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FINAL REPORTS

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH

CLOSING REPORT

CENTRAL UTAH RELOCATION CENTER

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JANUARY, 1946

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Partial Service

P R E F A C E

This volume constitutes the closing report of the War Relocation Authority's Central Utah Project, Topaz, Utah.

It is composed of final reports written by division, section and unit heads in the liquidation period to provide a record of the handling of many unique problems which may prove valuable to future government agencies faced with similar problems.

The reports were compiled along organizational lines, as indicated by the general table of contents. Each of the longer reports has its own table of contents.

In addition, an index was prepared of significant problems, criticisms, recommendations and other subjects which should prove of particular interest and value to future administrators of related programs. Because of the volume's bulk, this index has been placed at the front instead of back.

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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH

PROJECT DIRECTOR'S CLOSING REPORT

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH

SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS AND PROBLEMS DURING
TERM OF FIRST PROJECT DIRECTOR, CHARLES F. ERNST

A DESERT TOWN IS BORN

The Central Utah relocation center was constructed late in the summer of 1942 by army engineers to house 10,000 of the 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry being evacuated from the Pacific Coast region.

Located in West Millard county at an elevation of 4,561 feet, the project covered 19,000 acres. Most of the land bordered the Sevier desert. The townsite, named Topaz after a nearby mountain dotted with Topaz crystals, was in the alkali, greasewood covered desert, 16 miles from the railhead town of Delta.

The town covered a mile square area and was surrounded by a barbed wire fence and guard towers. It was divided into areas for evacuee residents, administrative personnel and military police. The evacuee area consisted of 42 blocks--mostly residential blocks with 12 barracks, a central dining hall, a recreation hall and a latrine-laundry building in each. The administration area was just inside the main gate and was made up of one-story office buildings, barracks apartments and dormitories with modern conveniences. The Military Police barracks occupied one corner of the square behind a barbed wire fence.

The administrative staff opened temporary offices in Delta early in September pending completion of administration buildings at the project. A detachment of 98 military police arrived Sept. 8, and the first evacuees three days later.

FIRST EVACUEES ARRIVE

This initial evacuee group consisted of 214 volunteer workers from the Tanforan Assembly center, San Bruno, Calif. Charles F. Ernst, project director, and his staff met them at the railroad station, escorted them to Topaz and assigned them to hospital, kitchen

and transportation crews. A block laundry building was turned into a temporary hospital within a few hours, and other essential community services were functioning within several days.

The second trainload of evacuees, numbering 502 persons, literally blew in Sept. 17 during a blinding dust storm. Nevertheless, they were welcomed by an evacuee band. Thereafter trainloads of evacuees arrived every few days until mid-October when the Topaz population neared 8,000.

There were many problems in those early days besides choking dust and gum-like mud. These were mostly in construction, housing and supply. Evacuees often had to occupy barracks before the roofs had been water-proofed or secondary sheetrock walls and ceilings installed. It often was necessary to temporarily assign two couples, large families or a group of bachelors to one room. Lack of adequate housing made it difficult to keep Caucasian personnel. Open ditches for water mains separated every block, constituting physical hazards. There were shortages of mattresses, bedding, stoves, coal and school supplies.

WORK FURLONGHS

In response to appeals of state officials and farmers for evacuee workers to ease the wartime agricultural labor shortage, able-bodied residents began leaving the center on work furloughs. Utah's Governor Herbert B. Maw proposed early in September that evacuees be conscripted into the army and assigned to farm work at military salaries. However, the Project Director made it clear at a conference with state and federal officials in Salt Lake City that WRA policy would not permit this.

Late in September three U. S. Employment Service officials visited Topaz and set in motion a plan whereby evacuee residents would be offered regular employment outside the center through the U. S. E. S. in cooperation with the project employment division. They were followed by recruiting agents for sugar beet companies. Hundreds of workers went out on short-term or seasonal leave to work on farms and orchards in Utah, Idaho and Oregon. The number engaged in agricultural work, including the project farm, reached a peak of 530 Nov. 1. Community reception outside was generally favorable.

RELOCATION

Following a conference of WRA heads in Salt Lake City Nov. 21, permanent relocation was adopted as the agency's chief policy. Students soon began going out to enroll in midwestern universities, but the first indefinite leave for outside employment was granted early in December. At the end of 1942 nearly 500 relocation applications had been made by residents but only 16 indefinite leaves and 17 educational leaves had been granted.

SELF GOVERNMENT

Meanwhile, a democratic form of self-government had been set up. Residents of each block elected a representative to serve on a Community Council empowered to pass legislation which did not conflict with WRA policy. Accomplishments of the provisional Council included drafting a constitution, appointing a judicial commission and naming the city's streets.

A Block Managers organization also was evolved as a service group to look after the physical needs of the residents. Both bodies made recommendations to the project administration.

A cooperative was organized to meet consumer needs of the residents. Its services included a canteen, dry goods store, fish market, bank, radio and repair shop, photo studio, barber shops and a movie theater.

A ministerial association also was created to develop a unified religious program.

STATE OFFICIALS VISIT TOPAZ

Two politically important events occurred in 1943. Governor Maw visited Topaz and presided at induction ceremonies for new Councilmen. Impressed by the pioneering spirit of the residents, he reversed his previous stand against the settling of evacuees in the state and subsequently vetoed a bill that would have prohibited aliens ineligible for citizenship from owning, leasing or cultivating Utah farms, contending that it would prevent evacuees from helping the state's agricultural program. A state senate investigating committee, which also visited Topaz, branded as unfounded charges of certain agricultural groups that the residents were being given preferential treatment.

REGISTRATION

The populace was stirred to unprecedented emotional levels over the army's loyalty registration program launched in February, 1943.

Issei residents objected to question 26 reading: "Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese Emperor to other foreign government, power, or organization?" They felt that since this country had denied them citizenship they would, by forswearing allegiance to Japan, be people without a country and without a protecting power. Registration was postponed while the Project Director took this up with Washington authorities. The wording of the question then was changed to read: "Will you swear to abide by the laws of the United States and take no action which would in anyway interfere with the war effort of the United States?"

Nisei and Kibei were concerned with question 27: "Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the U. S. on combat duty, wherever ordered?" The majority of these American-born citizens felt that they should not register until their civil rights, lost through evacuation, were restored. This principle was embodied in a resolution dispatched to the Secretary of War. The war department replied: "It is only by mutual confidence and cooperation that the loyal Japanese-Americans can be restored to their civil rights. The present program is not complete rehabilitation but is the first step in that direction. The United States government has evidenced its faith in the loyal Japanese-Americans by giving them the opportunity to serve their country. This is their opportunity to demonstrate to the American people that they have faith in America."

When the objectives and ramifications of the program became clearly understood, the strong resistance to registration collapsed. Incomplete, distorted information and illogical emotional appeals had been tools by which a vocal few swayed the opinions of the majority at numerous mass meetings.

All residents over 17 registered. The results were 5364 direct and qualified yes answers to the loyalty question and 790 direct and qualified no's. About one-third of the no votes later were reversed.

One consequence of registration was a large number of repatriation and expatriation requests. Soon after registration these totaled 447--201 from draft-age male citizens (159 Kibei and 42 Nisei) and only 84 from aliens. By September, when the segregation program was carried out, the number of such requests had nearly doubled.

ARMY VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM

The war department had announced Jan. 28 that evacuee volunteers would be accepted for a Japanese-American combat team, but the volunteer program made little headway during the registration period.

Although many Nisei regarded the war department's action as a great opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty to the land of their birth, there was a great deal of opposition to volunteering at first. Disloyal elements threatened volunteers and their families. Many loyal persons opposed volunteering because of the anomaly of asking for army volunteers from a group the army had confined in a relocation center, the injustice of a segregated combat unit of Japanese-Americans and the uncertainty of the future of the dependents of volunteers.

Only 58 Nisei had volunteered by March 3 when an army team turned the recruiting campaign over to the project administration. They were organized into the Volunteers for Victory. This group promptly adopted a patriotic creed that received favorable recognition nationally. It was:

"We believe in democracy and dedicate ourselves to the futherance of its principles. To uphold these principles, we must destroy every form of tyranny, oppression, and violation of human rights. We place our faith in America and base our hope in the future on that faith. Therefore, we believe that our volunteering in the armed forces of this country is a step towards the realization of these ends, and a positive manifestation of our loyalty to the United States of America."

The Volunteers for Victory also staged an intensive publicity campaign, publishing booklets, staging a big rally and going on a good-will tour to the State Capitol. When the campaign ended, volunteers

totalled 112, or seven percent of those eligible. The Community Council then went on record as urging young men to be aware of their war duty, and opposition to army service gradually became negligible.

HOSPITAL PROBLEM

In March, 1943, a series of disagreements between the evacuee doctors and the appointed medical staff culminated in a threatened walk-out of all evacuee workers in the Topaz hospital. Chief factors underlying this dissension were the inadequacy of medical facilities and a shortage of medical personnel which often made it necessary for the five resident doctors to work almost on a 24-hour basis. The arrival of an evacuee physician from the Manzanar relocation center only added fuel to the discontent as the resident doctors refused to work with him on the grounds of incompatibility. The resident physicians resigned and the administration planned to operate the hospital with a skeleton crew of volunteers. But last-minute negotiations affected an agreement whereby the evacuee doctors agreed to place absolute faith in the administration as to matters of policy and organization.

MILITARY POLICE CRISIS

Another crisis developed in April from the fatal shooting of an aged Issei resident by a Military Police sentry who stated that the victim was going through the boundary fence and did not obey challenges to halt. The community protested through work stoppages that lasted a week until the announcement of steps taken by the administration and military authorities to insure that an incident of this kind would not reoccur.

LABOR AND OTHER PROBLEMS

With the streamlining of indefinite leave procedure in the spring of 1943, relocation picked up and by May a labor shortage had developed. The agriculture and public works departments especially were affected. Planting of truck crops was completed through the aid of volunteer crews from the schools and work divisions. High school students and women later helped save the harvest. A recruiting program among residents relieved the situation.

Friction grew between loyal and disloyal evacuee groups as a result of the registration program. Several pro-administration evacuee leaders were assaulted or sent threatening letters. Jars of odorous material were thrown through apartment windows of eight others. This situation was remedied by sending 14 young trouble-makers to the WRA's isolation camp at Leupp, Arizona. All had declared their allegiance to Japan and asked expatriation.

Another administrative problem was created in July by a new WRA employment policy providing for standardization of evacuee jobs and the termination of about 1,000 workers.

A strike in the garage repair shop in September to force the removal of the Caucasian supervisor spread throughout the Operations division.

Discontent over the quality of food, precipitated by the nation-wide meat shortage, was solved by the formation of an evacuee food advisory committee.

A health and fire hazard was created by numerous leaks which developed in the reclaimed water pipes servicing the center. The plumbing crew quit and considerable difficulty was encountered in getting blocks to form labor crews, the residents contending it was the government's obligation to maintain center utilities.

SEGREGATION

The segregation of disloyal residents, determined by the registration program, was one of the most significant developments in the center's history in that it removed much of the pressure against relocation.

The segregation program was carried out late in September, 1943, with the transfer of 1447 residents to the Tule Lake segregation center in three special train movements. The trains brought to Topaz 1489 Tule Lake evacuees who had declared their loyalty to this country.

Of those transferred to Tule Lake, 859 had asked for repatriation or expatriation, 259 had answered in the negative to the loyalty question, 325 were volunteers accompanying relatives and four were unspecified.

Three hundred and eighty-five of the segregees were Japanese aliens; 1062 United States citizens.

In contrast to registration, the segregation movement was carried out with a minimum of confusion. This was made possible because every detail was carefully planned in advance by administrative personnel working closely with representatives of the residents. The machinery consisted of an administrative transfer committee, a general transfer committee representing block residents which worked with a Council committee, an information consultant's committee of both appointed personnel and residents which met directly with the transferees, and a transfer office staffed by resident personnel.

REINSTITUTION OF SELECTIVE SERVICE

The most important event of the first quarter of 1944 was the War department's announcement of the reinstitution of general Selective Service procedures for American citizens of Japanese descent.

The news was favorably received in the center as an indication of the national approval of Nisei soldiers based on the heroic exploits in Italy of the Japanese-American combat team formed in 1943, and a significant step forward in the restoration of their rights as American citizens.

Answering an avalanche of questions and opening a Topaz branch of the county selective service board were problems. Early in March the Community Council endorsed the draft.

The first contingent of 25 Topaz draftees reported for their preinduction physical examination at Fort Douglas, Utah, March 1. First inductions came April 12. Topaz now felt less isolated--more a part of America.

IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS AND PROBLEMS DURING
TERM OF SECOND PROJECT DIRECTOR, LUTHER T. HOFFMAN

Project Director Ernst resigned early in June, 1944, to go with UNRAA and was succeeded by Luther T. Hoffman, assistant chief of the WRA's Relocation division in Washington, D. C., and former deputy project director at the Gila River, Ariz., relocation center.

A chronological summary of important developments and problems occurring while Mr. Hoffman was project director follows:

JUNE, 1944

Steps were taken to improve relations between the residents and the administrative staff. The Council chairman was outspokenly critical of the administration, which he contended had failed completely in meeting the needs of the community.

A tour of the project indicated problems in general maintenance of buildings and equipment, and in replacement of pipelines.

The Community Activities section was separated from the Education section and made an independent section of the Community Management division.

A new gate control procedure was instituted and an agreement worked out with the commander of the Military Police regarding the extent of his authority. Resistance to the new gate check plan was overcome by clearing up misunderstandings.

What promised to develop into a general hospital walk-out was forestalled by terminating striking ambulance drivers and arranging for the Motor Pool section to take over this service. The crisis was caused by opposition of evacuee hospital doctors to policy changes including reductions in evacuee dentists, pharmacists and optometrists.

JULY-AUGUST

The hospital continued to be a problem because of community opposition to the reduction in dental positions allotted Topaz. A shortage in nurses aides was solved through a recruiting program. Gate checking procedure was improved and modified.

1944

SEPTEMBER

"Work conferences" with division, section and unit heads were inaugurated to enable key personnel to lay down their problems before the project director and to assist in working out solutions.

A change was made in the system of grading students in Topaz schools. The educational staff had been using grades as a means of enforcing discipline. The new Project Director insisted that evaluations of scholastic achievement be separated from evaluations of deportment.

A harvest festival was held which set a new high in resident participation and pride in locally produced products. Representatives of Utah State Agricultural college expressed amazement at the food produced on the project's submarginal land.

OCTOBER

The first WRA local appeal board hearing was held on leave clearances.

The hospital problem was cleared up with acceptance by the Council of a five-point program of improvements.

After long negotiation, an agreement was reached with the evacuee labor committee abolishing all overtime as of November 1, providing for assignment of essential positions for each department based on available labor and concentrating on getting the job done. The administration agreed to clear up all back overtime that could not be credited as time-off.

Law enforcement was improved. Members of the Judicial commission said they had felt the administration wished to be easy on law violators and therefore had been letting most offenders off with warnings. They agreed to be more strict with assurance of full backing by the administration.

A valuable meteorite was discovered by two resident evacuees and sold to the Smithsonian Institute for \$700. Weighing about 1500 pounds, it was the ninth largest found in the United States.

NOVEMBER

Topaz ordinances were revised following several meetings of the Project Director and Council. Representative

evacuee groups were taking increased responsibility in maintaining law and order.

Carrying on public relations work, the Project Director met with the acting governor and other state officials in Salt Lake City, and with the Lions club in Delta which agreed to clear up a situation regarding protests about evacuee boys taking an aviation mechanics course at the Delta airport.

The administration worked with the Council and USO in conducting center-wide Memorial services which marked improved relations between residents and the staff in working together on a joint project.

