The Japanese are very good at artificial flowers; their flower making. The young man would send an orchid or gardenia to his girl for the dance. It would look real. They had music, and they were dressed up. The fraternities and the sororities themselves had rank. They all knew which was the best and which was next. I suppose maybe the one that was at the bottom of the totem pole would be the sort of a rough group of San Pedro; youths, about 17 to 21. And they aggravated the rest of the population, particularly, the teenagers and the young adults, by going barefooted and using naughty words, and so on. But they built a very tough basketball team. And they won every game through their athletics. They were looked down upon as they weren't polite; they were rough and uncouth. But there was certainly a hierarchy in a short time.

MILNER: A very short time. It's fascinating. Did they have elected officers or any formalized type of organization?

CARTER: Among the total population?

MILNER: Yes.

CARTER: They had, for example, the block managers. I'll mention that later. I think that's a topic coming up pretty soon in our discussion, because organization changed hands. We had a PTA organization, and I must say that's a little black mark against California. I tried very hard to get the PTA Chapter that we had organized, into the Los Angeles PTA, because that's where most of them lived in Los Angeles.

MILNER: Yes, yes.

CARTER: But, they didn't want to get mixed up with enemy aliens, and they turned us down. It was a very abrupt turn-down. But the State allowed a PTA chapter to be chartered from the state level--a really excellent PTA. And for graduation, the officers of the PTA would also get academic gowns. Our high school graduations were very serious affairs, and everybody who was up at the top of education had, in sponsoring events or in the PTA, worn the academic gown, following the high school students. And each senior graduate certainly had the best gown available. They were shipped in from Los Angeles for graduation. So that then the bureaucracy was very similar because many of our procedures in purchasing and finance, you know, and employment, were regulation government.

MILNER: Yes.

CARTER: So that it operated in a sort of mixture of participation and government bureaucracy.

MILNER: There were reports, I remember, of riots in the Manzanar Camp. I wonder if you can recall causes of these.

CARTER: There was just one, actually. I mentioned the block managers. At the beginning, whenever the administration--and you have to get it going fast, you just can't wait for all these things to happen until you are familiar with your situations. The ones who came forward, more or less volunteering to be block managers, were those who were about 21, 22, 23, in there, and whose English was good. They could communicate quickly with the staff. And the Caucasian staff, by this time, had not learned any Japanese, so that they weren't able to communicate or to give out warnings or signals about pressure build-up in the camps. Without warnings and signals, there was pressure buildup in the camp; there was wrong leadership. That was one cause, that they were not getting the warning signals or rumors of fearfulness, and of the FBI, who also were picking up people. There were informers, and the situation was growing rugged. The precipitating event, I think, was when the Department of Justice moved in and picked up six men for causing trouble. I think a couple of them were Isei, or those who were educated in Japan, and they were very much like sore thumbs all the way through. They didn't belong; the Nisei didn't care about them and they weren't accepted, of course, in the family. They weren't like other teenagers or young adults, and they were bitter and dissatisfied, so that all of these things came together when there was the arrest. The mob gathered around. It wasn't a mob at first; it was a march. The administration demanded the release of the five or six men who were in the jail, in Independence. The director, Mr. Marrot (name indistinct) talked to the marchers, and so did the assistant director, but pretty soon it got rough. The people were pushing each other, then someone started to throw something, and the situation got out of hand. Now, the policy was that if at any time the project director failed to keep control and keep order, or if the situation seemed to be getting out of hand, he was to give up his post and to call in the Army next door: Captain Hall was his name, I think.

We were all out of a job that day, and everyone had to quit. The director had to quit, and the Army moved in. I'll just make one more comment on the Army. After things had quieted down a little bit, their next move was to hunt for contraband. (Laughter) It was so amusing: they brought in scissors and knives and razors and made such a big effort, and they didn't find anything. Their contraband drive was a serious affair; there were four or five shot in the back. One was killed, and I never did get an exact picture of how seriously any of the others were hurt in the shooting. But the Army that moved in was very disarranged. They were not disciplined. Somebody said--well, let's put it this way--one soldier got out of line, and he became frightened when someone pushed a car down the hill toward where the Army was stationed and he fired. As soon as he fired--now this hasn't been reported, but I certainly saw it with my own eyes--the Captain said, "Fire." And they fired. By that time the tear gas was pretty heavy, and everybody was running. I was running, too. But one of my purposes for running was my little girl, who was about four years old then, and the gas was so bad, I figured she might be in danger. So I dashed over to my barrack and found out that the commotion was pretty well centered around one block and hadn't hit the residences very much. But it was bad.

