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COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT IN MINIDOKA

(Submitted through the Community Council)

October 23, 1945

Final Report

Of

Chairman Community Council
February 1945 - October 1945

Section Heads:

Yoshito Fujii, February 28, 1944, - February 26, 1945
Iwao Oyama, February 26, 1945, - September 18, 1945

Compiled by

I. Oyama

Portland, Oregon
931 S. W. 1st Ave.
December 22, 1945

Mr. Bert Weston
War Relocation Authority
Hunt, Idaho

Dear Mr. Weston:

The persons assisting the Council in
writing up the final report of Community
Government in Minidoka were:

Mrs. Madge Erickson
Miss Gladys Tamura
Miss Fumi Sugikawa
Miss Mary Sadanaga
Mr. Henry Ito
Mr. Elmer R. Smith

These persons assisted by giving suggestions as to the arrangement of materials and the correcting of English as well as doing some typing on the report.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ I. Oyama

COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT IN MINIDOKA

(Submitted through the Community Council)

INTRODUCTION:

The following report will attempt to give a brief history of the development of community government in Minidoka and to present some of its many problems growing out of the type of relationship existing in an abnormal community. It is not the purpose of this report to lay the blame on any particular individual or group, but instead to point out the general types of problems and their failures of solution and successes in terms of the total picture. In order for the background material to be understood, the first part of the report will deal with the concepts of community government as held by the residents, and the history of the development of this type of government in the center. This will be followed by a brief summary of the ways the community governing units participated in community affairs, and some of the many problems faced by the block commissioners and council. The conclusions will attempt to evaluate community government in Minidoka in relation to the solution of problems, relations between the community governing units and the WRA administration, and some points of recommendations.

I

EVACUEE CONCEPTS OF COMMUNITY

GOVERNMENT

The concept of government as found in a relocation center by the residents does not follow a necessary given pattern, but various shades of ideas and opinions are found to exist among the population. The leaders of the community stated in the charter submitted in December of 1943 their main thinking on the subject under the second article. These concepts might be summarized as holding that the Community Council should be duly elected by the residents thru the use of the secret ballot; it should determine its own rules of order and discipline; establish committees and commissions from the residents in order to investigate, report and contact various groups incident to its functions and duties; adopt resolutions and recommendations addressed to the Project Director and negotiate the same with the project director. The other concepts associated with this statement of functions and duties or distinct from them held by others might be listed as follows:

1. To have the right, after due deliberation, to refuse to participate in certain requests of the WRA administration after presenting the reasons for such refusal.

2. To have the right of all interested to vote on certain rules and procedures of the council involving the welfare of all the people as related to problems of the center.

3. The people should have the right to bring personal as well as public problems to the Council for settlement, especially where these personal problems involve WRA policies or personal conflicts.

Another group of residents held that any form of community self-government was a farce and was a waste of time since WRA, and especially the project director, held the right to make final decisions upon all matters pertaining to policy and the carrying out of various programs within the center.

These are the outlines of most of the thinking pertaining to what community government should be. There were some other concepts present, but they were in such a minority that they played no important part in the development of the government structure nor in the conflict situation that later developed.

II

HISTORY OF COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

The history of community government really begins in the assembly centers of Puyallup and Portland, but only a brief statement can be given here of that beginning. It was in the assembly centers that one finds the basis for the traditional Issei-Nisei conflict, which was carried over into the Minidoka Relocation Center. In Puyallup, particularly, we find the services of the Nisei being used to aid in the control and governing of the residents. The Issei left out, and many of the residents were especially "touchy" about the fact that the Japanese American Citizen League was the basic force in contacting the government officials and in the carrying out of various jobs within the Assembly Center. These feelings and attitudes were carried over into the Relocation Center and for many months after the arrival of the people at Minidoka this Nisei-Issei conflict was carried on. It is also significant that many of the Issei leaders were not in the Assembly Center nor at Minidoka in the "first days" since many of these "leaders" were interned at this time by the Department of Justice.

A month and a half after the first arrivals at Minidoka from Puyallup (September 29, 1942), two representatives from each block were elected to the Congress for Council planning. The members of this Congress were primarily Issei, but it is possible that the fact that some 2,300 project residents, the majority Nisei, had left the Center at this time to work with the farm harvest had some influence on the small number of Nisei representatives. The composition of the Congress was as follows:

Issei.....	42
Nisei.....	23
Kibei.....	4
Sansei.....	1

Total	70
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In all fairness to the Congress, it should be mentioned that the Nisei did not "show up" in representative numbers at any time at the various meetings in the blocks where residents business matters were discussed. In other words, the Nisei, by large, seemed to leave the "representation of the Nisei" up to a picked group of leaders, mostly those who had experience in the Assembly Centers. It is also possible that many of the Nisei were at this time thinking about getting out of the center as soon as possible, and thus lost interest in political activities.

On October 6, 1942, a meeting of the Congress was held and seven persons were elected to the Organization Commission for Community Government. There was but one Nisei elected to this group of seven. Six days later (October 12) the first official meeting of the Commission took place, and plans and purposes of community government were discussed with Mr. George Townsend, Chief of Community Services (later called Community Management). There was dissatisfaction among the Issei with regard to the Administration Instruction No. 34 because Section III, Article B stated "Only citizens of the United States who are twenty-one years of age or over shall be eligible to hold elective office." Their (Issei) dissatisfaction was chiefly due to the fact, that in the Puyallup Assembly Center, the Nisei had taken over all the dominant roles in the running of the assembly center. All the executive positions had been held by Nisei and the Issei were excluded from all responsible positions, i.e., the block managers were Nisei, and all the area directors were also Nisei. The Issei felt that their status and experience were ignored. In other words, the Issei were dissatisfied with the domination of administrative positions by the young Nisei group.