A misunderstanding regarding the advisory and supervisory relationship of the administration and the evacuee-owned Co-op was cleared up.

DECEMBER-JANUARY -1945

Reopening of the West Coast

Sunday, December 17, 1944, brought two epochal announcements which shook Topazans as nothing else had since evacuation--the lifting of the Western Defense Command's mass exclusion order, effective Jan. 2, and the WRA's decision to close all relocation centers within 6 to 12 months.

The Project Director gave out the news immediately at an emergency meeting of key evacuee leaders and appointed personnel and an extra edition of the project newspaper was issued the next day.

Center reaction was one of mixed surprise, relief and apprehension. There was happiness over being allowed to return to former homes, but fear over closing of the center. Most of the Issei were afraid of violence and boycott on the West Coast. Many were skeptical of finding jobs or housing; other felt lost without their children who had gone into the army or relocated in the East.

The administration had its hands full with resulting problems. It had to explain clearly the WDC's complex processing program with its white, gray and black lists, calm fear, combat rumors and anti-relocation movements, and make the populace realize that WRA really was going

to close the center. The first movement to take shape was one calling for residents to sit tight until the WRA adopted a more liberal policy of relocation assistance. Another group indicated intention of sitting tight until the war with Japan ended, contending that during evacuation they had signed agreements to remain in a relocation center for the duration and six months.

An administration-sponsored evacuee information committee organized to act as a sounding board of problems and questions of the nearly 6000 remaining residents dissolved after three meetings when certain residents questioned its representativeness. Its successor, a committee stemming from block elections, had an even shorter existence. It attempted to act as a negotiating committee and by-pass the Council which it felt was to pro-administration. This committee resigned after the Project Director backed the Council as the only negotiating group for the center as a whole but left the way open for the community to give the Council a vote of confidence or to elect a new group as their representatives for all negotiations.

An army team interviewed residents about whom there was some question of loyalty and recommended approximately 250 for individual exclusion orders or for holding for further investigation and possible internment. There was little resentment. The great majority of residents were automatically considered cleared for free movement anywhere in the United States on Jan. 20. Immigration officials also came in to check their alien lists.

An anti-relocation circular in the Japanese language was slipped under evacuee doors at night. It proved to be the work of a vociferous minority and was generally ignored by the residents.

Despite the reopening of the West Coast to evacuees, only 134 residents relocated in January as compared to 126 in the same month the previous year. Only 38 of the 134 returned to California.

FEBRUARY

Topaz evacuee leaders sponsored an all-center conference in Salt Lake City and made 21 recommendations to the WRA. Chief requests were for larger relocation grants and long-term, low-interest loans to aid businessmen and farmers reestablish themselves.

Director Dillon S. Myer visited Topaz and succeeded in crystallizing the thinking of residents in terms of realizing that the WRA was in earnest about closing the centers and was working hard for their best interests.

The Project Director took first steps with Buddhist officials towards utilizing the San Francisco Buddhist church as a hostel for returnees.

MARCH

The Spanish Consul and State Department representatives visited the center and the only complaint made by residents was regarding quality of food served.

There was a definite increase in medical social cases due to worry over center closing, between 75 and 100 cases appearing daily at the hospital clinic.

As a step in liquidating the agricultural section, bids were issued for leasing surplus farm lands until Dec. 31, 1945, by which time the center was expected to be closed.

The administration dining hall crew threatened to walk out because of a longer work day made necessary by adoption of a five and one-half day work week for appointed personnel.

A fight within the Co-op arose over the removal of the executive secretary.

A near crisis developed over the removal of an evacuee to the Santa Fe internment camp. A threat was made against the Council chairman and another prominent evacuee supposedly close to the administration. The antagonisms were mostly between evacuees and both groups appealed to the administration for help.

APRIL

Residents expressed their feelings over the death of President Roosevelt by cancelling all entertainment and meetings scheduled for the weekend and conducting a center-wide memorial service.

The hot Co-op internal strife which had reached a climax with the Directors defying efforts of the Co-op Congress to remove them, was ended as a result of the Project Director's mediations. The Directors resigned en masse.

The Welfare section was incorporated into the Relocation division to provide better services to residents, and the center was divided into 14 districts with a staff worker responsible for meeting the relocation and welfare needs of each resident in his district.

A plan for closing block dining halls on the basis of population and location met with considerable opposition but was put into effect on schedule.

Surplus farm equipment was sold at an auction attended by more than 100 certified dealers from the Intermountain region.

MAY

Relocation at last showed signs of swinging into high gear. Opposition was dying out. Transportation difficulties began and plans were made to schedule most departures on early morning trains. First reserved train cars left for Chicago May 14 and California May 21. Pressing problems developed in the Leave office. The Relocation and Welfare offices reported a critical shortage of counsellors.

Nurses aides decreased to the point where it was difficult to operate hospital wards. The Property Control, Motor Transport and Maintenance sections also were short-handed.

JUNE, 1945

The Education program concluded with commencement exercises, and teachers were transferred to other departments, chiefly Relocation.

The Community Activities program was stepped up for the summer to sustain morale.

Three hundred Buddhists made definite plans to return to the West Coast and assist in relocation of other Buddhists.

JULY

The former Council chairman, long-time leader of the anti-administration minority group, made an unsuccessful effort to regain control of the Council. Defeated in his bid for the Council chairmanship, he made an inflammatory talk against the administration at the induction ceremony for

the new Council. But as the residents had heard him so many times in the same vein there was little response and the general opinion was that he had sung his swan song. The Council and community leaders generally said they wanted the center to close with continued good feeling.

A decision was made to close classes in Adult Education and Vocational Training.

Approval was secured for the Buddhist church at San Francisco to move all private property of evacuees stored there to a WRA warehouse. A decision was made to transfer headquarters of the Buddhist Churches of America to San Francisco and adopt an aggressive relocation assistance program for Buddhists.

A letter was sent to the Director recommending a modified program of scheduled relocation so as to close Topaz by November 15.

The tight housing situation on the West Coast was the major deterrent to relocation. The Project Director returned from conferences with West Coast relocation officials and reported to the Council and staff that WRA was doing everything it could, but so far little had been accomplished. We would have to keep trying and be ready to take advantage of housing when it opens up and have confidence it will.

AUGUST

The first special train carrying evacuee residents back to the West Coast left Delta Aug. 15 with 340 passengers.

The momentous WRA announcement fixing center closing dates and scheduling relocation broke with news of Japan's capitulation and cleared the atmosphere of uncertainty. Leaders came to the Project Director and expressed satisfaction with methods contemplated and confidence in the local administration to properly carry out center closure without unnecessary and undue hardship. They said there would be no trouble, that the center would be closed Nov. 1 on schedule, and that the community generally was now ready to leave as soon as housing could be obtained. They made a special request for the Project Director to do everything possible to open up temporary housing facilities on the West Coast.

The Council chairman set a good example by taking a WRA job in Los Angeles, and the vice-chairman (an Issei) and other officers called on the Project Director to pledge cooperation and full assistance in community and relocation problems.

1945

The all-center conference committee sent a second letter to the Director requesting additional assistance and reconsideration of points made in its first letter.

Efforts to streamline leave procedures and increase efficiency in the Leave office were only partially successful.

A breakdown in work morale was one consequence of center-wide acceptance of relocation and center closure. There was a let down in work production and little concern for maintenance of essential center services.

Word finally was received that 100 units of FPFA housing had been made available in San Francisco for veterans' families, and it was hoped this would pave the way for housing for all.

The Council became concerned about services to departing relocatees and discussed with the Project Director how they could assist. A volunteer crew was recruited to pick up evacuee baggage. Additional relocation workers arrived from field offices.

An effort on the part of parents through the P.-T.A. to arrange for evacuee sponsored schooling in the center was given up.

SEPTEMBER

Dr. Provinse, chief of WRA's community management division, took over duties as acting assistant project director, and his services proved most helpful.

The outward movement began in earnest. Problems of special trains and handling of evacuee services incidental to departure were worked out. Problems of listing and handling surplus property developed. West Coast housing, except for veterans, still was frozen, and frustration among staff members as well as evacuees mounted. Problems of keeping the staff increased. Interest in returning to the West Coast increased despite no break in the housing situation there. Some consideration was given to scheduling relocation but it was decided to hold off until some housing was available.

OCTOBER

Temporary housing for all now was available on the West Coast and people poured out of Topaz.

The Community Council had its last meeting, a farewell banquet in Delta, and thanked the administration for ser-

vices. The Block Managers' organization dissolved, too, but agreed to appoint a committee of five to carry on until the end.

Despite uncertainty about special trains, movements of several hundred residents at a time were carried out. The record was 559 on Oct. 19. The last special train left Oct. 26 with 325 aboard.

The San Francisco office was notified that Topaz hospital and dependency cases would be sent to California the last week in October regardless of approval or not, and that it should plan accordingly.

Washington office representatives visited Topaz in increasing numbers and personnel workers interviewed members of the appointed staff as to their future plans and desires for placement with some other government agency.

The Project Director wrote letters to 12 family heads who had not made relocation plans, and within two days all had come in and set departure dates and destinations.

OCTOBER 31

The center closed on schedule with the Project Director "locking" the gate behind the last bus load of evacuee residents at a 1 p. m. ceremony attended by the staff. The final exodus consisted of 32 persons, mostly evacuee families from Hawaii, who had to remain until sailing arrangements could be made.

This brought to nearly 6000 the number of residents relocated in 1945, more than 4000 of them since Aug. 15, out of the total of 9408 relocated from Topaz. Only 44 per cent of these returned to the West Coast--43 per cent to California and 1 per cent to Oregon and Washington.

The Statistics section reported total center admissions of 11,209 as follows: From Assembly centers, 8481; transfers from Tule Lake and other centers, 2069; miscellaneous admissions, 270; births, 389. One thousand six hundred and fifty-seven residents were transferred to other centers and there were 144 deaths.

NOVEMBER

Problems of maintaining essential center services with no evacuee help immediately became apparent despite advance preparations. Inventorying property, clearing it out of barracks and mess halls and storing it became main

concerns. Efforts to recruit local labor increased.

DECEMBER, 1945

The administration dining hall and staff dormitories were closed and plans made to turn the center over to the government liquidating agency Feb. 9, 1946.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Of

Luther T. Hoffman,
Project Director

from June, 1944, to close of center

Following first impressions and introductions, I announced my policy would be to carry on as before with no major turnover in staff contemplated and look for needed improvements as we went along.

The first problem attacked was improving relations between the residents and the administrative staff. The Community Council was opposed to all administrative procedures. The Council had observers at weekly staff meetings to check on the administration but there were no administration representatives at council meetings. The Council chairman was openly antagonistic, sarcastic and critical of the Project administration and publicly declared his opposition. For instance the Council insisted that staff members be given tickets for traffic violations by evacuee Internal Security police, and be tried and sentenced by the evacuee Judicial commission. With the election of a new Council and new chairman, relations became much improved. The basic problems of misunderstanding as between the Council and the staff were gradually overcome by meeting them openly, talking the problems over and taking a definite stand and sticking to it. Functions, responsibilities and limitations of the Council were thoroughly discussed and while Council members did not always agree they did take my statement of such limitations and responsibilities as authoritative. The Judicial commission at first refused to accept my statement that appointed personnel were responsible only to the Project Director whether for traffic violations or daily work and conduct. Staff members were notified they were bound by the center regulations but violations would be handled administratively by the Project Director. After a few such citations were handled that way, it ceased to be a problem.

The next stand on which the Council sought to assert its authority and responsibility for making final determination of acceptance or rejection of administrative policy was on the Hospital. After many meetings and discussions about Hospital administration, the Council presented a formal resolution requesting removal of the

Chief Medical officer. Although the Chief Medical Officer had handled his relations with the evacuee community rather badly at times he was nevertheless a capable doctor and he was also the Chief Medical Officer. So this seemed as good a place as any to show the Council and the community that their previous conception of the Council's function, which by the way they repeatedly told me was clearly told to them by the former Project Director, was impossible. This function, as it was given to me, was that it was up to the Council to run their own community. We as a staff were here to help, advise and assist, but theirs was the final responsibility. I am sure this was misunderstood, but it was up to us to change this and at the same time win their confidence and establish a basis of cooperative work relations, each understanding the place of the other.

After many long sessions during which time they decided to send their request on to the Director, they partially accepted my refusal to even consider the request to remove the Chief Medical Officer, which, I explained, was out of order to begin with. They finally agreed and decided to work together for the improvement of hospital services. They appointed a hospital committee and met regularly with the Chief Medical Officer and his medical staff, and relations gradually improved. (Detailed reports of this whole Hospital situation are on file in the Washington office.)

As was hoped for, this improvement was reflected in all relations. About that time or soon after an influential element of the center, not represented in the Council, decided to make a stand on refusing to work on the pipeline. Representatives of the workers presented an ultimatum of refusal to work on the pipelines, saying that repairing and replacing the broken pipelines of the center was the responsibility of the administration and not the evacuees. After many meetings with the staff the Council finally appointed a labor committee and sat in on negotiations with the workers.

The overtime problem then emerged as the real stumbling block to a solution here. So special authority was obtained to settle the overtime problem once and for all. Overtime pay was properly authorized, but after the agreed upon date there was to be no more overtime for anyone, staff or evacuees. An agreement was

drawn up, thoroughly discussed and minor modifications made, signed by both the Project Director and labor representatives, and overnight we recruited 90 workers and work proceeded smoothly. There were other factors besides overtime, such as poor supervision, but related to it. This is well documented in special reports as well as the whole Hospital problem. It is mentioned here only as a highlight of the major problems that confronted the new Project Director when he took office in June, 1944.

Relations as between the staff and the Project Director also seemed to need considerable improvement. People seemed uncertain of their jobs, and what they were supposed to do, and appeared confused as to lines of authority, how to prepare and address letters and memorandums and most of all, who made decisions on what. Several office letters seeking to clarify this were carefully worked out and weekly meetings of Division heads were started and kept up throughout the life of the project, and monthly meetings of all the staff instituted. The Council no longer sent representatives, although at first they made a half-hearted attempt to have a representative at our weekly staff meeting. Orientation committees were formulated and a staff training program worked out by Personnel and our Vocational Training Supervisor together. The Reports Officer started a staff paper. Recreation committees were appointed as well as a Staff Housing Council representing interests of all resident staff members. This met regularly. Although it always remained difficult to get anyone except the officers to take any responsibility, good results were accomplished including the moving and setting up of a special recreation hall for children. In the last few months a canteen was set up in the staff rec. hall but this was done only after the M. P. 's left and their canteen was closed. Visitors from Washington and others visiting the center generally remarked on the excellent staff morale at Topaz.

Another objective was the physical improvement and care of the center and government property. With open ditches all over the center including the staff housing area and open water making for unsanitary as well as unsightly conditions, a concerted effort was put forth by the staff and evacuee residents to clean up and dress up. The improvement in staff and center morale which resulted from the voluntary work and effort to make Topaz

a place we could all be proud of while here, was soon noticeable. This also touched on one of the other main objectives of the "new administration", that of finding and utilizing all possible work incentives. Competition, training for a new skill or task, pride in a job well done, commendation, intelligible and understandable job descriptions, rotation of work so that knowledge of new skills could be realized--all are elements of what we were on the lookout for to raise the level of the work standard at Topaz. Putting more responsibility on evacuee supervisors and foreman was stressed. Transmission of instructions through them and commendation to them when work was well done, also seemed to help.

Relations with the state and local county and city officials were in need of improvement. With the State we did little--one call at the Capitol and a visit with the Acting Governor, Mr. Monsen, Secretary of State, and a call on a number of other officials in the Capitol building about covered my State-wide contacts. Mr. John Boyden, Assistant U. S. Attorney at Salt Lake, whom I knew well, introduced me to a number of the State officials, but these were only perfunctory courtesy calls. However, the contacts made did result later in first rate speakers at our twice yearly Council inductions.

