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COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT IN THE RELOCATION CENTERS

Part I. One Year of Community Government
at the Gila River Relocation Center

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SUMMARY

After more than two years of experience, it is possible to make some evaluation of community government in the relocation centers. The program developed from a tentative plan announced in June, 1942. A general policy was formulated in October, 1942. The councils elected as a result of this policy have differed from project to project. Both appointed staff and evacuee residents have responded in different ways. There is at present, moreover, much difference of opinion as to the value of community government.

An adequate evaluation of the program can be made only in the light of the various center experiences. This report on Gila River, which was prepared by the Community Analyst at that Center and edited in Washington, is the first in a series of case studies. Together with similar reports from other relocation centers, it will provide a basis for weighing the contribution of community government to the total War Relocation Authority program.

The Gila River Relocation Center consists of two communities, Butte and Canal, four miles apart.

After almost a year of community government under a temporary plan, permanent Councils were set up in both communities in July, 1943. Elections were held and the Councils inaugurated without enthusiasm on the part of either evacuees or appointed staff. It was felt that recognized leaders among the evacuees had not allowed themselves to be put in office. The new Councilmen were uncertain as to what anyone expected of them. Some regarded the Councils as places to air grievances; others thought that through the Councils direct action for the improvement of community life might be taken. There was little understanding of the Councils as means for bringing community sentiment to bear on the solution of community problems.

Almost immediately minor conflict developed within the Butte Council. The Nisei leadership of the Council did not have the confidence of conservative residents and other Council members. A working organization was however soon established. It consisted of an Executive Board to coordinate the Councils and a three divisional organization of committees. The Canal Council, on the other hand, organized and proceeded to work smoothly without conflict comparable to that in the Butte Council.

The achievements of the Councils during their first term were primarily in the field of community organization and the establishment of channels of communication in the community. The creation of Executive Boards which integrated the two Councils with each other and with the project

administration resulted at least in a framework of community organization through which administration and evacuees might coordinate efforts. Further, the Councils organized committees on Health, Relocation, Mess, etc., thus formally relating community interests to aspects of administration.

Largely as a result of this organization, communication between evacuees and administration and among evacuees was noticeably improved during the first term of the Councils. This was especially apparent in connection with the problem of medical services which was aired thoroughly in the Councils and through them relayed back to the residents. The Councils also played a part in the control of rumor at the time of the shooting of an insane youth by a military guard. Except for the voting of an order to keep all mess halls open despite declining population, no legislation of any importance was carried out.

At the end of the first term, the Councils still had not the full support of Councilmen. The administration in general remained unconvinced that the Councils mattered, and there was general public indifference and even hostility. It was clear that procedures were slow and cumbersome and that the Councils as agents of community welfare suffered by comparison with the Block Managers.

The second term of the Councils, beginning in January, 1944, saw little change in personnel. Although the Councils undertook to do more during the term, they also suffered some clear-cut failures. They undertook legislation, passing a code of offenses and a traffic code, and formulating a juvenile code. A judicial commission was put into operation. These practical achievements probably weighed less with the community than a series of failures.

The Councils in common with Councils at other centers took great interest in making plans for a general evacuee conference on the future of the Japanese in America. When nothing came of these efforts, there was general doubt as to the utility of the Councils. The Councils took a stand against reduction of the block janitor force ordered by the administration. Their recommendations were not acted on, and as a result the Council lost prestige with the community and at the same time accumulated antagonism to the administration among its own membership. This was followed by the passing of a resolution denouncing the Japanese atrocities on Bataan, which created a violent reaction in the community against the Council. An investigation of internal security also resulted in unfavorable community reaction.

These setbacks indicated more clearly the limitations within which the Council had to work, both those resulting from the administrative framework and those stemming from community sentiment. They contributed in April to a crisis in the Councils' role in the community. There had been considerable replacement of Councilmen as a result of relocation, with Issei assuming the vacated Council positions. There was a feeling on the part of the Block Managers and of a large part of the community that the

Block Managers were the real government.

A reconsideration of the Councils' role resulted in a proposal that the Council-Block Manager system be consolidated through a block coordinator organization. Discussion of the proposal crystallized thinking about the functions of Councils and Block Managers and made clear some of the weaknesses of the Councils. When the proposal to consolidate was presented to the people, however, the result was a decision to retain the Councils. It was clear that the residents after a year's experience regarded unpaid representatives as a necessary part of community government.

The Councils then acted to streamline their procedure, giving the Executive Board more power, enforcing attendance at Council meetings, and clarifying in written statements the functions of Block Managers and Councils. Thus was ended a year of representative government at Gila River Relocation Center.