"The powers and functions of the community self-government were restricted within the limits of the Administration Instruction No. 34. With this Administration Instruction as a basis, various forms of city government were thoroughly investigated." (SELF GOVERNMENT AT MINIDOKA RELOCATION CENTER, by Dick Kanaya, April 1944, page 10). The investigations of the ordinary city government set-up in other municipalities did not aid the Commission very much, since self-government in a relocation center could not function in the same manner as government in a "free" society.

"Due to the fact that the Issei were not eligible for the elective offices, the Commission felt that in order to facilitate good will and insure a smooth functioning of the governing body, an advisory board which would include non-citizens should be considered. The self-governing Charter, however, was planned with the thought in mind that a Nisei Council would be the supreme body." (Ibid., Kanaya, page 11.)

On November 11, 1942, after four separate drafts had been made of the proposed charter, the final draft was completed, and on November 16 the Charter was presented to the Project Director. The Charter contained the following clauses:

Article I.....Community Council
Article II.....Advisory Board
Article IV.....Judicial Commission
Article IX.....Nomination and Elections
Article V.....Initiative and Referendum
Article VI.....Amendment
Article VII.....Ratification.

The Commission held various meetings with Mr. D. S. Myer, Dr. Sol Kimball and others on the whole problem of self-government and types of representatives, but by January 23, 1943, no communications had been received from the Project Director, Mr. Harry L. Stafford, as to the status of the Charter or to the position of self-government in Minidoka as a whole. "The suggested time table for the permanent plan of government was prepared as early as October 31, 1942, and according to this timetable, the election of Councilmen and advisory group were supposed to take place on November 30, and the induction ceremony on December 7, 1942." (Ibid, Kanaya, page 13.)

During this period under discussion, the residents were under the supervision of Block Managers, appointed by the WRA administration to carry on the necessary businesses developing out of social living in a compact community. Many of these Block Managers appointed by the administration were considered to be "stooges" and "WRA dogs" by the residents. These attitudes were due to a number of reasons, among them were: Many of the persons appointed as Block Managers were Issei who had been working with the administration during certain critical times, such as housing, mess hall organization, etc., and were thought to have "played favorites," etc. in a number of instances; some of the Nisei appointed were labeled as "bad" before coming to Minidoka; some of the appointed Issei were believed to have acted as "squeelers" on others in order to keep out of the internment camps. All in all the situation was not conducive to a co-operative approach to solving some of the relationships between WRA and the residents.

Due to the failure to get results from the administration as to the status of self-government, the Commission on January 23, 1943, wrote a letter to Mr. Stafford, Project Director, asking what had been done with the Charter. "At this meeting (of the Commission on January 23) it was brought out that the public was getting impatient about the matter. In order to maintain favorable sentiment it was emphasized that a definite answer should be received from the administration so that the reasons for the delay could be announced to the public." (Ibid., Kanaya, page 14.) The Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Kinya Okajima, prepared the letter as follows:

"It has been quite some time since we submitted the tentative draft of the Community Charter for your approval.

"Many residents have been wondering why it has taken so long.....

"We, the members of the Commission, therefore, would like to know whether it is to be approved or not, within two weeks of this date."

/s/ Kinya Okajima
Chairman
Organization Commission

On January 28, 1943, the Commission received the following letter from Mr. Stafford, Project Director:

"While I believe we could put the instrument into tentative operation pending the final approval of the Washington office, I am not willing to do so for the following reasons:

"Difficulty has arisen at both Poston and Manzanar Projects. Both of these projects have had prior initiation or self-government activities.

"Adverse outside public sentiment has recently been given widespread public charges that the War Relocation Authority Administration is pampering the residents of these projects. I wish to be quite frank in saying that I do not understand why these projects which have operated under self-government have experienced riots, demonstrations and trouble. I believe it is in the light of all these recent events that our Washington office has slowed down, temporarily, the process of sanction for Mindoka self-government.

"Unless I am sure that our proposed Charter is free from any instrument or appendate affording factional strife and bitterness, I shall indeed be very reluctant to execute the same.

"I suggest to you and your commission that we hold off temporarily, pending solution of the basic causes of recent disturbances at other projects, and possible abatement of public and political demands to incarcerate us under direct military supervision."

/s/ H. L. Stafford
Project Director

A letter from Mr. D. S. Myer dated March 5, 1943, differed in its general tone from that of Mr. Stafford. The letter of Mr. Myer's read in part as follows:

"Despite this, I think you should keep in mind that WRA has declared a policy favoring evacuee government, has fostered it at all other

projects, and adopted such a policy with rather full consideration of the fact that a type of paternalistic directorship could be made to work under the given circumstances of evacuation and the high discipline of the people involved. The choice was made against the easy way, if it really is that, partly because fundamental rights of citizenship were involved for a majority of the people, partly because we wished to move definitely in a direction away from the authoritarian psychology of the assembly center and what was the prevailing policy of the Indian Service until a few years ago in its handling of minority group problems. To have adopted any other policy would have been a further and uncalled for negation of rather basic American principles of self-determination and choice over and above what was already negated by the evacuation itself.

"There is not sufficient evidence to support the conclusion that the evacuee governments at Poston, Manzanar or Gila have been the responsible factors in the difficulties encountered there. In all these cases, it is true, the evacuee government has not been strong enough to prevent trouble or adequately handle incidents after they occurred, but these failures are related more to inexperience and poor definition of functions and powers than they are to the mere presence of evacuee participation.

"I wish you would give me any further reactions you may have on the whole problem. It is not our intention to force evacuee government where not wanted, but we must keep open the opportunity for it, and lend our help when efforts are made by the evacuees to take advantage of that opportunity."