Where we made substantial progress and improvement in public relations was with the local communities. Mr. Bell and I went to Fillmore and met with the County Commissioners on two occasions and as a result, most of them visited the center at several different times. Dr. Noble and I met with the County School Superintendent and his board. We invited all of these officials to our Harvest Festival, and to the Memorial Services, to special parties and dances and to the Council inductions. This list of special invited guests, numbering between 30 and 40, included all the dignitaries of "Church and State" in the surrounding communities. Public appearances at the Lions Club at Delta, meetings of the Irrigation Districts and Water Users Associations, preceded by calls on various individuals at their places of business, did seem to definitely set a higher standard of public relations, and paid good dividends later. Invitations to attend various community gatherings and participation of many outside individuals in our affairs here, also helped to bring about a better understanding of the evacuees and their situation.

On Relocation we early adopted the policy that we were here to help and assist, to give the best informa-

tion possible as needed, but that the real and final responsibility for relocation was theirs. The fact that towards the end we recommended scheduled relocation is not inconsistent with that same policy. Some just couldn't or wouldn't take advantage of the assistance available, and we made no real distinction between these two classes. They still needed to be helped. They had just so much time before the center was to be closed and if we couldn't work out a satisfactory resettlement plan by that time, we had both fallen down. In the long run when the show-down came, they came across with alternative plans they already had worked out and the closing of the center proceeded and was concluded very satisfactorily and on a basis of mutual confidence and cooperation.

We are still getting letters from former residents, all expressing appreciation for the understanding and assistance given them, although at the time it was not always asked for or appreciated.

One other problem was the need for definite improvement in relations with the Washington office. When I was here in November, 1943, as a representative of the Relocation division in Washington, it seemed to me that the staff at Topaz was blaming the Washington office for failures and shortcomings, many of which were entirely local problems. I found rather severe criticism of the Washington office for not being more explicit in instructions and then when instructions did come out in manuals or handbook form, they were immediately criticised and picked apart. Washington officials were openly feted while here but bitterly denounced when they left.

Just how to go about the needed improvement here was not too easily determined, as I was from the Washington office myself. However, by adopting a policy of complete frankness, coupled with honesty and with several staff meetings partly devoted to explanations of relationships, functions and administrative responsibilities of project personnel, we developed a much better man-to-man and project-to-Washington understanding. I endeavored to stand up for the center and "fight for our rights" when we were right, but to recognize that often it was the other way around, and the particular problem, procedure, regulation or whatever was being considered, and what it was designed to accomplish was important. Gradually I think this ceased to be a real problem, except in a very few exceptional cases and they were handled on an individual basis. I believe our staff came to understand as well as any field staff could, the function and relationships of project, field and Washington offices.

In order to bring about a better understanding and closer acquaintance with the evacuee community and not be limited to contacts with its official representatives, the Council, I made it a practice to attend as many public affairs as possible. I dropped in on movies, USO dances, school parties, exhibits of all kinds and accepted as many of the almost daily invitations to officiate at one affair or another as possible. I spoke at high school assemblies and Buddhist and Protestant meetings. I occasionally attended Block Managers meetings as well as Council meetings. I met with the Co-op board on special occasions and dropped in at the Credit Union to have a check cashed once in a while when they were at outs with the Co-op about checking services.

In addition, I made it a practice to call on individual families when by so doing I could do it as representative of all individual families. For instance, on Fathers Day I called on the oldest father in the community and on his son, who I found out later was a leading Protestant Reverend. When the first news of Nisei war fatalities came in, I called on the families, but did not keep this up. Gradually the Project Director came to be personally known by quite a number of evacuee people and everybody always spoke.

Later, at the suggestion of the Community Analyst, I held an invitational open house to invited evacuee leaders, not necessarily members of any official organization, every Sunday afternoon. These weekly get-togethers were very much worthwhile, with no set program and discussion not only free and on a wide range of subjects, but intensely interesting. Contrary to earlier prediction, no problem of having everyone in to see the Project Director on personal problems resulted. In fact, all of this helped to clarify in the minds of the residents, who to see on what. I found evacuees were more often settling problems among themselves and sometimes leaning over backwards to protect the Project Director in matters they felt they should settle themselves.

There were many problems we did not solve and of course made many mistakes, but the gradual development of confidence, fairness, honest dealing and talking out of differences did make for less difficult and quicker solutions to problems in the early stages before they became serious.

Rumors were always a problem, but were less serious than they otherwise might have been because we tried not to get too excited or disturbed and kept the channels of inquiry open and free, not only from Council and Block Managers but from individuals.

The Topaz Times and its reporters kept in close touch with the community and felt free to go up to the edge and sometimes over the edge of editorial freedom. However, the Times kept the community informed and was usually there before things happened or soon after ready for a "scoop".

We were a conservative community, but I believe steady and sound. The people left slowly and only when they were good and ready, but with increased confidence in themselves and faith in the outside community because they had a chance to take responsibility here and at the same time recognize their rights and limitations under the somewhat artificial, but nevertheless real life problems, we learned to work out together and not in competition.

Letters received speak of generally satisfactory acceptance and successful working out of often difficult problems of relocation and of pleasure and appreciation to all the staff for the good start they gained while here at Topaz.

H 2.15

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH

CLOSING REPORT
RELOCATION DIVISION

By

Miss Leah K. Dickinson, Relocation Officer

CLOSURE REPORT
RELOCATION DIVISION
CENTRAL UTAH WAR RELOCATION CENTER
TOPAZ, UTAH

November 1, 1945

A. HISTORICAL NARRATIVE.

The first semblance of organization for relocation purposes in the Central Utah Relocation Center appears to have followed the stresses of the registration period and the establishment early in April, 1943, of a decentralized leave clearance procedure. Prior to April 1, 1943, approximately 500 persons had relocated from the Center -- a group made up primarily of Army volunteers, young people with professional or semi-professional backgrounds, and students.

The Project Director had set up during April, 1943, a Committee known as the Relocation Planning Committee, comprised of the Assistant Director, the Chief of Community Services, the Welfare Officer, the Social Science Analyst, the Chief of Adult Education, the Chief of the Employment Division and several evacuees, Issei and Nisei. Control of this Committee rested with the Project Director and it met daily. (Office organization as in Chart A attached).

A "Relocation Office" comprised entirely of evacuee staff came into being around this same time. It was responsible jointly to the Employment Division and to the Project Director's Relocation Planning Committee. This office staff, with their own leadership, carried on the interpretation to Center residents of new developments in the Relocation program. During the months of April and May, 1943, there was a great deal of spontaneous activity emanating from this "Relocation Office" group. The leaders were young and energetic and they instituted and led Forums and prodded the Administration to further activity in organizing for a more comprehensive relocation program. Since most of these leaders were members of the Project Director's Relocation Planning Committee, their channel of operation was clear.

In May, 1943, a system of division "consultants" was instituted through the Relocation Planning Committee. An evacuee employee of each section and division staff was chosen to work with the Committee and the Relocation Office staff in disseminating relocation material, job offers, etc., and interpreting to fellow employees new policies and procedures concerning relocation. This channel of

information appears to have been very effective for the next few months. The Consultants kept close to the Relocation Planning Committee and were very active on "company time."

The "Form" (promoted by the Relocation Office group but nominally under the Adult Education Section) became a compulsory feature in late May, 1943, and continued as such through the year. All who were scheduled to relocate were expected to attend a Form before departure. The Form programs were all in line with re-orientation to life outside a Relocation Center.

viewing Late in June, 1943, a major re-organization took place as a result of joint planning in the Project Director's Committee. A Central Relocation Office was set up in new quarters designed to meet the needs of the steadily increasing responsibilities of relocation. A waiting room, Relocation Library, and an orderly flow of responsibility were provided for in this new office. *inter-* It was administratively responsible to the Employment and Relocation Officer, but with liaison relationship to other Sections. (Charts B & C attached).

During this re-organization period, there was noticeable effect of the establishment of leave assistance grants and the new interest in seasonal leave. By June 30th, 1943, there were 412 evacuees out of the Center on seasonal leave and 887 on indefinite leave.

During the summer and fall of 1943, the Central Relocation Office operated in a more formalized manner. The Relocation Library and more material from field offices were the main tools for relocation planning and promotion. With the subsequent relocation of a number of the "Relocation Office" group, the degree of evacuee participation declined. Segregation and the return of seasonal workers to the Center appear to have interrupted the rising tide of interest in relocation. The doldrums had set in.

Reacting to Washington spurs, as represented in the Washington letter of October 28th, 1943, there was a re-organization of the Relocation Planning Committee according to the pattern set up by the Washington office and a half-hearted effort to resuscitate the old Section

Consultant plan. Early meetings of this Committee focused their attention on the setting up of the Family Interviewing program as suggested by Washington, while waiting for the Community Council to come along in the general scheme of this re-organization. On December 22, 1943, the answer came from the Community Council -- they declined to take any part in the Relocation Planning Commission by a vote of 26-17. The Relocation Committee of the Community Council continued to meet with the Project Director's Relocation Committee but with their hands practically tied behind their backs. The Anti-Relocation Community Council, led by a Chairman who was thoroughly anti-Administration, was in full swing.

January, 1944, was devoted to a preparation for the Relocation Team from Washington, who were visiting all projects. The Relocation Committee struggled valiantly but there was no way to reach the Center residents except through the Community Council and that way was thoroughly blocked on every side.

The Relocation Team came in February, 1944, and left with far less general effect on the center than the re-institution of Selective Service for Japanese-Americans which was announced to the Center residents during the same month. From February, 1944, until the election of a new Community Council in June, 1944, Selective Service was the only bridge that could be used to span the gulf between the Project Administration and the Community Council in matters of relocation. The Council Selective Service Committee worked closely with the Relocation Division because the Assistant Relocation Program Officer was in charge of Selective Service at the project.

In February, 1944, the separation between the Employment Division and Relocation became effective with the appointment of a new Relocation Program Officer and Assistant Relocation Program Officer and the establishment of the Relocation Division as such. A new Leave Officer was appointed and some re-organization of the Relocation and Leave offices followed. The Relocation Committee continued to meet, but not very effectively since there was active opposition to it on the part of the Community Council. Every effort to build toward a greater degree of evacuee participation in the relocation program was thoroughly thwarted. (Office Organization: see Chart D).

Family interviews (or discussions, as they were termed at Central Utah) were in full swing during the first three months of 1944 and served as an entering wedge into the confidence of center residents. While the results of these interviews were never very trustworthy statistically, they were a real factor in stimulating Center thought regarding relocation. The Welfare Section carried the chief responsibility for the interviewing but the Relocation Division reaped the benefits. It was evident very early that there was a direct connection between our steadily rising rate of relocation and the family discussion program.

A major responsibility of the Division during these first months of 1944 was the final clearing up of all pending leave clearance hearings and the subsequent follow-up with the Washington office to get action on hearings already held. As the rate of relocation rose, leave clearance became one of the most aggravating obstacles to it and continued to be a problem through July, 1944.

In June, 1944, a new Project Director entered upon duty and almost immediately, relationships with the Community Council became less strained. A newly-elected Community Council chose as their Chairman an ex-member of the Relocation evacuee staff. Our popularity as a Division definitely increased. The word "relocation" could be used more freely and our Relocation Committee meetings became a little more vital, although relocation business was always secondary in the interests of even this new Community Council. However, direct opposition to the relocation program ceased at this time.

After the flurry of a very active seasonal leave period in May and June, 1944, the efforts of the Division were focused on securing appointive staff members and organizing toward a more successful drive for permanent relocation of Center residents. We were getting much more interesting material from field offices and with the services of a translator from the Reports Division, we were able to reach the Center population as a whole in a way that had been hitherto impossible. Our method was a slow-going individual counselling program and our rate of relocation held up until October, 1944, when rumors of the imminent lifting of the mass exclusion order and fall weather conditions set us back.

In October, 1944, another effort toward evacuee participation in the relocation program was inaugurated -- The "Future Planning Commission" -- a group of representative residents who met weekly with the Project Director and the Relocation Program Officer. Their meetings and the distribution of the minutes of these meetings did much to focus the attention of the Center on impending events. The group seemed to attend the meetings regularly in order not to miss any important new announcement. However, they were not too important a group and not significant except as an indication that relocation might be westward as well as eastward.

In November, 1944, the Relocation and Leave offices were moved into two facing barracks in Block 2 -- to be closer to the Center and to our colleagues in the Welfare Section, and to secure more room for our increasing staff. Ordnance Depot recruiting was the chief current interest. Other relocation was at a low ebb. December brought the lifting of the exclusion order and a great deal of preparation for the big job ahead.

The first three months of 1945 were somewhat confusing. The new element of possible return to the West Coast retarded the eastward movement and threw Center residents into a foment of indecision. The Welfare Section bent its efforts to the identification of dependency cases and the Relocation Division worked closely with them in a case-review committee to define the responsibility in the borderline cases. Field offices in the mid-west and south made some final futile efforts to interest evacuees in farm opportunities and Ordnance Depots continued recruiting efforts. The All-Center Conference and Director Myer's visit were duly "waited for" by the residents and school closure was thoroughly discussed. An acceptance of the fact that the Center would really close as of January 1, 1946, was very slow in coming and, in the meantime, the Relocation Division did the obvious individual counselling that was necessary and fretted about our slow start on the gigantic task facing us.

To add to the general confusion of this period, the matter of Western Defense Command clearance processes, with the hearing boards, the MAU lists, etc., became an

aggravating element in the picture. The Statistics Section carried the main responsibility in this matter, but it had many angles which retarded and confused the general process of relocation. Not until the final lifting of the ban on excludées after VJ Day were we freed of this difficulty. After that, it took many hours of our time following up the necessary procedure to secure permits for deportees and parolees to relocate.

In the last week of April, 1945, plans were completed and announced for the merger of the Welfare Section with the Relocation Division. The month of May was full of merger business. It involved a second moving to get the Counselling staff into two facing barracks in Block 2 and the administrative unit (Leave, Housing, Clothing) into two facing barracks and the records into the Central files, in the same block. It involved much personnel business and many orientation sessions and other meetings. However, by the end of the month, the merger was completed and not one minute too soon, for the Resettlement Assistance program was upon us and the Center had really begun to move. (Office organization: see Charts E & F).

The district plan around which the merger had been centered proved to be sound and timely, not only from the point of view of working on dependency summaries and Resettlement Assistance cases, but also for the door-to-door process which was necessary in determining the status of planning which Center residents were doing. The four area supervisors each had three district workers -- the districts comprising three or four blocks. The district workers held office hours in Block Managers' offices each day. Their cumulative knowledge of their districts and the problems therein became our most certain source of information as to trends, problems and possibilities during the last few months of center operation.

Momentum of relocation increased steadily from March until June, 1945. Special coaches were secured to relieve transportation difficulties and the movement in those months was rather spontaneous. In July, we began to meet the heavier problems of dependency summaries and resettlement assistance cases. Each week had different "priorities" for the district worker to contend with -- families with

school children, dependency cases, servicemen's housing, etc. Our final closing date had been moved up to November 1st and we had set our own weekly quotas and were struggling to meet them. Housing in the San Francisco Bay Area was our highest hurdle but we proceeded to urge Center residents to set their dates and pack and crate, even though housing was not in sight.

On August 16th -- VJ Day -- we landed our first all-evacuee special train in San Francisco! From that date, we sent special trains weekly to the West and special cars to the East. Our trains to the West went through as a section of the 4:58 A.M. Union Pacific train and necessitated the picking up, checking out by bus, captains and transporting the sixteen miles to the Delta station before dawn, of large groups of evacuees and their hand luggage. It became nearly routine until the last three weeks when the uncertainty of securing train equipment added to our confusion. However, with the excellent cooperation of Union Pacific officials and the Washington office, the trains were never delayed more than a day from the scheduled departure.

