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January 17, 1944

MINIDOKA RELOCATION CENTER

Community Analysis Section

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF THE BOILERMEN'S DISPUTE AT MINIDOKA

The boilermen labor difficulty which has been brewing since last July flared into the open with the close of 1943 when the boilermen group decided to resign rather than work under the new condition which entailed a 24 hour schedule imposed by the administration. A plea by the acting project director kept the boilermen and janitors on the job until January 4th. At that time a complete work stoppage resulted and from January 5th to January 11th, the residents of Minidoka were without hot water. A settlement was finally reached on the evening of January 10th and boilermen and janitor service was resumed in the blocks.

EVENTS leading up to the walkout of January 4, 1944.

Along with almost every other department on the project, the Maintenance Division of the Engineering Section had in the early days of the project built up a sizeable evacuee staff. During the winter of 1943, each resident block had a maintenance staff of 11 evacuee workers. There were 4 janitors, 2 janitresses, 2 stove tenders and 3 boilermen.(1) There is little doubt that 11 maintenance workers even for the winter months was more than necessary. One of the result of this overstaffing in all divisions was the creation of elaborate system of job titles. This soon developed into a rather rigid status setup. In the maintenance division, for example, the boilermen devoted their time strictly to tending the boiler, the janitors did janitor work and refused to tend laundry room and showerroom fires which was the job of the stove tenders.

In July, 1943, the Washington office of the WRA initiated a program of curtailment of evacuee employment in the centers. Employment quotas were set up for each project and were to be effective July 1, 1943. Minidoka's quota was set at 2900. Since Minidoka's employment roll was well over 4,000 this meant a reduction of some 1200 evacuee workers. Although the Washington instruction indicated that this reduction could be spread over a three month period with one third of the reduction being accomplished by July 31st, the administration at Minidoka elected to reduce to its full quota by July 15th. Thus, Minidoka in one fell swoop not only lopped off 1200 workers but did so within a two week period.

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Up until December 1942, there were 4 boilermen, but in December this was reduced to 3.

Certain divisions were forced to take sizeable cuts. The number of maintenance workers for each block was cut from 11 to 4. An attempt was made at this time to make these 4 remaining workers into general maintenance workers and to merge the duties of boilermen, janitor, and stove tender. This was met with resistance on the part of the workers who clung to the status of their original jobs. When the cool fall weather of 1943 arrived, there was 1 janitor, 1 janitress, and 2 boilerman for each block.

Even though there had been a great deal of complaint following the reduction of maintenance workers in July, the light work entailed during the summer months did not impose too much of a burden on the 4 block maintenance workers. However, as soon as cool weather set in, the tending of stoves in the laundry rooms and latrines became a bone of contention. The janitors did not consider this to be part of their work. The boilermen held the same attitude. This lack of cooperation plus the fact that cold weather was coming on, led the Superintendent of Maintenance to issue a memorandum on November 8, 1943, to all maintenance workers which outlined the duties of the workers and served notice that failure to comply with the orders meant dismissal. Under this order, boilermen were instructed to build the fires in laundry rooms and lavatories and the janitors were ordered to tend the stoves during the day. This memorandum in addition to its unwelcome contents was unfortunately couched in blunt, undiplomatic language. The result was that the workers ignored the memorandum and refused to comply with its orders. Immediately following the issuance of this memorandum, the high school boiler room was damaged by a fire on the night of November 10th. There was no one on duty at the time and it was only by luck that the fire was seen and reported. The damage resulting from this fire, plus the fact that colder weather was in the offing led the administration on November 19th to attempt to initiate a 24 hour working schedule for the boilermen and janitors. The Superintendent of Maintenance was unable to get acceptance of this schedule. The maintenance workers at this time (Nov. 19th) submitted a petition to the Project Director setting forth the reasons why they could not comply with this order and asked for 2 additional fire tenders. (1) A lengthy meeting was held the next day in which the administration presented its side of the picture and again requested 24 hour service. The Maintenance workers further discussed the proposal and decided again that they could not work on the 24 hour schedule unless 2 additional men were added in each block. The Administration could not meet this demand and on November 20, 1943 a deadlock resulted. From November 10th to December 28th the situation remained calm with the boilermen and janitors adhering to their original schedule and duties.

(1)

A full report of the janitorial trouble up to this date and copies of this petition and memo are found in Community Analysis Field Report #239.

The rapidly falling temperature which was making the danger of freezing daily more apparent, plus the nearness of a new budget quarter led the Superintendent of Maintenance to issue another memorandum on December 28, 1943. This memorandum ordered a 24 hour schedule beginning January 1, 1944 and changed the title of all sanitation workers to janitors. A list of all workers who were willing to comply with this schedule and those who were not was immediately requested from the head janitorial supervisor.

The contents of this memorandum and its undiplomatic construction served only to rub salt in the wounds of the boilermen and janitors. A special meeting of all janitorial service workers was held on December 29th at which only three janitresses voted to work on the new schedule. The remaining 163 boilermen and janitors elected to submit their resignation effective the close of the work day December 31, 1943. This decision was reported to the Superintendent of Maintenance via memorandum by the boilermen supervisor.

In the meantime the residents of the center were becoming concerned about facing 1944 without hot water. Various groups and individuals contacted the administration to stress the seriousness of the situation.