The next morning, every Japanese in the camp had a black band on the arm. I never did find out, and I've often wondered, where did they get that black material--enough material so black--to dress everybody in a black armband by the next morning. And there was silent treatment. Now, that's as near as we ever came to feeling a racial division. That was when nobody would speak to you. And your secretary would sort of run around the building so that she wasn't embarrassed by having to speak to you; her friends and others around her building would know; they all had agreed not to speak. The silence ended in a few days. Meanwhile, the teachers, the workers, all the Caucasian staff, all became volunteers on the jobs. All the work was

stopped, yet somebody had to pick up the oil trucks, the garbage, sanitary inspections and all; to see that groceries and food came in; to make sure that the children that were in the separate buildings were cared for. So we did other kinds of work until such time as the Army went back home next door.

MILNER: I see. The morale must have been very low for quite a period of time in the camp.

CARTER: It was close to Christmas. The riot was about the seventh of December. What a coincidence, because Pearl Harbor was the seventh. It was a coincidence. It wasn't just because Pearl Harbor was the seventh of December. But it was a coincidence. It was on Christmas Eve--it was a very emotional thing when particularly the Christian group, the Japanese people--walked over to the Caucasian buildings there and sang Christmas carols; Holy Night, and all of those beautiful carols. Then we picked up the clue and grabbed our kids and joined the line, and we all marched over to the Japanese buildings, and everybody sang. They came out of the buildings and sang. It was a spontaneous kind of a group movement that was so stirring. And then--I will say of that one event that everybody was about ready. Otherwise, it was quiet, and we went back to our respective jobs. All of our friends and our staff wanted us to be sure to understand that they thought about us all the time, and they knew that we didn't mean them any harm.

MILNER: Yes.

CARTER: So it was a quick healing session.

MILNER: It took Christmas season to do it.

CARTER: I think Christmas added to it. See, we were all ready.

MILNER: That's very interesting. I wonder about the medical programs within the camps, whether you used the Japanese doctors, or whether you used the Army doctors, or what

arrangements?

CARTER: For quite a while the Japanese hospital was run by the Japanese people with a medical background. There were at least three physicians--one was a very excellent surgeon from County Hospital--who ran the hospital. There was one who had been with a surgical company, and so he was the hospital administrator. There were a number of Japanese nurses. Apparently, the women who were trained as nurses had much better possibilities for jobs than those who were school- teacher trained, who couldn't get jobs in Los Angeles. But the civil service doctor didn't come in for some time later and, in my opinion, he was not the quality of the Japanese doctors, but they were on civil service and were available and were sent there. They didn't stay too long. But the hospital was always run well. It was directly for the Japanese population. The Caucasians had to just get what you could get. The Japanese also had dentistry. It was awfully hard to get out to have your teeth cared for, and I was having trouble with my gums, but I just could not--there was no way to drive in or go up to Bishop. Dr. Kikoke, one of the dentists, liked me and, I thought, I hope none of the Caucasians find out--but he saved my teeth.

MILNER: That's marvelous.

CARTER: It was a difficult time. But for any other reason, if it were a death threat, you could go to the hospital. But otherwise, you had to find a way to Lone Pine or Bishop or someplace. In some ways the Caucasians felt hardship with the severe weather and storms; the buildings were certainly poor shelter at times, and with the shortage of medical care and dentistry, it wasn't so easy for the Caucasian staff.

MILNER: Yes. Can you name some of the Caucasian staff who were there at the time?

CARTER: Well, I just can think of some of their names. Mr. Davidson was the recreation man. Then there was the top position for director of agriculture, that was Sanderson. On maintenance

and building, I've forgotten the name now. But they were a couple who were from civil service, engineers, and they were very well qualified. And the fiscal and finance man, I think you'd find, it was just the average in say, a large Bureau of Indian Affairs headquarters.

MILNER: Were any of them social workers?

CARTER: No, there were no professional social workers until later. There were some social workers.