INTRODUCTION

In June, 1944, the third elections for the Community Councils took place, and early in July the members of the third permanent Community Councils were sworn in. These events marked the beginning of the second year of community government at Gila River under a permanent constitution. The aim of this report is to assess community government during its first year. In particular, an attempt is made to show the Councils as functioning bodies, indicating their uses and achievements as well as their shortcomings and failures. In addition, and necessarily, it will show their relationship with the administration, with the residents and with a rival body, the Block Managers.

The materials for the report are the minutes of the Community Councils, the minutes of the Block Managers, informal accounts of meetings of both bodies written by members of the Community Analysis staff, many interviews with members of the Council and Block Managers and interviews with resident evacuees, during the whole period under review.

Much more is said about Butte than about Canal. That is because no evacuee assistant was ever obtainable in Canal for the Community Analysis staff, and because contacts with Canal people have always been slighter. This is regrettable.

Certain individuals must be mentioned. Even if they are cited by title, they are easily identifiable. The Project Director, the Assistant Project Director, Community Management Division, and various evacuee officials of the Council had definite effects upon the development of the Councils and their influence must be taken into account. In this connection the Community Analyst has endeavored to exert restraint and, while he must observe the effects of the actions of various individuals, he has refrained from imputation of motive or criticism. He would have preferred to deal with the topic without regard to personalities.

THE CONSTITUTION

On July 6, 1943, the Constitution, as drawn up by the Constitution Committee acting under the authority of the temporary Community Councils, was received as approved from the Washington office of the WRA. Some minor amendments, chiefly concerned with license fees and eligibility for office, had been made, but it was substantially as submitted. On July 9, a joint meeting of the Advisory Boards, the Temporary Community Councils, and the Constitution Committee, was called by the Assistant Project Director* at Butte to discuss further action.

At the meeting it was decided that the Constitution be translated into Japanese and submitted to the people for acceptance or rejection by written vote. Discussion indicated that many present already foresaw difficulties. The case of Minidoka was cited, where the Constitution had been turned down. This was a possibility which had to be faced, and the need for education of the Issei was stressed. In informal discussion, one member remarked, "It is too late." A summary opinion given at the time is that there was a genuine, but not enthusiastic interest in having the Constitution adopted.

The principal foreseen difficulties were antagonism to the Constitution and indifference to it. These were caused by attitudes arising from the experiences of the temporary Community Councils. Rightly or wrongly, it was believed by a large number that these bodies had been inept and futile, and that new Community Councils, even if labelled "permanent", would be equally useless. It was also believed that the Administration would never permit them any real power; this belief has persisted among some to the present time.

The remark "it is too late" indicates another handicap. It was believed that a very long time had been consumed in drafting the Constitution, that Washington had taken a very long time to approve and return it, and that consequently potential interest in it had diminished considerably.

Thus, unenthusiastically, the Constitution was launched. Translation was completed and approved by August; it was submitted to the people and adopted in Canal on August 30, in Butte on September 6. The voting was: Canal, 596 for, 96 against; Butte, 1383 for, 96 neutral, 108 against.

The first elections were held in Canal on September 14, 1943, and in Butte on September 28. During the process of the elections, two facts were of importance. The first was that the process of segregation was well under way. That two thousand people were going to Tule Lake in the

* Unless otherwise indicated in this report the term Assistant Project Director means the Chief of the Community Management Division, since he is responsible to the Project Director for the Community Councils.

near future was of paramount interest. To complicate matters, the segregants were permitted to vote. Even those not segregated favored the segregants' vote. It was not primarily a matter of right but conceived as a gesture of good will; good will on the part of those going, and good will on the part of those remaining. Consequently, many hundreds of voters who were hostile to or indifferent to the developments of community government participated in the election of the candidates.

The second fact was that in many blocks it was difficult to get able men to run. This was partly the result of the confusion of segregation, but partly because of disbelief in the efficacy of the Council, already mentioned. The consequence was that, while a number of able and loyal men were elected, a number of blocks were represented by men of indifferent ability or even by men ready to oppose any constructive measures.

Such as they were, good and indifferent, the Councils were elected in September. Canal Council had its first formal meeting on September 21 and its first business meeting on September 23. Butte Council had its first formal meeting on September 28 and its first business meeting on October 4.

THE FIRST TERM

Initial Meetings of the Councils

The Councils at their initial meetings were not certain of what was expected of them by their colleagues, their constituents, or the Administration. To some, a Council was a place to voice complaints, or to redress grievances. To others, it was a means of protest. To still others, it was a means of getting certain specific acts performed. Few understood it as a means of achieving systematic expression of the people's will within limitations laid down, so that harmonious administration resulted; and of those few who did so understand it, only a tiny minority had any idea of how to achieve this end.