On the evening of December 30th various so-called influential residents of blocks 1-19 met and discussed the situation with the evacuee supervisor of the boilermen. On the following morning (December 31st) this same group met for the purpose of selecting a negotiating committee to meet with the administration to request reconsideration of the administration's orders. (1) Seven members were chosen to serve on this committee. The aim of this committee was first to discover whether the administration was prepared for the emergency which would result when the boilermen quit on December 31st. If this were the case, there was no need for any negotiations. If not, the group proposed a reconsideration of the matter and recommended as a possible solution to the problem a temporary increase of janitorial workers for the cold winter months. Since this group represented only area A which was half the project, a special meeting was called with delegates of Section B (Blocks 22-24) the same afternoon. At this meeting 8 additional committee members were elected. The same afternoon these 15 representatives met with the acting project director. (2)

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A full account of this meeting is given in Field Report #256.

(2)

The Project Director was away on leave during this period.

The acting project director who had just resumed duties following an attack of flu was not well grounded in what had gone before and believed that the difficulty was due mainly to misunderstanding concerning hours of work, and he felt that the boilermen did not really understand the situation. At this time the acting project director sent a memorandum to the boilermen indicating that this was his belief and appealed to them to stay on the job until January 4th on their old basis. On January 4th the administration proposed to meet with them and discuss the problem. This appeal was circulated to the boilermen and sanitation crew through their supervisor. Around 8 P.M. that evening the boilermen and sanitation crew met and decided to carry on until January 4th.

It was hoped at this time by the acting Project Director that clarification of the new budget from the Washington office would be received before this meeting and also that the Project Director would be back to meet with the group.

The members of the negotiating committee were invited to attend this meeting. Since each represented $2\frac{1}{2}$ blocks, they felt each block should be represented. To this end on January 3rd, an invitation was sent to the block delegates to attend the January 4th meeting. Unfortunately, the regular block mail service had been disrupted due to a reduction in the mail carriers and these invitations failed to reach the delegates in time. On January 4th, the administration met with the boilermen and janitors from 2:00 P.M. to 3:30 P.M. The workers refused to accept the acting director's explanation that budget limitations forbade hiring any additional men. They also immediately went on record to effect that there was no misunderstanding on their part as to the situation.

The ~~group~~ Superintendent of Maintenance was attacked as ignorant and prejudiced. A great deal of emotion and sentiment was apparent. There was a great deal of applause for all evacuee speakers and little or none for the Administration. (1) The group was determined not to accept anything but a definite answer in their favor from the administration. The administration could not provide this and the meeting dragged on for hours until it had degenerated into an emotional exhibition in which charges of racial prejudice, accusations, etc., were being bandied around. An appeal by the acting Project Director to the men to return to work temporarily on the old basis for another week until a meeting could be held with the Project Director fell on unheeding ears. This appeal was unanimously rejected by the group.

Events following the cessation of janitorial service.

On the morning of January 5th, the residents were without hot water. The administration area firemen, however, reported for work but were warned in no uncertain terms by

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A verbatim account of this meeting is filed in the Documentation Report prepared for the Washington Reports Officer by the Minidoka Reports Officer.

a gang of young men to stop work immediately. This they did. This gang of 25-30 young men reportedly from the Central Services Division then made the rounds of the camp putting out laundry room and latrine stove fires with snow and water. Threats were made that these fires had better remain out.

During this time the administration executive staff was meeting and discussing the problems. It was decided at this meeting to turn the water off in the blocks wherever the threat of blocks could secure a new crew to keep boilers and stoves going. Word then began to come in that those workers whose activities involved hard and dirty labor were refusing to work without assurance of hot water showers. Such groups were the coal crews, the garbage crew, the mechanics. Since a serious coal shortage was threatened at the hospital, special arrangements were made by which the coal crew could obtain showers at the hospital.

The Administration decided to call in the block managers and to ask their assistance in recruiting a new maintenance crew. At a meeting with this group, the block managers reported that recruitment of a new crew was out of the question and suggested a compromise of adding additional men for the winter months. That same evening the meeting was continued with 5 boilermen representatives present. The situation was discussed until 2:00 A.M. without reaching any solution. A suggested plan brought forth by the boilermen foremen and block manager committee by which the boilermen would return to work under the old schedule and take care only of the boilers was accepted by the administration. The boilermen ~~and block~~ then turned around and flatly rejected this proposal. Further the boilermen and block managers present did not feel they were in a position to carry back the administration request that the men go back to work on the old basis.

On the morning of January 6th a delegation of over 75 women representing all blocks stormed the acting Project Director's office demanding hot water. Their demand for hot water, however, was also synonymous with the suggestion that the administration add an extra men to the boilermen and janitor staff. This delegation camped for the entire day in the Project Director's office. Lunch was sent up to them by residents. Late in the afternoon the women drafted a teletype to the National Director requesting hot water.

At the same time in the center the block manager committee was meeting with the block delegates. The boilermen were not in attendance at this meeting. The result of this meeting was the election of 11 men committee from among the block delegates to serve as a Mediation Committee. The Project Director was expected back on January 7th and a meeting of the Mediation Committee was scheduled with the Project Director upon his arrival.

In the meantime while all these meetings and discussions had been going on, the residents were without hot water and heat in laundry rooms and lavatories.