MILNER: Yes. Dr. Diehl.

CARTER: Oh, yes. Let me tell you about Margaret Diehl. Before I come to Margaret, let me say that there was a place on the personnel roster, besides all the teachers, of which there were about 100 (I can come back to the teachers and principals.) But there was the place for a social worker. We didn't think so much about a social worker at the beginning because we were sort of on a survival tack, trying to get food, clothing, and shelter. But as the families moved into the barracks, at times without proper partitions and with the fearfulness and the uneasiness of not knowing what was going to happen to them--and, particularly fear of their families being broken up or separated--there were quite a bit of problems. At first it was my job, then, to get a counselor for each block. From the personnel department, I selected those who'd had something in the social sciences: sociology, psychology, or something along that line, and they all turned out to be 20, 21, 22, 23 years old. I put them on as a block counselor, and they would come back almost in tears and so would I be. Nobody would counsel with them. They viewed some of the problems that were going on, and we said, well something is wrong here. We'll have to see where they're getting advice. They're talking to somebody. Somebody is giving them guidance. We discussed this and they knew that they weren't what you'd call the "wise ones." So all of the social workers--what we called social workers--made this inquiry into each block: who's the wise

one in your block, man or woman? who hears the troubles? who helps families settle their squabbles? and so forth. And when there's boy/girl kind of problem, who advises the parents? So they nominated, and we had a staff of the wise ones, one from each block. They were utilized--and they did a very good job.

Then it was obvious that we had to have a director of social work. I looked through all the civil service files that had available applicants, and found this one in Porterville, in northern California, 67+ years of age. They said, well, you can't recruit from civil service someone who's already 67 or 68. They wanted you out when your 65, at that time. I said, well, let me just try first. So I went to see her and I was so pleased. She was the director of the YWCA in Tokyo for 15 years, and she speaks excellent Japanese, fluent Japanese. And she had this dignity, and grey hair and was a very understanding kind of person with a soft voice. She spoke slowly, clearly. So I employed her. And it was a job to get her through, but she was approved. She was to come back very shortly. We rushed this through because we really did need someone to tie all these pieces together.

We had a welcome for her, and then, in Manzanar style, you must always have the public address system if it's of any importance at all. That gives it the status. Then, if it were a meeting or a great announcement, you put two trucks together and the floodlights on the trucks, then all the Japanese sat on their pillows on the sand, in the firebreak, and faced the back ends of the trucks. We had the meeting, and I, by this time, had been studying my Japanese. I think I did a little bit after work each day. Our teachers were the Navy teachers for Boulder. They were very tough on us. They just enjoyed putting our officials through a hard time. But it was conversational Japanese. I could speak just about five or six or seven minutes. I did my speech, and I introduced Margaret Diehl as the Director of Social Work and someone that they would all love

because she spoke their language so fluently, and she knew the people so well. Then it occurred to me that I had never heard her speak. How did I know she could speak a word of Japanese? (Laughter) So, having turned a little bit pale, I introduced her, and then she stood up and faced this whole sea of brown faces out there, all looking with great anticipation, and nothing came out. And then she moved a couple of more steps toward them, and still, she didn't speak. I thought, I wonder if this was a mistake. Then finally, she looked at them, this whole group of faces looking up at her. They were on the ground, and she was on the truck, the back end of the truck, and she began to speak. It was the most beautiful music and sound I ever heard. Slowly at first, and then it became louder, and then she moved closer to them, and then she spoke more distinctly over the microphone, and they just loved her. She was very good for them and did a beautiful job. Also, it was shown that a community can use some kind of social work at one time and then, at another it isn't appropriate. It doesn't do the job for them.

We began the relocation program, where so many balls have to be kept in the air at one time, with a family group; younger children had to be placed in school. There had to be employment verified, there had to be funds allowed, there had to be sponsors; a large file had to be built up before it could get through for approval for relocation, and it had to be done fast by somebody who could pick up the phone and call to maybe five or six agencies in the community and get it done in a hurry. So I brought in a very vigorous woman from New York, and she carried on with most of the social work from then on. Margaret began to withdraw somewhat, because at that time, too, the families were pretty well settled. But just one side comment about Margaret Diehl. She was a very wonderful person. We began to give her some assignments of visitors. When we had visitors there, and all the Japanese people knew this too, if we had, for example, "Happy" Chandler come with a very nasty committee from Congress, to investigate, to