Election of officers at Butte. In Butte, the conflict situation came more to the surface. At the second meeting, on October 11, the permanent officers were elected. The Chairman was well-known in the community, having previously been Central Block Manager. He was an older Nisei, of little formal education but much native intelligence and energy. He had the drive to get things done. He lacked tact, which alienated many Councilmen and the more conservative Japanese thought him an "inu" (dog; informer) for the way he collaborated with the Administration. It is due to him that many things were done during the first few months of the Butte Council, but it is also due to him that many of the more conservative people were confirmed in their distrust of and disregard for the Council.

The Secretary was a younger Nisei, highly educated, extremely intelligent and energetic. He understood the functioning of democratic bodies better than most. His chief handicap was his extreme Americanism which made it difficult for him to understand the more conservative Japanese point of view.

The Vice-chairman was an Issei, and one of the most independent and respected people in the camp. While he always remained influential, he did not exert his influence to the degree he might have done because he was more intensely concerned with another public task, and he was then only half-convinced that the Council, as constituted, would function. The Treasurer was an officer of Community Cooperative Enterprises, a well-educated and intelligent Kibei.

The leadership was vigorously assumed within the Council by the Chairman. He carried the other officers with him, but in so doing he alienated a number of Councilmen who thought him at once too assertive and at the same time too dominated by the Administration. Thus, when the time came to elect the Executive Board, an effective opposition developed. The Assistant Project Director had proposed a plan whereby the Chairman and the Secretary of the Council be ex-officio members, the other three members being chosen, one from the Council, two from the community at large, outside the Council. The motion was put and lost, and a motion was made and carried that the Executive Board be composed of five members of the Council.

The practical effect of this was not great. It merely meant that able people not elected to the Council were not available for that kind of public service. The psychological effect, on the other hand, was marked. It established a pattern of opposition to the Council officers which was utilized on other occasions, and it was hailed primarily as a defeat of the elected officials.

Other organizational plans were passed. In particular, the system of committees, organized into three divisions was passed with little comment other than requests for explanations and the basis of much constructive work was laid. The three elected members of the Executive Board became the three chairmen of the administrative divisions, and went ahead to appoint the respective chairmen of their committees and commissions.

Election of officers at Canal. In Canal, events proceeded more smoothly to all appearances at that time. A Nisei was elected Chairman who is young, has a pleasant personality and gets on well with people. He is not aggressive. His handicaps are that he does not appreciate the complexities of the problems he faces, and is not old enough to have the complete respect of the older Issei when any significant issue arises. Thus, he maintained an appearance of order in the Council until events in May and June, 1944, disclosed the real rulers of that community and overturned the existing state of affairs.

A young Issei was elected Secretary who is also quiet and unaggressive. On the minutes of the Canal Community Council he is the only one noted as elected to the Executive Board, but Community Analysis notes show that an older Issei, highly respected and somewhat scholarly, was also appointed. The three worked together well for a period.

With these organizations the Councils proceeded to their work. In an estimate made at the end of December, 1943, when new elections were held, their positive achievements seem small. Much more was accomplished than appeared on the surface.

Achievements of the Councils

Communication. The Councils became another, and useful organ of communication. The Executive Boards and the various committees began to get some notion of administrative problems, and some of this was communicated to the other Council members. For example, on October 11, the Council backed a petition to retain a popular medical officer. This proved not to be possible, but it was the occasion of a full explanation of the whole medical problem, and the statement by the Principal Medical Officer to the Executive Boards that WRA would accept responsibility for adequate medical services. Though this did not dispel the fears of the residents (nothing has completely dispelled their fears on that score) it probably kept the fears within bounds.

On December 1, a young man was shot leaving the gates of the camp. The

Council proved a useful body through which to disseminate information. The Project Director gave a full and frank statement of all that had occurred. This in turn gave the Councilmen an opportunity to ask questions and to make certain recommendations. While the amount of false rumor was remarkably small, the existence of a responsible body to which explanations could be made had its share in still further minimizing fears and resentments.

Other communications of significance were made. They concerned housing, welfare, the functions of the Community Activities Section, relocation, health and mess. In general the effect was good. Communications from the Administration had been difficult because of suspicions and fears. The existence of Community Councils did not make communication perfect, but it improved the situation.

Legislation. The amount of legislation was small. It was made mandatory to report cases of incipient insanity, as a result of the shooting incident. Drives for funds were restricted to the War Fund and the Red Cross (though this was later altered, and a drive for gifts to the medical staff was permitted). Much legislation was discussed. A code of offenses was drawn up but not passed. Judicial Commissions were authorized, but only appointed toward the end of the term. The regulation of private enterprise was much discussed, but it was finally decided to wait until Washington policy was announced. The playing of baseball in the blocks was forbidden at the suggestion of the Block Managers. But the committee work was not sufficiently developed to be the basis of much legislation. Probably the act giving most satisfaction to the public was the decision to keep open all existing mess halls (with one exception) and to staff them in proportion to block population. Consolidation of blocks was not popular.