The gang of young men who on the first morning had used force to put fires out, now began to resort to more subtle means. Blocks which kept laundry room and lavatory fires burning were pressured through the suggestion that unless these fires were put out, delivery of food to mess halls would stop. Mess hall chefs who had been supplying hot water to residents were manipulated by the same tactics. By January 7th all utility room fires were out.

Negotiations with the Project Director

The project director returned to the center late on January 7th and immediately met with the Mediation Committee. Agreement was made at this time that all previous negotiations were void and that the Project Director and Mediation Committee were starting from scratch. (1)

The Mediation Committee presented a recommendation to the Project Director asking for the return to the old schedule and the addition of one extra man per block to the janitorial force. This the Project Director said he would submit verbatim to Dillon S. Myer, the National Director. The Project Director upon entering into the dispute took as his premise that the workers' demand for 70 additional men was contingent upon the administration's request for continuous 24 hour service. The Mediation Committee requested that the Project Director ask the boilermen to return to work under the old schedule. The Project Director countered with a memorandum requesting the maintenance workers to inform him what hours of service the present force of 164 people was willing to furnish. The Mediation Committee decided not to carry this message back to the boilermen until an answer had been received from the National Director in regard to their recommendation. Negotiations were suspended until this answer was received.

On Saturday, January 8th, a serious water shortage began to develop in the center. Taps had been left running for several days in the unheated laundry rooms and lavatories to prevent freezing. By late afternoon of January 8th, blocks in the higher elevations of the project were without water.

The Mediation Committee had called together the block delegates on Saturday afternoon to await an answer from Dillon S. Myer and to further discuss the situation. When it became apparent that the water situation was becoming serious, the delegates decided that fires in the laundry room and lavatories must be built. This step had been previously held impossible on the grounds that it was dangerous to the residents to attempt it. Shortage of water and fear of disunity overcame this reluctance. By

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See Field Reprt No. 259 for full account of this meeting.

8:00 O'clock that night almost every block in the project had fires in the laundry rooms and lavatories and before morning the water storage tanks were again full.

The reply from Myer to the committee's recommendation was to the effect that the force of 164 men was considered by the Washington office more than sufficient for adequate operation and that the situation must be settled locally within the WRA regulation of a 44 hour week. (1)

This reply of the National Director was not available to all the members of the Mediation Committee until Sunday afternoon, January 9th, since it did not arrive until late Saturday night after the delegate meeting had disbanded. On Sunday afternoon the Mediation Committee after studying Myer's reply contacted the Project Director and asked him for a clarification of his memorandum of January 7th to the janitorial workers. The Project Director clarified his position in a letter addressed to the Mediation Committee chairman. (2) In this letter, the Project Director again retracted the 24 hour schedule and further indicated that the safeguarding of government property outside of janitorial service hours was recognized as an administration responsibility.

He again asked the janitorial workers for an appraisal of the janitorial hours of service necessary to provide the residents with sufficient hot water.

On Monday morning January 10th the Mediation Committee met with a group of boilermen foremen. By afternoon they had prepared a list of recommendations (3) consisted of (1) retraction of the 24 hour schedule, (2) the setting of a working hour schedule for boilermen and janitors which was substantially the same as before, (3) assurance that all terminations would be cancelled and all original employees returned, and (4) assurance that there would be no reduction in pay resulting from the temporary suspension of work. After the Project Director had accepted and signed this recommendation, several attempts were made by members of the committee to get the Project Director to provide a written statement to the boilermen and janitors relieving them of any responsibility for the care of laundry room and lavatory fires. The committee members claimed that this was a technical point which unless clarified might well "explode" the negotiations.

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- (1) See Appendix A for Myer's reply.
 - (2) See Appendix B and C for memo and letter of clarification.
 - (3) See Appendix D for complete copy of recommendations.

The reply to this was that the administration was supplying fuel, equipment, and necessary funds for adequate service. The problem of caring for the laundry room and lavatory fires was one for the janitorial group and residents to work out. When it became clear that the Administration did not intend to concede on this point, the Mediation Committee and boilermen foremen met with entire boilermen and janitor force who accepted the recommendation and elected to return to work.

Upon reporting this news back to the Project Director, the chairman of the Mediation Committee and the head supervisor of the janitorial workers indicated that it was their understanding that the janitorial workers were to be directly under the supervision of the assistant director in charge of operations rather than the Superintendent of Maintenance. This had been one of the concessions made by the acting project director at one stage of the negotiations. The Project Director at once scotched this by reminding them that all negotiations had started from scratch when he entered into the picture and that his had been fully accepted by the Mediation Committee. ~~the / to / a / close /~~ Formal negotiations between the Administration and the Mediation Committee came to a close late Monday afternoon, January 10th.

Present status of the Janitorial Situation

Fires in the boilers were immediately built following the agreement to return to work and by nine o'clock, Monday night, January 10th, residents of Minidoka center were taking their first hot baths since the preceding Tuesday.

On January 11th, the coal crews, garbage crews, and mechanics who had refused to work without assurance of hot showers were back on the job, and Minidoka seemed to be settling back into its former routine pattern of life.