Sincerely,

/s/ D. S. Myer, Director

The administration continued to be very negative about the establishment of self-government, and on March 17, 1943, Mr. Stafford requested the members of the Commission and some outstanding members of the administrative staff to comment on Mr. Myer's letter. The general outcome of these requests was that the Administrative staff in Minidoka was not in favor of immediate inauguration of self-government within the project. They felt that Administrative Instruction No. 34 would be changed, especially to allow some sort of Issei representation. The Commission also went on record as holding for a modification of Instruction No. 34 to allow more Issei participation.

From March 19, 1943, a number of Commission meetings and block delegates meetings were held to discuss the various ways and means for the organization of a new charter that would more fully meet the demands of all concerned. However, it was always felt that the Project Director was

against any such organization of self-government that would do away with his appointive power of key men in the administration of evacuee living. On April 7, 1943, the Commission decided to draft a new Charter which would incorporate the alternate provisions which were suggested by the administration. On April 20 the Commission met with Mr. Stafford, and at that time it was announced that a telegram had been received stating that Administration Instruction No. 34 had been amended to allow Issei to hold elective offices. Throughout the rest of April and the whole month of May various meetings and committees were appointed to carry out the voting on the revised Charter. June 15, 1943, was the day the people in Minidoka voted on the Charter and voted down the acceptance of the said charter. The vote was 1,568 in favor of accepting the Charter to 2,375 against acceptance.

The Charter was voted down for a number of reasons, but the following as summarized by one of the residents presents the main factors:

1. "The majority of the residents were indifferent. The proper time to present the Charter had been missed. The residents thought everything was going smoothly and why should something new be introduced and stir up the peaceful atmosphere of the center.
2. "The explanations of the block delegates were not clear and were not sufficient.
3. "The block managers were against the instruction of anything new because they were interested in maintaining the status quo. There was an organized effort on the part of block managers to prevent the formulation of Advisory Council in the Center.
4. "The interval of time was too short between the election and circulation of the Charter. (The Charter was distributed on Thursday and the election was held on the following Tuesday, allowing only four days for general discussion.) There was not enough time to study the Charter.
5. "The lack of self-awakening of the residents. They did not realize the importance of having such a Council in the Center.
6. "The Japanese translation was too difficult to be understood by the majority of the residents. Some residents held that it was an inadequate translation.
7. "Some of the residents had individual grudges against some of the block representatives and towards members of the Organization Commission. These were distinctly personal reasons.
8. "Lack of cooperation on the part of block representatives. Some representatives were against setting up a Community Council in the Center. They held the opinion that it was better not to introduce anything which was new.

9. "Some Portlanders thought the formation of a Community Council would give more power and authority to Seattle people since the majority of the Minidoka residents came from Seattle."
(Ration 6:15)

Another factor they might have played a role in the voting down of the Charter was the fact that some of the Administrative personnel in high places were known to be violently against the Charter, and since this was so, it was felt that peace and harmony could be better maintained by "giving in" to these officers.

On June 23, 1943, the Organization Commission and the block delegates resigned from their positions. Mr. Stafford several days later, requested the Organization Commission to consider their resignations, and to continue to work on the revision of the Charter.

On July 9, 1943, newly elected block delegates took place, but only one delegate was elected from each block at this time, in contrast to two previously. This new group of block delegates was composed of ten old delegates and twenty-five new ones. Thirty-one were Issei, two Nisei, and two Kibei. Thus a great change took place in the composition of the delegates over the previous ones.

From July 20, 1943 through August and most of September practically no progress concerning the Charter was made because of the segregation program and the transfer of over 1,500 people to Tule Lake. However, on September 23, the block delegates met and studied the Charter which had been rejected by the Minidoka residents in June. A series of other meetings were held, and on November 10 a meeting was held with Mr. Stafford for the final polishing up of the Charter and late in November the Charter was approved by the Washington Office.

About a month after the Charter was approved by the Washington office of WRA it was decided to have the general election relative to the acceptance of the Charter. On December 28, 1943, the general election was held. All the blocks ratified the Charter except Block 2. It is possible that the large number of Tuleans, who had recently arrived in this block, was a factor in the failure to ratify the Charter. Since it was held that they were against community government. The percentage voting on the Charter was--Yes, 79 per cent--No, 21 per cent. In contrast to the percentage voting in June of 1943, the figures are given as--Yes, 40 per cent--No, 60 per cent.

"The important factors which brought about the Charter adoption may be summarized as follows:

"1. The residents as a whole understood the present Charter much better than they did at the last election which was held on June 15. The credit is due to the block delegates who tried their best to explain the proposed Charter to the residents.

"2. The residents realized that a representative of government was also imperative under present conditions in the Center. They realized that the block managers alone were not sufficient to cope with the various problems which arise in the center from day to day.

"3. There was no organized effort on the part of certain groups to oppose the establishment of the Community Council in the center as had been the case in the last election.

"4. The residents experienced a great deal of inconvenience when Director Myer visited this center as there was no formal body to represent them. This was also true on December 22 when the Spanish Consul visited here.

"5. The residents felt that even though there would undoubtedly be some politics in the center, a community council was imperative to carry out various functions of the center." (Ibid., Kanaya, page 31-32.)

The carrying out of the Charter's organization into practice was held up due to the development of certain labor disputes to settle these problems, and the function of the Organization Committee will be discussed later under Labor Relations and the Administration. It was not until January 26 that a Nominating Convention was held. Two delegates from each block were elected (35 blocks) which made seventy delegates to the Nominating Convention for Councilmen. Out of the seventy delegates only about 20 per cent were Nisei. At the Convention thirty-eight candidates were nominated. The twenty-one nominees who received the highest votes became the candidates and the other eighteen became the alternates. It was decided that twenty-one persons be the number of candidates for the Council and that the others should be the alternates in terms of votes received.

