

(Problems related to housing requiring further treatment in this chapter.)

1. Sandstorms and dust in the homes.
2. Fire Department regulation against the use of electric plates, heaters, and other electrical equipment in the apartments because of the danger of overheating the small gauge electric lines. The practice of cooking at home.
3. Housing regulations re: moving. E.g., wives' requests that husbands, from whom separation desired, be moved out.
4. Inadequacies of the center home, e.g., Michi's discontent at not having a piano, women wanting their sewing machines, etc.

CHAPTER VI. HOUSING

Housing was evidently less of a problem at the Tule Lake Project than at a number of other W.R.A. centers such as Minidoka, Poston, Gila River and Manzanar. (Conditions in the remaining centers are not known.) During the initial ingress of evacuees to the latter centers when the intake was frequently more rapid than was the completion of housing to shelter the people, it was frequently necessary to crowd families into un-sectioned recreation halls to provide temporary quarters, but this difficulty never occurred at Tule Lake except on one minor occasion when the first group of bachelors to arrive were quartered for two or three days in unpartitioned recreation halls. Furthermore, even at the peak population of Tule Lake during early September 1942, there was relatively less crowding than at many other centers. The necessity of housing two or more households in a single apartment, which was notably the case at Manzanar, was at a minimum at Tule Lake; and the calculation of floor space per individual evacuee would probably show a comparatively favorable rate at the latter project. Except perhaps during the first two months of the project when the initial housing adjustments were taking place, the housing question never reached the proportion of a community issue, although, to be sure, there continually were individual housing difficulties.

Nevertheless, the basic limitations of relocation center housing were the same at Tule Lake as elsewhere, and the maladjustments resulting from these limitations, while perhaps less articulated than at some centers, were an important source of evacuee malcontent *and* irritation.

General Organization of Housing

The W.R.A. projects have been likened to army camps, and the similarity is perhaps greatest in ^{their} ~~its~~ physical features particularly since the centers were designed and constructed according to army specifications. Like the army camp, the relocation center residential area is marked by row upon even row of monotonously uniform barracks. Moreover, the residential barracks were designed primarily as sleeping quarters rather than as household units in the ordinary sense of housing structures, for many of the maintenance functions of the family such as of feeding, bathing, ironing, washing, and even much of family recreation, were not possible within the "home" and necessarily had to be performed outside it. But the most distinguishing feature of project housing was the centralized administration of all housing for the 15,000 residents of the community, and the consequent subjection of all these people with their various circumstances to the standardized housing regulations of the W.R.A. In other words, the limits of freedom in one's choice of dwelling conditions, and as well/^{as} in the ~~re-arrangement~~ possibility of re-arranging dwelling space according to the family needs, were extremely narrow. The crux of the problem in housing adjustments lay in the fact that not only were the dwelling facilities very much limited, but also that there was no escape from this condition since all dwelling units were generally uniform and any efforts to alter them were confronted with restrictive regulations. Hence, it was necessary that the individuals and families adjust to the provided physical structures since the possibility of adjusting structures to the persons was largely excluded.

At the Tule Lake Project, the residential area for the ^{15,000}evacuees occupied almost precisely one-half square miles (exclusive of fire-break areas)¹/of a very flat, sandy, dried-out lake bed. This ratio compares favorably with congested sections of large cities, but the comparison is misleading for all the structures at the project were of one story and the congestion was not so much in the space surrounding a residence but within it. This residential area was sub-divided into seven wards of nine blocks each, ~~with~~ one extra block adhering to the sixth ward, with each ward separated from the adjacent ones by open fire-breaks of 200 feet width. Each ward may be pictured as a rectangle sub-divided into three by three sections of nine blocks, with a criss-cross pattern of unpaved streets running between the blocks.

The regional setting of the project was not without its scenic attractions of a semi-desert variety, for a rugged butte, labelled by the evacuees as "Castle Rock", stood in front of the center directly across the highway, while a range of barren hills extended north and south some distance in the back of the project. But the center area itself was monotonously unattractive. Except for small garden patches in front of evacuee residences and the clumps of desert grass in the fire breaks and the open areas of the blocks, the entire center was virtually devoid of vegetation. There was not a tree or a piece of shrubbery in the entire residential area; there were no spots of green except for a few minor attempts to grow lawns. Perception was largely adjusted to a view of ugly, black, tar-papered barracks; variegated porches built of scrap lumber; stocks of fire wood piled against the barracks; laundry lines strung in front of residences in the rear of the adjoining barrack; and the dull gray

¹/ The evacuee residential area exclusive of fire-breaks measured .495 square miles, or about 317 acres.

of the desert sand that composed the ground of the entire project. During the summer heat, the residents would seek the narrow shades of their barracks; during the rain and snow season of the winter, paths would become slushy and muddy, and large pools of water would obstruct passages within the blocks. The roads were ill kept and dusty, there were no street lamps nor anything resembling sidewalks, and people walked between barracks, across fire breaks, kicking up sand and stone, along paths of their own making.

This was the setting of the evacuee residences, and the unattractive simplicity of the exterior surroundings bore its influence upon the interior surroundings of the home as well. The relocation center was a "camp", the life within it was "camp-like", and no amount of labelling the community a "city" or "town" could alter the basic features of its life emerging out of its structure and setting.

For more reasons than one, housing at the project requires to be treated within its block setting since many functions of the home were necessarily fulfilled outside of one's residence. Each block measured 400 feet by 540 feet, measured between the center ^{line} ~~axis~~ of enclosing streets, and were therefore comparable in size to a city block. Each block consisted of fourteen residential barracks, one mess hall, a recreation hall, a washroom and shower room for each sex, a laundry room and ironing room.

All the residential barracks were of the same measurement, 100 feet long by 20 feet in width, but they were sub-divided into apartments of differing sizes. The buildings were of wooden frame construction, the exterior surfaces ^{of which were shiplap sheathed with} ~~covered with~~ black tar-paper which was held down by strips of wooden lathes. Although the original

construction did not call for inside walls, this was deemed necessary in anticipation of the extremely cold winters of the area, and the interiors were therefore faced with sheet-rock. The partitions between apartments were double walls, unlike the single walls, for example, at Minidoka, and greatly assisted in cutting down the transmission of sounds between adjoining apartments. Ceilings of fir-tex were put in after the arrival of the evacuees by evacuee carpenters, without which sounds would have travelled over the walls from one apartment to another and the heat of an apartment would have escaped .

Each of the one hundred feet long barracks were sub-divided into four, five or six apartments, that is, apartments of 24'x 20', 20' x 20', or 16' x 20'. Due to an over-estimate of the family sizes, the first apartments constructed in Wards I, II, III, and IV, were of 24' x 20' size, which did not allow sufficiently for variations in family sizes and the relatively greater number of two and three person families than was anticipated. The error was corrected in these wards by the construction of six apartments in barracks 18 and 19 of each block, but no 20' x 20' apartments appeared in these wards. Later construction in the remaining wards, however, did make allowances for differences in family sizes, and all sizes of apartments were installed. The Tule Lake housing administration announced the following ideal ratio of family size to size of apartment:

<u>Size of Apartment</u>	<u>No. of Family Members</u>
16' x 20'	2 to 3 persons
20' x 20'	4 persons
24' x 20'	5 to 6 persons
2 Apts.	6 or more persons

A 16' x 20' apartment for a couple allows a per capita floor space of 160 square feet, that is, an area of 16' x 10' per individual. But this floor space per individual is at a maximum for couples, and as the number in the family increases, the distribution of space becomes progressively less favorable despite the assignment of larger apartments to the larger families. A 20' x 20' apartment for four persons allows at most 100 square feet per person, or an area of 10' x 10' per individual, while six persons in a 24' x 20' apartment receive only 80 square feet per person, or an area of 8' x 10' per individual. These figures, furthermore, do not take account of the additional limitations upon space that closets had to be built within the allotted area and a large stove occupied a part of the room. Because the latter were permanent fixtures in a room, the space occupied by them had to be discounted in arranging the layout plan of the home.

