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GRANADA COMMUNITY ANALYSIS REPORT NO. 1

(13)

May 30, 1943

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Japanese Relocation Papers
Bancroft Library

The Community Analysis Section was set up at Granada on May 20, 1943. The Community Analyst has participated in the work of the Juvenile Delinquency Committee, the Public Affairs Committee, has engaged a staff of five workers, and has submitted two formal Memoranda on administrative problems currently urgent. In general he has tried to make his function one of interpretation--interpretation of needs, attitudes, and habits of thought and action of evacuees to appointed staff and to other evacuees, and of appointed staff to evacuees. He has established rapport with several large and important factions among the evacuees, including both issei and nisei, and predominantly masculine and predominantly feminine groups. He has become acquainted with the operation of the machinery of administration and government, has observed the process involved, from top to bottom and back again, and has been able to observe several instances of the operation of this machinery. He has been able to observe a little of the "home life" of the evacuees and of the appointed personnel, and has attended a few of the after-hours functions of the Center.

On the basis of the observations made to date, a brief summary statement of the situation in general may be made. The evacuees and the appointive staff are in general working together pretty well. They realize that the other fellow is not perfect, that he makes mistakes, but ordinarily both are inclined to feel tolerant of such lapses from perfection. From time to time exceptions occur, and acrimonious feelings arise in some group, but they seldom persist for long.

Language and other cultural differences make probable a great deal of misunderstanding and confusion. While instances of this type occur frequently, yet the spirit of cooperation present, on the part of both the Japanese and the Caucasians in the Center, has been consistently great enough to make possible effective and remarkably successful collaboration in the accomplishment of a difficult task under critical conditions of strain and urgency. As in any situation, there is room for improvement, and constant efforts must be made to maintain that spirit and practice of cooperation and to avoid misunderstandings and misconstruction of behavior. Yet smooth and effective running of the Center, the successful collaboration inspite of the fact that the original appointed personnel had never had any experience with Japanese-Americans before reaching the Center, and that only four of the present staff have ever had any such experience, speaks emphatically and unmistakably of the ability of the evacuees to get along well with Americans previously unacquainted with Japanese, and of their understanding of American life and a capacity to fit into it under even the most adverse conditions

Effective cooperation with the Reports Division, especially the Documentation Section, with the Public Welfare Section, with the Hospital, and with the Employment and Placement Division have been established. A questionnaire on evacuee attitudes toward relocation was carefully formulated, adjusted to supplement a schedule which the Employment Division was ready to launch, circu-

lated, and returns of over 67% secured. About three-fourths of the filled and returned questionnaires have been tabulated, and tabulation of the others is proceeding rapidly and efficiently. They should give rather clear insight into the psychological factors which hinder the relocation program. From the replies already tabulated, and from interviews and other sources of information, it would appear that several basic problems in regard to evacuee attitudes will have to be met in the near future.

(1) Most of the evacuees--especially the older ones--are going to be a long time in getting over the shock of the evacuation processes. The effects as reflected in their present attitudes vary from (1) complete defeat and resulting apathy through (2) covert hostility, resentment in varying degree and forms mixed with an effort to make the best of a bad situation, to (3) an intelligent recognition of the facts of the situation and an effort to re-adjust to the situation now facing them. The number of the first is relatively large, particularly in the older age groups. The number of those whose behavior is dominated by resentment and hostility is very small, but the feeling is present in practically every issei and almost every nisei. The number of those trying to make an intelligent adjustment to the present situation is relatively large, but their lack of resources, information, and ability to cope with the problems to be met make their efforts less effective and less prominent than some of the other types of activity. A later report based on the tabulations of the questionnaires will deal with these

attitudes in particular. It is important, however, that certain aspects of the situation be considered now and some strategy be worked out for meeting them.

(a) Among group 1, the prevailing attitude is "The government put us in here and it is up to the government to take care of us. We were robbed of our life's savings, and our plans for our old age and the future were completely wrecked by the government. If this was necessary for the good of the country, all right. But then the country as a whole should bear the burden, and not ask us to carry it alone. We are too old and worn out to start over. The government should provide for us, or at least compensate us for our losses." A specific result of this sort of attitude is seen when the administration tries to recruit workers for the farm, or to do other work on the project, or to hustle out and get relocated. When attempts are made to point out the responsibility of each person and family to care for itself and its own needs, and the point is made that those who do not work don't deserve the food, warmth, etc., which can only be provided by evacuee labor, they reply: "The government put us in here and it's up to the government to take care of us. The men in San Quentin are always fed and clothed and kept warm, despite their crimes. We have done no crime. How then can the government evade its responsibility for caring for us? We are worn out and cannot work hard anymore--we cannot go out and start over. We will wait till the war is over and go back to California where we have friends and know how to do the work that we can get to do."