Voluntary departures filled our quotas through September so that it was unnecessary to schedule any involuntary departures. In October, when the announcement of housing arrangements in the Bay Area was so long in forthcoming, it sometimes appeared that it might be necessary to schedule involuntary departures in order to force some action as to housing. However, the Relocation staff were thoroughly convinced that the people in their districts were all packed and waiting to go as soon as the housing announcement came through. This proved to be true. There were only four cases which approximated "scheduled departure." One young man was not allowed to "postpone" his departure East and was given help in crating his dog -- his chief problem. The heads of three family groups were presented letters signed by the Project Director, setting their departure dates. But they came to the Leave office and signed their papers and departed peacefully enough, on a special train. The remainder of the Center population appeared to be not only willing but anxious to depart as soon as housing was arranged.

In the early afternoon of October 31st, 1945, the last bus-load of Topaz residents (including twenty-one Hawaii-bound persons who had been unable to depart earlier) pulled away from the main gate, and with due ceremony,

the Project Director locked the gate. The Central Utah War Relocation Center was officially closed on scheduled time.

B. Office Organization.

See Charts attached.

C. Staff Participation.

A Staff Relocation Committee was organized in November, 1944, and continued to function until July, 1945. This committee included in its membership all key personnel on the project. The meetings of this Committee, (which were held weekly at first and later bi-weekly) were sometimes dull and sometimes very stimulating. It was here that all new procedures relating to relocation were discussed in relationship to other Divisions and Sections. These discussions became much more vital during the winter and spring of 1945, when Center closure was in sight. It was the one scheduled meeting where the supervisory personnel of the project could focus their attention on the progress and problems of relocation and see where their own divisions, sections or units could make a helpful contribution. The suggestions and advice of the members of this committee were of invaluable aid to the Relocation Program Officer and to the Project Director who took an active interest in the relocation program.

D. Evacuee Organization and Participation.

The ups and downs of evacuee participation in the Relocation program have been related in the historical narrative. Central Utah has never enjoyed the degree of evacuee participation that seems to have been an important part of the picture in some other Centers. After the enthusiastic youthful leaders of the early "Relocation Office" left the center, it seemed almost impossible to elicit the same degree of participation from the older leaders in the Center. The subject of Relocation was never a popular one around which to do any organizing. In the later months of Center operation, the Community Council and the Block Managers were both helpful as groups. They listened attentively and did a good deal of interpretation of policies to their constituents. However, they would not take the initiative in any matters of major

significance relating to relocation. They relayed to the Administration all sorts of complaints and suggestions on very minor items, which were all very helpful, as far as it went.

E. Publicity and Use of Publicity Facilities.

For months in the years of 1943 and 1944, the main publicity channel for the Relocation Division was the project newspaper, the Topaz Times. Bulletin Boards around the Center were used but not until late in 1944 did we have sufficient photographic material to put on really good displays. The Reports Division made the very best use of all materials which came in, especially during the winter and spring months of 1945, when we were suddenly flooded with good pictures for display purposes. Bulletin Boards were set up in the Center and attractive displays were made up and kept current by the Reports Officer. Good movies on geographical topics were also used much more extensively and to good advantage in the spring and summer of 1945. The pictures were shown in Block mess halls and became an interesting means for the district workers to become better acquainted with their block residents in a more informal fashion.

The services of the translators from the Reports Division staff were a noteworthy contribution to the Relocation program. In the summer of 1944, we were able to translate many of the field office bulletins and get them across to our Center Issei. This did much to stimulate discussion of relocation, even if there was no immediate effect otherwise.

The "Relocation News" was a special edition put out by the Reports Officer and his staff from May, 1945 almost to the closing of the Center. It was sometimes weekly, sometimes semi-weekly, and contained all late announcements of new policies, procedures and developments, as well as special announcements that the Relocation staff needed to make to Center residents. It was an exceedingly important contribution to our later efforts for relocation. It was given center-wide distribution both in English and Japanese.

F. Statistics.

Our Statistics Section has been unable to provide any special statistical data for this report. We believe that this will be obtainable in the Washington office.

G. Interviewing Program.

The chief responsibility for this program was carried by the Welfare Section prior to its merger with the Relocation Division. It should be contained in that section of the Closure Report.

H. Special Problems and Comment.

Almost all of the early relocation problems of Central Utah stemmed from the fact that the predominant group of Center residents was composed of middle-aged and elderly people who had always lived in the San Francisco Bay Area -- a large of them in "Little Tokyo" and had operated their own small businesses -- art goods stores, laundry and dry-cleaning establishments, grocery stores, nursery businesses, florist shops, etc. Without capital, most of them, and never having had any experience in anything but self-operated enterprises, they were exceptionally timid and reluctant to consider working as paid employees in another man's business. This group especially felt that it was impossible for them to establish their businesses in any other region than the West Coast. Not until the Exclusion Order was lifted was there any appreciable movement of these people out of the Center. They occupied a large amount of the time of the Counselling staff and accounted for hundreds of teletypes to and from field offices, much of what seemed like fruitless effort. Also, this type of population accounted for our comparatively poor response to the well-organized and earnest attempts of the field offices to interest Center residents in farm opportunities, Seabrook Farms, etc.

A corollary to the above, we probably had one of the most insecure groups of people in any Center. Those whose life experience had been in the San Francisco Bay Area and "Little Tokyo" were on the surface more sophisticated, but evacuation had removed them from a setting which never had been anything but a "segregated" experience. Domestics had worked for the same employer on the Coast for twenty, thirty, forty years; gardeners the same. Even the nurserymen and laundry operators displayed terror at the thought of working out their problems in any other setting.

As probably can be read from the report of the Chief Medical Officer, there were evidences of group and indi-

vidual neurosis, which was undoubtedly true in every Center. Fortunately, our percentage of actual mental breakdown was surprisingly low. However, it had its effect on the general picture of relocation. Family splits; the tension between parents and children; general low morale which was reflected in terms of physical "ailments" and obscure symptoms -- all were factors with which the Relocation staff, as well as the medical staff, had to be concerned. However, these cases were handled as best we could do with the skills we had and, it is to be hoped, with not too serious results.

Administratively, the Relocation Division had very few really serious problems. We had the support and help of not only our Project Director, but virtually the entire administrative staff. Probably the most irksome difficulties were encountered in the Leave Office. We literally "wore out" three Leave Officers. It was a thankless job and should have been redefined to attract and hold persons capable of more real responsibility. Perhaps this difficulty could have been off-set on the project level by sharing with the Leave Officer more of the actual philosophy and content of the entire relocation job. But as it worked out at this project, the Leave Officer had more of the trials without the compensations, either monetary or spiritual.

Evacuee Property was ever a problem at the Central Utah Project and still is, even when the gates are closed behind the last evacuee resident. The first Evacuee Property Officer resigned as of March 1st, 1945 -- a very critical point in the project history. We had two detailed staff members in the interim, but not until July, 1945 did we succeed in filling this important post with a permanent appointment. At that time, the records of the Evacuee Property office were discovered to be not only in bad shape, but practically missing. The present Evacuee Property Officer has struggled against very serious handicaps and has done very well, considering all things. There is a vast accumulation of evacuee property in storage at the Center, but in the main, this is not the fault of the project but just the fact that a large number of Center residents have not yet found anything that approximates permanent housing. This is a factor which must be contended with in the next few months and we feel sure that the Evacuee Property Officer will work out solutions to the problem as soon as is possible.

The transportation problems were worked out satisfactorily with the help of the head of the Motor Transport Section. This was characteristic of the excellent cooperation which the Relocation Division enjoyed during the final days of stress. Checkable baggage was handled through the same Section Head and his crew. They worked hard and long in getting the baggage into Delta and properly checked and loaded. There may have been plenty of mistakes and mishaps in the matter of baggage handling but if there were, it was only because of the exigencies of time and pressure. Until the opening of Hunters Point housing to evacuees, every piece of baggage was individually checked on tickets purchased by project staff. Hunters Point baggage was loaded without checking but it was easily handled at the point of destination.

The Resettlement Assistance program was administered through the merged Relocation-Welfare Division and we stayed within our allotted funds. With the additional use of Public Assistance grants in cases where there was real need but eligibility for the Resettlement Assistance grants could not be established, we feel that we gave to each relocating family as much assistance as possible under our regulations. The control of these grants and the adjustment of problems arising from this Assistance program, was entirely in the hands of the Assistant Relocation Program Officer (formerly Head Counsellor of the Welfare Section), and he did an exceptionally fine job in working out an equitable distribution of the available funds.

The merger of the Welfare Section with the Relocation Division was a successful experiment and did much to simplify our work in the final months. The Relocation Advisors and Assistant Relocation Advisors were a group of people with mixed experience -- some with social service experience, others with other professional experience. However, after the initial orientation period, they all handled the same responsibilities as area supervisors or district workers and it was difficult to distinguish much difference in their performance on the job after they had mastered the necessary procedures and processes. Much credit for this is due to the Assistant Relocation Program Officer, who carried the major responsibility for their supervision.

To summarize, we do not doubt that the success of the job of relocating the evacuee population of the Central Utah Relocation Center was due primarily to a general philosophy and approach which held that the evacuee really wanted to relocate if they could be given the necessary courage, self-confidence and understanding assistance to take the step. The work of the Counseling staff of the Relocation Division centered around this approach. They persuaded people to prepare to relocate, with the assurance that they would not be "scheduled" to depart until adequate housing was secured for them. There were dark days when it seemed that our hundreds of already-packed Bay Area people would never have any place to go. But the housing announcement came and was met with real relief, not only by the evacuees but also the entire project staff. The rapidity and ease of moving these last few hundreds of people out of the Center after the housing announcement finally came, fully justified our confidence in their willingness and real desire to go.

We sincerely appreciate the attitude and faith of the Project Director and his staff in accepting this approach of the Relocation Division staff and permitting us to follow along this line of what sometimes must have seemed to them to be inaction in the face of the rapidly approaching "deadline." The job could not have been completed with nearly the same degree of satisfaction and pride had it not been for the confidence and assistance they gave us throughout the final trying days.

Part A

Central Utah Project
Relocation Division
Office Organization
April, 1943 - June, 1943

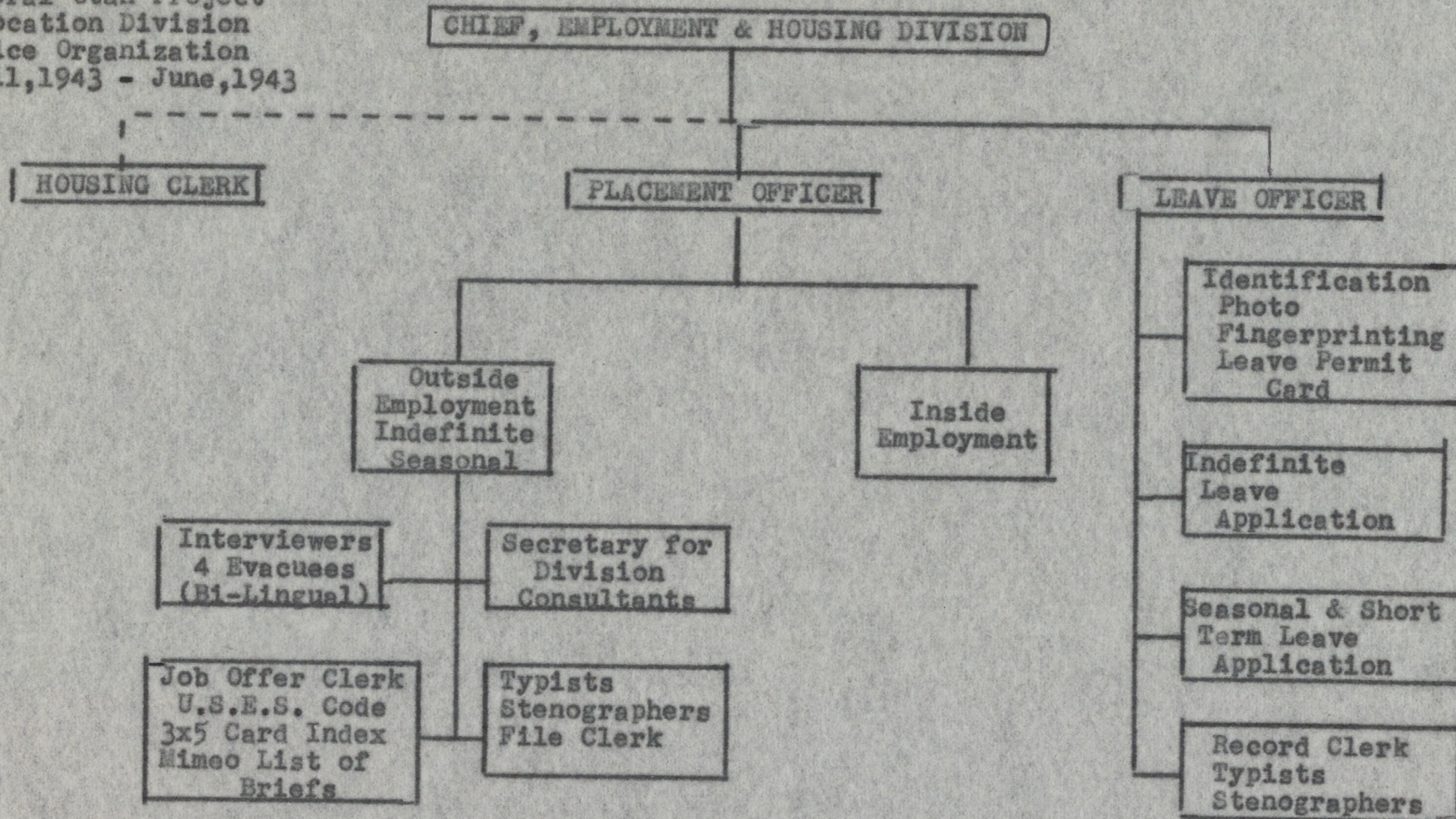


Chart B

Central Utah Project
Relocation Division
Office Organization
June 1943 - Feb. 1944