The W.R.A. provisions of home furnishings for each apartment included an army cot and mattress for each resident, one or two army blankets per person, ~~and~~ a large coal stove, a broom, a mop, and a laundry rack. All other household furnishings had to be provided by the evacuees themselves, and even the closet was left to the evacuees to construct out of whatever scrap lumber they could procure. The term "apartment" is somewhat a misnomer for these rooms, for they were essentially sleeping quarters, with feeding arrangements provided at the mess halls, and the latrines, showers, and other such facilities requiring running water being in separate buildings some distance from the residences. This fact was important not only in the inconveniences arising from the absence of such

facilities within the apartments, but the communal use of home facilities dictated that the block residents/^{share}~~live~~ a considerable portion of what normally would be their home life with other people. In this sense, housing implied an extension of the "home" beyond the boundaries of the walls of an apartment and many areas of family life were intimately woven into the life of the block.

As the in-movement of evacuees to the Tule Lake Project occurred in June and July, 1942, they were directed to processing centers located in the project at which point they were assigned residences by the Housing Section. The project was filled block by block as the people arrived, and with each daily arrival, housing assignments would be begun at the point where they had ended on the previous day and would continue on apartment by apartment through the blocks. Some adjustments were made for size of families, unmarried individuals living independently of families, cases of physical incapacity requiring special housing circumstances such as being close to the mess halls and washrooms, or friends desiring to live as neighbors; but since most of project housing was uniform in its major features, it made relatively little difference whether a family were assigned to one apartment or to another. The one circumstance leading to complaints from the residents about their housing assignment was with regard to the size of apartment given them, the general complaint being that the spatial allotment was inadequate, but more will be said of these complaints later.

The housing staff composed entirely of ^{youthful} evacuees from the advance group to arrive at the Tule Lake Project, was headed by Mr. Friedman, Head of the Housing Section, who in turn was responsible to Mr. Frank

Smith of the Employment Division. The major tasks of this group were to (1) assign housing, (2) maintain a record of the houses assigned and the families to which they were assigned, and (3) direct the families to their new residences. There was in addition the necessity of hearing complaints of those who requested changes for one reason or another, and of determining the justification of re-assignment in these cases. To expedite the process of housing assignments, which was the major job of this group, the staff divided ^{itself} into departments: (1) those who took care of the bachelors, (2) those who took care of the large families, and (3) those who took care of the small families. The new arrivals would then be divided according to these categories, and each individual or family would be interviewed to analyze his or their needs.

Housing assignments at the reception center encountered several difficulties, one of which was that Friedman, Head of the Housing Section, evidently was constantly concerned with completing the processing procedure as rapidly as possible. There was some reason for this, for one because the new~~y~~ arrivals were fatigued from their train trip, usually over-night in coaches, and desired to get through the waiting line as rapidly as possible, make an early beginning in getting themselves established, and have a place to clean themselves and rest. Moreover, when a steady inflow of evacuees began about the middle of June 1942 at a daily arrival rate of 500 evacuees per day, the housing organization was kept busy not only assigning housing, but also in maintaining records of the houses assigned, listening to the complaints of those who were dissatisfied with the houses assigned, and making preparations for the reception of a new group

on the following day. The complaint of the housing staff, however, was that Friedman sought to treat the assignment procedure in a purely mechanical way, which failed to take account of the individual problems of residential adjustments. One member of the staff, in voicing this complaint, declared:

It was an easy job, but it kept me very busy. I enjoyed it all right. But one thing I didn't like was the way Friedman rushed things. Every morning before the new arrivals came in he would say, 'See how quickly you can run all these arrivals through the reception office. But each independent family is different, their problems aren't all the same, and we had to take time to discuss these problems with the people coming in. It made me mad when Friedman told us to rush them through. ~~X~~

I don't think Friedman handled housing very efficiently; he was a poor organizer. In the first place, he wanted to handle people like merchandise. It could be done in the morning when we assigned apartments, but we'd run into greater problems in the afternoon when they came back to complain. One day we got the brilliant idea of assigning apartments to families on the night before. A list of people coming in was always sent us on the day previous, although the list wasn't always accurate, and we hit on the idea of making apartment assignments from the list before the people arrived. We'd have all the assignment sheets made out, and when the newcomers came through in the morning, we'd just hand out these sheets to the people. Boy, we ran through the list in no time. We thought we'd hit on a great idea. But in the afternoon we got more complaints than ever before, and we found out that the system didn't work. The only thing we could do was to handle individual problems as carefully as we could, as they came through.^{1/}

Because of the uniformity of housing, there were only two major variables involved in making housing assignments: (1) size of apartment, and (2) location within the block, and within the project. There were seldom complaints that one apartment was superior to another in the sense of having superior accommodations, or a better internal arrangement. But even with the minor differences of the apartments, new arrivals would frequently voice a preference for one apartment as over against another, and the housing staff would have to consider the justification of the demand. One problem which

^{1/} Miyamoto Document, CH-304A, August 20, 1943.

frequently appeared was the desire of certain groups for a southern exposure.

I guess people who came first wrote back to their friends as to what to ask for and what was best. Anyway, everybody wanted apartments on the south end of the barracks, and near the mess hall. I don't know why they preferred the south side. The project wasn't quite lined up north and south, you know, so we'd draw diagrams for the people to show them that there wasn't any apartment with a southern exposure, but that didn't make any difference. They wanted apartments on the south end of the barrack. They'd give us all kinds of reasons for getting the particular apartment they wanted. They'd tell us of their sick parents or sick children who had to have sunlight. It finally got so that we told them right from the beginning that they'd have to get written statements from the health officer before we'd give it to them.1/

The alignment of the barracks was northwest to southeast. The doorways of the apartments in any single barrack were so placed that for the end apartments they were built into the ends of the barrack, while for the apartments in between, the doorways were in the side of the building. (Picturing the barrack as a rectangle, two doorways were built into each of the short sides of the rectangle, and two or more others on one of the longer sides.) Except where doorways occupied the space, windows appeared at eight feet intervals on both sides of the barrack for its entire length, but there were no windows at the ends of the barrack. The course of the sun over the project was such that the morning sunlight struck the southeastern end of the barracks, but the late afternoon sun fell on the northeastern end. It is doubtful, therefore whether the southeastern end of the barracks received appreciably more sunlight than the other apartments, and considering the number of windows in each barrack, all the apartments were well ventilated and lighted. Some of the discontent of the evacuees about their apartments were undoubtedly whims, but they were also expressive of the bad housing

experiences encountered at the assembly centers and the consequent purpose not to be cheated again in housing assignments.