Work of the Executive Boards. The Executive Boards were constantly active. Early in the term the Butte Chairman was able to assist in the settlement of a labor dispute which might have caused trouble. They also acted as liaison bodies between the two Councils, meeting frequently with each other. Their meetings were finally regularized. They assembled once a week in the Assistant Project Director's office, coordinating the actions of the two Councils and discussing matters which were afterwards brought to the attention of the Councils. Without their preparatory work and coordinating activities the Councils would have been much less effective.

Committees and Commissions. A number of committees and commissions were established. Some of these had little to do, others did useful work. The Relocation Commission, which had previously existed, was coordinated with the Councils and continued its contributions to the relocation program. The Recreation Commission kept in touch with the Community Activities Section, was instrumental in creating a recreation center in Block 42, and laying the basis of its future development. The Committee on Enterprises collected much material, but failed to induce action until Washington's policy was announced. The Health Committee organized a successful "Clean-up Day." The Mess Committee was most successful. Up until October, Mess Operations had been a constant source of trouble. In August, a partial

strike followed the reduction of mess hall staffs. From June through October, complaints of food were many and bitter. And much criticism was levelled against the personal attitudes of the personnel of Mess Operations. The Committee got together with the Chief of Mess Operations and his staff, and matters were arranged so satisfactorily that the mess halls, always a potential source of disturbance because of their importance to the people, have given no major trouble to this date. The credit for this should be divided between the committee and the staff of Mess Operations.

Evaluation of the Achievements

Considering the initial handicaps, the Councils had moved far. But at the end of the term, that was not very apparent. The Councils were still divided within themselves, many members being convinced that what they did was futile. One cause of dissatisfaction was the slowness with which anything was accomplished. A matter was referred to a committee. The committee reported at the next Council meeting. The matter might be referred back to them. Much time was consumed. In the meantime, administrative action may have been necessary. The Councils then felt themselves ignored. Hence, while some were learning and were willing to carry on, others were not convinced that any good could be accomplished, failed to attend meetings and failed to keep the people in touch with Council activities.

The public were mostly indifferent, some contemptuous. The names called the Council were, in extreme cases, unprintable. Criticism took two main lines. First, the Councils were futile; or worse, rubber stamps for the Administration. Second, the Councils did much harm because of ill-advised legislation; or inconsistently, did harm because they did not legislate. The Council leaders were still suspected. For these opinions, some of the Councilmen were themselves to blame. They did not keep in touch with the people, as above noted or, worse, they made no attempt to conceal their disbelief in their own effectiveness.

The personnel of the Administration staff were, as a whole, still unconvinced that the Council mattered. At one extreme, they resented interference in the management of what they considered their own functions. At the other extreme, they welcomed cooperation. Possibly it could be said of those holding the middle ground that they recognized the value of a group to which matters could be explained, and were willing to make minor policy changes in deference to the opinion of the Council; but they were not convinced that the representatives of the evacuees should influence any major policy or operational procedure.

Finally, the Councils suffered because of unfavorable comparisons with the Block Managers. This rivalry came to a head later, and will be discussed more fully, but it may be noted now that the Block Managers were a well-organized and respected body of much more prestige than the Councils; that they debated and passed resolutions on every important matter; and that their opinions were much more likely to be considered than those of the Councils.

Under these complex circumstances the second members were elected in December and took office early in January, 1944.

THE SECOND TERM

The elections did not change the personnel of the Councils to any great extent. In Canal, 14 of the 17 members were re-elected; in Butte 27 of 32 were re-elected. The officers and the Executive Boards were also substantially unchanged.

The development of the Councils proceeded much as it had done in the previous term, and their achievements will not be mentioned in detail. Certain outstanding positive accomplishments were, the final adoption of a code of offenses, a traffic code and the final appointment of judicial commissioners.

During this term, also, more matters were referred to the Councils. These were infrequently matters requiring legislative activity. They were informative, and emanated from committees, from the Administration from the evacuee leaders of other activities and from outside organizations. Often the matter could be referred to committees for appropriate action. Sometimes a recommendation from the Council became a basis of administrative action.

Committees and commissions also functioned more effectively. Much work was done by them for which little public credit was given. Their recommendations tended to harmonize internal security problems, fire prevention, work of the Community Activities Section, relations with external bodies, the ups and downs of the special diet kitchens, garbage collection and a host of other matters.

In brief, the Councilmen were slowly learning their business and their limitations. The value of the Councils as organs of communication and co-ordination between Administration and people gradually increased.