The nominees in some cases did not wish to run for office and within a few days after the convention closed, many nominees declined the candidacy. These declining nominees numbered twenty-two out of the original thirty-eight, thus only sixteen men were to be considered in the election for the Council. There were eleven Issei and five Nisei in this remaining group. The reasons for declining the candidacy as given by the persons themselves have been summarized as follows:

- "1. Relocation (seasonal or indefinite).
- "2. Personal reasons which they did not specify.
- "3. 'There are many better men than I am.'
- "4. Lack of political experience.
- "5. Council in final analysis would be to rubber stamp the acts of the WRA.
- "6. New to Minidoka Center (in case of some nominees who came back from the Internment Camp).
- "7. Ill health.
- "8. Too heavy responsibilities." (Ibid., Kanaya, page 34.)

It was finally decided that the election of Councilmen would take place on February 7, 1944. Three thousand twenty-eight votes were cast and only two persons out of sixteen candidates received a majority vote. These were Mr. Y. Fujii and Dr. Shigaya. A run-off election was held on February 14. In the run-off election 2,597 votes were cast or a decrease of 431 votes over the first balloting. The first Community Council was thus elected at Minidoka on February 14, 1944, some fifteen months after the first meeting was held to discuss and lay plans for a self-governing body in Minidoka. The elected councilmen and the number of votes received were:

Mr. Y. Fujii	2219
Dr. Shigaya.....	1961
Mr. G. Hihara.....	1574
Mr. Roy Akiyama.....	1489
Mr. S. Osawa.....	1372
Mr. J. Chikata.....	1347
Mr. K. Takeda.....	1156

In this group of Councilmen there was but one Nisei (Mr. S. Osawa), and he was the oldest Nisei in the center.

The Charter for Community Government at Minidoka provided for one block commissioner to be elected by the people from each of the 35 blocks. The functions of the commissioners was to concern themselves with the general welfare and desires of the residents within their respective blocks. It would be their duty to disseminate information regarding action taken by the Council. The commissioners were to be subsidiary and subject to the control of the Council which would promulgate necessary rules and regulations for the conduct and operation of the coordinating commission. The commissioners were elected and organized on February 26, 1944.

The Community Council members were sworn into office February 28, 1944, by the Mr. Clyde Linville of the Evacuee Property Office. Mr. Y. Fujii was Council Chairman. On March 9, the Council met and established six standing committees, namely, Education, Food, Health, Public Relations, Welfare, and Juvenile. These committees remained as basic ones throughout the life of community government at Minidoka. The activities and problems faced by the Council will be discussed in the next section.

The second Community Council election was held on August 7, 1944 and five of the old councilmen were seeking re-election. Article IV, Sec. 4 of the Charter was amended by the joint resolution of the Council and the Block Commissioners, eliminating the necessity of a run-off election. The Amendment to the Charter read: "The seven candidates receiving the largest number of votes cast by the qualified electors of the community shall be declared elected by the Community Clerk." The five old councilmen running for re-election were elected. Four of these received the four highest number of votes, while the fifth received the seventh place in number of votes cast. There were 2553 votes cast and Mr. Y. Fujii, Chairman of the

first Council received 2024. The other members elected to the Council and their votes were;

Jack Chikata.....	1581
Genji Mihara.....	1505
Shigeru Osawa.....	1198
Heitaro Hikida.....	1034
Kunizo Mayeno.....	884
Yosajiro Doi.....	854

The blocks having the highest number of people voting were;

Block 15.....	111
Block 24.....	105
Block 14.....	102
Block 42.....	102

The rest of the blocks had less than a hundred voters.

It should be noted in passing that of the number of delegates nominated at the nomination convention, a large number again resigned their candidacy.

The third Community Council election was held on Feb. 26, 1945, and the nomination Convention had been previously on January 23. Forty-one nominations were proposed by the delegates out of which twenty-one candidates were elected. Of these twenty-one candidates, five are incumbent councilmen. Two other councilmen had previously announced their intention of resigning and were not nominated. A large number of candidates resigned, until finally only seven men out of the forty-two candidates chose to run for the third Council. The three old members of the Council two declined at the last moment. The Charter held that at least ten candidates must be on the ballot. The Charter was thus amended to the effect that the nominating convention delegates must secure prior acceptance of the candidates they propose to nominate. It was also decided to have a new nominating convention. (Note: The original date set for elections of councilmen was February 5, 1945.) After the nominating convention met on February 20, and twenty-one candidates were finally elected (the seven nominees that did not resign from the previous candidacy were re-nominated) the Council elections took place as previously noted in the beginning of this paragraph on February 26, 1945. The entire slate was composed of Issei, and seven of the candidates were former internees. There were 2,668 votes cast. The following were the Councilmen elected and the votes received:

*Genji Mihara.....	1771
Iwao Oyama.....	1682
Taiichi Takeoka.....	1309
*Kunizo Mayeno.....	1241
*Yosajiro Doi.....	1129
Kintaro Takeda.....	1124
Roy Akiyama.....	994

The three council members from the old council were elected and are starred in the above list, while Mr. Akiyama was a previous councilman from the first Community Council, as was Mr. Takeda. There were, then, only two new members that had not had experience in community government in previous councils. Mr. Iwao Oyama became the chairman of the third Community Council.

Mr. Takeda was the first Council member to relocate, and the others relocated one by one, until at this writing (September 18, 1945) only three remain.

III

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SELF-GOVERNMENT

To go into detail, on every aspect of the participation of the Council in self-government in Minidoka, would take a report of too great a bulk, and time nor space does not permit. It is, however, thought advisable to give the high spots in the life of the governing bodies of Minidoka as evaluated from the point of view of the residents. Thus, the following report will be a brief statement of the various activities and problems faced by the self-governing body of Minidoka from the time of its organization commission to and through the life of the third Community Council.