But while hot water had been secured, the problem of firing the laundry room and lavatory stoves still remained. In most blocks this had been carried on by block volunteers. The administration order which had set forth this duty as a joint responsibility of the boilermen and janitors had been rescinded, and the new schedule of hours said nothing about division of work. Thus, the problem firing the laundry room and lavatory stoves had been ~~the / to / a / close /~~ thrust squarely back upon the block residents and the janitorial crew. The residents now must choose, if they want fire in these stoves during the day, between doing the firing by volunteers or by putting pressure on the janitorial force to do the firing. Already matters of discontent are arising from blocks where the residents have been doing this on a volunteer basis. Residents are now beginning to feel that they have come out the short end of the stick.

The block delegates met on January 12th, and decided that this was a problem that involved safeguarding government property and as such was an administration responsibility. To this end they voted to request the block managers to take this matter up with the administration. In reality, this is in good old American slang--"passing the buck." This step by the delegates is especially amusing in light of the fact that the block delegates had felt slighted because the administration had called upon the block managers for help before contacting the delegates. At present time (1) the situation with regard to the caring for laundry room and lavatory stoves is still unsolved.

Activities of the resident committees involved:

Following the decision of the boilermen and janitorial workers to quit work on December 31st, a resident committee of 15 members called upon the Acting Project Director in the role of a negotiating committee. This committee was elected from a group of residents who had become concerned over the pending boilermen walkout which threatened to cut off the hot water supply of the residents. They were not in a true sense representatives of the block residents since less than 75 residents were involved at the original meeting and in many blocks the residents did not know about this meeting or who was representing them. The Acting Project Director believed at this time (Dec. 31st.) that the situation was the result of misunderstanding regarding the amount of work required of the janitorial force. With this in mind he appealed to the janitors to work until January 4th at which time a meeting was to be held to discuss the matter. (2) The self-appointed negotiating committee was invited to this meeting.

The committee felt that representatives from each block should be present, and to this end, it was suggested that the block delegates, who had been officially elected by the residents, be invited to January 4th' meeting. This was done but due to disruption of mail service on that day, the notices failed to reach them in time.

When the boilermen and janitor group at the January 4th meeting voted against returning to work, direct negotiation with this group was broken down. The Administration's next step was to call in the block managers to consult with them as to whether a new crew could be recruited. Out of this meeting came the idea of presenting to the boilermen the administration's suggestion that they go back to the old schedule of work with block volunteers to care for lavatory and laundry room fires. To this end a committee of block managers was asked to meet with boilermen formen to discuss this proposal. This meeting proved unsuccessful.

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(2) See Davidson memo of Dec. 31---Appendix E.

The tactic of bringing in the block managers did not meet with approval from the block delegates. The block managers are WRA appointees and immediately criticisms arose to the effect that they were cooperating too much with the administration in this matter. On January 7th, the block managers met with block delegates to discuss the situation. Here it was at once evident that the block delegates felt that the block managers were out of line in trying to iron out the affair. At this meeting when a Mediation Committee of 11 men was elected, not a single block manager was represented although several block managers are also block delegates. On this Mediation Committee were represented three or four of the so-called community leaders, that is, those individuals who have come to be regarded by the administration as representing the community.

The Mediation Committee offered themselves to the Administration purely in the role of arbitrators. Their plan was to attempt to work out some concession with the administration and then present it to the boilermen. They proposed that an increase of one extra ~~man~~ man per block be added and gave their justification for such a request. When this proposal was not accepted by the administration, they proposed to wait for an answer from Myer before contacting the boilermen. All the block delegates were summoned by the Mediation Committee on Saturday afternoon to hear a report on developments. A serious water shortage had developed in the meantime. Several blocks in the higher elevations were running out of water and one block had been without water since Saturday morning and had been forced to haul water in containers. It was brought out in this meeting that if this continued, there might be conflict among blocks and unified action would be impossible. The delegates unanimously decided that fires in lavatories and laundry rooms would be started to allow the water supply to be resorted; otherwise, suffering and disunity would result. With adequate water supply, it was felt that the committee could wait for a reply from Washington before preceeding with negotiations. Janitorial representatives were brought to the meeting and sounded out as to their attitude with regard to fires in laundry room and lavatories. They indicated that had no objection to such a proposal.

The Mediation Committee's next move was to meet early ~~on~~ Sunday afternoon, January 9th, to discuss the reply received from Myer regarding their recommendation. They decided to proceed with the Project Director's memorandum of January 7th to the janitorial workers which asked them to inform administration what kind of service they could supply. A clarification of this memorandum was secured and on the next morning the Mediation Committee met with 12 janitorial representatives and presented this memorandum and clarification to them. At this meeting the Mediation Committee informed the janitorial ~~representatives~~ representatives that they were in sympathy with the demands of the janitorial workers and had backed up their demands and would continge to do so.

At this stage the janitorial representatives indicated that care of the laundry room and lavatory stoves must be treated separated and apart from the janitorial services. While no official statement from the Administration could be secured to this effect, the group interpreted the recommendation to return to work as unofficially recognizing this fact. The janitorial group voted unanimously to return to work under this arrangement. The workers also wanted the residents informed that they had never been against the proposition to go back to work on the old schedule.

This officially brought the negotiations to an end. A meeting of the block delegates was called to inform them of the negotiations. At this time the delegates decided that the laundry and lavatory stove problem was an administrative responsibility and as such should be handled by the block managers. Later deliberation on the matter led to a reconsideration of this move. The delegates are at the present time being asked to vote on this proposition again.