But there were very definite setbacks and a number of incidents made many Councilmen doubt the value of their work and kept the public from giving them much support. Some of these incidents are worth noting in detail.

The Reduction in the Number of Block Janitors

History of the reduction. This problem had already been brought to the attention of the Councils during the first term. Instructions from Washington were that janitorial services were to be reduced. Each block had had a janitor and a janitress. The instruction, as first read, would have allowed only one janitor or janitress per block. Public Health and Labor Relations Committees met with the appointed official concerned, and it was agreed that by adjustments of the labor force, there could be one janitor for each block and one janitress for every two blocks. This, however, did not satisfy the Councils, the Blocks Managers or the people. They all wished to retain two people for each block. But events moved too rapidly. The official in charge felt bound by his instructions to terminate the requisite number of workers. According to evacuee statements, this was

done on the last day of the year, without the customary ten days' notice, and, in fact, the notices were posted so late that some workers did not get them until after the New Year, although they were supposed to be terminated on December 31.

Evacuee opposition. The evacuees, particularly the Council members, claimed that the appointed staff members concerned did not listen to any of their requests, and had no intention of deviating from the course laid down. It is further stated that the appointed staff members did not care what were the results of this reduction in labor. One is quoted as saying, "If the janitors fail to cooperate, we will terminate all of them, in which case the Japs will take care of their own blocks voluntarily." Whether all these statements represent facts is not important. The significant fact is that they were believed. The Council members thus felt themselves slighted and made of no account.

Actually, matters came to an impasse because of the time limits set by the Washington instruction and the cumbersome nature of the proceedings of the Councils. The matter was first referred to the Councils on December 10. The Councils referred it to the appropriate committees. The committees conferred with the appointed officials and reported back to the Councils. And by the time the Councils could act, the termination notices were out.

It was also the result of failure of either party to understand the point of view of the other. To the appointed officials, the reduction was mandatory by a certain date. Further it was in keeping with the WRA policy effective from July 1, 1943, of reducing employment to increase efficiency. From any common sense analysis of the labor situation it was justified. Even those who claimed most for the janitors stated that a thorough cleaning of the wash-houses and latrines took three and a half hours, with two moppings up in addition. No one claimed that the janitors worked an 8-hour day. Hence, although some officials tried to be sympathetic, they did not realize the strength of the opposition to the reduction.

The strength of the opposition came originally from several factors. First, there was the general feeling of insecurity following each reduction of labor. Such reductions had been in progress for six months, and each fresh one caused new anxiety. Second, the block janitors were associated with block solidarity. If a janitress must be shared, that was a blow at the identity of the block. Third, janitorial work was unpopular. If the work were not made relatively easy, janitors would not be obtainable. "A Japanese would be a janitor to Caucasians in the old days, but not to another Japanese." The arguments advanced were all variations of the last consideration. If the janitors were made to work too hard, they would resign. Hence, keep them happy, so that the community be kept clean. "The staff should be satisfied on the basis of satisfactory sanitation and that alone." There was a complete rejection of the administrative point of view.

In their opposition to the reduction, the Councilmen were supported, indirectly, by the Chief Medical Officer. He reported that sanitary conditions had deteriorated. Other appointed officials, however, believed this

would rectify itself as the janitors adapted to the not very onerous demands on them. And besides, there was still the Washington instruction.

Finally, a letter was written to Washington. To this, no reply was received. To this date, there is still agitation to bring back the janitorial staff to its former numbers.

Effects on the Council. On the whole, the results were unfortunate. The Council lost face in the eyes of the community. It had exerted its utmost, and its influence was nil. Among many the feeling spread that the Council would have no influence or authority on any matter of significance to themselves. The local Administration and Washington both ignored them.

The adverse effects were the outstanding results, but there was a constructive side to it. The limitations laid upon administrative discretion by budgetary needs and rules had become evident, and budget studies were made. Charts, showing appropriations and labor force, and their breakdown by division and sections, were made, and some members learned more of the problems with which they were faced. This knowledge did not permeate the whole Council; recent comments suggest that the charts were too complex; but some few understood pretty well, and some principles became evident to others. But these favorable results did not have constructive effects for some time to come.

The Atrocities Resolution

On January 27, the account of Japanese atrocities to prisoners of war in the Philippines was released. The Executive Boards were summoned on the morning of the 28th. They were told that any resolution they passed on the news would be given favorable publicity.

Then and there, a resolution, unreservedly condemning the atrocities, was drawn up. The Chairman showed it to a well-known resident. He first explained, "But the Japanese do not do such things!" The Chairman said that the American public believed them. The resident replied, "Yes, that is true. I advise you to be very careful how you present this to the Council."