The fields of participation may be divided for descriptive purposes into the following categories:

- Community Welfare
- Labor
- Law and Order
- Communications
- Ceremonial
- WRA Programs

A series of discussions will be carried on under each of these "fields of activity," and evaluations will be made of these activities in the final and concluding section of this report. The present approach aims to be purely descriptive.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Under the heading of Community Welfare, the Council set up five committees to assist the Council and the residents in studying and solving the problems of Food, Health, Housing, Recreation, and Education. Each of these committees will be discussed in the above named order.

The Food Committee

The food committee consisted of five members appointed by the Council and an advisory committee of four members. Delegates at large numbered two members. The committee appointed its own respective chairman.

The food committee was one of the most active and important of the community government committees, and many problems were always being presented to it. Some of these problems the committee was able to adjust satisfactorily either with the administration or with the various residents involved. However, in many instances, especially where the administration was concerned, little progress was made. The minutes of the Food Committee points up these various situations.

The following main problems seem to be the most pertinent ones that developed during the existence and functioning of the Food Committee:

1. The problem of manufacturing "miso" (mixture of rice and beans), "moyashi" (bean sprouts), "tsukemono" (pickled vegetables), "age-dofu" (fried bean cakes).
2. The quality of food served at various times was not of such quality as could be eaten. This was especially true of such items as fish, breakfast food, and milk.
3. That mess hall equipment was not in sufficient quantities or was inferior. This type of equipment included work clothes, cutting equipment, meat blocks, etc.
4. The problem of keeping perishable foods in the mess halls without sufficient ice boxes or ice, especially during the hot summer months.
5. That bread be served less often than rice, and that the quality of bread be increased.
6. That the Steward Division give the full allotment of food per person as allowed in their budget.
7. That there should be better cooperation and coordination between the various employees in the various sections of the mess operations.
8. That vegetable and fruits should be served more often.

These were the main problems that kept jumping into the discussion of the various meetings of the committee, and the objections of the residents would seem to perpetually come back to at least most of these points. This was due, primarily, to the fact that the administration did not take into consideration many of the recommendations of the committee.

Supplement I of this report will give some of the minutes of the various Food Committee, and in this manner the problems can be more adequately understood.

SUPPLEMENT I

Example of Minutes From Food Committee Presenting Problems
and Recommendations of the Committee

Special Joint Meeting
of the
Food Committee
and
Chefs (Chief Cooks) and Pantry Clerks (Storekeepers)
of all Evacuee Dining Halls

Date: April 14, 1944
Time: 2:00 P.M.
Place: 22-5-DEF

The Chairman followed his introductory remarks with a brief explanation of the circumstances whereunder it was decided the special meeting should be held. He stated that his Food Committee, meeting on March 30, 1944, had drafted a set of recommendations, numbering fourteen points. Submitted for the Community Council's consideration, the recommendations were discussed at the Council's meeting on April 4, 1944, at which time a fifteenth recommendation was added, and decision made that a joint meeting of the Food Committee and Chefs and Pantry Clerks of all evacuee dining halls should be held promptly, for the purpose of further investigation and deliberation of the recommendations.

The Chairman thereupon read a copy of the recommendations, one point at a time, asking for comments on each.

1. "That the manufacture of "miso" (mixture of rice and beans), "moyashi" (bean sprouts), "tsukemoto" (pickled vegetables), "age-dofu" (fried bean cakes), be made possible within the project, and that the list of the above mentioned foods (listing their food values) be sent to Washington for approval."

The Chairman explained that a table of food values was being prepared by experts.

2. "That the quality of the foods served for breakfast be improved in quality without sacrificing the quantity."

The Chairman stated that the words "for breakfast" had been deleted at the suggestion of the Community Council.

3. "That, as Mr. Mihara suggested, it would be advisable to have the chefs of the dining halls meet with the committee at such time when the need arises for discussion of problems that may require their presence and cooperation."
4. "That fish, preferably tuna, sea bass, yellow-tail, be served in its raw state to the residents whenever available."

No comments, except that the recommendation should suggest "at least once a month."

5. "That the Steward Division when making its requisition for fish bear in mind the following preferences of the majority of the residents:

Sardines	Squid	Yellow-tail
Mackerel	Sole	Halibut
Barracuda	Sea bass	Salmon

No comments

6. "That conflicts or problems pertaining to the personnel of the dining halls will not be handled by the committee--that such matters be brought to the attention of the Council until the Fair Labor Practice Board is organized."

Omitted from discussions.

7. "That the Projects make an extensive study of their various types of soil, and plant such vegetables that are suitable to that particular type of soil."

Omitted from discussions.

8. "That cutting equipment (knives) be provided for the cooks of all the dining halls, as they are very inconvenienced at this time with their inadequate supply of cutting equipment."

Additional equipment desired, as stated from the floors:

Meat Blocks (heavy tables for chopping meat)
Meat saws
Sharpening steels
15/20 gallon pots
Rice cookers
Uniforms and clothing
Cooks' boots, trousers, coats, aprons for
cooks, waitresses waterproof aprons for
dishwashers, gloves for janitors, night
clerks.
One additional refrigerator or ice-box
An ax and a hammer for each kitchen
An electric iron for each laundress

9. "That proper steps be taken to provide the dining halls with sufficient supply of knives, forks, spoons, cups, saucers, and plates."

It was reported that new deliveries, except for table knives, had just been received.

10. "That chop sticks (which will make the eating of Japanese foods

much easier) be made available to the residents."

Consensus of opinion was against chop sticks, due to sanitary reasons.

