

the more you can feel the heat probably accounted for the reason why the west coast residents had a more reactive concern about the enemy and people that looked like the enemy looked.

Temporarily cleansing my mind from war related considerations I backed the car from the parking stall, turned toward the lot entrance and drove out onto the street heading east. With the windows down and a gentle morning breeze touching my face and hair it felt like this morning would blossom into one of those ideal San Joaquin valley spring days.

I began to think about my home in Bakersfield, two hours south on highway 99. My mind was reflecting thoughts about my wife Grace and our first child that we were expecting in mid-summer. Grace was teaching art at Bakersfield High School and was hopeful she would be able to finish out the school year which would be over the first week in June. That was only one month away. She was probably up and busy about the house fixing breakfast for her mother, herself and Jane. Her mother had been living with us several months following her release from a prolonged hospital stay. Jane was a teenage high school senior that needed a home during her final high school year. Another hour would find Grace on her way to her first class of the day.

Today would be the start of a new chapter in my life and I had no preconceived ideas of what the coming months had in store for me. I was on my way to become directly involved in the war effort, in a way that no civilians had ever been included in the history of our country. My services would be civilian and not military. I was soon to become aware that a war can produce casualties that are not related to physical injuries. Hysteria mixed with anger, frustration and prejudice when combined with logical military concerns can result, under certain conditions, in wounds that prove to be the most troublesome of all, wounds that can only be soothed and never healed.

My life would be changed by this coming experience but only in a small proportion to the changes that would effect thousands of other men, women and children who were also American civilians. The power of humility and family unity was to be demonstrated to me before long. I was destined to develop an endless appreciation for those able to accept restraint with quiet acceptance, and adversity with dignity.

Today I would become involved in a venture decreed by the United States Government that would invoke controversy for years to come, On this very day I was on my way to help write a bit of national history. For the next six months I was foreordained to participate in an answer to a problem that some members of future generations refuse to believe