Thus with regard to the stove problem the Mediation Committee has found itself in a rather delicate position. The residents have hot water, the boilermen and janitors are back on the job on their old schedule, but the Mediation Committee and delegates have produced no solution to the stove tending problem. If the problem is pushed onto the block managers after the delegates' intimation that negotiation was not a block manager's function, there is bound to be resentment on the part of the block managers. At the present time, then, the problem of stove tending in the laundry rooms and lavatories is hanging fire and will probably have to be settled by each block on an individual basis.

Attitude of the Residents

Most of the residents of Minidoka Center were unaware of the friction which had been developing between the janitorial group and the administration until the block managers began to make announcements in Dinign Halls on December 29th and 30th that starting January 1st, there would be no hot water available due to the resignation of the boilermen. Meetings were held in some sections of the center with various influential members of blocks and the supervisor of boilermen to explain the situation. While the residents in general did not like the prospect of going without hot water, the majority, after listening to the boilermen's explanation felt that the Administration was being "tough" and was unjustified in forcing the boilermen to go on a 24 hour schedule and to do extra work without meeting the boilermen's request for extra help.

Throughout the months since the opening of the center, resentment has been growing among the residents of Minidoka Center toward the local administrative policy which they regard as high-handed and arbitrary. After the drastic July 15 employment cut, this resentment was greatly in-

tensified. Although Washington had indicated that the project quota could be met through a gradual reduction over a three month period, the administration at Minidoka elected to accomplish the cut at one time and did so in less than a two week period. The suddenness of this move plus the fact that the segregation program immediately followed taking the heat of the employment cut, made this accomplishment possible. In the other centers the employment cut as far as the Minidoka residents could see was either cut gradually or not at all. To the Minidokas this was only further proof, that the local administration was high-handed, and was intent on making conditions as hard as possible in order to force them to relocate. The residents have long heard that the evacuees in other centers regard them as without "backbone" and as stooges of the administration. The influx of a large group of Tuleans in September and October of 1943 made this even more evident. Many Tuleans during their first weeks at Minidoka minced no words in describing the Minidokans as "spineless" and "Stooges". Probably a small degree of the more aggressive attitude of the Tuleans has infected Minidokans to a certain extent. In any event there is some expression by the Minidokans that the Tuleans were responsible for the trouble.

The majority of the residents appeared to be standing solidly behind the boilermen. Expressions were heard to the effect that if this latest high-handed order from the administration were docilely obeyed, it would only pave the way for even more drastic curtailment of evacuee employment and mean increased pressure to force people to relocate. Some felt also that the administration was attempting force work on a volunteer basis and that if this succeeded, eventually all work in the center would have to be done voluntarily by the residents.

The Superintendent of Maintenance's undiplomatic handling of the affair was made a target at which many residents directed long pent up resentments towards Caucasians much of which had been stored up since evacuation and assembly center days.

After listening to the boilermen's explanation, the residents were willing to stand behind them to the extent of foregoing hot water. Probably most of the residents believed this would be only for a few days. Further they did not bargain for the turn of events brought about by a gang of young men who began to use force and threats to bring them into line. When this gang secured the stoppage of fires in laundry rooms and lavatories, first by force and then by threats of curtailing food supplies, many residents began to wonder what was up. But even these moves did not at first break their support of the boilermen. Many families with small babies had been up to this time securing hot water from the kitchens. This, however, was also stopped by threats to the mess hall chef. As the days grew colder, the danger of pipes and laundry facilities freezing became ever greater. Those residents who gave

serious thought to the problem knew full well that any serious damage to plumbing facilities probably could not be repaired, and would only mean hardship for the residents themselves. So while no fires were built, they saw to it that taps were left running in the utility buildings to prevent freezing. This procedure initiated by the residents themselves brought on an even more serious situation. The continual running of water all over the project emptied the storage tanks and a serious shortage of water resulted. Blocks 35-44 which are on a higher elevation than the rest of the camp found themselves without water. Up to this time, the residents had refused to build stove fires in the utility buildings. Now they did so.

With the start of the fifth day of the walk-out, there began to be heard expressions from residents that they were the ones who were suffering not the administration and the issue should be settled as soon as possible.

When the issue was finally brought to a conclusion and hot water was again available and everyone had reveled in the luxury of a hot bath, the fact gradually began to be brought home to the residents that the laundry rooms and lavatories were still untended and heat was to be had only when provided on a volunteer resident basis. There is beginning to be heard expression that the settlement came out somewhat of a draw for the Administration and the workers. The workers did not get extra men but they did succeed in getting the Administration to retract the 24 hour schedule and the order merging the janitor and blilermen duties. In the last analysis the residents themselves are the losers for at the present time they are carrying out on a volunteer basis duties which the Administration, both national and local, feel are provided adequately for in the number of janitorial workers assigned to each block.

Residents are now expressing the opinion that the problem is not yet settled. Rather facetiously some are remarking that while they went a week without hot water, the Administration saved tons of coal.

Role of threats and force in the situation

The threats and force that came into play during the first days of the dispute appear to be secondary in nature. There is no evidence that the boilermen and janitors were ~~involved~~ involved in this display of force.