11. "That rice (which is equal to bread in the American diet) be served at least twice daily to the residents."

Unanimously in favor. If ultimate negotiations should result in increase of rice rations conditionally upon a reduction in bread rations, this is to be accepted.

12. "That the dining halls receive an adequate supply of ice during the hot summer months to prevent food spoilage."

Comment: Ice is needed particularly in the summer months, of course.

13. "That the Steward Division give the residents their daily full allotment per person (for the three meals) as allowed for in their budget."

All in favor.

14. "That breakfasts be served at 8:00 a.m. every Sunday."

Much discussion; final consensus--delete this recommendation altogether. It was suggested that the cooks and the residents of each block should determine their Sunday meal schedules for their own blocks, according to their desires.

15. The additional recommendation proposed by the Community Council:

"That delivery of milk to dining halls should be made in the early morning, instead of during the afternoon, as at present. The weather thus far has not been warm, yet already, on some days, some milk has been spoiled, probably during delivery. With warmer weather coming, deliveries during the cool of the mornings is greatly desired."

This recommendation was approved.

Mr. G. Mihara, Vice-Chairman of the Community Council, and employed on the project in the Steward's Division, explained the procedure of food deliveries from warehouses to dining halls. He stated that "tomorrow's food is delivered today," and that food should be used up according to the menu. He advised against maintaining any appreciable inventory in dining hall storerooms, since this would result in reduced deliveries to those particular storerooms.

There was some discussion about deliveries of spoiled foodstuffs. It was explained that some deliveries of spoiled food were made for the purpose of salvaging an indeterminable part not spoiled, that such deliveries were "extras," not on the record of deliveries. The point was raised—"When such spoiled food is originally received at the project, is it paid for at the full charge, and thereby charged in full against our budgetary per-head daily ration of 45 cents?" No definite reply to this.

The cooks and pantry clerks expressed a desire for more time during the receiving and checking of food at the time of delivery. A little more time would enable them to refuse and return some spoiled food.

Additional recommendations suggested from the floor:

1. That there should be better coordination between the Menu-maker, the food ration office, and the warehouse, to insure that food will be delivered according to the menu.
2. That on unavoidable occasions when an item of food, mentioned on the menu, cannot be delivered, some substitute should be delivered.
3. That food should be procured more in sympathy with Japanese tastes.
4. That cold meats should be served less often.
5. That head cheese and salami should be minimized, in favor of baloney and wieners, which better suit Japanese tastes.
6. That salad dressings should be supplied in larger quantities to conform with requirements of the menu.
7. That, if the rice ration is to be increased, there should be proportionate increase in the supply of shoyu (soy sauce).
8. That egg noodles should be minimized in favor of spaghetti and Japanese style noodles, which are more popular with the Japanese.
9. That deliveries should be full weight. Dried shrimps, sesame seeds, etc., are more often than not found to be about ten per cent short delivered.
10. That requisitions submitted by Pantry Clerks should be, whenever possible, fulfilled promptly. Pantry Clerks seldom write requisitions, and only in case of actual need.
11. That extreme caution should be exercised in the accepting and storing and handling of Saligen (Japanese: "Aji-no-moto"), to

eliminate delivery of this item in an unusable lumpy state; it should be a dry powder.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Tohru Ogawa
Community Clerk

* *

COMMUNITY COUNCIL OFFICE
Minidoka Project
Hunt, Idaho

May 18, 1944

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. Cecil W. Wilder
Chief Steward

FROM: T. Takeda
Chairman, Food Committee

As chairman of the Food Committee, I have received many complaints regarding an alleged inconsistency in the matter of distribution of fresh milk and sugar to the various project dining halls. I, therefore, would very much appreciate it if you will arrange to furnish me with comprehensive list showing distributed quantities of fresh milk and sugar in detail to the various dining halls, say during the last week or two. I would also be interested in hearing under what formula the Steward Division determines the proportioning of the two commodities to the respective dining halls.

It might interest you to know that we have received actual complaints that in one or more dining halls, pregnant ladies and nursing mothers have been refused milk in spite of the fact that they had in hand authorization from the hospital authorities.

I believe that our Food Committee can best cooperate with you if you can arrange to supply us with the foregoing type of information in order that we may be able more intelligently to answer questions raised by the residents.

Respectfully yours,

Kintaro Takeda

cc: W.H. Mann
Supply Officer

Minutes of the
Food Committee Meeting

Date: March 30, 1944
Place: 22-5-D
Time: 1:30 P.M.

The first meeting of the Food Committee was called to order by Mr. Takeda, chairman. Members present were: Messrs. M. Mihara, M. Ota, K. Tambara, Y. Harada, and K. Takeda. Messrs. G. Hara and Y. Doi were absent.

The Food Committee made the following recommendations to be presented to the Community Council:

1. That the manufacture of "miso" (mixture of rice and beans), "moyashi" (bean sprouts), "tsukemono" (pickled vegetables), "age-dofu" (fried bean cakes), be made possible within the project, and that the list of the above mentioned foods (listing their food values) be sent to Washington for approval.

2. That the quality of the foods served for breakfast be improved in quality without sacrificing the quantity.

3. That, as Mr. Mihara suggested, it would be advisable to have the chefs of the dining halls meet with the committee at such time when the need arises for discussion of problems that may require their presence and cooperation.

4. That fish, preferably tuna, sea bass, yellow-tail, be served in its raw state to the residents whenever available.

5. That the Steward Division when making its requisition for fish bear in mind the following preferences of the majority of the residents:

Sardines	Squid	Yellow-tail
Mackerel	Sole	Halibut
Barracuda	Sea bass	Salmon

6. That conflicts or problems pertaining to the personnel of the dining halls will not be handled by the committee—that such matters be brought to the attention of the Council until the Fair Labor Practice Board is organized.