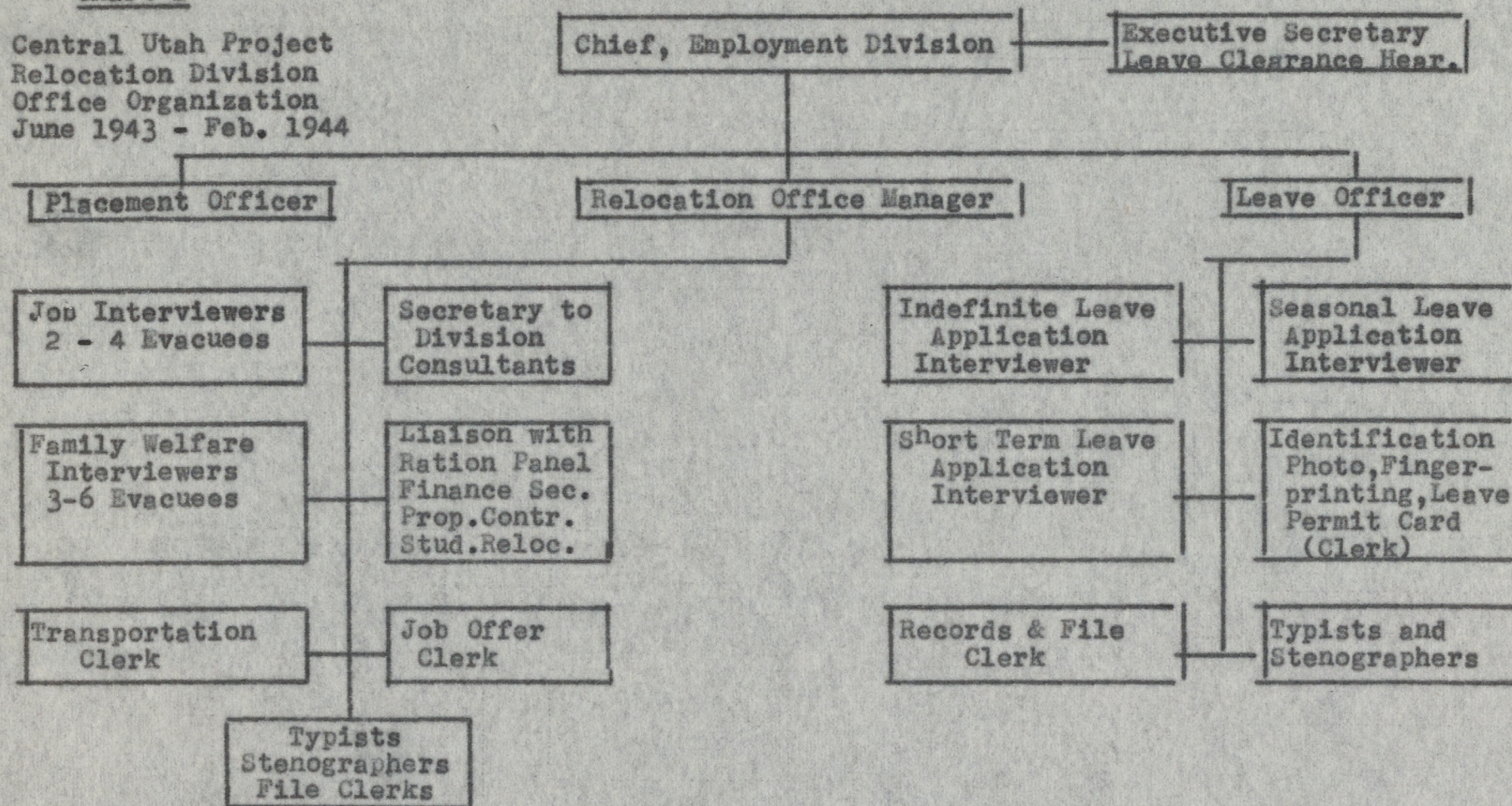
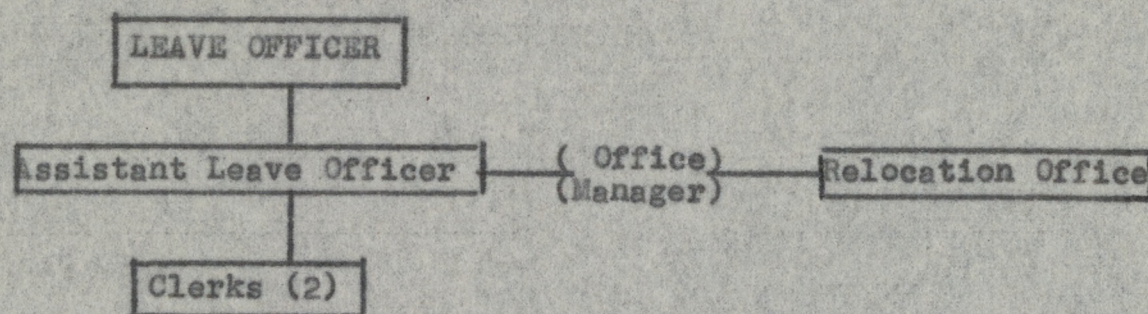


Chart C

Central Utah Project
Relocation Division
Office Organization
June 1943 - Feb. 1944



Relocation Office Flow

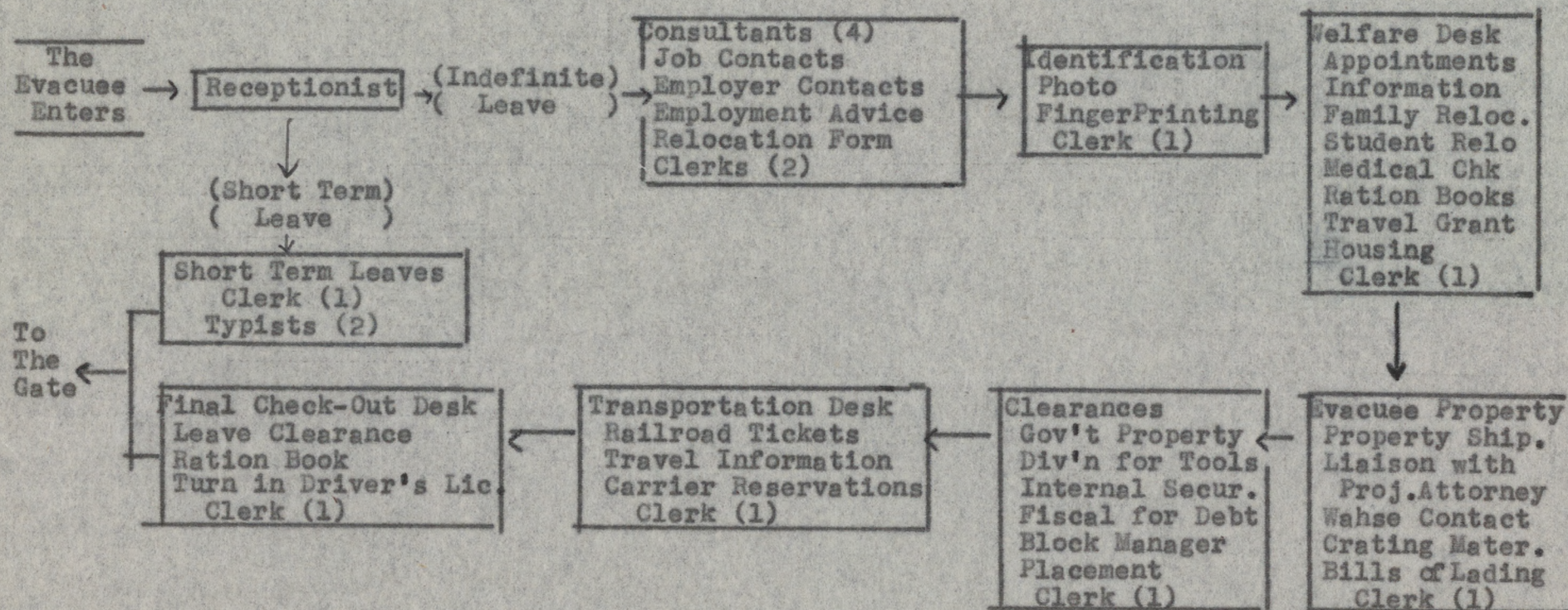


Chart D

Central Utah Project
Relocation Division
Office Organization
Feb. 1944 - May 1945.

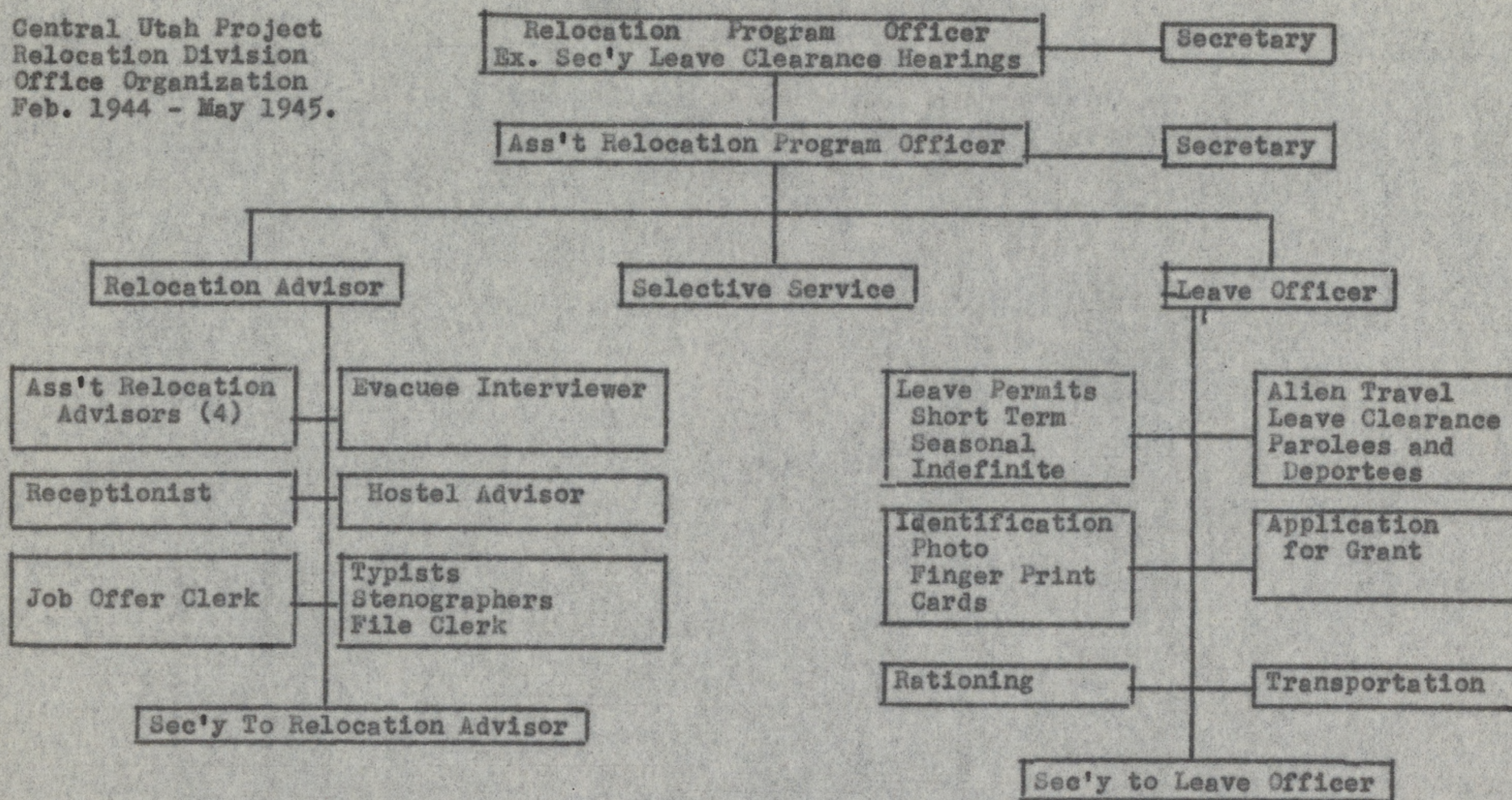


Chart E

Central Utah Project
Relocation Division
Office Organization
May 1945 -
Nov.1,1945

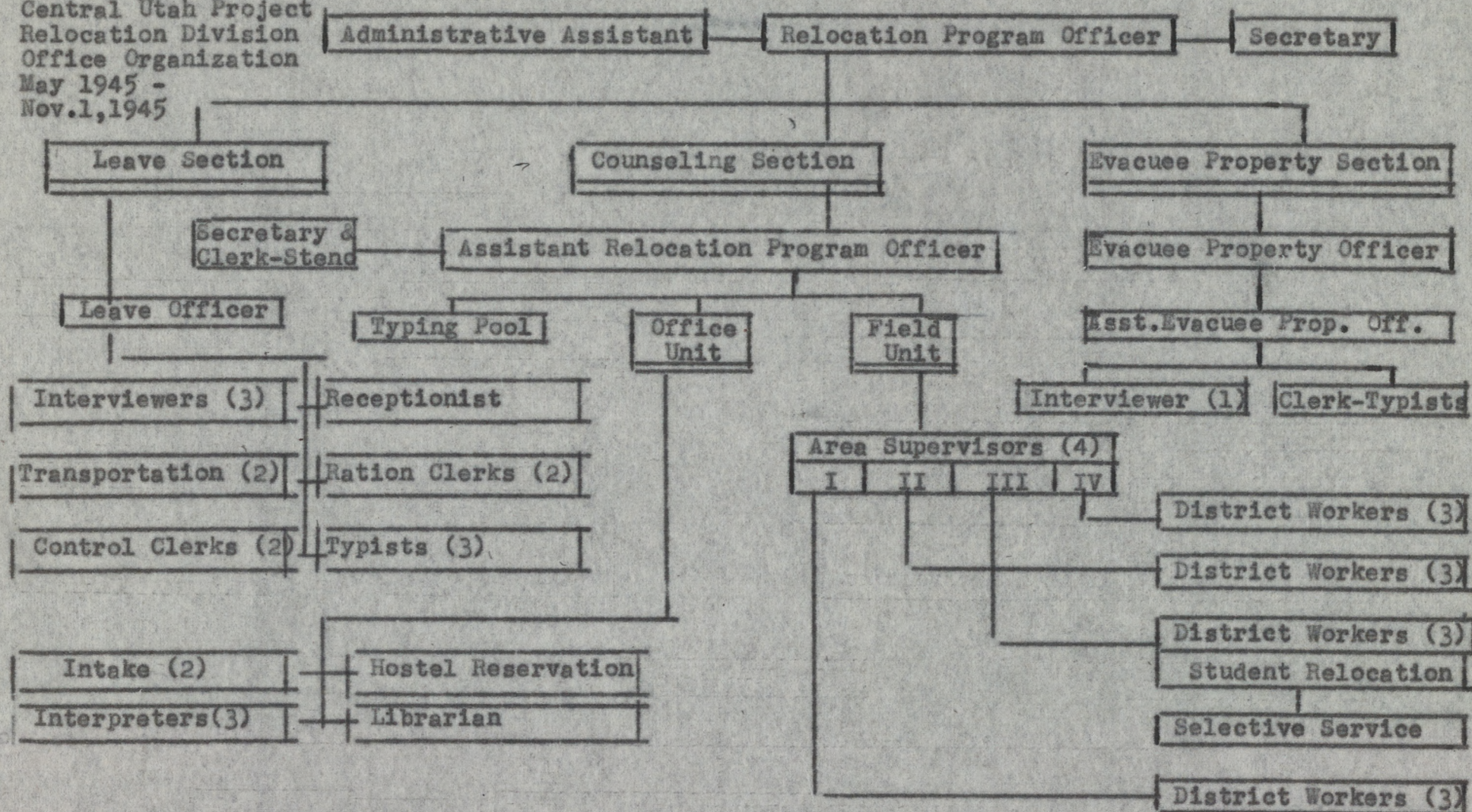


Chart F

Central Utah Project
Relocation Division
District Plan
May 1945-
Nov. 1945.

AREA
I

AREA
III

(XX - Offices)

District A	Relo- Welfare Headquarters	District C	District A	-	-	DISTRICT C
Elem. Sch.			District C	XX	XX	DISTRICT C
- DISTRICT		B - - -				
Vacant	District A	Community Center				Vacant
		Auditorium				
		Churches				
XX	XX	DISTRICT C	High School	XX	XX	XX
			District C		Elem. Sch.	