Families had to be accommodated according to size, and because the number of apartments of varied size classes could never be perfectly correlated with the variations in the family composition of incoming groups, interviews and adjustments were necessary to enable the best possible match of apartment size to family needs. The problem of the housing section was that of achieving an equitable average between too liberal a space allotment which would lead to later difficulties because of the limited number of apartments, and of too parsimonious a distribution which would lead to complaints from the residents. There were also families with legitimate special problems for whom it was necessary to allot an apartment close to the communal facilities of the block, in which cases there was the problem of establishing the legitimacy of a request, and of making special concessions without arousing the protest of the entire people.

One day a family came in among new arrivals who had a crippled girl in a wheel chair. We could see that her case needed special attention, and the family talked to us and requested an apartment near the mess hall and near the lavatory. We were assigning apartments beginning at one end of the block, but in her case we wanted to give the family a choice of apartment. Friedman, however, said that we couldn't do that. He argued that if we gave this family special consideration, we'd have to do it for all the families. These were the things that made me feel that Friedman wasn't a good administrator. We went ahead and gave the family the apartment they needed anyway.^{1/}

A special problem also existed in the case of bachelors, particularly those who came in without a group to join in one of the bachelor's apartments. Bachelor's were generally assigned to large

^{1/} Miyamoto Document, CH-304A, Aug. 20, 1943.

apartments in groups of six, but frequently those who were formed in groups of a smaller number were unwilling to accept others to complete the assigned number for the apartment. Occasionally, there were objections to certain individuals; others wished to maintain the number in an apartment at as low a figure as possible to permit the maximum room for those already occupying a room.

The fellow who took care of the bachelors always had more difficulty in the morning than the rest of us so we used to rotate our work. It was comparatively easy when we assigned new rooms to bachelors, but the difficulties came when we had to assign bachelors to rooms that were already partially occupied. Some people didn't want certain persons with them, and so on. 1/

Yet another difficulty of the housing section was that of restricting people from moving into empty barracks without permission from the housing section. "They'd just pack up and go into an empty apartment, and the next morning when we'd assign the apartment to some newcomer, we'd find that the apartment was already occupied and we'd have to reassign all over again."2/ It was difficult to forcibly eject families which acquired apartments through irregular channels, but widespread adoption of such tactics, of course, would have completely disrupted the housing administration, and led to inequities and conflicts.

Occasions arose, however, when it became necessary to request families to vacate apartments which they already occupied. Usually such requests arose only after some time had elapsed after apartment assignments had been made, as when it was suddenly discovered that a block of apartments already occupied were needed for schoolrooms, but in the meantime families would have constructed permanent closets, shelves, and other permanent fixtures of a home. Further movement

1/ Ibid.

2/ Ibid.

was also bothersome. From the standpoint of the evacuees, these were errors of anticipation made by the administration, and they balked at being penalized for mistakes which were not of their own making. The evacuee staff of the housing section, upon whom the complaints of the people fell, likewise resented the necessity of making requests to the people which the staff members themselves felt were excessive demands. Especially was this feeling strong because it was thought that Mr. Friedman failed to assume responsibility in authorizing such requests and to bear the major brunt of the storm of protests.

When we first got to Tule Lake, there weren't any small apartments built for couples, so we assigned couples to large apartments. Then Friedman issued orders that the couples had to get out. That day we saw a whole mob of couples bearing down on our office, and when they started to argue, Friedman backed out and ~~issued~~ said, "No, you don't have to move." Then, another time, Friedman issued orders that Block 37 people had to move to make room for grammar school classrooms. A whole gang of people came to the office, and Friedman backed down that time too. He said the classrooms could be put in recreation halls. We always felt that he never gave us support when he handed out orders.

We had trouble with the firemen. The firemen were to live near the fire house, so we assigned them one whole barrack near the firehouse and all the firemen were supposed to move into these apartments. But most of them didn't want to move so they refused to give up their old apartments, and they used the barrack assigned to them as a play house. Then Friedman wrote out orders that they had to move, and we had to carry these orders out. There were only ten firemen, and there were four apartments in each barrack. We tried to put all ten firemen in two rooms because we needed the space for other families, but they refused to give up the other rooms. They said they'd put up the partitions, and after going to all that trouble, they weren't going to give up their apartments. We had to go out there and try to move them out; Friedman gave out the orders but he would never go out to see them carried out. Friedman talked to Chief Rhodes about it, but Rhodes felt that the firemen had a right to those rooms and refused to back us up. I guess Friedman had a couple of big arguments with Rhodes; I'm sure he didn't get along with him. Once our staff went down to the firemen's apartment when they were out on duty,

and they said we'd broken into their apartments. We almost had a battle royal over that. Whoever trouble came up, though, we felt that Friedman never backed us up. We felt that he was yellow about that kind of thing.¹/

As the administrative liaison officer between the W.R.A. and the evacuees, it often fell to the block manager to carry out eviction orders from the Housing Section. Invariably, however, these orders involved movement by families to whom the apartment in question had been assigned, and having established themselves, made friends with their neighbors, and otherwise having formed ties which the families were reluctant to break, such efforts to move out families were generally met with the greatest resistance. In the greatest number of these cases, the reason for the Housing Section's desire to effect transfers was that the number of occupants of an apartment were fewer than intended for the size of their apartment. But even ⁱⁿ ^{large} the case of families with a greater number of residents than the size of the apartment was meant to hold, there were instances of families who preferred to remain where they were, even with crowding, rather than move to a more spacious apartment.

One other group which worked in cooperation with the housing section on housing assignments and transfers was the transportation and supplies division. Their part in this work was to ensure provision of cots, mattresses and blankets, as well as of the delivery of all baggage and equipment brought by the evacuees themselves. The problem of this department arose when shortages developed in the number of steel cots, which were preferred to the canvas cots provided the bulk of the people, and in the number of army blankets. The steel cots with springs in them were, of course, more comfortable than the much less flexible canvas cots, and for that reason

¹ Ibid.

was indispensable for invalids and bed-patients. Unfortunately, there was a miscalculation of the number of steel cots that would be accessible to the Tule Lake Project, and as their reserve was rapidly diminished, it became necessary to recall a number of the cots from Ward I where most of them were concentrated. Much the same difficulty was encountered in the distribution of army blankets, for their too liberal distribution to the first arrivals caused a shortage by the time of arrival of the Pinedale group, and the need arose of recalling extra blankets under a regulation that each resident should be provided with no more than two blankets. Recalls, of course, required cooperation from the residents, which was not always freely given, and petty conflicts which sometimes continued for weeks occurred.