7. That the Project make an extensive study of their various types of soil, and plant such vegetables that are suitable to that particular type of soil.

8. That cutting equipment (knives) be provided for the cooks of all the dining halls, as they are very inconvenienced at this time with their inadequate supply of cutting equipment.

9. That proper steps be taken to provide the dining halls with sufficient supply of knives, forks, spoons, cups, saucers, and plates.

10. That chop sticks (which will make the eating of Japanese foods much easier) be made available to the residents.

11. That rice (which is equal to bread in the American diet) be served at least twice daily to the residents.

12. That the dining halls receive an adequate supply of ice during the hot summer months to prevent food spoilage.

13. That the Steward Division give the residents their daily full allotment per person (for the three meals) as allowed for in their budget.

14. That breakfasts be served at 8:00 A.M. every Sunday.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 P.M.

* *

Minutes of the
Food Committee Meeting

Date: October 4, 1944
Time: 1:40 P. M.
Place: Council Chamber, 22-5-DEF

Meat

Mr. Y. Doi reported on the meat situation stating that due to shortage of available meat in this project, deliveries of meat have been made to Minidoka Project from Topaz Center. Residents are charged 20 cents per pound for meat sent from Topaz Center, while available meat from Minidoka Project costs the residents 18 and 18½ cents per pound. Because of the difference in prices, there has been a slight decrease in the quantity of meat being delivered to the dining halls, but the chefs reported that the meat situation was satisfactory.

Vegetables

Members reported that the milk and sugar distribution was satisfactory but mentioned that shortage of vegetables was keenly felt by the residents.

Mr. Doi, then stated that adverse weather conditions had delayed harvesting. The Steward Section had depended on the harvesting of vegetables grown in the project, therefore, had cut down on purchases of vegetables for that certain period. Mr. Mihara reported that orders for purchase of vegetables outside had already been made.

Recommendations

1. Project-grown peas and beans which had been delivered to dining halls were found to be very poor in quality, and in most cases, not edible. To save valuable time, effort and labor needed on the farm, and to avoid useless wastage, it was suggested by the members that recommendation be sent to persons responsible for making planting charts for next year, to take into consideration the poor quality and poor growth of beans and peas harvested this year.
2. The chefs reported that the majority of residents do not like macaroni and cheese (which requires valuable points), and there is considerable amount going into the garbage cans. To avoid such unnecessary waste, the chefs recommended that the Steward Section, when putting in their requisitions, take note of the fact that the residents have expressed preference for Chinese type of noodles or spaghetti.
3. Many varieties of cereals are being delivered to the dining halls, but some varieties are not accepted by the majority of the residents. The chefs reported that residents have shown strong favoritism towards the following cereals:

Rice Krispies
Puffed Rice
Corn Flakes

4. Plans for the production of "moyashi" (bean sprouts) was brought up for discussion. The members agreed that recommendation be sent to Community Council asking for their cooperation in investigating conditions, whereby "moyashi" could be made available to the residents.
5. More "tsukemono" (pickled vegetables) are desired by the residents.
6. Order for 1500 pounds of "mochi-gome" (sweet rice) should be sent in immediately in order to avoid last minute confusion and delay.
7. Evacuee visitors are charged 20 cents per meal, 60 cents per day (5 meals). The members felt that the 60 cents charged to the visitors should be credited to the food account charged to the evacuee residents.
8. The members reported that the residents have expressed their desires for certain kind of fish. The Steward Section, when putting in their requisition for fish, should bear in mind that squid is very unpopular with the residents, and the choice of the residents are as follows:

Sardine
Mackerel
Barracuda

Tuna
Sea bass
Salmon

9. Members reported that many loaves of bread are being wasted, as the bread now being supplied to the residents has a tendency to harden in a short time, therefore, they recommended that steps be taken to make available Wonder Bread (the unanimous choice of the residents) as soon as possible.
10. Chefs reported the great and immediate need for cooks' coats and pants, which is an important factor in maintaining a high degree of health standard in the kitchen.
11. Some dining hall chefs have reported that residents are quite concerned over the poor and inferior quality of silverware. The residents are hesitant and fearful of using such silver, which may eventually affect their health.

* *

Minutes of the
Food Committee Meeting

Date: November 4, 1944
Time: 10:00 A.M.
Place: Council Chamber 22-5-DEF

Problems to be presented by the Food Committee to Mr. Frank W. Harding, Chief, Mess Operations of the W.R.A. staff at Washington, D. C. at meeting to be held with Mr. Harding in the near future:

1. Residents have felt the shortage of vegetables and fruits during the past two months.
2. How is the dining hall of the appointed personnel managed? Why is there a difference in the menu of the appointed personnel as compared to the menu of the evacuees?
3. Chefs reported that a large quantity of vegetables had spoiled during the hot summer months. They expressed a great and urgent need for cellars (adjacent to their respective dining halls) which will be helpful in preserving vegetables and fruits and also make possible more space in the kitchen.
4. Problem of hanging kitchen wash (cooks' aprons, etc.). Laundresses face difficulty of hanging wash. Fire and sanitary rules make impossible drying of wash in the laundry room and in the place of residence. Would recommend an empty apartment in the respective blocks to be used specifically as drying room.
5. Laundresses supply their own thread for mending purposes. They also use their own irons. In form of compensation for the use

of thread and irons, and for repairing bills paid for repairs made on individually owned sewing machines, it was recommended that their classification be changed to class C (\$19) from class B (\$16), or some other steps be taken to reimburse them.

6. In a normal household in any community, points are given for waste fats turned in. For waste fats turned in from this project, are the residents entitled to the use of these points to acquire additional sugar needed in the pickling of vegetables?

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 A. M.