Special meetings of both Councils were called at 1:30 that afternoon. In Butte, the draft of the resolution was not shown. Instead, the Executive Board, together with three named Issei, were empowered to draw up a resolution in terms of the discussion. This committee then accepted the resolution as drafted. At Canal, the Council adjourned without taking any action. After making a careful translation, the Canal Council passed the English version of the resolution at the following regular meeting, February 1, though they did not accept any translation.

The passing of the resolutions had unfortunate consequences. When the text became known, there was much violent resentment. Some of the Councilmen denounced its terms as being "hysterical," "like what a high-school boy

would write." One Councilman brought a statement that his block had held a meeting and disapproved the resolution unanimously. The opposition was bitter because very few of the Issei believed the stories of atrocities. In their experience, the Japanese people could not possibly be guilty of such enormities. On the other hand, some Issei, as well as some Nisei, defended the resolution on the grounds of public relations. The overt opposition in the Butte Council died down.

The community reaction was violent. One individual said that it was the most upsetting thing that had happened since Army registration. The Councilmen were objects of abuse, of scorn, in some cases of hatred. In Canal, one of the more prominent Councilmen resigned, though he later withdrew his resignation. The prestige of the Councils sank lower than it had been before.

Other Notable Activities

It is not intended to give case histories of all significant activities, but three other series of events may be mentioned.

Appointment of Judicial Commission. The Constitution gave the Council power to appoint judicial commissioners, but it was not until late in December, 1943, that three suitable men were obtainable. Of the original three, one, a medical man, resigned before hearing any cases, so that it was not until January, 1944, that a suitable commission was finally created.

Accusation against a staff member. On January 24, a member of the Internal Security force, who was also a Council member for Butte accused one of the appointed staff of improper conduct. An excited discussion took place, in which alleged irregularities of the wardens were brought up. The Fire and Police Commission was authorized to inquire and report. Many denunciations of the wardens were received, but it was impossible to procure witnesses willing to appear. The first tentative report was a statement of much of the gossip directed against Internal Security. This, on advice, was not presented to the Council, and a much more balanced report was finally submitted. The useful consequences were that the committee members learned some rules of evidence, how to conduct an inquiry, and how to present a report. This educational advantage was confined to Council members. Those of the public who were interested in the matter thought it just another whitewash and the prestige of the Council suffered accordingly.

Preparation for Relocation Conference. The Council devoted some time to the relocation conference to be held with the National Director. It started off unfortunately. At a joint meeting of the Council members and Block Managers, the Chairman failed to direct the meeting constructively and the discussion was mainly concerned with what should be the demands of the evacuees rather than with the advisability of the conference and necessary procedures to make it effective. Later, the plans were discussed more intelligently and much useful work went into preparations for the conference. The indefinite postponement was something of a let-down, and the

whole set of events created further doubt of the real benefit of community government.

A Period of Crisis

By March, there was a widespread belief that community government had proved ineffective. This belief was held by a number of Council members and by a large number of residents. This was possibly caused by the setbacks, or believed setbacks, the Councils had suffered. But two other causes were effective.

Influence of relocation. The first of these was relocation. A number of Councilmen relocated, and were replaced by less experienced men. In Butte, both the Chairman and the Executive Secretary relocated in March. In April, the successor to the first Executive Secretary resigned to take up the post of Central Block Manager. While successors to all these officials were found, their departure added to the feeling of instability and made the process of education in self-government seem unending.

A further consequence of relocation was that the adult population was becoming increasingly Issei. The majority of relocators were Nisei. Thus there was proportionately less acceptance of democratic procedures, and less acceptance of American ideas.

Influence of Block Managers. The second cause was the competition of the Block Managers. As noted, the Block Managers as a deliberating body had been in existence much longer. They had more prestige, closer contact with the people, and their executive functions gave them added authority. While their job description did not warrant it, they felt themselves responsible for the total welfare of their respective blocks, and for the welfare of the community as a whole. Every important issue debated by the Councils was also debated by the Block Managers. Their resolutions had at least as much weight with the people as an act of the Council. Their appointment by the Administration gave them added prestige. And the continuity of their office gave them more experience than that attained by most Councilmen.

One Block Manager remarked, "We are the Government; the Community Council is a child's toy." On one occasion a Block Manager was asked the name of the Councilman from his block. He replied, "Oh! he has relocated; I don't know whom I will send to the Council in his place." While this condition would not be true of every block, it was undoubtedly true of some.

Meetings for reorganization. The Council members felt their position keenly. Finally matters came to a head at a meeting of the joint Executive Boards in the Assistant Project Director's office on March 10. Another conference was held on March 17. The matter was discussed at Council meetings the following week, and the Executive Boards were empowered to discuss plans of reorganization. This constitutional conference met with the

Assistant Project Director on March 24.