The Kumata family was one which arrived with the advance group from Seattle, and they were therefore able to acquire steel cots for all the family members. Since their son left the project very shortly after his arrival, they had an extra steel cot in their apartment not in use for sleeping purposes but which the family used as a seat. Considering the lack of comfortable seats, it was to the advantage of the family to keep this cot. In July the block manager sought to recover this extra cot under administrative orders, but the Kumata's claimed that their son would be returning and refused to give it up, despite the block manager's emphasis on the great need for any unused steel cots and the assurance that some bed would be provided their son in the event of his return. Some comments were heard in the block regarding the "selfishness" of the Kumata family in refusing to give up something which others needed badly.1/

When the workers in the transportation and supplies division went around to recall army blankets which had been distributed too liberally to the first arrival resulting in a shortage for the late comers, they ran into some difficulties. Morris Age who was heading this job said that most people were cooperative in yielding extra blankets, but he mentioned a few cases where he ran into trouble because the family was unwilling to yield them despite the fact that the blankets were not being used for bedding purposes. Morris remarked specifically on the case of Mrs. Inouye who evidently gave him quite a call-

ing down for siding with the W.R.A. and not giving sufficient consideration to the needs of the people. There were also some cases revealed where individuals had cut blankets and tailored them into trousers. The justification given was that the W.R.A. provided no clothing and the workers were badly in need of work clothes.2/

Problems of Housing and Home Adjustments

Tule Lake was a community of makeshift homes and even the best of the apartments had an air of temporariness and inadequacy. It was not that they bore the cold and standardized impersonality of hotel rooms, for many of the apartments were individual and/~~more~~ reflected the personalities of their occupants; nor were they like dingy, deteriorated slum homes for the buildings at least were new and sunlight and ventilation were ~~more than~~ adequate. Yet because there was a low limit to the improvements which could be made of these apartments, which was quickly reached, and because of the crowding and the lack of privacy due to the absence of partitions, there existed the disadvantages of transiency and congestion that characterize slum dwellings.

An immediate difficulty of newly arrived evacuees was the total lack of home furnishings, for except for the bed and stove provided/^{by} the W.R.A., the apartments were devoid of other furnishings. The dilemma of the home maker was that the evacuees had been told to bring with them only the baggage which they could carry, which excluded ~~most of that~~ furniture and other household equipment ~~in the baggage~~ ^{necessary to} with which home makers arrived at the project. Yet, the W.R.A. made no provisions of furnitures; nor did the agency provide lumber with which to construct even the most necessary items such as tables, benches, shelves, closets, and dressers for storing garments, not

to mention partitions, porches and laundry line posts. What was provided were scrap pieces of lumber from the construction works on the project, but these were, at best, boards and other construction material discarded as unusable for construction purposes, and much of it was scrap material useful only as fuel. Those who were able to get these scrap pieces had only enough to make the essentials about the home, but the scrap lumber pile was largely depleted long before the arrival of the last groups.

Home furnishings therefore consisted, by and large, of the most simply constructed benches and tables, shelves, closets, and very little more than these. Except in the cases of those who bought chests of drawers, garments remained stored in suitcases and trunks, or miscellaneous boxes. Those gifted in cabinet making and home planning and decoration succeeded in creating a reasonably attractive atmosphere in their homes, but such efforts required an adequate supply of scrap lumber, which ^{few} ~~not everyone~~ and ^{and} expenditure of time and money, which few were willing or able to afford.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Nishi was considered one of the more attractive on the project. Mr. Nishi is a young Issei of forty but his wife, about four years younger, is a Nisei with some training and ability in home decoration. Being a couple without children, they were given one of the 16' x 20' apartments. Perhaps the most unique feature of their apartment is that the two windows on the west wall were entirely ~~surrounded~~ ^{surrounded} with closets, the middle closet between the windows being used for clothes hanging purposes, while the two smaller side closets had built-in shelves for laying away garments and linens. Window seats with storage space beneath them were built in to fill the space under the windows. To cover the open fronts of the closets, blue drapes bought through ~~the~~ mail-order house was hung from the ceiling. The ceiling itself was papered with an inexpensive wallpaper, likewise bought through the mail-order catalogue, although the effect was somewhat spoiled by its having to be tacked up rather than pasted down. The other major purchase for the apartment was a linoleum which served to cover the wide cracks in the flooring. For the rest, there ~~were~~ ^{was} a table, chairs and benches, a kitchen cabinet, ~~and~~ a neat little

coffee table, ~~all made of scrap lumber~~ and a small dressing table with bench camouflaged with frilled material, all made of scrap lumber. While the net effect was reasonably attractive, the notable defects of the apartment were the absence of partitions to screen the beds, the location of the large stove in the exact center of the room, the consequent crowding in the remainder of the room, and the inescapable appearance of a temporary camp home.

Improvements were possible with the expenditure of funds, but very few families were willing to invest more than the ^{bare} minimum into their center home. Such an apartment as the one described may not have required more than thirty dollars for the items mentioned, but there were fundamental reasons why families, even those with the means, were unwilling to expend such an amount for home improvements. Since the evacuation was a forced migration, it was expected that the Government should provide the main facilities of a home. Not only was the center home considered a temporary dwelling for not longer than the duration of the war, but there were constant rumors and suspicions of a possible forced relocation to another center or other areas long before the end of the war, and the center residences were never regarded as having any permanency. Most families left furniture and household equipments in storage at their prior places of residence, and therefore were reluctant to duplicate their property by further purchases, but were also unwilling to send for their stored baggage because of the impermanence of their stay and the expense of shipment. But by far the most important consideration in making expenditures upon the home was the financial inability of most families to spend more than a few dollars on necessities, and the grave concern about future economic security which deterred families from any unnecessary expenditure. For the average worker making \$16 a month, there was little disposition to allot any of

this amount invest more than the barest minimum in household equipment, particularly in consideration of the impermanence of the center home.

As a result of these conditions, the impermanency of the center home, the current low income of evacuee families, and the considerable anxieties and doubts about future economic opportunities and security, the majority of the people at the center, regardless of whatever savings they may have had, held attitudes towards the improvement of their home not dissimilar to that ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ a poverty stricken community. In general, values were so altered within the center that goods which on the outside would be regarded as basic necessities were considered "luxury items" by the evacuees. Expenditure on the home was generally viewed in this light, and household equipment beyond that which could be made with scrap material was considered unnecessary, or, rather, such expenditure was considered out of keeping with the economic status of the people. Household improvements were stabilized at a low level, considerably lower than that which people were accustomed to on the outside, and their problem was to adjust to these home circumstances of the center.

Inability to improve the home, however, did not lead to any ready adjustments to these conditions. Comparisons were invariably made with the household circumstances prior to evacuation, and expressions were frequently heard of a desire ~~for~~ the conveniences which had been had before. Inconveniences were numerous ^{because} and they were inherent in the structure of the apartments, the residents fretted about them yet never completely escaped them. The flooring had been laid out with green ^{lumber} ~~lumber~~ and as it dried, it shrunk, leaving

spaces between the boards which filled with dirt and dust. Every occasion of sweeping caused a reminder of this war upon the apartment. In every apartment, the stove was placed in its exact center, and especially in the smaller apartments there was the problem of arranging the furniture in relation to the location of the stove. Room space was limited, yet certain basic furnishings such as chairs and tables, shelves, beds and a closet were essential within this space, as a result of which there were ^{rudimentary} ~~elementary~~ problems of arranging the room for function, circulation and aesthetic satisfaction. Because there were no water taps within the apartments, water for every purpose had to be carried from the washrooms. While these and other inconveniences were in themselves minor, the cumulative effect added significantly to the irritations with the inadequacies of center existence.