AREA
II

AREA
IV

WHA Library Washing. 3

H3.10

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH
12/20/45

CLOSING REPORT

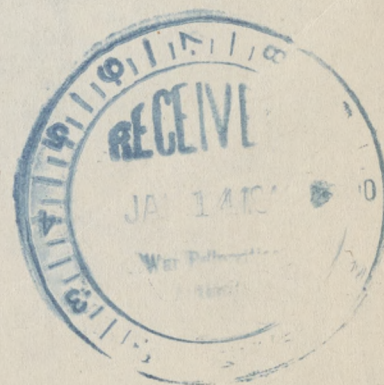
WELFARE SECTION

By

Claud H. Pratt, Counselor
From Sept. 11, 1943 to Center Closing

H 3:10

Benaroff Library



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT

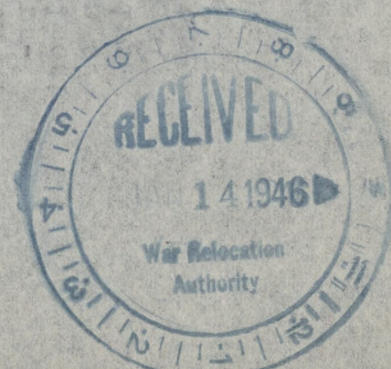
WELFARE SECTION REPORT

I. Chronological History

On September 11, 1942 a tired and weary vanguard of evacuated Japanese, the first of thousands more who were to follow, detrained in the middle of the great Central Utah Desert. This desert but a generation or two ago was the home of a poor Nomadic group of redmen, who with the aid of their crude bows and arrows were barely able to keep starvation from them by preying upon the numerous birds that seasonally made their home along the meandering channel of the sluggish stream, later called the Sevier River, or along the lakes formed by the disgorging of this stream.

The advent of this vanguard of unusually small men and women, into this land of the tall Piute and the lanky Mormon was like an invasion of a people from another world. The reception to their future home, which was to be the home of many for the next three years or more, was not a cheery one. The center with its rows and rows of buildings was still very much under construction. The whole project was completely enveloped in a cloud of dust and in the early mornings after the dust had settled, every object was coated white which gave the place a ghost-like appearance.

It is a tribute to the intelligence and foresightedness of the early planners of the program of the War Relocation Authority that they had the vision to include in their organization a Welfare Department. Certainly, this group of evacuees, who almost overnight found themselves unwanted strangers in a land that most of them had considered to be theirs either by birth or adoption needed the services of such a department. It is questionable whether the intelligent foresightedness which dictated the



establishment of a Welfare Department was followed up with a carefully planned program to utilize such a department to its greatest advantage in ameliorating the mental anguish and attendant physical discomfort to an insecure and frustrated population. The services outlined for the Welfare Department, at times were hardly worthy of the term "welfare" although, a needed service was given. Perhaps the point of argument here is not that the services were not necessary, but as will be shown later, many of the services rendered by the Welfare Department, were a far cry from helping those, with more or less extreme personality conflicts, to adjust to a very unhealthy and unnatural environment.

Mr. LaFabregue, the first Head Counselor of the Welfare Section, arrived literally in a cloud of dust, but full of enthusiasm, about September 12, 1942 and about the same time that the vanguard of Topaz evacuees reached this desolate wilderness of dust, burning sun, and tar paper buildings.

In true "LaFabregue" fashion no time was lost in setting into motion the wheels of the Welfare Department. By September 24, 1942 a staff of counselors and clerical personnel had been recruited and an organization shaped. Four Major Divisions were set up as follows: Family Counseling, Youth Counseling, Legal Counseling and Medical Counseling.

The Evacuee staff as then constituted was as follows:

- 2 Receptionists
- 1 Adm. Assistant
- 10 Field Workers (Jr. Counselors)
- 6 Supervisors (Sr. Counselors)
- 5 Clerk-Stenographers
- 2 Messengers
- 6 Ministers

The Welfare Section did a great deal from the very beginning of its organization to assist in planning receptions for the hordes of incoming residents who were to follow for the next few weeks. The Welfare Section's Youth Counseling Unit, which had the

responsibility for Student Relocation Counseling almost immediately became one of the busiest and most virile of its units. The week ending October 1, Student Relocation Counseling was given to eleven students. Other services given during this same week were visitor passes 11, medical counseling 7, advice on outside employment 6, and a wide variety of other services ranging from storage problems to problems of personal insurance.

The organization of the Welfare Section's Medical Department predates a medical social work organization in connection with the hospital Administration, and so we find this unit of Welfare making home visits to the families of hospital patients prior to the patients discharge to be sure that the home conditions were satisfactory for the patient to continue his recovery.

The Legal Division began having numerous requests for stove installations, permission for soldiers to visit families, funeral services and other miscellaneous requests. Before the Welfare Section had been functioning more than six weeks it started to handle problems dealing with repatriation and expatriation. This included counseling with families about such problems, and taking the necessary application where the evacuee desired to take such action.

For the next six months, the history of the Welfare Section is one of continuously increased services and responsibilities with an attendant increase in staff. In the meantime considerable change in organization was effected to meet the services demanded.

In the latter part of October, the Welfare Section assumed full responsibility for the assignment of evacuee housing, and for all subsequent adjustments, which in this stage of the development of Topaz was a considerable task. To accomplish this a housing unit was created, with a supervisor and appropriate staff.

In the early part of November the Welfare Section was given an added responsibility, that of processing clothing allowance grants for all eligible

center residents. An addition to the appointive staff was made in the person of a Clothing Unit Supervisor, Miss Adrain Altvater. Very shortly thereafter, supervision of the ministerial staff was transferred, and rightfully so, to the Community Activities Section.

By the beginning of January 1943 the Welfare Section had put on it's long pants and was now fully grown. With the addition of an Assistant Counselor, Mr. Harry Q. Johnson, there were three appointive staff members, with others soon to be added, and an evacuee staff of 87.

Ambitious plans were now made for the Welfare Section, especially by way of increasing the effectiveness of the Family Welfare Unit which became largely the responsibility of the new Assistant Counselor. A training program in casework techniques and project welfare administration was planned, which began the first week in February and continued for a number of weeks, to more or less die an early death because of the loss of staff and because of pressure of other problems.

The Family Unit was organized on a geographic basis, with four Area Supervisors and a Caseworker assigned to each block or block and a half as the case might be. This same pattern was later to be adopted by the Relocation Division, after it had merged with the Welfare Section during the last six months of the center's operation. It was planned that the block worker should keep in continuous contact with the families in his or her block and handle all problems arising therein. The first home visits were made the first week in January 1943, and the worker became acquainted with her families, and explained the services of the department. A few of the services which the Family Unit expected to bring to the people included: (1) Public Assistance (2) change of head for clothing allowance purposes (3) Repatriation applications and counseling (4) Visits to other centers (5) Inter-project transfers (6) The adjustment of family and individual problems etc. The objectives of

the Family Unit as set down in a statement of policy and instruction is given, "This division is all inclusive, dealing with the over all problems of family units. Looking after the daily needs by constant contact and consultations with families are the particular responsibilities of the family workers. To this division also falls the task of interpreting the policies and of fully explaining the services of the entire community Welfare Section to and for the residents, and reversely, by a familiarity with their problems, advising as to adjustment, additions, or deletions to the Departments' plan of work as may be seen necessary for its fullest effectiveness. Referrals and collaboration with the appropriate departments within the Division, as well as to and with those 'outside' agencies such as housing, recreation, and education will be another essential function of family workers. Briefly, then, the family division is in reality a family counseling division, responsible for the Welfare of the Family and it's members, and thus the community at large."

Shortly after the first of January 1943, the Medical Unit was dissolved, because the hospital had organized a Social Service Department. The Medical Department during the brief months of its existence, besides its service to individual cases, conducted a survey of crippled and handicapped children, completed a survey regarding the need for a diet kitchen, a survey regarding the need for an old folks home, survey of all children between 1 and 3 regarding baby diet, and list of all T.B. patients in the center. The medical division also instituted the "housekeeper service" which provided for house-keeping services into homes where the mother was ill or absent.

By the first of February 1943 a number of changes in the Welfare organization had taken place besides the discontinuance of the Medical Department. The Youth Unit had been subdivided into three distinct sub-units as follows: first, Child Welfare, second, Youth Counseling, and third, Student Relocation. The youth Counseling Unit was to be concerned with problems of juvenile delinquency, and with youths in danger of becoming delinquent. The Child Welfare Unit was to be concerned only with problems of children. This implied a very close relationship with the school in

order to give special attention to retarded, handicapped, and children presenting problems in behavior. The Student Relocation Unit was to counsel with prospective college students in helping them to secure admission to colleges or universities, and to gain the necessary clearance to enable them to attend.

The Family Unit was divided into Family Counseling, Adult Probation, Special Services, and Office Management. The Family Counseling Unit became concerned mainly with public assistance, changes of head, repatriation, Red Cross messages and other miscellaneous services. The Special Service Unit handled problems in which families or individuals were in conflict such as personality problems, mental difficulties etc., and funeral services. The Adult Probation Department dealt with adult offenders in a program of supervision designed to correct anti-social attitudes, etc.

The Housing and Clothing Units became highly specialized and highly organized. In addition the Head Counselor had a staff of staff officers including a Research Analyst, Public Relations Supervisor, Transfer Supervisor, Reports & Procedure Officer, Secretary, etc., which made the organization chart as of this date February 1943, look like that of the New York City Department of Public Welfare. At least thirty persons were placed in supervisory positions or were Staff Officials. It would seem that the organization at this point was extremely top heavy, too much organization with too many supervisors, and with units broken down into such a narrow sphere, that there was considerable overlapping and a great deal of confusion as to the responsibility of the respective units and subunits.

In March 1943, Mrs. Laura Lamb was added as an appointive staff member in charge of the housing unit, and Mrs. Goodman was added as Supervisor of the youth unit. This increased the appointive staff to its highest level at that time, a total of five.

During the first six months following the first of January 1943, Welfare became increasingly engrossed in two services, that of Relocation, and Repatriation and Expatriation.

Because of the particular kind of service given by the Welfare Section in Student Relocation Counseling, and its program of Family Counseling it soon found itself largely the center of Relocation Counseling for the project, so much so that by May of 1943, a reorganization of the Family Unit was effected in order to establish a Relocation Counseling Unit. The establishment of the Relocation Counseling Unit made it necessary to take some of the members of the staff from the Family Unit which left it without sufficient staff to continue its block workers set-up, whereby a worker was assigned one or two blocks and made continuous visits. The Family Unit was subsequently organized entirely on a functional basis with three units, 1 Public Assistance, 2 Family Relocation, 3 Personal Service. All other Units were left unchanged.

The Family Relocation Unit, with a supervisor in charge and 6 assistants, was set-up to interview every potential relocatee family. The list was to be obtained from the Employment Division. This unit also was to secure from the Leave Office a list of persons who had obtained leave clearance in order that contact might be made with them and with their families. The Unit then assisted persons and families to plan for relocation. Following their interview a brief summary was to be submitted to the Employment Division with definite recommendations as to the type of work the person or persons in a family desired, and something of their plans and desires. The Unit took the responsibility to see that plans were made to properly safeguard the Welfare of family members remaining behind. This Unit functioned as a part of Welfare until June 26, 1943 when it was transferred to the newly created Relocation Office formerly the Employment Office.

In the meantime considerable changes in staff took place both with appointive and resident personnel. Mr. Harry Q. Johnson the Assistant Counselor resigned in April 1943 and shortly thereafter Laura Lamb left the Housing Unit and Mrs. Goodman left the Youth Unit. Mrs. Lamb's responsibility was given to Miss Altvater who was then in charge of both the Housing and Clothing Units. Louise Watson was added to the Staff about May 1, to take over the supervision of the Youth Unit. In the meantime the ration

office was added to the responsibilities of the Welfare Section, and Mrs. Verna Murray was employed as Ration Clerk.

With the transfer to the Relocation Office of the Family Relocation Unit on June 26, 1943 plans were made to place greater emphasis on the remaining functions of the Welfare Section Program, but about this time announcements began to come through from Washington about the Segregation or Transfer program in which the Welfare Section was to play a most important role. The Head of Welfare, Mr. LaFabregue, was appointed Transfer Officer and organized a transfer organization out of the Welfare Section Staff which operated quite independently from Welfare.

July 19, 1943 Mr. Claud H. Pratt was added to the Welfare Staff as Assistant Counselor and during the succeeding three months was quite largely responsible for the functioning of the Welfare program.

The Transfer Officer, worked directly under the Project Director. A special Segregation or Transfer Counseling Section was established in a part of the Community quite removed from the Welfare Section, and Mrs. Louise Watson, who had been head of the Youth Unit was put in charge of this unit. Eight evacuees from the Family and Child Welfare Units of the Welfare Section were used as receptionists, interpreters, and counselors. Three appointive staff school teachers were detailed to the Transfer Unit as counselors.

The transfer period, during which approximately fifteen-hundred persons were transferred to Tule Lake, and a like number received from it, was a period of great stress to the center residents. The Welfare Section showed a very sympathetic, yet objective attitude in dealing with the problems facing individuals and families. Many families were completely divided. Parents wanted to apply for repatriation and the children wanted no part of Japan. This oftentimes caused considerable feelings between members of families. Many children succumbed to the parental influence and conceded to the parents wishes. Others held doggedly to their own convictions and refused to take any steps to accompany parents to Tule. In many instances where children disobeyed the wishes

of the parents, they found themselves in a state of torment. They became burdened with a feeling of guilt which was very frustrating to them. On the other hand, parents whose children made decisions contrary to theirs, were greatly disturbed. They felt this action on the part of their children was extreme disobedience, and a repudiation of them. To help individuals and families to face such situations squarely and with a healthy disposition of mind was the challenge met by the Welfare Section.

With the Transfer program completed by the end of September it appeared that the Welfare Section might again approach normality, if there was such a thing as a norm in this section's activities. Following the completion of this program it was necessary to recruit many new evacuee staff members since a large number of very capable and industrious employees had transferred to Tule, and during the same period many other valuable members of the staff relocated, leaving gaps in the organization. It never again was possible to replace many of the persons who left during the summer of 1943. Many among them were college-trained people and outstanding employees. The sifting process began, leaving largely Issei and young girls to staff and service a department designed as one to give professional service.

On December 1, 1943 the head of the Welfare Section, Mr. LaFabregue was promoted to the position of Personnel Officer, and the Assistant Counselor, Claud Pratt, was made acting head of the section.

The organization, at this date, on the appointive staff level, consisted of an Acting Head Counselor and a Supervisor of the housing and clothing sections. The Housing and Clothing Supervisor was soon to transfer leaving only one appointive staff person in the section for several months. The quota of evacuee personnel, which had been around 99 in the early summer had been reduced to 48. Some streamlining of the organization was effected combining some of the smaller sub-units, so that we now had under the Family Unit: Public Assistance, Personal Services, Files, and Special Services, and under the Youth Unit: Child Welfare and Student Relocation; and the Housing and Clothing Units. This organizational structure remained virtually the same, except with increasingly fewer evacuee personnel, and some additions to the

to the appointive personnel, until the merger of the Welfare Section with the Relocation Division.

On the basis of a letter dated November 7, 1943 from Leland Barrows, then Acting Director of WRA, and an accompanying draft on procedures for a special counseling program, which was to be under direction of the head of the Welfare Section, beginning shortly after December 1, 1943, this Section began making plans to prosecute this program, although instructions from Washington had indicated that they were yet to send additional information and develop forms necessary for this program.

However, since such additional information and forms were not forthcoming it was decided that this project should go ahead with what information had been received as to the objectives of the program, and develop forms and procedures.

It was decided to begin with approximately 20 teams recruited from the appointive staff and residents to do the job of interviewing and counseling. A team was to consist of one appointive staff person and one resident. The appointive staff member was to carry the main responsibility for the interview and the counseling, the resident member was to be identified only as an interpreter since most residents found it unpopular to be identified with Relocation, and did not want to be considered a part to any plan of the Administration for stimulating relocation.

This relocation counseling program, was to be known as the Family Discussion Program, since it was determined that the word "discussion" when translated into Japanese described more nearly the friendly non-coercive kind of interviews intended by this program, in which family and individual problems tending to prevent or postpone relocation, could be carefully discussed with the idea of interviewer and interviewee working out a solution together.