see if they were suffering, we would tell the block leaders who's coming in for the next visit. And they said, "Oh, let's see. Why don't you show them the Watanabes? They've just got six beams, and they've got sixteen people jammed in there." (Laughter) And residents would help make up the list, and we'd take committees around. Then we'd have the missionaries and the preachers, and others who would come in and want to know if we were treating the people properly, and if we were giving them love, and all that. So we'd have a "love of the suffering" group: Tour A, Tour B, and sometimes Tour C, that would have a little of both. Margaret Diehl began to handle some of those when her workload went down. There was a Methodist Minister who had just finished his Doctorate degree, and he kept coming in, and each time she'd show him around again. The story concludes that he asked her to marry him, and they had a December-type marriage--not in camp--but we gave them a real good party, and she lived for four years afterwards and finally died before he did. But it's a happy ending to the elderly social worker who was so gracious to the people and also, a gracious person. That's the conclusion of my social work story.

MILNER: That's an interesting story. Very interesting.

Now, Dr. Carter, could you discuss some of the personal relationships that existed between the Caucasian staff members and the interned Japanese.

CARTER: All right. I'll just make a few comments. That's a common question that people ask because there's some kind of confusion as to the nature of the relocation camp and the position of staff, which was all Caucasian at that time. And their relationships with each other--were there racial tensions. I think, on the whole, there were very good relationships. There were some who never came forward at all, and we didn't see much of them. But the relationships were very strong between some. Take the construction company, Mr. Sanderson and his staff. Their friendships and letters went on for years afterwards. The education and the community staff I

headed for many years, had letters very often, and reunions. Every graduating class would have a reunion. And in Little Tokyo, or somewhere, there were Christmas presents, Christmas cards. I think there were friendships that lasted fifteen, some of them forty-four or forty-five years, and they're still friendships. People got to know each other. Before I went into camp, I think the only Japanese-American people I knew were on campus or students. But here we learned a lot about each other, and I think it was quite wholesome and went along much better than almost everybody would, at first, think. There is certainly a difference between the staff and the community. You can't get around that; that was reality. But the community around Manzanar didn't necessarily see us in that perspective. I was called a "Jap-lover" by my own relatives, by my own family. People couldn't understand why I would want to do my War effort in a camp with American-Japanese. The people in Manzanar and Inyo and Mono Counties were very, very upset in having the Manzanar Camp moved into their geography. Why us? why don't you move it somewhere else? They were very hostile. I went on Sunday to church, bringing my little girl with me, going in there very brave-like, still being whispered about and pointed to as that Jap-lover from that camp that's close by.

We took a little beating. One time, earlier, whenever it was possible for the internees or residents to go out into the community, we arranged for a picnic. This was a group of teachers, grade school and high school teachers, and we had some watermelons from the gardens--oh, they were beautiful fruit--and vegetables and chickens, and so on, that the Department of Agriculture gave, and we always had carrots and different kinds of fresh things. So we had a big picnic, and truck drivers went out to a place close by where there was a brook. We put the watermelons in the brook, and we had some soft drinks and put them in the water to cool and then we had the music instruments, singing in Japanese, and singing the old school-type songs. We were just getting

settled and having a good time, and a farmer came around from a bunch of trees right by the brook with a big shotgun. Now, if anybody knows the history of Inyo and Mono Counties, war went on there for years regarding water rights. Those farmers with shotguns weren't just playing games. They'd shoot. I knew my history there. He came up and pointed this gun at us and he said, "You Japs get off of my territory and get out of here in a hurry or I'm gonna shoot, and I'm gonna first shoot that goddamn Jap lover." That was me. (Laughter) I was the head person in the group, the responsible, ranking person, so I had to walk up to him. I did what intuitively I thought might work. I didn't know it was called diversion, but that's what I did. I said, "But you see our watermelons are out there, our two watermelons. If we could just get those watermelons back--you see they're getting cold now. And those cokes--can we get them out?" And he said, "All right. Get them out, but get out of here in a hurry." So we rushed out there and got the watermelon and the cokes and scrambled into the trucks and hiked back as fast as we could to Manzanar gates and got inside. It was a good feeling to get inside that barbed wire, with a guy out there with a shotgun.