But the source of greatest distress and resentment were crowding and the lack of partitions, and the resulting congestion and lack of privacy. The apartments were but a single room each which served as living room, study, sometimes a kitchen, and bedroom for all members of the family. Generally, beds were placed at the corners of the rooms to afford sufficient space in the middle for passageway and to serve as a living room. Apart from the problem of arranging the furniture to give room for daily living activities, there was the more acute problem that individuals living under these circumstances had no place to call their own where they might be removed from the presence of others and the total family activity. The activities of each family member invariably impinged on the personal life of other members, and the possibilities for a personal

life were therefore reduced to a minimum. > A friend visiting with one member inevitably affected all other persons within the room, and the presence of a visitor set marked limits to the activity of the entire family. It was not uncommon to observe the Issei parents withdraw to a corner of the room when their children entertained guests, and, on their part, the children would withdraw upon the arrival of Issei guests, or would leave the room. Inefficiency in individual activity necessarily resulted from this condition. Likewise, it was felt that the lack of partitions gave basis to serious morality problems. Young people who might otherwise remain at home spent more time visiting friends and wandering in the project because of the limitations of home life, and some ~~xxxx~~ parents felt that this contributed directly to delinquency problems. Furthermore, males and females, sometimes of different families, dressed and undressed, and otherwise shared the same dwelling ~~xxxx~~ place for all purposes.

Adjustments to the congested living quarters depended in large part upon the stability of the family throughout its background history. Families which had solidarity and harmonious relationships from before evacuation seemed to maintain these conditions even though ~~x~~ close living circumstances reduced the area of privacy and created more occasions for friction, whereas those families which had tensions from before found these family conflicts intensified and aggravated by the necessity of having to live closely with one another in a single room. Some brief notes on the problems of privacy in a normal home written by a girl of twenty suggest the type of minor irritations which frequently arose. In this

family of six persons, the father, mother, herself (eldest daughter), a sister, and two younger brothers, the parents and two sons slept in one partitioned room, the writer and her younger sister in another room, and a third area was reserved for living room purposes. In speaking of "rooms", however, it should be noted that apartments, even under relatively favorable circumstances as in this family, were ~~xxx~~/seldom partitioned into completely sealable rooms, but the partitions functioned more as screens. She writes for different dates:

Feb. 12, 1943: Mr. K. came over after the meeting and was discussing the matter with Mother and Dad.... I don't know when he went home but when I went to bed at 11:15 he was still talking.

Feb. 27: There simply isn't any privacy here. I was getting undressed to take a shower when Mr. Kix knocks on the door and comes in.

~~Feb~~ March 6: Mr. T. and Mr. K. came over to play chess with Dad. They were playing in the other room so Jim and Jack (brothers) came into my room and started wrassling on my bed while I was trying to straighten up my room. Then Mother blames me for making too much noise.

March 14: Jim sleeps in the other room with Mother, Dad, and Jack. Most of the time he goes to bed early and doesn't like it when anybody talks in the room while he's trying to sleep. Mother told him to move into our room so she could talk in her room, but I said, "Nothing doing. I don't want early retirers sensitive to noise in my room."^{1/}

Presumably, ^Tthis family occupied ~~xxxxxx~~ an apartment of 24' x 20' dimension, and after it's sub-division into three rooms, with part of the space taken up by closets, ~~it may be presumed~~ there must have been considerable congestion throughout. Most families, however, were less fortunate in getting sufficient lumber to build partitions, and the entire family would then occupy a single room. But even under favorable circumstances, voices would readily carry from one room to another, there would be much common use of all the rooms because of the limitation of space in the apartment, and privacy in the sense

^{1/} A Nisei Girl's Diary, Jan. 24, 1943 - March 21, 1943.

of normal family dwellings was not possible. Even with the fortunate condition of two bedrooms, a family of six received not much more than the minimum bedroom space, and where individual members especially sensitive to the presence of others demanded individual freedom and privacy, there were but limited possibilities of affording such conditions to such members.

Most families, however, were less fortunate in the acquisition of lumber to make partitions, and maintained but a single large room that was used as a common, all-purpose apartment; or where privacy was desired in such an apartment, ropes were stretched across the room and blankets or curtains were hung from them. Rooms sub-divided in this manner were unsightly, but due to the lack of lumber the possibilities were limited; either the family gained a minimum of privacy by hanging blankets with a corresponding loss in the appearance of the apartment, or the family did without privacy and gained slightly in room appearance.

Mr. and Mrs. Kimura, an older Nisei couple, and their three-years old son, occupy a large apartment. Definite efforts had been made to improve the aspects of the room, but the place looked somewhat bare and lacking in a home atmosphere. Two folding camp chairs, and some benches, a table with a basket of laundry on it, Mr. Kimura's desk and bench, a shelf of books, and a few other minor items made up the furnishing in one part of the room. Some toys were piled up in one corner. One side of the room was cut off by a large blue drape which hung from a rope the width of the room. The bed, covered with a richly-colored chenille spread, was the one attractive spot in the entire room, and this corner which could be seen from between the drapes seemed incongruous in relation to the drabness of the rest of the apartment. A little room was evidently curtained off for the little boy.^{1/}

In these center apartments the ~~general~~ appearance of which were generally drab, it was not uncommon to observe a few relatively expensive items of luxury brought from the previous homes and incongru-

^{1/} Miyamoto Notes, August 3, 1942.

ously placed within an otherwise rustic setting.

I walked across camp to tell Masako about the plans for a meeting of our group. Her family, consisting of five or six members, lives in one of the large end apartments. I found her in, and while she did not invite me in, the door was open because it was a warm evening, and I could make out the general lay-out and the appearance of the apartment. Beds were arranged in a row as in an army barrack, and there were a few scattered items of home-made furniture such as tables, chairs, a large closet, and shelves. But the feature which struck my eyes was the long rope running the length of the apartment from which were hung a number of army blankets. It seemed as out of place as laundry hanging in a living room, yet this was the only way in which the family could achieve a semblance of privacy.^{1/}

~~The problem of privacy was aggravated where mixed groups lived in the same apartment~~

The extent to which the activities of individual members could affect all other members of a family living under such restricted circumstances is illustrated in the rather extreme instance of a girl who would visit her boy friend and ~~jump in~~ in bed with him. The mother of the young man complained:

That Inouye girl was just horrible. She had no decency. She used to come over to our room at 9 in the morning when Mac was still in bed and would get in with him. She would get in and wrestle with him right in front of all the other children. I was shocked but did not say anything for some time. Finally I could not stand it any more and asked her not to do that for the sake of the children, but she looked at me resentfully not realizing that I was only telling her how decent human beings should live so that she might be happily married some day.^{2/}

One of the problems much discussed among the people concerned with the morality of the youth on the project was that of boy-girl relationships where home environs/^{were} unsuited to courtship. Most youths entertained in their homes despite the limiting circumstances, but those desiring more privacy than was available in the home took to wandering in couples in the streets of the project or found isolation in laundry and ironing rooms. Apart from courtship relations, there

^{1/} July 20, 1942.

^{2/} Shibutani Document TL-30, "The Yoshida Family," p. 15.

was concern over the fact that young people often spent little time at home, but rather chose to wander the project in groups or gangs. Efforts were made to control such wandering by the establishment of recreational facilities in at least one hall of each ward, but such facilities were limited and generally proved inadequate for youths who demanded more excitement and variation than could be provided with ping pong tables and table games. Laundry rooms, ironing rooms, block manager's offices, and the apartments of bachelors or of families with relatively free household regulations were among the favorite meeting places of such youth groups. The dilemma of these small apartments was that if the friends of the young people visited at their homes, family life within the apartment was disturbed, but any great degree of social participation outside the home was considered likewise undesirable. Couples sometimes met on the porches and steps of apartments, another favorite social gathering place, but this would lead to gossip from the neighbors; and gangs meeting in the some way led to complaints of noisiness and disturbance.