^{at} the bottom of this activity appeared to be a group of 25-30 young men who in some capacity or other are connected with the Central Services Division. This fact cannot be interpreted by any means as indicating that the entire Central Service organization was involved. It is significant, however, that it was within the Central Service organization that the cessation of work in other sections than that of Maintenance began. Taking as their theme, "No hot water,

no work" the coal crew was the first to abandon work. In this they were followed by the Central Service mechanics and the garbage crew. Now all these jobs are arduous and dirty, and it can be strongly argued that working in these categories without hot water shower facilities would be adequate grounds for refusing to work. This can be granted. However, in the equally arduous jobs on the hog farm and poultry farm, the workers did not walk off the job.

It is significant also that it was apparently some of the same Central Service boys, who refused to work because of the lack of hot shower, who then made the rounds of the center putting out fires in utility buildings. This gang, it is reported, toured the center in Central Service trucks.

Actual force of this nature, however, was evident only during the first day of the dispute. Blocks were then pressured through the more subtle method of threatening to curtail the food supply, the delivery of which was controlled by the Central Service truck drivers. This threat plus the fear of physical danger served to keep the stove fires out in the utility buildings and later served to prevent the kitchen crews from supplying hot water to residents from the kitchens.

This type of action was not attributed by the residents to the boilermen most of whom are middle-aged or elderly Issei. But there was no move on the part of the residents to speak out against the group of young men who were exerting force or to take any measures to curb them. The block where an attempt was made to start fires on a volunteer bases gained the name "Eta Mura" (1) from other residents.

A wall of blank inscrutability was met by the administration whenever the subject of the activities of the gang of young men was mentioned.

What, then, is the explanation behind this type of activity? It is evident that the Central Service Division has in its ranks individuals who would like nothing better than to stir up trouble for the administration. There apparently was an organization of some sort behind the group that used force during the first days of the dispute. Just what this consisted of is not known as yet. In one sense, the thinking behind the organization was not of too high a caliber, for it defeated its own purpose. When pressure was used to force the residents into line, the group overstepped itself. The force was applied in such manner that the residents eventually began to reject this pressure.

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The "Eta" class was a pariah group in Japan and while officially caste distinctions are no longer recognized, the "eta" are still largely regarded as outcasts. "Mura" means village and is sometimes used to refer to the block in the center.

Thus, if the thought behind this type of pressure was to make conditions so intolerable to the residents that they would intensify their demands to the Administration, it failed for it boomeranged.

Except for suspicion on the part of certain Administration officials and some of the residents, there is no actual indication that any Tulean group or individuals were directly concerned in the incident. Actual proof of involvement of such individuals at the present time is lacking.

Inu Warnings:

Around this time certain residents began to receive "inu" (1) warnings. These named the receiver, "dog" and warned him to leave the center at once. These notes were written in Japanese characters and decorated with a large red circle which evidently was meant to signify the rising sun of Japan. These were pinned on the doors of the apartments of the recipients.

Officially it is known that three evacuees received such notes although it is rumored in the center that other individuals have also received them. Of the three notes reported, only one was directed at an individual who was playing any direct part in the dispute. This was the evacuee placement officer who had followed (against his expressed desire) the administration order to attempt to recruit labor for a new janitorial crew. The other warnings were received by a warehouseman who has no known part in the dispute, and by the ex-secretary of the Consumers Co-op who is no longer on the project having relocated some weeks ago. This ex-secretary was an active JACL leader in pre-evacuation days and it was probably for this reason that he was singled out. (2) Even though he is no longer in the center his family remains and the opprobrium of "inu" would fall on them. This same procedure of sending an "inu" warning to an individual even though he is no longer a resident has been observed at least in one other center.

There is indication that all these warnings came from the same source. In addition, the recipients are localized on one side of the camp. The Internal Security is of the opinion that these notes were the work of a crank who capitalized on the incident to vent his spleen on individuals he disliked. This belief is also shared by some of the residents.

(1)

The term "inu" means dog in Japanese and is used as a derogatory expression.

(2)

The JACL immediately preceding evacuation and during assembly center days became the object of suspicion on the part of many Japanese, especially Issei. Many of the JACL leaders were tagged as "inu".

Regardless of the source, the warnings did serve to focus resident attention on the recipients. The evacuee placement officer, for example, felt obliged to resign from his position not because of fear but as he stated, "I don't want to be misunderstood by my people." Even though this resignation was immediately rescinded, it served to put on record the fact that his action in attempting to recruit new members was not of his own volition.

The use of anonymous threats branding individuals as "Inu" seems to have become an accepted pattern in all the centers where trouble has been experienced. The instigators of such threats are probably Kibei or Issei since most Nisei individuals would not have sufficient command of written Japanese use it with ease.

The term "inu" is used in Japan for spy and its use here among the evacuees appears to have started during pre-evacuation days when JACL members and other Japanese who were regarded as giving information to the FBI about members of the Japanese community began to be tagged as "Inu". It is now used in the centers to tag not only individuals who are regarded as informers but also those who are accused of being pro-administration.