To begin the discussions a group of one hundred families was selected for interviews. These were all families who had one or more members already

relocated, and were thought to be the most receptive group. Interviewing offices were set up at two central points in the center and letters sent out inviting heads of families to come in for an interview. The response to the first 100 invitations was quite good; 87 persons responding. After a short respite following interviews with these first 87 persons, interviews were continued for about four weeks on pretty much this same basis.

Splendid cooperation was experienced with the Relocation Division and the Statistics Section. A joint case review committee, consisting of the Relocation Program Officer, the Counselor, and the Medical Social Worker, reviewed the case records and narratives of the interviews, and segregated cases into categories for follow-up work.

In this initial counseling set-up there were administrative difficulties which made such a procedure very burdensome. Appointive staff members were busy, and to give two to four extra hours each week from their own work to the Discussion Program worked a hardship on them. In most instances the best qualified appointive personnel were too busy to give time to such a program, and when they did they were under pressure to conclude the interviews as rapidly as possible. Also, with the large number of interviews scheduled, and many of them taking place at the same time the program took on much the appearance of a registration.

Discussions were discontinued through the latter part of February and the first half of March 1944 until the Welfare Section could recruit appointive staff personnel to do the job. In March an Assistant Counselor, Miss Margaret Mack, and a Junior Counselor, Mr. Ralph Earle, were employed. Mr. Earle was first assigned to Family Discussions and worked for a short time alone, and a few weeks later a second Junior Counselor was employed to help him. During this period, the Assistant Counselor was assigned duties in the supervision of the Personal Services, the Child Welfare, and the Public Assistance Units. The first part of May of 1944, Miss Mack was put in charge of the Family Discussion Unit with two Junior Counselors to assist her. Interviews were held in the Welfare Office. Only about one-half of the persons invited responded to the first invitation. However, these discussions

were much more fruitful. They were given under more relaxed circumstances and considerable follow-up work was done. These discussions continued throughout the greater part of 1944 and ended in November with nearly all center residents having been contacted at least once. About 1500 family heads had been interviewed once or more.

It is difficult to evaluate the results of the Family Discussion Unit because there is no way of knowing to what extent a discussion with a family or a person caused them to relocate earlier than they might otherwise have done.

It is believed that those interviews which were conducted by experienced counselors, and under proper conditions, helped many to think about their problem in more realistic terms, and must have helped toward relocation. The value of such a program depends largely upon the type of personnel, and it would be better not to attempt such a program if well-qualified persons were not available. The success of such a program cannot be measured by the number of interviews held.

From May 1944 to September 1944 the Welfare Section had the services of Anna Sundwall who worked as Assistant Counselor. She did a great deal of intensive work on a number of cases, and gave good direction and guidance to her evacuee staff in handling problems of children and problems of adults who were in conflict. Problems in adoption, truancy, stealing and sex behavior, were typical of the professional type of service given to children, and problems relating to mental behavior mistreatment of children by parents, and marital difficulty were typical of the services given to adults. Some of the very best case work done by the section was done either by Miss Sundwall, or under her supervision.

In November 1944, Miss Dorothy Kiester was employed to fill the vacancy made by Miss Sundwall's resignation, and it was at about this same time that a survey was made of the dependency cases in the center in anticipation of an announced closing of the center. Miss Kiester was in the section a little over three months. She was given the supervision of the Personal Services, the Public Assistance and Child Welfare Units. The standard of

services in these units suffered a severe setback.

With the lifting of the general exclusion order and the subsequent announcement of the center closing, the beginning of the year 1945 found the Welfare Section concerned with working out suitable relocation plans for the dependency population, and to secure authorization for their return to their state of legal residence. The latter part of January two new Junior Counselors were employed. This increased the appointive staff to six; a Counselor, two Assistant Counselors, and three Junior Counselors. One Assistant Counselor remained only until March, when she resigned. She was never replaced as long as Welfare remained as a separate and independent section.

At the beginning of 1945 the Evacuee Staff totaled 25. Six persons were in the clothing unit, three in housing, and of the remaining 15, nine were doing stenographic or clerical work, so that there were only six persons working as counselors and interpreters.

In the Welfare Section during the first five months of 1945 the major emphasis was placed on working out dependency summaries and attempting to obtain acceptance of financial responsibility for dependent persons from their State of residence. However, there was no let-up on service to other center residents requesting assistance or being referred for services of any kind.

The section cooperated with the Medical Social Worker and the Chief Medical Officer in working with persons who were extremely neurotic or had marked psychotic tendencies, and in helping families of such persons to understand them and face their problems. Problems involving children, and all types of cases requiring intensive study and care were handled from day to day.

In May, 1945 the Welfare Section merged with the Relocation Division. This merger was initiated by Miss Vera McCord and Robert Dolins of the Washington Office, and agreed to by the head of the Relocation Division and the head of the

Welfare Section. A considerable period of adjustment was required before the Welfare and Relocation Staffs reached a harmonious relationship. Each Section had specialized largely in its job and persons within the respective division or section had likewise specialized in a particular job. The merger meant that each worker must handle all problems in his or her district. Some workers were near casualties. For example, one relocation worker, who had been an agriculture employee, had specialized in advising evacuees on farm problems. It was now necessary for him to handle a case load, to advise on all types of relocation and welfare problems, and write case summaries on dependency cases. He was unhappy in his new assignment and accomplished little. Some others failed to adjust completely to their new assignment, although, most workers were able to fit into the picture quite well.

It is not easy to say with any certainty whether the merger of Welfare and Relocation was a good or a bad move. There is no question, but that on paper it was highly logical, and under the proper conditions would have worked out well. In the mind of the writer, it seems that the organization was ponderous and top heavy without the lines of authority being clearly enunciated. With the small staff of Assistant Relocation Advisors and Jr. Counselors assigned to the case work duties, there was no need for four Area Supervisors. At times an Area Supervisor had only one or two people under his or her supervision and was forced to do much of the counseling and case work himself. This weakened his position as a supervisor, because he became absorbed in case work duties, and became too busy in those duties to give direction to his subordinates.

The role played by the Administrative Assistant to the Relocation Program Officer was often confusing to the staff. He worked very close to the Relocation Program Officer, and in carrying out many assignments worked directly with the Junior counselor and assistant relocation advisor.

Under the system followed by the division after the merger, whereby a worker was responsible for all types of services within a district, certain types of services were not handled as well as under the

more specialized type of organization such as had existed under Welfare. This often resulted in some confusion with slip-ups occurring. When Welfare was an independent section, and the Public Assistance Unit a separate Unit, there was only one unit to be notified about changes in the family, and about changes in employment among family members. Under the merger, it was necessary that four Area Supervisors be notified of all changes, and the four Area Supervisors in turn would have to see that each worker was notified. There seemed to be too many things for each district worker to think about at the same time which caused confusion and some inefficiency. Sometimes a resident continued to get Public Assistance after he began working.

On the other hand the assignment of responsibilities on a geographic basis theoretically had many advantages. The district worker had the opportunity to become well acquainted with each family in his or her block. This, of course, was not entirely true because of the rapid turnover in personnel. The residents also had the opportunity to become better acquainted with his worker, and because of this closer acquaintance came to have greater confidence in him as a representative of the WRA, and likewise more confidence in the WRA.

II. PROBLEMS OF OFFICE SPACE AND EQUIPMENT

There is nothing especially pertinent regarding office space and equipment. It was never possible to have an entirely satisfactory office arrangement affording privacy to all counselors. However, under the circumstance, and in relation to the total camp facilities, Welfare enjoyed reasonably good facilities. There were times when work was interfered with because of fires not having been made in the coal stoves, or because the coal stoves became clogged, and smoked up the office, but usually conditions were from fair to good. Welfare was always supplied adequate office equipment.

III. STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

The professional standards of the Welfare Section would probably compare with a newly organized Public

Welfare Agency of most States and Counties. However because of the newness of the organization, and the fact that the case work responsibility was assigned largely to evacuee personnel without previous social work, training or experience, it could not be expected that the highest standard of performance would be achieved. During the first year of the center the evacuee staff was very good material. There were many college-trained people and persons with valuable experience. However, beginning from about the time of the segregation program in September 1943, it was difficult to obtain promising staff members for professional assignments. During much of the time the Welfare Section was short on appointive staff members who were adequately qualified to give casework supervision, consequently, standards were not raised. The evacuee counselors seemed to delight in handling problems of marital difficulty, and invariably before they finished, the case would be almost a public scandal. Groups of friends, neighbors, or councilmen would be brought in to hear the circumstance, pass judgment, and persuade the parties. Often they were very subjective and showed a disposition to want to punish the party or parties whom they considered to be in the wrong.

IV. THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The first Public Assistance payments were made about January 1943. It was at this time, when a worker in the Welfare Section covered one or two blocks, and was completely responsible for all service within them, that Public Assistance first got its start and gained momentum. The block workers began systematic visits to all families in their blocks to explain the services of the Welfare Section, and the residents privileges in the center. The old, infirm and otherwise unemployable were told about Public Assistance so that by the summer of 1943 it was a full grown program with around 240 cases, and about 400 recipients with a monthly expenditure of approximately \$3100. The number of cases, recipients, and money amount, varied little from this in subsequent months until the last three or four months of operation. There was never any attempt to establish budgets, and if a person or family was without project income and was certified by the medical division as



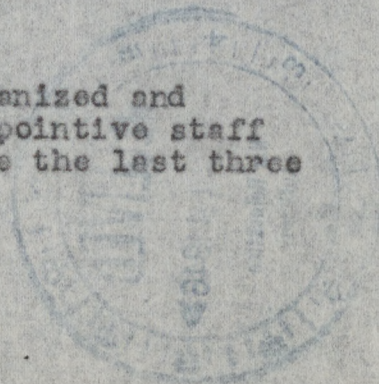
being unemployable, or if a woman was alone with young children, they were given the maximum grant as outlined in the manual on Public Assistance, 30-4-12-etc. Special grants were given freely upon application to persons applying for Assistance for the purchase of glasses or baby layettes. Some discretion was used in establishing eligibility, but no written policy was set down, so that it was relatively easy for a resident to secure a special grant if the wife expected confinement, or if someone who was not employed was certified medically to be in need of glasses. Public Assistance was given to the families of a husband and father who had relocated. Some of these grants continued for a long period of time after the family wage earner had relocated, usually upon the statement of the wife that the husband was not yet able to send money home.

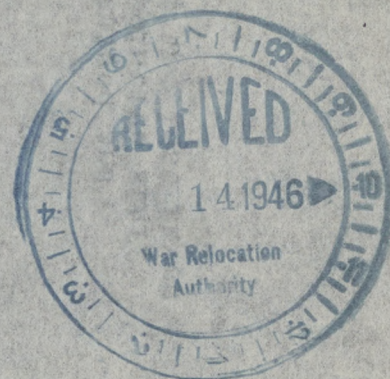
Later an instrument called "A Working Supplement on Public Assistance" was developed breaking assistance applicants into categories. It eliminated the necessity for a medical certification of unemployability as a prerequisite to Public Assistance for anyone over 65; it limited to three months the period that the family of a relocated head and wage earner could draw assistance without an investigation and report from the field office; and it set down a certain basis related to need and income, upon which special grants could be given for layettes and glasses.

The evacuees came into the center with pretty strong scruples against taking public aid in the form of assistance grants, and many who were in need because of age and infirmity had to be more or less convinced that there was nothing degrading or disgraceful about taking such assistance if one were in need. There were some as always, who, once they received Public Assistance were eager to keep it regardless of their need.

V. THE CLOTHING ALLOWANCE PROGRAM

The Clothing Allowance Program was organized and supervised for the first year by an appointive staff person. From then on until just before the last three





months of the center an evacuee staff carried on the job almost without supervision. There were few written policies developed, and perhaps the greatest problem in its administration was to determine who might be classed as the dependents of a wage earner, and who was to be the head of a family for clothing purposes. A change of head Form was devised to allow an evacuee to formally request changes in head from one member to another, depending usually upon who in the family was employed. Efforts to get clarification from the Washington Office always yielded nothing, and the center's policy in this respect became quite liberal so that it allowed almost any employed family member to assume the headship. The clothing allowance, was never great enough to meet adequately the needs of center residents, and some of the larger families found it difficult to get along on their project income, especially if there was only one employable member in the family.

VI. THE WELFARE SECTION'S PART IN RE-UNITING FAMILIES

The Welfare Section did everything possible to help reunite families. Following segregation there were members of families originally scheduled to go to Tule Lake who weren't able to go with the big movement because of illness, and were never able to proceed there. This was upsetting to them, but there seems only an instance or two where hardship was caused.

VII. CASEWORK SERVICES

From the beginning, the Welfare Section considered it a major responsibility to counsel with families and individuals on problems of delinquency, personal maladjustment, family difficulties and broken homes. Some of these cases were referred from other sections such as education or health, or from other evacuees; while in many instances the persons involved sought the help of the Welfare Section. Some of these problems were handled almost entirely by evacuee workers while others were handled by appointive staff counselors. The request for another service sometimes brought the problem before Welfare, for example, the woman who sought a transfer to another center to get away from her husband, or the husband who came in to see about getting an intruder into his family removed to another center.

The Welfare Section always had a Child Welfare Unit, although, there were periods of time when the section had only one or two appointive staff personnel in the entire section, and the evacuees assigned to the Child Welfare Unit could hardly be expected to carry on any intensive casework treatment. Typical of the cases handled was the fifteen year old boy who was separated from his parents by segregation, and for whom plans had to be made; the care of a mother who was committed to the State mental hospital leaving two small children. In another instance work was done for a child who had a deformed hand and with his parent. The deformity caused the boy to be very retiring and to completely withdraw from normal activities. His mother likewise felt and showed embarrassment much to the boy's detriment. Numerous truancy and stealing problems, a number of adoption cases, and other child welfare problems were handled.

VIII. WELFARE COOPERATION WITH OTHER SECTIONS, DIVISIONS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Welfare Section has always been able to work in close cooperation with other Sections within the Community Management Division as well as with other Sections outside of the Division.

The first important cooperative relationship was with the Medical Division prior to the time it developed its own Social Service Department. The Welfare Section maintained a Medical Unit that worked closely with the hospital. The hospital would refer to the Welfare Section's Medical Unit cases of patients about to be discharged from the hospital. The Welfare Section's Medical Unit would give the same type of service that was later performed by the Hospital's Medical Social work staff. As heretofore mentioned Welfare enjoyed a very close working relationship with the old Employment Division, later the Relocation Division, from the very beginning until Welfare's merger with Relocation. This became especially intensified during the Family Discussion Program. Welfare worked closely with the Community Council, meeting regularly with the Council's Welfare Committee. A close relationship was likewise enjoyed with the Block Manager's Organization,



Education, Inter-Faith, and Internal Security. All of the above Sections and Organizations were represented on a Youth Welfare Committee which met monthly to discuss youth problems, and effect the greatest cooperation. Each of these Sections and Organizations referred cases to Welfare, and Welfare sought to work with them in the solution of a particular problem. A close working relationship was enjoyed with the Red Cross Chairman, Mr. Kabo in giving assistance to servicemen and their families, as well as others requesting help which involved both Welfare and Red Cross.





WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH

CLOSING REPORT

EVACUEE PROPERTY

Central Utah Project
Topaz, Utah

Evac. Prop.

NARRATIVE REPORT

EVACUEE PROPERTY OFFICE

The Evacuee Property Office was established at the Central Utah Relocation Center, Topaz, Utah, on April 15, 1943, by the undersigned Evacuee Property Officer who arrived at Topaz from San Francisco on that date. Prior to that time the demands of that office were met by the Project Attorney's resident staff who carried on this activity as a secondary branch of their work.