The problem of privacy was aggravated where mixed groups lived within the same apartment, and especially were there difficulties when young couples dwelt with their in-law relations. As a rule, the daughter-in-law went with her husband's family, a practice influenced in part by Japanese custom, but also by the desire of parents to keep their older sons near them for the sake of increased feelings of security. While the practice of the son and his wife living with his parents was common before evacuation, the number of instances was decidedly increased by the needs resulting from the evacuation, for not only did the families tend to cling closely to-

gether, particularly to those most economically able, but because of the limited number of apartments available, the W.R.A. tended to approve the joining up of related groups.

In the case of Claude and Tamie Doi who were married in August 1940 and separated in September 1942, the break-up of the family was greatly influenced by Tamie's residence at the center with her husband's family. Dissatisfactions on the part of the wife with her married life, an extremely strained relationship between her family and her husband's, and a developing tension between Tamie and her mother-in-law which had long been emerging but was never articulated, were among contributing factors to the disruption of the couple's relations, but the evidence in the case indicates that separate housing for the couple might have prevented the crisis which followed.

The Dois were assigned to two adjoining rooms. Mr. and Mrs. Doi and the two younger boys, Robert and John, were given xxxx-D, and Claude, Tamie, their one-year old daughter, Louise, and the handy-man, Mr. Ono, were given xxxx-C. Since the D room was on the end of the barrack, part of it was converted into a living room. A hole was cut in the wall between the two rooms so that they could pass from one room to another without going outside. Block 33 is two blocks away from Block 24.

The three Doi boys joined the other Walergans in the rush for lumber, and they were more fortunate than the Ito's. (Tamie's family). They managed to accumulate a considerable amount of scrap lumber and sheet rock and fixed their room. A porch was made for both doors, and beside the side door a huge box was made in which to store coal and kindling wood. An attractive name plate was carved and nailed above the main door.

Several partitions were put up so that the two barren rooms were soon converted into an apartment with four bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen. Cupboards were put up all over the house; cabinets and drawer chests were made; beds were made; huge closets were built into each of the two rooms. Numerous tables were placed throughout the rooms and the cots provided by the W.R.A. were used for chesterfields instead of beds. Rugs were spread on the floors and Mrs. Doi put up decorations. Before long the room was neatly fixed and quite comfortable.^{1/}

^{1/} Shibutani Document, TL-9, "The Doi Family," p. 29.

Prior to evacuation it seems that Claude and Tamie lived part of the year with his parents, but no serious strain was experienced at the time. However, after the evacuation when occasions arose where Tamie's mother and Claude's were thrown together but failed to get along, Tamie felt more keenly the close control which Claude's mother seemed to maintain over him and her, and Tamie repeatedly asked her husband to find separate quarters for them. After her desertion, she said:

I never loved him. I was always afraid to go because he always told me that he would kill me if I left. It's too late to get together again. I don't want to go back even if he will separate from his parents. I don't think Claude has the nerve to separate from his parents. I'll admit that if he separated from his parents the source of the big trouble will be gone, but I still don't want to go back to him. I still don't believe that he is willing to live separate from his mother. He might say that but you can't tell what he says because he's a big liar anyway. I won't go back.....

Even before the separation my mother and brother went to see Claude to ask him to separate from his mother and step-father since it was kind of hard for me to stay with them. Claude didn't say anything so they asked him to give me a separation if he was not willing to do that; then we could have his parents and I would be free from them. Claude didn't say anything. He just stood there like a dumb ninny. My mother him a hint to separate from his parents, but he's so dumb that he can't understand things like that. He has to be hit before he can catch on. It takes him a long time to catch on to anything. He's always like that. He catches on too late. I myself asked him over and ~~xxx~~ over again before to leave his parents, but he wouldn't do it. I asked him in Walerga (assembly center) but there wasn't much room so it was O.K. I asked him when we came here but he told his mother and she said 'No' so we didn't move.^{1/}

What Tamie's specific grievances against Claude's mother were are not indicated, but it seems she felt that he was too much under the control of his mother. While the problem of privacy in this instance did not involve the lack of partitioning, six rooms within

^{1/} Ibid.

the space of two 20' x 24' rooms creates a highly congested circumstance and a high interactional rate among the family members.

In most of these cases the difficulties are directly attributable to the evacuation which necessitated the sons joining their parents to assist in the evacuation. In the case of Lily and James Matsumoto, they lived happily for a period of three months while living separately in another city, but when they went to Sacramento to join James' parents for evacuation, conflicts appeared. They were evacuated to the Walerga Assembly Center as a family group, where the split between Lily and her husband as well as his family widened, and the breach was increased at Tule Lake where the same group lived together.

On June 20, 1942, the pair with their parents were relocated to the Tule Lake Project. They continued to quarrel and finally, in September, 1942, the two decided that it was no use and separated.....

Lily continually mentioned the fact that her father-in-law was in charge of the Salvation Army in Tule Lake. She felt that they had very strict ideas and that they did not always approve of her actions. She felt that her husband's decisions were often influenced by the desires of his parents, and that they had encouraged him to leave her and to agree to a divorce. She felt that she would have a much better opportunity to get along with her husband if he did not live with his parents, but James refused to live away from them.^{1/}

A similar situation developed in the domestic relations of Joe and Dorothea Suzuki, a young couple who had married shortly before evacuation, were separated while at the center about a half year after their arrival at the project, and were arguing claims over an expected baby. The young wife remarked:

I think both of us are controlled by our parents too much but because I'm more carefree than he is I just laugh off some of the things that my parents tell me. But Joe is different. He's so serious that he'll do just about anything that his mother and father want him to do. I know that his parents don't like me and when they told him to get rid of me he just

^{1/} Tule Shibusani Document, TL-20, p. ~~4x2~~. 5-6.

kicked me out. After we got married we had to live with his folks. They're always serious and gloomy and they're not at all like my folks are. I just couldn't understand how people could live and be so unhappy like they are. Since I was so happy-go-lucky, I guess I just didn't fit into their family. I asked Joe to move but he just wouldn't do it.^{1/}

A much more complicated family relationship at the center existed in the family problems/~~related to~~^{of} the Tsutsui, Mayeda and Asakawa families which were related by marriage. An elderly couple, Mr. and Mrs. Tsutsui, 79 and 71 respectively, lived at Tule Lake with their daughter, her husband, and the latter's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Mayeda. Prior to evacuation, the elderly Tsutui's had lived with another daughter and her husband, Bob Asakawa. Referring to this background:

When Mr. Tsutsui became too old to operate his farm, his son-in-law, Bob Askaawa, took over. The older couple lived with the Asakawas and helped them whenever they could. On March 1942, when it became known that the area around the Pacific Coast had to be evacuated, the Asakawas decided to spare the elderly couple the discomfort of a center and therefore took their parents to Penryn where another daughter and her husband, Tom Mayeda, were living. They were quite sure at that time that Zone 2 would not be evacuated. The Asakawas remained in Center-ville until the end and after making arrangements for disposal of their holdings, evacuated to Tanforan Assembly Center.