Summary of opinion expressed. A summary of opinions expressed at these conferences is all that can be given here. First, it was agreed that many Japanese do not accept the authority of an elected representative. Their idea is that he represents them; therefore he is bound to do their will. If he does what they want, all is well. If he fails to do what they want, they do not accept his failure; he must try again. Further, he must not do what they do not like. They do not accept as right or authoritative any repressive legislation which he may have a hand in passing. When he does things of which they approve, they take it for granted; when he does something of which they disapprove, he incurs their displeasure. There is no respect for his status, only the belief that he is their elected creature, whose duty it is to do as told.

Second, there were many who believed that the Block Managers were not only more respected and obeyed, but would always be so. In addition to the reasons already given, the particular meaning attached to an elected representative implies a corresponding respect for an appointed official. Besides, the Block Managers are the dispensers of material issuances. If you are going to do something a man dislikes (such as passing repressive legislation) he is much more likely to accept it if he also give you things (such as mops, brooms and buckets). "If a man hits me on the jaw I will dislike it less if he also gives me a glass of beer." The people respect the Block Manager, dislike the Councilman.

Constructive proposals. Constructively, there were a number of proposals. That most discussed was the abolition of both Councilmen and Block Managers. In their places would be created a Block Coordinator. He would combine the functions of both, would be both elected and appointed, and would be paid. As Block Manager he would (with an assistant) still be responsible for the material welfare of his block. As Councilor, he would represent his block at the legislative assembly. A number of variations were discussed: (1) he might be elected; (2) he might be chosen by the Administration from a group selected by election; (3) he might be appointed. Some variations in other details, particularly in the composition of the Executive Boards, were also proposed. One suggestion was that part of the Executive Board be elected by wards. Another suggestion was that the two Executive Boards combined be the Supreme Project Council. Much thought was put into the proposals and into criticisms of the proposals.

Action on the proposals. But when it came to the actual abolition of the Councils, much opposition developed.

Canal decided to retain their Council as it was. The deciding factors seemed to be two: (1) if a man were appointed by the Administration, he would be the creature of the Administration and could not

discuss and criticize freely; (2) if the post were paid, a man would have to resign his other job; many able men would not do this, hence their services would be lost to community government.

Butte took a more devious route. The general principles of reorganization were accepted at a meeting on April 3, and a Constitutional Committee, consisting of the Executive Board and five Council members, was empowered to work out the details and submit a plan for vote at the next meeting. This Committee met with the Assistant Project Director on April 7. After much animated discussion, a general reluctance to make any radical change manifested itself, for much the same reasons as had determined the decision of the Canal Council. Two important decisions were made. The first was that procedure be streamlined. This, it was believed, could be done by delegating more power to the Executive Board to act between Council meetings. The waste of time in reporting and then getting authority to act was thereby eliminated, the speed with which many matters could be accomplished was greatly increased. The second was that the attendance rule be enforced, and failure to attend meetings be made reason for removal. These proposals were accepted by the Council on April 17.

Further consequences were the publication of instructions to Councilmen, and a clear statement of the respective functions of Community Council and Block Managers; and a resolution of the Council stating specifically how and under what limitations the Executive Board could act.

The Council members felt that they had passed a crisis and that the status and efficiency of the Councils had improved.

The Remainder of the Term

Juvenile delinquency. For the remainder of the term a certain amount of useful work was done. The juvenile delinquency situation was again to the fore. Boys were guilty of causing disturbances, of destruction of property and of general uncontrollability. The Judicial Commission was not empowered to handle it in any effective way. The boy could be imprisoned, which does no good. Or he could be put on probation, which does no good here because the center lacks trained probation officers and facilities for any retraining process. After many abortive attempts, a Juvenile Code was finally drawn up. Changes delayed it, and it was not passed until July, by the third Council. It still lacks the Project Director's approval and may have to be revised further, but it seems possible that its main provisions will be retained. It is not possible to predict whether it will be effective.

Recreation Commission. A Recreation Commission was established and began to function effectively. This makes possible a consistent and constructive use of funds collected from paying events, such as movies, for the financing of desirable but non-profitable activities.

Welcome to Jerome people. The welcome of the people from Jerome was one of the outstanding achievements of the Councils, though, of course other evacuee bodies, including the Block Managers, and the Administration also participated. The Butte Council delegated its Chairman, and the Canal Council meeting jointly with the Block Managers designated the Central Block Manager to accompany the Community Analyst to Jerome. Their presence at Jerome had an appreciable influence upon the attitudes of numbers of people toward the transfer to Gila.

At Gila, the Community Councils had a large part in the program of welcome. They assisted in the block arrangements for the reception of the new residents, met the trains, and promoted the successful assimilation of the Jerome residents.