From a broad standpoint the objective of the Evacuee Property Office was to assist the evacuated residents of the Pacific coast in all matters relating to their personal property, its transportation and storage and their real property. With this objective in mind then, the division was set up with headquarters of the transportation section in San Francisco, with representative in Los Angeles, Portland and Seattle. In conjunction with each office of the transportation section, there was established eventually a Government warehouse to be used for the free storage of personal effects, household furniture and commercial property of the evacuated owners. Paralleling the transportation section of the evacuee property division setup, was the establishment of evacuee property supervisors and the appointment of a staff of these men, whose responsibility was the active supervision of real property owned by evacuated residents of the Pacific coast, and which of necessity was left either under lease to or custodianship of others. In addition to real property in the foregoing status, there was at that time a great many pieces of land and real property that had been sold by these people, the terms of which sales had been hurriedly worked out, and the legal requirements of such sales were in rather precarious condition.

The Evacuee Property Division then was set up to care for and protect the interest of evacuated owners of both real and personal property.

The project evacuee property office was established in each project so that residents in the centers would have the facilities of first, seeking personal advice and guidance in the handling of their individual property problems, and second, where they could personally initiate any action within the framework of manual instructions which they might desire and which through project evacuee property office would be carried on to the Pacific coast supervisors for appropriate assistance.

The undersigned evacuee property officer, as stated above, opened the evacuee property office at the Central Utah Relocation Center and proceeded to carry out the over-all duties of the office. It was first found necessary to publicize the opening of the office through various means. Stories were publicized in the project newspaper, announcements were made at various administrative staff meeting, so that information could be carried through each project section to the residents. The evacuee property officer appeared before resident groups such as the community council, block manager's, and so forth, and explained to them the facilities offered and emphasized the necessity of inviting any and all interested residents to call at the office to take advantage of those facilities. The response was immediate, but it is fair to say that the most valuable publicity was derived by word of mouth discussions by individual residents as they experienced successful handling of their problems and profited thereby. Such publicity, as the above-mentioned, progressively increased the business of the office until the peak-load of cases was experienced about the middle part of 1944.

It must be stated here that the complex nature of many real property problems of residents were such that their successful handling by correspondence was at times extremely difficult. It was obvious that information given by the resident owner to the evacuee property officer on the project, and the statement of facts concerning the case as obtained by him, could not always agree with the statement of facts obtained from the other end through the property supervisor on the Pacific coast. And this fact, together with the absence of any written agreement or legal document, was an obstacle that was surmounted only by the most intelligent handling from both ends.

From the residents' standpoint, it is quite true that owing to the suddenness of the evacuation order and the limited time in which to safely dispose of assets, many evacuated persons found that they had to leave their homes with only the

most careless and ineffective procedures taken to protect themselves. This situation led to many cases of outright fraud on the part of buyers, lessees, and custodians.

This one factor of forced evacuation, of course, had its lasting effect upon the residents of the centers. Not only was there a very apparent feeling of frustration, but combined with that emotion was a bitterness which seemed to be the uppermost in the minds of most residents. Therefore, in discussing business and property problems with residents of this project, this office felt that it was part of its duty not only to assist all possible in conserving what assets could be saved, but at the same time to make an effort to improve the condition of these people by restoring their thinking to normal channels. We are of the opinion that the real feelings of the people of the project were brought out more markedly in discussions of their business problems than anywhere else on the project, since such discussion eventually developed into a statement of their personal feelings on many matters including, of course, their evacuation to relocation centers.

The evacuee property officer, feeling that a great many property cases would have legal aspects, requested that his office be close to the project attorney's, so that discussion of cases between the property officer and the attorney would be the order of affairs. We also have insisted that a resident member of either the project attorney's staff or the staff of the property office be available at all times as interpreter. It was very noticeable, as cases developed, that middle aged and older issei were very backward about discussing their private business affairs with a property officer, until they had decided in their own minds that he was entirely trustworthy and would treat their statements entirely confidential. This office then, has been particularly fortunate in having the services of one of the most highly respected Japanese issei from this center, who was liked and respected by every member of the community. This man was invaluable in discussing business problems of every nature from the standpoint of the Japanese thinking. Therefore, while we believe other project property officers have had access to project attorney in appropriate matters, we do not believe such a setup was sufficient, and feel that the general procedure established here resulted in a combination of offices which could render a maximum of efficient service. This office was particularly fortunate in obtaining the services of outstanding secretaries of the project, and their help and familiarity with the Japanese business problems in general was a factor that lent completeness to the whole organization. In speaking of

the property organization at Topaz, we have always felt that the location of the office had an important bearing upon its effectiveness. And with the locations available in the administrative section of the project, we have been most active in securing a location that was central, that was easily accessible, and that once established in its location, have attempted to have it stay put. We have of necessity been moved occasionally, but we must go on record and say that such movement should not be permitted, except for exceptional reasons.

We feel it fitting to emphasize here that the organization of the property office on this center, in conjunction with the resident attorney's office, has been most effective in its results. And we must say that as the reputation of the persons involved became established, we were able to serve the residents in such a wide scope of service, so that there was an ever increasing demand for advice and assistance which was carried on independent of property organization on the Pacific coast. Therefore, it is worthy of note that while the case-load reached its peak in mid-year of 1944, we have not placed in category of "cases" all those innumerable services which were performed and completed on the project. While the case-load has diminished, as we have been able to close these cases with the help of Pacific coast offices, the service load, which has been and is being performed, is ever increasing, and with the lifting of the exclusion order, we find the service and assistance requested increasing steadily up to the present time.

One of the peculiar condition which is present in this center and which has considerable influence on the evacuee property office is the fact that a great majority of our residents are formerly from San Francisco and the bay region. Furthermore, a great majority are business people, and most of them have made agency arrangements with someone to care for their property as custodian. The result is that leases, rental arrangements, and so forth, are in many cases handled by private custodians, therefore, instead of referring cases to this office, which require the assistance of the Pacific coast property organization, most of these request for assistance entail requesting the advice in matters pertaining to their property, and then the composing of letters direct to agents. We, therefore, have devoted considerable time to this sort of assistance, and have escaped in many cases the necessity of referring these matters to the property supervisors on the Pacific coast. We believe that a large percentage of residents

here are more business-wise, and therefore took steps to protect themselves however meager, prior to evacuation. And the steps that they took usually included the appointment of an agent, the appointment of an attorney-in-fact, and other customary procedure. The results of these actions on their part, while not entirely successful owing to the poor class of Caucasian representatives chosen, did result in a condition whereby their real property was supervised to some extent. The misunderstandings with and the malpractice of, these representatives has been the subject of much discussion in this office with interested parties, and we believe we have been successful in ironing out many difficulties which involved many residents.

Probably not in accord with practice at other projects, the property officer at Central Utah has taken care of all income tax problems of the residents, assisted in the preparation of income tax returns which program has amounted to a considerable load during February and March of each year.

The property office has, during the period of its existence, distributed some \$75,000 in cash to residents which resulted from collections of rents, past due accounts, proceeds of sales, and so forth. The sale of securities has amounted to fair proportions, and small blocks of stock have been sold through brokerage houses in San Francisco at various times at the request of residents. We might say that the service given by brokerage houses has been excellent.

The problem of blocked accounts had considerable attention in this office, and much correspondence has taken place with the Federal Reserve Bank in clarifying the status of the accounts of various residents here.

We believe that this office has been quite effective in furthering the relocation program, and has lent its cooperation and assistance in effecting many relocation plans. The fact is that we originally suggested and put into effect the procedure whereby all prospective relocatees were routed through this office before leaving the center on indefinite leave, so that the evacuee property officer might discuss and assist wherever possible in any business or transportation problems which might present themselves prior to their departure. We believed and do believe that correlating the activities and duties of one section with another in W. R. A. is essential for attaining the objectives sought.

The second important function of this office has been the handling of household goods and personal effects both from this project for relocated families, and in and from the Pacific coast for the residents of this project, and we have necessarily devoted a great deal of time and effort to the smooth operations of the facilities offered for the transportation and storage of personal property. From the time of the assembly centers on through the relocation centers, the problem of personal belongings has been an enormous one, and the handling of these goods was fraught with so many obstacles that the successful care of these belongings has been the major accomplishment of the transportation section of the evacuee property division. From both the viewpoints of the project and from the transportation officers on the Pacific coast, the facilities offered by W. R. A. for both storage and transportation have been exceedingly difficult to put into effect. Personal belongings were insecurely stored and left in most every conceivable place, including garages, basement storerooms, and rooms set aside for such purpose in the dwelling. Some storage rooms were locked, some were boarded up, but in almost every case, precautions taken were insufficient. Theft and vandalism were invited by the careless storage of valuable personal belongings. In most cases no accurate inventory was taken. As requests under WRA 155 and WRA 156 for storage and or transportation were forwarded for processing, the period which had elapsed between the actual storing of the property and the pick-up by W. R. A. was of such duration that in many cases it was impossible to reconcile the actual amount of property found at the designated storage place, with the owner's statement as to the actual amount of goods stored at the time of evacuation. From the fall of 1943 to mid-summer of 1944, the number of these requests originating from the project more than swamped the facilities of the transportation section on the Pacific coast. There was, therefore, necessarily, delay between the filing of the request and the completion of the pick-up. This, of course, led to much complaint between residents, and owing, no doubt, to the limited facilities on the Pacific coast, led to dissatisfaction among the owners of these goods.

There is no doubt that this handling of personal property and household equipment by the transportation section was an enormous job, and it was perfectly logical to expect that it could not be handled entirely satisfactory to all persons concerned. While this office and other project property offices bore the brunt of considerable complaint, it was ours and their duty to explain the circumstances to dissatisfied residents, and to assure them that everything

possible had been done to protect their interest and property. We think it a fine tribute to the residents of the projects that there were not more of this type of complaint. We do believe, however, that had the realization come to the transportation section on the Pacific coast earlier, that the whole program was strictly in the storage and warehousing business, they would have ironed out their difficulties more quickly and would have been able to operate with less delay and less trouble than was generally apparent. While various residents claimed to have suffered considerable losses of certain items in the general processing of their personal property, the great majority of persons were eventually quite satisfied with the service rendered by W. R. A. Both this office and the staff on the Pacific coast had been the recipients of many compliments as to the condition of the San Francisco Government warehouse, offered by residents who have had the opportunity of visiting there.

During the past two years many residents of the project had found it necessary, for their own comfort, to request the shipment of partial lots of personal necessities from private storage, and the completion of these requests and the delivery of these requested items to the owners at the projects probably gave us more concern here than any other activity of the office. But we do not believe that the enormity of that problem could have occurred to W. R. A. when policy and plans were made in the early stages of that agency's life. Doubtless if any such program were ever attempted by any other Governmental agencies in the future, our experience in W. R. A. along these lines should prove very valuable.

Any discussion of the handling of evacuee property on the project, and to and from, must include reference to the efficient work done in conjunction with this office by the Property Control Section of the project. While all requests for, signing of forms, and negotiations for personal property service originated in and were taken care of by this office, all of the physical handling of property, its shipment, and receiving and storing on the project, was carried out very effectively by the Property Control Section. We do believe that such a plan as was put into effect on this project is the most efficient method of so handling this activity. We must also add that the shipment from this project of personal effects for relocating families has been a very important activity, and here again we must give credit to the effective physical handling of these shipments by the Property Control Section.

From an administrative standpoint we have been represented in various project meetings where such representation was appropriate. We believe the project evacuee property officer could have lent further assistance in administrative problems, had he been called upon to do so. And we are firmly of the opinion that cooperation and correlation of the many sections in the administrative setup is essential to most effective administration.

The statistics of this office had been combined in monthly reports. The files, both active and closed, are in good order. We have suggested that the files, both active and closed, remain in the office until closing of the center. Their contents will show, as no report possibly can, the work, the results, and the effectiveness of the activities of the evacuee property office.

Evacuee Property Officer

CENTRAL UTAH RELOCATION PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH

January 15, 1946

NARRATIVE REPORT

EVACUEE PROPERTY OFFICE

The organization of the Evacuee Property Office and its functions having been clearly set out in the previous Evacuee Property Officer's Narrative Report of March 20, 1945, these details will be omitted here. In the interim between the time of his report and the time this writer assumed the duties of Evacuee Property Officer on June 15, 1945 the supervision of the office was transferred from Project Management to Relocation in order to get better coordination between the relocation of evacuees and the handling of their property problems. This change has proven beneficial to all concerned as the functions of the two offices have so nearly the same objective; that of getting the evacuees relocated to a normal life with as little additional inconvenience and hardship as possible.

Also during this time the announcement of the closing of the centers was made and the aspect of relocation was beginning to be seen in a new light; also property management cases had dwindled to a minimum. Therefore, the chief activity of the Evacuee Property Office at this time was the handling of personal property, picking up from apartments, storing or shipping of same.

First of all, the files containing property records had to be changed entirely, as it was found too much time was consumed in looking up all records for a family when the records were filed by subject rather than by individual names. New folders were set up under individual names and family numbers and all materials concerning the individual placed in the folder. This method of filing was found to be much more effective for Evacuee Property records, since practically all matters which came up were of an individual nature rather than general.

Considerable trouble was encountered in the physical handling of evacuee property, from the time of the first mass relocation movement of August 29, 1945, due mostly to a lack of officer personnel and labor. This caused delay in a number of shipments. These difficulties were finally overcome, and we believe not too great an inconvenience was caused relocated families.

The length of time for freight transportation and the expense to residents of getting their household goods delivered from the freight depot to their residence caused considerable concern among them. This resulted in more requests for express shipments which caused an increased burden on this office in checking the needs and eligibility of these requests. Also, there were indications that the area offices were devoting considerable time in helping the people effect delivery. This problem was solved, to some extent, for residents going east with the advent of shipments via Universal Carloading and Distributing Company which was effected on July 10, 1945. This method of shipment decreased the transportation time by ten days to two weeks and furnished sidewalk delivery. However, the Universal Carloading and Distributing Company could only handle shipments going east, which were less than 50% of our evacuee property shipments. An agreement was worked out with a freight truck line in Salt Lake City to handle household goods of evacuees moving to the Bay area, whereby they would provide pick-up at the project and give door delivery in approximately four days at a slightly higher rate, whereas transportation time by freight in LCL lots takes from three to four weeks. Authority was granted from Washington on August 11, 1945 to put this agreement into effect. The difference in rate being off-set by the elimination of expense of handling the property at the project and also elimination of express shipments. These changes were a definite service to the evacuees and we believe a great help to relocation.

On November 1, 1945 this office assumed the physical handling of evacuee property and began the task of moving stored property from the center and closing the files. This activity included combining records kept in the Evacuee Property Office and those kept in the Property and Warehousing Office, completing inventory of property in the warehouses, obtaining addresses where none were available in the center, etc. Where addresses were available, letters have been sent out requesting shipping instructions and where no address was available lists of names have been sent to area supervisors and the Washington office requesting addresses. Very good response was received from these requests with the result that only a small percentage of the property now remains in the center with the exception of property belonging to families residing in Federal Housing accommodations.

Another item of concern in closing the Evacuee Property Office has been the disposition of contraband, lost and found property. There is some unidentified clothing which was found at different times and turned in to the Internal Security Office. This clothing will be donated to the National clothing drive. All contraband property will be sent direct to the owner where addresses are obtainable, disposition of other unidentifiable property has not been decided upon at this time.

Only nineteen names remain on our list for whom addresses have not been obtained and it is anticipated that these will be obtained in a short time. Property belonging to families living in temporary Federal Housing will be shipped to WRA Warehouses on the West coast and it is anticipated that all property will be removed satisfactorily before the tentative closing date of February 9, 1946.

J. G. Atkinson
Evacuee Property Officer