It was not long thereafter that Zone 2 was unexpectedly evacuated. On May 13, 1942, the Tsutsuis were sent to Arboga Assembly Center with their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Mayeda, and his parents. There they had to share an apartment for 1½ months. Conflicts arose, especially between the elderly Tsutsuis and the parents of Tom Mayeda. On June 28, they were all transferred to Tule Lake Project but here again the Mayedas and Tsutsuis were housed together. There were conflicts again as the elder Mayedas disapproved ~~for~~ Mrs. Tsutsui visiting friends. Since the younger Mayedas did not pay much attention to the parents the old couple felt extremely lonely and unhappy. Finally, on October 14, Mrs. Tsutsui applied at the Social Welfare Department to have the Asakawas transferred to Tule Lake.

When the Tsutsuis related their difficulties to the social workers, a suggestion was made that they take separate apartments. Mrs. Tsutsui stated that she did not want to do this because such an action would create some difficulty between her daughter and the in-laws.^{2/}

^{1/} Shibutani Document, TL- 45, p. 7.

^{2/} Shibutani Document, TL-44, pp. 1-2.

While the significant factors leading to the break in family relations rests in most of these cases in incidents not directly related to housing, there is no doubt that the cumulation of grievances leading to an open break is based upon the excessively intimate and crowded relationships of different families/^{living} within a single apartment. In a great number of these cases, despite the urging of individual members or the welfare department that families find separate housing, there is evident an unwillingness of the parties, for one reason or another, to carry out such separation. In the latter case of the Tsutui couple, their reluctance to move in spite of the tension, was undoubtedly influenced by their lack of funds and the consequent inability of maintain themselves economically apart from their daughter and son-in-law's support. On the other hand, older sons of families frequently refused to leave their families even at the pleading of their wives because of feelings of responsibility to their parents while at the relocation center. The Tsutui case, as well as other information, suggests that it was not the in-law relationship which caused such strains, but that tensions might arise in any instances of two or more different families, with different habits and values, living together within the close limits of a single apartment.

The difficulties arising from project housing because of the need to quarter in the same apartment people of different interests and outlook are equally well demonstrated in the case of bachelor apartments. In each block, there were invariably three or four such "bachelors' apartments", generally a 20' x 24' apartment with six persons housed in a single, unpartitioned room. While these

groups of six were sometimes formed from friendship groups which applied together for a single apartment, more frequently the bachelors quarter was made up of smaller groups of friends, or of individuals, who had no previous acquaintanceship and were brought together ~~and~~ under the regulation of the Housing Section. Not only were these quarters composed of the most heterogeneous individuals, but attempts to partition these apartments were less common than in family apartments, and because of the crowding that resulted from placing six adults in a single large apartment, there was less privacy than where smaller groups were involved.

In a group of six, there was not infrequently at least one eccentric individual who would disturb the entire apartment. Some of these persons bordered on psychiatric cases and entered the project with a background of eccentric behavior, but it may be strongly suspected that predilections to neuroses or psychoses were aggravated ~~in the great number of~~ by the necessity of close living. ^{bachelor} Iijima, a Kibei/of 44, who had lived a somewhat ambulatory life until he bought a farm in Oregon in 1937, experienced a series of difficulties in adjusting to the housing assigned him at Tule Lake.

On May 20, 1942, Edward evacuated to Portland Assembly Center. Six days later he volunteered with the advance crew to the Tule Lake Project. Not long after his arrival in Tule Lake he began having difficulties. During the middle of July he moved without authorization from 3706-D to 3706-B. He had previously moved from a block in Ward I to Block 37 where some of his old friends from Isleton were residing. Immediately he had difficulties with other bachelors in the room. Part of the difficulty arose because Iijima insisted on locking the door with his own padlock to which he alone had a key and quite often locked out the other men in the room. Since two of the men were cooks in the mess hall whose work the people in the block apparently approved of, the block manager became very concerned about the situation. Both cooks threatened to quit unless Iijima moved out at once.

Further difficulties arose when Ed Iijima refused to allow his neighbor to open his door more than 90 degrees, closing the door if he did not comply with the former's wishes, declaring that the door would be in his territory. He claimed that the area to which he was assigned was his own and that no one had any right to do anything that he did not want. It seems that the difficulties first arose when the neighbor opened his door all the way and unintentionally blocked the sunlight from shining through Iijima's window. From this point the bickering began.

Finally, Mr. Friedman of the Housing Department had to go to Block 37 and take down the padlock from the door. When Iijima learned of what Friedman had done, he cursed him in front of all the block residents. Soon afterwards Edward was sent to another bachelor's quarters in Block 6. Iijima acted differently among the bachelors of Block 6 and not long afterwards he made many issei friends.1/

Differences leading to conflict among the bachelors were manifold. A Kibei of a Christain background referred to his dissatisfaction with the initial housing assigned him when he was placed with a group of Kibei with whom he had no common interests.

I first had a room with several Kibei in Ward I, but I didn't get along with them very well. They spent most of their time gambling and would play late into the night which would interfere with my sleep. They weren't interested in studying as I was, and it was therefore difficult for me to concentrate while the others were talking and making a lot of noise. On top of it, they wouldn't keep the room clean, and I had to sweep the room most of the time. Otherwise, noone would have taken the trouble to clean things up. I finally moved in with some friends in Ward VI. We had a group there who were interested in studying and talking about things other than girls and cards, so we got along very well.2/

But even among friends, the bachelor's apartment ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ retained its fundamental shortcoming of a lack of privacy. The impossibility of shutting one's self off from the rest of the men in the room, the need to maintain some degree of sociability, the consequent awareness of each other, were sources of irritation to people who desired circumstances favorable to private thought and complete personal freedom. A bachelor Nisei, living with a mixed

1/ Shibutani Document, TL-110, pp. 1-2.

2/ Miyamoto Notes, August 14, 1943.

group of Issei, Kibei, and Nisei, all of whom were congenial except for one neurotic individual, said of his housing condition:

Except for Mirikitani, we all get along very well. But the trouble is, I can't do any work at home. Like today, I wanted to do some work on reports I had to get out, and was just getting settled down to it when Tani started to talk to me. I didn't want to ignore him, and he likes to talk of his experiences and so on, but as a result I didn't get a damn thing done. It's always the same way; if it isn't one person, it's another. As long as you're around the room, somebody wants to talk to you. And that goddam Mirikitani; one of these days somebody is going to knock the tar out of that guy. He takes up one whole corner of the room and has his junk (amateur art pieces) spread all over the room. The other day he borrowed Tom Okabe's knife without asking permission, and he broke one of the blades. He just put it back and didn't say a damn thing. ~~I'm gonna go nuts if I have to stand that guy very much longer.~~ 1/ He's always pulling some stunt like that. Tani hates him so much now, he won't even speak to him, and when he does, he just orders Mirikitani around. When Tani brings home meat, he gives all the rest of us a share but doesn't give a thing to Mirikitani. I almost feel sorry for the poor guy sometimes, but I'm gonna go nuts if I have to stand that guy very much longer.1/

The difficulties of finding privacy resulting from housing conditions were not restricted to the limitations of space within dwellings, but also extended to the closeness of life among neighbors, within the block, and, in fact, within the entire community. Although intervening walls between apartments were of double lining, voices when raised easily carried from one apartment to another, and even normal conversation could be heard on the other side as a low murmur. Unless caution were exercised, people who entertained late at night were likely to hear from their earlier retiring neighbors. People discussing private matters were wont to lower their voices so that the conversation would not carry beyond the walls.