This attitude may be based upon facts concerning the possibility of returning to California, for a limited number of Japanese at least, but it is a question which needs investigation and scientific determination whether the great majority will be re-accepted peaceably. If not, this attitude must be changed. If yes, then the WRA program should take this into account, and provide for such a return, and for much greater development of food production and production of all sorts of consumer goods made scarce or difficult to obtain by the war, until that time arrives. The Japanese Americans regard the opposition in California as "newspaper talk," which their former friends, neighbors, and business contacts will not share at the end of the war. Is this true, or not?

(b) Group 2 indulge in many rationalizations, which are needed to make their behavior appear reasonable to themselves and to others. They share the feeling stated above, at times, but this differs in intensity from time to time and situation to situation. The very small number whose behavior is dominated by hostile feelings manifest it very intensely, and constantly, but the great majority of those who still feel resentment have this feeling less intensively, and as time goes on it decreases in intensity, except where it is stimulated by untoward incidents. Its influence can be overcome in specific instances, and this has occurred in an encouraging number of cases. The dominant attitudinal factor in the case of the majority of those who are still resentful is not this feeling as much as it is that they have made their sacrifices and that they should be permitted to sit back and make the best of a bad situation

until the war ends, and let the other Americans do the rest. This sometimes extends to the point of feeling that the other Americans (particularly WRA) should do the work of caring for their needs, and at this point it holds up the farm program, the work program in general, and encourages "shopping around" for the easiest jobs on the project when they feel that they have to work, and soldiering on the job. Many nisei who resent the infringement of their citizenship rights express themselves in this fashion.

Treatment of these attitudes is imperative in order that more healthful, cooperative mental sets be created before these persons resume their place in American life. One way of doing that is to give them a picture of present-day American life and the sacrifices it involves. Movies are particularly effective means of communicating such information. Another is to send out some evacuees to look over the ground, for several weeks if possible, and to encourage or provide for visits of successful relocators, and give them the best possible facilities for telling of their experiences and giving information to center residents. All of these techniques are already in operation. They need support and intensification by all persons who can aid in their use. Their chief lack is information, and that should be systematically and liberally supplied through effective channels. The recent establishment of a Relocation Library (and its continued growth and use) is a step which will help fill this need. So are the high school and adult education classes in

social orientation. The Employment Division tries to supply information of this sort, and spends much time advising individual relocators. Further systematization and intensification of such efforts is necessary, according to resident and both successful and unsuccessful relocators who have returned to the Center during the last two months. This group realize the need for relocating now, for carrying the responsibilities of work on the project, and work conscientiously at both. For them, the chief difficulties are family restraints, need to exercise discretion and judgment in considering and selecting jobs and lack of detailed information concerning possible openings in specific lines, and an exaggerated idea of wages and working and living conditions outside the Center. Adequate information will clear up their problems practically completely. Some time for finding the right jobs is necessary, but on the whole the only attitudinal work that seems necessary is to encourage them to make the break when the right time--or say favorable time and job opportunity--come along. In connection with this, adequate information of typical wage scales and living conditions outside the Center seems necessary to deflate some of the ideas of what an acceptable job is, but adequate information on wages, living costs, working and living conditions will clear up most of this difficulty. This group is usually the most thoroughly Americanized of the population, though some poorly assimilated families have these attitudes none the less.

(2) One of the most conspicuous aspects of administration of

the Center concerns a vital function of the community--communication. In the perspective of the impartial observer of the community and its functions, there seems to be an encouraging degree of efficiency, cooperation, and rapport.

There are, however, a number of instances of misunderstanding, lack of cooperation, and differences of judgment between the administrative staff and the general community of evacuees.

Probably the greatest step in clearing up this difficulty will be the decided improvement of the entire system of communication within the community. The Community Analyst reports it as his definite conviction that a great many of the difficulties involved are traceable in part to this source. To anyone who has worked with the Japanese Americans, it is well known that when they don't want to do a thing, they frequently feign ignorance or misunderstanding, and that is done in this Center in some instances, as a matter of course. However, one who is experienced in working with the Japanese Americans--particularly if one knows something of the language--can distinguish between this type of polite "stalling," and actual misunderstandings and lack of comprehension and information. The latter are much more frequent and wide-spread than necessary and interfere greatly with effective cooperation.