MILNER: I would think so.

CARTER: There were common ups and downs; there were hazards for people associated with the camp because of distorted ideas; and sometimes, people outside now have distorted ideas.

That's just what went on inside the relocation center. So that's my story on....

MILNER: Well that's a great adventure.

CARTER:local people.

MILNER: I'll say. I wonder, would you tell me a little about the children's programs that you had?

CARTER: Oh, yes. Well, that was a pleasure at least to develop. Manzanar was selected as

the relocation center, to receive the children from three orphanages. One was the Episcopal Orphanage in Pasadena--you know where that is?

MILNER: Yes.

CARTER: A man and his wife, a young couple; she was a trained social worker, a professional social worker; he was a businessman for the orphanage. Then we had the Salvation Army, and we had the Roman Catholic--what is the name of that?--it's an Evangelical, Catholic order--it will come to me later--anyway, there were three orphanages. I received a telegram one afternoon that in 48 hours, children from these three orphanages would be coming in three buses to Manzanar: with infants, pre-school toddlers, who were at least one-fourth Japanese blood, and who were in the orphanages. We had the older children hovering over the little ones, and the staff that came with them with the little enemy aliens in their arms, and they were tired after their afternoon ride, coming to this strange place. I wonder what kind of orientation those children received before they were packed them up with their belongings and put into these buses to go over that dry, desert territory to get into Manzanar. We had prepared as well as we could. The Army had no idea about children, so there wasn't anything for children to take a bath in except for the homemakers that were coming in to agree that they would get in the shower and hold the children while they were getting their bath. Then we had to make quite a number of changes in order to have some groups of children instead of a whole, long Army barrack of adult men sleeping there. It took quite a bit of adjustment. But the people who were working on it really did enjoy their work, and they enjoyed the children.

Now, there was one of the most difficult decisions I ever made in my life. I had about twelve hours or so to decide who was going to be the administrator because each orphanage had come with staff. They were three or four staff members from each orphanage, and they were

prepared to stay. Well, you just couldn't have a mix of staff like that, because they have different philosophies and different ways of programming; I had to make a decision as to who would go back and who would stay to manage the orphanage. I decided that I would select the Episcopalian couple because of the language. The others--the two nuns with the Catholic order, and the priest, all spoke Japanese. But, their English was very poor. So that for communication for everybody, the best deal was to have the couple that could speak both Japanese and English, and we could get going sooner and faster and start the programs and all these youngsters could settle down. There was one young man who was 16, who had come in with the children, but he really had been with a foster family of Anglos, and he had never been around Japanese children before. He couldn't speak Japanese. I could see him standing out in the middle of the camp, in the firebreak. He looked out there and he said, "My God, I've never seen so many Japs in all my life." He was just closing in on a group of people he had never talked with or played with and how strange it must be, just because he was American-Japanese who had Japanese blood--but he had never been around them. Then there was one Spanish kid. I've forgotten his name now, but he had always lived with this Japanese family. He didn't have any family of his own. And he had an awful time getting in because he couldn't show that he was part Japanese. We didn't know what to do with him, because he was already there, and he had no family to go to, and no one to make any other arrangements. They finally decided that he could come in, but it just worried them no end how to fix his file up, and what to do with him. But he was very happy, living with his Japanese family, and his Japanese brothers and sisters, and he stayed on for about two years before there was some plan worked out whereby he went back to Los Angeles. There were all these kinds of mixtures and confrontations that are interesting. You look back over the situation, and you just wonder how viable and flexible people must be in order to adjust and adapt to all these strange happenings,

faced by some things like how much Japanese blood do you have.

MILNER: Amazing. Was there any rationale at all given for bringing children in who, say, were only one-quarter Japanese?

CARTER: Well, the Army order was, no matter if you were an infant or a child or an old man of 90, if you had Japanese blood, that was the only differentiating issue.

MILNER: That made you dangerous at the time.

CARTER: Yes, yes. That would be the easiest and most simple way of moving fast to segregate this population.

MILNER: It's such a marvelous example of the hysteria of this war period.

CARTER: If you were economy minded and cost containment minded, you would have had employed an individual FBI agent for each family, and it would have cost a lot less.

MILNER: Of course, of course. In retrospect we know those things.