Analysis of administration role in the situation:

While the basic, underlying factors which have long been preparing the way for such an incident were beyond the immediate control of the administrative officials involved, they must shoulder a large share of the responsibility for the boilermen flareup. This dispute was no sudden, unexpected development for it had been hanging fire for almost two months. Although the administrative officials concerned in this affair were aware of the situation, they were evidently lulled into false security by the fact that Minidokans had always in the past accepted comparable situations without demonstration and would do so again.

Further, the handling of the problem made little or no attempt to deal with Issei psychology. In November the blunt, undiplomatic tactics used had been strikingly turned down by the boilermen group. Yet the same tactics were again used in December. The importance of understanding Japanese psychology in handling problems of this nature cannot be overestimated. Incidents such as the one just experienced at Minidoka demonstrate this very clearly. The experiences of evacuation, of assembly center life, of relocation center life, have had tremendous effects on the evacuees. It should be recognized that procedures and tactics ordinarily used may not succeed in the surroundings of a relocation center. It is important to realize that as relocation progresses, it will become more and more difficult to deal with the remaining population. The project director at Minidoka

has often expressed this idea by pointing out that as the more stable individuals relocate, the remaining population will become gradually more and more a temperamental group and must be handled as such. This will entail spending a great deal of time over matters which may seem trivial and unimportant to the administrator but may have deep emotional significance for the evacuee resident.

The administrative handling of the affair during the first few days was unfortunate in that the administration lost "face" with the boilermen group by the vacillating course it steered. As a result, a deadlock resulted which was broken only when the project director who was away on leave returned to the scene.

The fact that the project director was forced to step in and was obliged to cancel out all previous negotiations, reinforced the pattern, already well entrenched, of evacuee acceptance of final decisions only from what they consider the final authority. This pattern is observed continually in everyday project occurrences. It was demonstrated strikingly during the negotiations of the boilermen incident. Here the pattern was carried a step farther than usual. Whereas ordinarily the project director is considered the final authority, in this case only when word came direct from the national director did the residents give up hope of concession on part of the administration.

Summary

The affair, however must not be regarded only as an isolated flareup concerning the boilermen. It has its roots deep in the history of the project and probably back to evacuation and assembly center days. Since these days, life in Minidoka has gone along on a relatively smooth, even keel. But in the year and half of operation of the center, a great deal of resentment has been built up towards the local administration. This is a development that is to be expected under the circumstances of relocation center life. Certain policies of the administration have been interpreted by the residents as high-handed and even harsh. Among certain individuals and groups, this resentment has steadily grown. The boilermen incident was thus a golden opportunity for such individuals and groups to express themselves. They seized upon it and attempted to manipulate it for their own ends. It should be recognized, then, that basically this flareup was the result of the accumulation of a long series of grievances, both real and imaginary, on the part of the residents.

An explosion of this type would have come sooner or later. It happened at this time to be expressed in the form of the boilermen dispute. Inasmuch as the incident afforded an opportunity to let off the steam of long pent up emotion, it served a purpose in releasing tension. But while on the one hand, this might be true, on the other hand, it stirred up

anxieties, reinforced fears and built up new resentment. These facts should be considered carefully by the Administration in its future dealings with the residents.

Appendix A

Copy of Teletype Message received at Hunt 7:50 P.M.
Jan. 8, 1944

Appendix B

Memo to Janitorial Service Workers from Mr. Stafford
January 7, 1944

Appendix C

Letter from Mr. Stafford to Mr. Hatate and Supervisors
and Maintenance Employees clarifying his letter of
January 7, 1944

Appendix D

- Suggested recommendations from the Block Delegates
Mediation Committee to Mr. Stafford.

Appendix E

Chronology of Events Connected with Boilermen's Situation

1943

July 15

Residential blocks' janitorial staffs reduced from 11 to 4 as overall project employment was cut to conform with quota set by Washington office.

Nov. 8

Glenn R. Green, Superintendent of Construction and Maintenance, sent memorandum instructing boilermen it is part of their job to build all fires in laundry rooms, lavatories and boilers, and janitors to keep the laundry room and lavatory room fires going. "Failure to comply will mean dismissal."

Nov. 9

~~Green met~~

R. Sawaji and K. Hara, boilermen foremen, sent telegram to Harry Hatate, boilermen supervisor absent on personal business trip to Pocatello: "Emergency case arose. Come back immediately."

Nov. 19

Green met with janitorial service foremen in unsuccessful attempt to arrange 24-hour schedule.

Representatives of janitorial service workers, presented a petition to H. L. Stafford, Project Director, stating "To promote efficiency, to maintain residents' health and sanitation, and as necessary precaution against fire, we hereby request your reconsideration of Mr. Green's order and consent to and instruct the hiring of two additional fire tenders to each block."

Nov. 20

Project Director and other staff members met with representatives of janitorial service workers and met several hours discussed the situation without reaching agreement. After this meeting ended at 2:00 P.M., janitorial service workers met and about 5:00 P.M. advised Project Director that they could not rearrange their work schedule to 24-hour basis unless two additional firemen were assigned to each block. Project Director replied that increase of workers was not possible under quota and budget limitations.

Dec. 28

Green sent memorandum to Hatate setting forth 24-hour schedule to begin January 1 for boilermen and janitors and changing title of all sanitation workers to janitor. Green asked immediate reply "listing the names of persons who are willing to comply and those who are not" by eleven o'clock Wednesday, December 29, 1943.