Because a large part of home functions were served in common within the block, as in the mess hall and the block facilities, the home necessarily extended out beyond the confines of its walls.

1/ Miyamoto Notes, August 13, 1942.

Late arisers, a disapproved group in middle-class society, were readily subject to detection at the center by their failure to appear for the seven-to-eight/^{o'clock}breakfast, and by their neighbors who could watch virtually all the comings and goings of others in the same barrack almost without effort. The consciousness of such a problem is reflected in the diary of a Nisei girl who, having a bad conscience about her laziness in the morning, even made a New Year's resolution to get up early.

Feb. 2: This morning after breakfast Mother and Dad began preaching to me about getting up earlier for breakfast. I kept quiet because I didn't want to start a fight, and I knew it was my fault, inasmuch as getting up early was one of my New Year's resolutions which I have not kept. Dad is nice enough to start the stove for me, so I should at least get up early enough ~~to~~ not to make myself conspicuous by my belatedness at breakfast.

Feb. 8: Mother said the waiters and waitresses had a meeting yesterday at which they discussed some people whom they had on the "black list." Some of the people they mentioned are Mr. Sumida who goes in there late, bangs the cup on the table, and complains the service is poor;..... Mrs. Kodama who always brings food home for five to seven people who are too lazy to get up or come to eat in the mess hall. Mother said that if she hadn't been there they probably would have talked about me too because I go late and eat slow, so she made me get up early this morning.^{1/}

Feb. 3: I got up before seven this morning, the first time that has occurred in months. Regardless of whether I wanted to or not, I had to because Dad practically yanked me out of bed.
and personal

Invasion of family/privacy, however, was likely to take place at all levels. Family quarrels had to be carried on in a subdued voices if it were not to be talked about in the block that a certain family was quarrelsome. The usual sorts of neighborhood gossip about others' clothing, washings, dining table habits, taking food home from the mess halls, and sundry other subjects, was intensified by the intimacy of the block and the closeness of the residences.

^{1/}A Nisei Girl's Diary, Tule Lake Project.

The women were perturbed upon arrival at the center to find that the latrines had ~~open~~ privies that were not compartmentalized, and that individual showers were not partitioned. Nisei husbands who inclined toward the American "equalitarian" relationship of husband and wife would sometimes be cautioned by their parents, or by Issei friends, against lowering male dignity by too often assisting with the family washing or with ^{other} housekeeping work.

The effect which such intimate living within a community from which the residents could not escape is well illustrated in the case of a particularly sensitive youth of 22 who, following evacuation, found that an "anti-social and anti-old friends complex" which he had been gradually developing during the last few years was becoming severely aggravated. This youth showed considerable insight into his own difficulties, and expressed the view that his only deliverance from actual mental disorder was release from the center. ^{In} /His first request, written from the Tulare Assembly Center, he describes his state of mind:

I've lived in this camp for over two months and every day of it has been both physical and mental torture to me. A few more weeks of this life and I will be very very close to the brink of a mental or nervous breakdown.

This awful state of affairs is caused by terrible anti-social and anti-old friends complexes I've developed over the last few years. My living in a camp tends to increase it more and more each day. So as a last desperate measure, I decided to write to you to let me evacuate to an out-of-the-military zone area. I'm positive that as soon as I'm out where I won't be near former friends and large groups of people, I can begin to live a little more normally again.....

As life is now here in camp, I'm making ~~xx~~ it miserable for everyone, especially the family. My abnormal life is being talked about in camp, and it makes it very uncomfortable for them. Talk of guys calling me crazy has been near and trouble may break out soon. I assure you I'm not in that mental state of mind yet. Japanese people can be cruel like any people when they want to and I've had more than my share. So if I can be

permitted to leave, it will be very beneficial to everyone concerned.....

I am really sincere when I say I'm in a mental state. It isn't anything dangerous. My mind has only developed a complex which can only be cured in small stages away from people who know me and who keep ridiculing and hammering away at my mental state. Living here in camp only makes it worse day after day.1/

At the recommendation of a doctor who interviewed this youth, he was transferred to the Tule Lake Relocation Center with the advice that he should not be released because of a suspected paranoid tendency. From the latter project, the youth again wrote:

I am sorry to trouble you again but I just had to write to you to attempt another method of securing a solution to my problem. As you probably remember, I was that mentally complexed person you interviewed in the Tulare Assembly Center about two months ago. Although I am sure I definitely stated that a transfer to another camp would not be the answer, you probably thought it was the best thing for me. Realizing your method of cure, I took the offer to transfer to the Tule Lake Relocation Center, where I myself thought it would really help me. But after two weeks of this life in which I endeavored to accustom myself to camp life and the handicap I was faced with, I find it continually growing much more difficult as time progresses. What I sincerely need is privacy as I cannot mingle with the Japanese crowd without that awful feeling of inferiority. I've had more than ample time to brood and try and plan means of escape from camp, but it all seems hopeless. You asked me at the interview if I had any ideas of self-destruction and I answered no at the time although I did have such thoughts. These thoughts are still prevalent due to the future of living in this camp with that ever present mental strain.....

.....I am in no way dangerous to the general public as I merely have a terrible inferiority complex which I cannot overcome in any crowded place as here where everything is done on the family basis. Mess, showers, laundry, toilet, and what have you. A person in my mental condition with an extremely sensitive mind cannot live normally in such a community.2/

A reproduction of his entire correspondence would better indicate that the youth's reasoning was unimpaired and that his insight into his own difficulties was of a high mental order. To ensure his

1/ Shibusani Document, TL-106, "The Case of Tsutomu Sakai."

2/ Ibid.

release from camp, he gave precise accounts of his savings, the method by which he would gain employment, the precautions he would take against getting into trouble because of his Japanese ancestry, and his written release of the Government from any responsibility for ~~any~~ future developments in his own case. In September of the same year, he left the project for sugar-beet harvesting work, and although a follow-up of his case was recommended, no further reports about him appeared. The absence of the follow-up precludes a comparison of his adjustments before and after his departure from the center.

The psychological difficulties of this youth started immediately after his graduation from high school in 1938 with incipient signs of persecution feelings in his relations with fellow workers. There are indications that the complex had its basis partly in his relations with his parents toward whom he evidently harbored a strong underlying resentment. While there is no doubt that his mental state was developing even before his evacuation to a center, and while it is not known whether removal from the center markedly improved his condition, it seems certain that the conditions of the center severely aggravated his inferiority feelings.

While his case represents an abnormally strong reaction against the crowding and lack of privacy characteristic of the relocation center, in a lesser degree the remainder of the populace was also subjected to invasions of personal sensitivity. As the youth pointed out, "Everything is done on a family basis;" mess, showers, laundry, toilets, and what have you, were semi-public. Assuming that sensitivity about intrusions upon the personal life is a matter of degree, the people at large had a similar problem of adjusting to conditions which permitted only the minimum of privacy.