CARTER: I have one other point. I didn't mention the library, did I?

MILNER: No, you hadn't.

CARTER: As the Japanese moved in, they collected their books. They didn't have room for them, so we collected books through Caucasian staff, and we started a library. It was a very busy library because we had books printed in Japanese that we could exchange. There were no other resources; this was a great help for them. We had motion pictures, and they had other kinds of entertainment, but the library was quite an important institution and that took a whole barrack. We had, of course, a librarian who was experienced from the camp there. One morning I got a telegram saying that an investigation committee was coming in from Washington to inspect our library to see what kind of espionage we had going on in the library. (Laughter)

MILNER: Could they read Japanese?

CARTER: Oh, yes, they had staff coming in who could read Japanese. They wanted to look over the titles and content to see what we had in the library. I really wasn't sure. We had an adult education department, and we had two or three leaders in that adult education department, because we had English classes, and we had other kinds of discussion groups, and all, that they organized themselves with volunteers. I called on them, and we were open all night, going through every book to make sure that everything had been reviewed before the committee came the next night. I believe we did find four or five books that could be suspicious of some kind of propaganda. We took them out and burned them and buried the ashes. Then the next day, the committee came, and it was such a tiny little speck of questionable books, and what obviously was in the contents--I didn't think there was much to it. But we didn't want to take any chances of being in an unfavorable position, so we took care of it. The next day we had the visiting committee, and they were quite pleased. Then we also got questions about, did you try to submerge or discourage Japanese cultural types of activities? No, they were certainly encouraged. The Judo Hall was a magnificent building; in comparison to an Army barrack. They built it themselves, and they paid for the lumber. But we helped them arrange to have it delivered. They carried on the classes. Almost every day in Judo, and they held cultural types--I guess you'd call them martial arts--and then we had many programs of the old classics, which take so long for one story to take place. Unless you know the language, you can't appreciate it so much. We had Japanese music up and down any road, between the blocks; there were certain popular pieces that they played over and over again. Whenever I hear them, I know them. The teenagers and the younger adults, all had their records of the same popular songs, and at their dances or their gatherings or the church gatherings--there was the Roman Catholic Church and the

Buddhist Church and the Episcopal Church--the young folks always had their book leagues and their readings and they'd have their records and their dances. And they also were in a fortunate position of having a very creative and talented music supervisor in the high school who wrote plays. He was in the movies, himself, for a while, and was just the kind of a guy that the young Nisei adored. They had a ceremony for him at his death, later on, and he was reported many times as the one who'd done so much in developing their lines, because they were the male lead and female lead in the plays and the operettas, and in the courses; everybody participated. Some of the young folks said they could never have had the lead in a single play back in Los Angeles. "We could never have done this in Los Angeles, and here we make our own music." I remember one song--it was a very beautiful girl with a deep contralto voice, and they called her song bird of Manzanar. And he wrote a song for her to sing. It was a very plaintive song. I've forgotten the words, but it had to do with a boy and a girl in Manzanar, and they were having their romance, and they could never find a private place to hold hands or arms or to be alone together or to talk over their plans for their future when they got out of Manzanar, what they would do when they got married, then as the song sort of ends, it'll soon be over, and then we'll meet again where we can have our privacy and our lives.

MILNER: Isn't that marvelous? Oh, if we could only have a recording of that, that would be great to have.

CARTER: It was a beautiful song.

MILNER: Oh, yes. Dr. Carter, we've covered a great deal of material over the last hour or so, and I wonder if there are some additional things that you can think of that you might want to talk about.

CARTER: One area that we haven't talked about, and for a good reason, I suppose, are the

emotions and the feelings of both staff and the Japanese population. That's seldom ever talked about. People think of physical deprivation, and there was some, but the Caucasian staff had deprivation, and in fact, everybody during the War was going without something or working hard or having some kind of hardships. But it seems, if I look back now, one of the important events that seldom get mentioned, but that I think comes out once in a while, is the recruitment of volunteers for the United States Army. I believe it was called the 442nd, and volunteers were called for at Manzanar at the same time the recruiting was in the adjacent counties. The response of volunteers to the youth population was much greater inside the barbed wire than it was outside the barbed wire. These youngsters just wanted to prove that they were loyal Americans and that they were good soldiers. And some of the expressions from the Japanese-American soldiers were, "Go for broke" and "Don't stick your neck out," and I can still remember a good many of them that came from that group. They were very proud and the barracks would have their pictures of a son, of a brother who was in War--in Italy most of the time.