Dec. 29

At special meeting of all janitorial service workers to consider Green's memorandum of Dec. 28, only three janitresses of entire staff of 166 were willing to work on new schedule.

Dec. 30

Hatate sent memorandum to Green advising him of results of meeting of December 29.

Dec. 31

About 15 representatives of the community called on R.S. Davidson, acting project Director, in effort to avert stoppage of hot water on January 1, New Years Day Holiday. Davidson sent memorandum to the janitors asking them to continue on present basis until Tuesday, January 4, when he would meet with them.

1944

Jan. 3

Davidson sent memorandum to block delegates inviting block representatives to the January 4 meeting. (Due to interruption in regular mail delivery service caused by meeting of mail carriers regarding reduction in their staff, Davidson's memorandum to block delegates was not delivered until late January 4.)

Jan. 4

Davidson and other staff members met with 150 janitors and a few block representatives from 2:00 PM to 7:30 PM. Janitors request two more men in each block, Green's resignation. Davidson's request that janitors continue on present basis until January 11 when they would meet with Stafford was unanimously rejected by Janitors and boilermen.

Jan. 5

Residents found lukewarm water in morning as boiler fires die out. Survey at 9:00 A.M. found all boiler fires out and all but one or two boiler room doors padlocked with locks not property of WRA. Boilermen in administration area were told by group of about 25 young men to get off their job. A gang of young men was reported going through the camp throwing snow into heating stoves in laundry and shower rooms when they found such stoves in operation. Youths were seen throwing snow into the boiler room of staff dormitory. Executive staff met and decided to have water turned off where there was danger from freezing and to meet with block managers to ask their assistance in recruiting new janitorial crew. Staff met with block managers in afternoon. Block managers reported new crew or volunteers to fire boilers was out of the question. 18 evacuees including block managers, representatives, and boilermen foremen met with staff in evening and discussed situation until 2:00 A.M. without reaching agreement. Evacuees decline to take back to boilermen Davidson's suggestion that they return to work on the old basis.

Jan. 6

Seventy-five women residents from all blocks called on Davison and demanded hot water. They sat in Project Director's office from 10:30 to 5:00 P.M. Received sandwiches and tea from sympathetic blocks at noon. Davidson sent women's teletype to Director D. S. Myer, Washington and the delegation went home.

Block managers and block delegates met and committee of 11 block delegates was elected to offer services to administration as Mediation Committee.

Jan. 7

Mediation Committee met at 8:00 P.M. with Stafford upon his return to project. Stafford on the basis that an all-night shift is not a part of the janitorial service if it is not necessary to provide hot water, wrote memorandum to janitorial service workers requesting them to suggest the hours of service the present force of 164 workers was willing to furnish. Mediation Committee declined to carry Stafford's memorandum to janitors until the committee had sent a recommendation for additional workers to Myer and had received his reply.

Jan. 8

Mediation Committee's recommendation for one more janitor in each block is teletyped to Myer. Myer replied that additional workers not justified and that conditions resulting in stoppage of hot water must be worked out at the project level by volunteering or with present crew within WRA regulations requiring 24-hour work week. Water storage exhausted by running of water in laundry rooms and lavatories to prevent freezing. Blocks at higher elevations ran low on water. Survey late in day found heating stoves in laundry and lavatories going in all but two blocks.

Jan. 9

Mediation Committee met with Stafford. Stafford wrote letter to Y. Funii, Mediation Committee Chairman, clarifying Stafford's memorandum of January 7 to the janitors by stating that the safeguarding of government property beyond the period of operation necessary to maintain hot water is not a janitorial service function and is recognized as an administration responsibility to be treated separately. He repeated that the administration wanted the janitors to state the basis on which they can provide the residents with sufficient hot water.

Jan. 10

Mediation Committee met with boilermen foremen and then with all boilermen and janitors to consider Stafford's letter. A memorandum to Stafford from the Mediation Committee was worked out and presented. Stafford accepted it.

Suggested recommendations:

1. Retraction of the twenty -four hour schedule.
2. The working hour schedule for boilermen:
Daily schedule:
From 6:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
From 4:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Sunday schedule
From 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
From 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
3. The working hour schedule for janitorial service:
From 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
4. All termination resulting from the temporary suspension ~~of~~ will be cancelled and all original employees to be returned.
5. All persons returning to work shall suffer no reduction in pay resulting from the temporary suspension of work.

All boilermen and janitors were called into meeting and within an hour, Fujii, Hatate and Floyd Tokuda, a member of the committee reported to Stafford that the men were going back to work.

Appendix F

MINIDOKA WAR RELOCATION PROJECT
Hunt, Idaho

December 31, 1943

TO: All Boilermen and Janitors in All Residential Blocks
FROM: R. S. Davidson, Acting Project Director

I understand there has been some misunderstanding regarding the amount of work required of you and some of you have requested that your termination be effective as of December 31.

I wish to have a meeting of all boilermen and janitors with their foremen in Recreation Hall 22 on Tuesday, January 4, at 2 P.M.

Until the whole matter can be discussed in this meeting, I am appealing to you to stay on the job and keep the fires going to provide hot water for the people in this camp. I am sure you will cooperate with the residents in your block over New Years and until we can get together and talk this matter over.

R. S. Davidson
Acting Project Director