The Community Analyst has given particular attention to the processes whereby information and misinformation are disseminated among the residents of the Center. There are several channels of information. The official channel is through a written instruction,

copies of which are given to either all or selected members of the appointed personnel. Infrequently written copies are also given to the block managers and Council members. Usually they are not supplied to evacuee members of the staff. They are ordinarily read to evacuee staff members, and sometimes posted thereafter. Police regulations are posted on the police bulletin board in each mess hall, but other communications are seldom posted where the general public can read them at their leisure. This system could be improved by systematic reading and posting of all information of general concern, and of some specific information which affects community attitudes to a noticeable degree. Where possible, written copies should be provided the evacuee staff members, particularly in regard to important announcements or instructions which are basic to their work or their understanding of the part they play in the general program. Another improvement badly needed is the posting of Japanese language translations of such announcements. Usually information of this sort is read aloud in the mess halls by the block managers during mealtimes. Such announcements are seldom listened to in entirety or with the necessary attention to create an accurate impression or understanding on the part of the residents. Clatter of dishes, conversation by many small groups of diners, shuffling of feet, all combine to render a large part of what is said unintelligible. An effective public address system or strictly-local radio station would be of great assistance here. One good feature of the block managers' announcements is that they are usually given both in English and in Japanese. This should be continued through a public address system. The block information

offices also help to inform inquirers of facts at their disposal--usually fairly efficiently--but too few people ask their block information office and too many ask their neighbors and friends, who are usually as uninformed as are the inquirers. Publication in the center newspaper, the Pioneer, is frequently made use of, and is a most valuable means of spreading information. Very severe limitations of space, lack of agreement of sources, and other handicaps make the amount of information diffusible through this method limited in both quantity and adequacy. Many people do not read the newspaper carefully because of these conditions of inadequacy and for other reasons. This might be overcome by expanding the size of the newspaper, while continuing the Japanese language section as at present, and by greater care to discuss adequately and promptly the news of importance to the welfare of the Center residents. The schools frequently function as disseminators of news, but with the handicap of staffs terrifically overworked and undermanned, without adequate equipment, it is futile to expect them to take up the slack in the communication system, particularly since they reach only the younger age groups. Other informal sources are found to disseminate rumor as much as fact. Adequately led discussion groups and evening lectures, already planned by the Adult Education Section, should help to fill the need considerably, if well executed. To summarize, then, regular and systematic means of making available to the people in written form, both in English and the Japanese language, all important information; a public address system or local radio system, a larger and better newspaper, larger staffs and better equipment for the schools and for the adult

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education section especially, and a systematic means of finding and spiking rumors as they arise, would be of invaluable assistance in administering the center. It is too easy for a responsible administrator to tell a few key people about something important, and then to assume that all the Center residents know what he has said or shown these few individuals. Careful field checks on three items of great importance reveal that information simply does not percolate freely and effectively through the population. (The three items were, the new "20%" tax on income, the farm program and need for more workers, and news concerning working and living conditions in areas of project relocation. Certain information does spread rapidly--the kind that fits in with or adds fuel to already existing thought patterns or which has a particular and very evident promise of personal benefit to the majority of residents or to certain organized groups of them. However, to suppose that because some information spreads rapidly that all of it does, it about as valid as to suppose that a small boy will master his lesson in algebra and American history with great facility and speed because he always knows about and tries to profit by the occasion of any store within four miles which is giving away free ice cream cones or candy. Many years of work lie behind the expert devices employed in getting him to understand and master the algebra and history--no formal or organized effort is necessary to inform him about the free ice cream. Similarly information on some subjects gets about the Center rapidly, while a great deal of hard work and thought is necessary to secure community-wide knowledge and understanding of other topics.) Improvement in this field is vital to

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the success of the relocation and also to successful, economical, and easy administration of the Center. For instance, some way of getting successful relocators' experience as well and as favorably known as the garbled and exaggerated accounts now current concerning those who fail and return to the center is imperative right now to the relocation program here.