This always reminds me of the visit we had from "Happy" Chandler maybe a decade or so back. You may remember that he was a very outgoing politician connected with baseball, too, in some way, I believe, from Kentucky. He brought his wife out on this visit with several members of a committee to inspect the camp and to see if the internees were being coddled. As I mentioned before, you have some groups that are concerned that the Japanese-Americans were being unjustly--not unjustly. That's a poor word--unfairly treated, and others that they were being coddled, so that whenever Mrs. Chandler came with "Happy" Chandler, since I was the only woman in top staff as was to be expected. I was assigned to Mrs. Chandler, to escort her around all day long. She had on high heels in that sandy, gravelly soil where you do well if you wear rubber boots part of the time to keep your feet on the ground. We had planned a sort of cocktail

party and dinner that night to offer a little cultural interlude after they had covered their rounds today. I had Mrs. Chandler all day long, and she was really mortally afraid of being stabbed in the back or being in some way hurt or damaged. I think she thought that maybe the two of us should have had an escort or a soldier with us as we went around the camp. I showed her the nursery schools and the beauty parlor, the Co-op, and several things I thought she might be interested in. All day long I'd ask her if she didn't want to come to my place, my barrack, and wash up and have a little interlude there. No, no. I don't see how she made it all day long. She was fearful of going into any bathroom, any place in the whole camp. She'd just stand out there, and of course, someone stayed with her. I'd stay with her every once in a while. Her one remark has always stuck with me. I was trying to find things I thought she'd be interested in, so I told her about the draft and how the American-Japanese had volunteered, and how the high percentage went from inside the camp, and the response on the outside around us. She wouldn't say much. I said, "Well, don't you think that's rather surprising? A good thing?" And she said, "Yes, it is a good thing. You know what we could do with that? See, you could put the Japanese-American boys up front and that would protect our boys."

MILNER: Isn't that--oh, what an attitude!

CARTER: Now, we get into some of the other points about just what was the loss. Of course the financial loss was great for the American-Japanese--more important than that, I think, we all had some losses, like privacy and, of course, the loss of freedom and the loss of personal control because you are bound in and can't pursue your life and develop as you want to. But the War disrupted a lot of people. I suppose, everyone sort of stopped still for a while until after the War. So that we just don't know the cost in terms of social costs as well as in terms of financial loss. There's no place where we read now that one would say it was a very unjust kind of move, but

what else--what the other alternatives were, we don't hear much about. Maybe something else could have been done to ease all the tension at that time. But I've often thought that if we had an FBI agent for each family, it would have been at least something to consider. It certainly would have been much less expensive for the country. I haven't heard many others point to other alternatives, except they do point to a life in that huge population. They had no other choice but to do the thing they did do, which was right, and worked out all right. I don't know what else we could have done here. In the East and Middle West, it worked out just fine. The Japanese-Americans were still in place, carrying out their work--maybe uneasily--but they were carrying on so that their lives were not disrupted.

In California, particularly, there were other political and economic forces that were influencing the removal of the Japanese. We haven't had that written down very clearly, but the property, particularly the truck gardening industry and the greenhouse and some of the industries that were forming and getting very competitive. There were others in the same business and the same work, who felt that competition and that perhaps intensified their hostility toward the American-Japanese. I won't try to answer important questions like that. Let someone else who looks back in history, years later, try to tell us just why did it happen, and why did it happen the way it did, and was it in the long run, a way of integrating and spurring on, enhancing the Japanese role in this country, in an economy, in education, in science, and all of the good things of life that we all strive for; you can hardly see the scars now. The Japanese people have done so well, and they have such a set of values that have been their influencing source. I often quote a principle or a rule that I've heard many times about education, because it can, although it was rough and they had good teachers, they did well, they made their relocation, and none of the Japanese students ever went back a grade. They were all such good students and worked so hard and so well, that I

think the value system has continued to guide them. The principle goes like this: Children, never walk on the shadow of the teacher.

MILNER: Beautiful. Beautiful. Thank you Dr. Carter. We appreciate so much your willingness to do this interview.