Referendum on beer. In May, it was voted by the Butte Council to submit a referendum to the people to determine whether the sale of beer was favored. The interest in this was very great. A larger number of voters turned out than had ever been the case before. The sale of beer was favored by a definite, but not overwhelming majority. It is unfortunate that so much interest and action was wasted on an already determined issue; beer cannot be sold on an Indian reservation.

Rise in prestige of Butte Council. During May and June, the authority of the Council of Butte became increasingly recognized. More matters were referred to it than had been the case before. The Block Managers had some debates in which their status was, sometimes resentfully, discussed, but they fell into line, and now defer, formally at least, to the Council's position. The elections held in June returned an appreciable proportion of old members, including all the members of the Executive Board, as their representatives for the third term.

Dilemma of Canal Council. Canal, having passed the constitutional crisis of March and April, found itself in a new dilemma. A raid on a gambling house on May 20 began a series of inquiries which disclosed a corrupt state of affairs. A gambling ring had much to do with the control of the community. At least two members of the Council were creatures of the ring, others were intimidated by threats of the "ironwood club rule." It became apparent that, to put it at its mildest, the Council was less important than the gamblers. At any rate, the Council fell again into some disrepute, though it continued to function. As a result, of the 17 old members, only 4 were reelected for the third term (and one of the four immediately relocated.) The Chairman did not run for reelection, as he was expecting army induction. The other members of the Executive Board either did not run or were defeated. There was an almost complete change, and a new condition confronted Canal.

THE PRESENT COUNCILS

Canal

The Canal elections, as well as ousting most of the old members, put in office a totally Issei Council. One reason for this latter fact is that already mentioned: the majority of the adults are Issei. Such information as can be gained about the new Council members indicates that a good proportion of them are chronic grumblers. They grumble at what they termed the futility of the Council, its adoption of some unpopular resolutions, the connection between some members and the gambling ring. Some of the old Councilmen refused to run again. So the grumblers were elected. There are a few able men in the new Council, some of them on the Executive Board, and the regular procedures are being followed in an orderly fashion. But it is possible that trouble may develop there because of the inexperience and lack of constructive ability on the part of a number of the members.

Butte

Elections. In Butte, the situation is more complex. Butte has always had more varied attitudes than Canal. In Butte, there was not the same election upset. Many old members were reelected, including all of the previous Executive Board. In the elections by the Council of the Executive Board there was one change, but that was to put in again the former Vice-chairman who had always been popular and who had remained relatively inactive only at his own request.

It is believed that the new Council will begin with a better understanding of procedures and what to do than the previous Council. There is no evidence that the newly elected people are of better or worse ability than those they replaced. Possibly this knowledge of procedure may be counterbalanced by the arrival of people from Jerome. Difficulties will be caused by the fact that the Jeromians will have different ideas of what the Community Council should do and, to some extent, different wants.

Prestige of Council compared with that of Block Managers. The Butte Community Council is considered more important than it was three months ago. There is a greater tendency on the part of the Block Managers, as a group, to present matters to the Community Council for formal action, but Block Managers continue to pass resolutions on matters which they think are important to the community. Within each block, the relative influence of the Councilman and the Block Manager is determined on the basis of personal ability and popularity. In some blocks, the Block Manager is definitely prominent. In other blocks, the Councilman is of more importance.

The Community Council is said to be looked upon favorably or otherwise in each block, according to the activities of the Councilman of that block. Where the Councilman is active in the Council and is conscientious about

keeping his people informed concerning Council activities, the Councilman is looked upon favorably. In some blocks, block affairs are run by a group of men regardless of who is Councilman or Block Manager.

Present and possible future status of the Council. Thus Butte is in a relatively favorable position, and has acquired prestige and experience. It is given as an opinion that its position is not as secure as appears on the surface. It has functioned with the moderate degree of success that it has had in the face of opposition, both from some of its members and many of the public. This opposition is definitely decreasing, but is still there. If the support of the Administration were lessened, or if it were subject to many frustrations, its confidence in itself would diminish and the confidence of the people would be less. It might then become a futile debating society or an instrument of obstruction; or, alternatively, it might die out. Again as an opinion, it continues to exist, not because it is perfect, not because it never makes mistakes, but because the members and the public feel that it has at least some voice in making or modifying some policies.

Influence of Relocation on Both Councils

In both Councils the problems caused by relocation will be continuous. Experienced executives and those who have learned something of orderly procedure will resettle. New Councilmen and executives must be trained. In Canal already all are Issei. That condition will gradually be approximated in Butte and ignorance of parliamentary procedure and language difficulties will make the task of cooperation between the Administration and Council more exacting. Whether or how these problems will be solved cannot be predicted; it depends upon factors too complex on both the evacuee and the administrative sides.