Although the secondary techniques of communication to the people as a whole are important, the other aspect of communication, the convincing of the community leaders by personal, individual contact of the justice and desirability of certain policies--must not be overlooked. In some cases this is the only dependable way to get a program across. In some cases only personal conversation of considerable length, detail, and thoroughness, so that both evacuee and administrative appointed staff members can express their views and bring out their difficulties and doubts fully and become convinced of the validity and wisdom of a certain course of action, is effective. In this process, appointed personnel members have to think through, meet, and satisfy the needs of the evacuees as well as of the administration, and the evacuees have to recognize the problems of the administration and think them through to solution. In this way potential obstacles can be smoothed out, reduced, or eliminated. Misunderstandings can be cleared up, and the deep conviction that comes of complete understanding can be enabled to supply the whole-hearted support and energetic activity which are so often conspicuous by their absence. This, as well as every other possible technique of communication is needed, and should be employed, to do the job successfully and effectively.

Efforts have been made to make use of many of the techniques described and suggested. Some have been successful and are in operation; others

need to be perfected and retried; still others need to be developed and put into use. All are needed to accomplish the desired result, and more attention and energy should be given to working out satisfactory techniques to achieve success in this field.

These observations, then, point to needs which are related; misunderstanding can be allayed by knowledge and experience; improvement of the communications system will do much to provide knowledge and personal contact sufficiently adequate to form a basis for better understanding and execution of the relocation program and of administration within the Center.

Incidentally, a matter of extremely great importance to the relocation program is revealed by the experiences of the evacuees who do come back. Interviews with these persons reveal a great need for more personalized treatment of evacuees on leave than regional WRA offices are now giving them. The evacuees feel secure, in a limited fashion, but secure, in the Center. When they relocate, they expect that they can transfer their reliance in time of need--their feeling of ultimate resource to maintain their feeling of security--to the regional office of the WRA. Instead they are treated in a highly impersonal manner--such as though they were told, "Well, we'll help you, but really you're on your own and we're not particularly interested in you." Personal and family counseling and vocational guidance as well as employment services must be furnished by the WRA regional offices if that feeling of security in having a reliable resource to fall back on

in time of need is to be transferred from the Center to the relocating area field office. Relocators need to have such a feeling of reliance. If the field offices cannot give it, relocators must be given detailed instructions concerning other social agencies which will. Most Japanese Americans are entirely unfamiliar with such agencies, their operations, never having made use of them before evacuation. They need even more detailed and specific instructions than the present conscientious efforts of the leave and employment offices give. When they are disillusioned, and find no such resource, they frequently return to the Center to find it. (A few have found such a service in the American Friends' Committee work, and have been greatly helped by it so they have stayed out.) A few dollars spent for personal counseling service and followup work in the field would save many returns, such disappointment, and would help keep the relocation program going forward. Several of the social workers now being trained in the centers appreciate this need and could do the work very well if given the opportunity. Follow-up work to check on the activities of and encourage relocators over the rough spots would also keep many persons in their new places and help them make a permanent adjustment.

A very important part of this process can be carried out in the Center before persons who are relocating leave. Consultation with several persons who have returned, several who considered job offers, and several others who were critical of persons or policies involved in relocating, leads to the conclusion that the great majority of

relocating persons are not adequately informed nor educated in several very important aspects. Within the Center, table manners, habits of speech, habits of dress, manner of addressing persons, attitudes toward other persons, toward work, toward living conditions, toward dress, toward many things, have changed for the worse, or have lost step with changes outside. A returned student who is leaving again within two months put it this way: "I saw all the girls in the town in which I was going to school working, going without things, buying war bonds, sending their boy friends, husbands, and brothers to fight (so much that there were few young men left in the whole town), and I know what they are going through. I can't sit back in the face of their sincere effort to fight for the American way of life, and assume that I have no responsibility, that I can side-step all sacrifice, or sit quietly in the security of an easy job and let them do the hard work of trying to preserve my right to equality and freedom. I've got to do as much as they, or I won't deserve those privileges, and I'm going to do all I can." This statement indicates how much changes in perspective results from real contact with people living outside the Center. Preparation for those things which will be expected of the evacuees when they go out will smooth over many an obstacle, eliminate many a useless handicap for them, and give them a really good start in learning the intricacies of living in a new community in a nation at war. A relocation committee has been appointed which is in a position to create such a course of educa-

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tional preparation for evacuees about to leave the Center. It is now organized as a part of the Public Affairs Committee, and should be able to coordinate and reinforce efforts to prepare evacuees for relocation, as well as to treat other aspects of relocation .

On the whole, it may be noted that both evacuees and appointed personnel are working seriously and determinedly on the problem of relocation. There is promise of increasing achievement in effecting this objective.

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For Community Analysis
Report no. 2

see

National Archives Microfilm
Reel 44, Folder 10