* *

The Health Committee:

The health committee of the Council was made up of seven members. The principal types of problems presented to the Health Committee had to deal with the hospital and general health problems within the center. Some of these more reoccurring problems were:

1. Condition of water both in the taps and in the irrigation ditches supplying the residents in the respective blocks.
2. Problems of hospital, such as, blood donors, relations of the Ko-en Kai to certain groups within the hospital; disturbances within the hospital staff; aiding in the recruiting of workers in the hospital, especially in the T. B. ward. (For some examples see SUPPLEMENT II).
3. The problem of garbage disposal, especially during the last part of May and the first week in June. Failure to have adequate arrangements for the disposal of garbage created a health hazard at this time.

SUPPLEMENT II

LETTERS ON HEALTH PROBLEMS FROM THE
HEALTH COMMITTEE TO THE ADMINISTRATION

COMMUNITY COUNCIL OFFICE
Minidoka Project
Hunt, Idaho

August 30, 1944

Mr. H. L. Stafford, Project Director
Hunt, Idaho

Subject: Pollution of Irrigation Water

Dear Sir:

This is a request that you will arrange for some appropriate action towards improving the sanitary condition of the irrigation water presently being furnished a large part of the residential area within this project. According to reports received by this office, the drainage from the hog farm, particularly the filthy water from the washing of garbage cans and/or other receptacles used there, is permitted to pollute the irrigation water serving our residential areas. This, of course, is understandably a situation which should be remedied, considering that small children cannot be kept from playing with water, that the odor of the water is more than a nuisance, etc.

Complaints regarding the foregoing have been voiced by many individuals and by several Block Commissioners at joint meetings of the Community Council and its Coordinating Commission. The Council's Health Committee recommended that the Community Council take action, and the Council subsequently accepted the task of bringing this matter to your attention.

Respectfully,

Y. Fujii
Chairman, Community Council

cc: Health Committee
C. A. Sullivan, Sanitarian

* *

COMMUNITY COUNCIL OFFICE
Minidoka Project
Hunt, Idaho

August 30, 1944

Mr. H. L. Stafford, Project Director
Hunt, Idaho

Subject: Special Accommodations for
Evacuee Physicians.

Dear Sir:

I am writing this memorandum on behalf of and at the request of the Community Council, to solicit your cooperation towards granting our evacuee physicians and surgeons on the staff of this project's hospital, some special accommodations and services. We have in mind, particularly the granting of extra housing facilities (an additional small apartment if he is living with his family) or the furnishing of a part-time housekeeper's services (if he is living alone).

We believe the foregoing is a reasonable request considering the type of services rendered by doctors, and the long hours during which they are obliged to be on duty.

You will recognize, of course, that the Council's concern in this matter is a result of camp-wide agitation that something must be done to improve the possibilities that evacuee doctors will remain here, and the request contained in this letter originates from recommendations emanating from the Council's Health Committee, the Hospital Ko-en Kai (Benefit Association) and its executive Board.

Respectfully,

Y. Fujii
Chairman, Community Council

cc: Health Committee
Hospital Ko-en Kai

* *

The Housing Committee

The housing committee has had a stormy career, especially in the early days of the center when the transfers were being made, and before the regular "housing committee" under the Council was set up. The background of the present housing committee and events leading up to its establishment might be outlined as follows:

By the 11th of September, 1942, all of the residents from Seattle and Portland areas were in Minidoka, but from the middle of July through to this time, representatives from the Housing Department were sent to the trains to meet the people and explain to them that housing space was inadequate. They were also told that they would have to "double up" with their friends for the time being, and live in one apartment. This sort of "doubling up" went well for a few days, but very soon, as more persons arrived, the residents began to come to Housing, insisting they be given a separate room as they were promised. "Every morning before office hours, the front space of Housing Division was packed with the newly arrivals with but one thought in their minds, separate apartments. The excitement and confusion were beyond description. It was simply pathetic. The Housing Staff members did everything humanly possible to convince the crowd that their wishes will be fulfilled as soon as possible. Despite this appeal, the mobs did not disperse until they got their apartments. It was a matter of their stubbornness versus patience on the side of the Housing Staff. There were at that time, approximately 200 members in Housing Department comprising mostly young and inexperienced persons, and

as a result they made all sorts of promises just to escape the pressure." (From Report to Council, November 1, 1943)

WRA finally adopted a method of adjustment to attend to this matter by forming an Adjustment Board. The Board consisted of three board members, four investigators, and three special assistants. The names of the Board members were not made public, thus protecting them from pressure groups by the residents. Upon this basis a certain amount of objectivity was injected into the solving of the housing problem.

During the month of October 1942, it was necessary to vacate the residents out of Block 23 to make room for the high school. The residents in this block were requested to go to Block 44. The angry residents came to the Housing Division with axes and knives and threatened the Board members in protest of their removal to other blocks. By manipulation this incident did not develop to any further stage and ended in the understanding on the part of the residents.

Some of the other highlights in which the residents of Minidoka and their representatives were involved as far as housing was concerned were:

1. The vacating of barracks in Block 4 of the hospital area for the use of the semi-invalids. This took place with no large amount of negative reaction.
2. On March 1943, the vacating of apartments in Blocks 10 and 32 for the purpose of having grade schools in these blocks ran into some problems. The main argument against moving out of these blocks revolved around the fact that WRA had promised regular school buildings for the children, and since the housing situation was acute, WRA should live up to its promise and not move people out of their established homes.
3. In May 1943, half of Block 22 was vacated for the purpose of office space. This resulted in negative reactions. Office space should be built and not residents forced to move after they had become once established.
4. On March 26, 1943, the problem of adjusting fourteen families in Block 35, who had been crowded into three person apartments by having more than that number of persons in each apartment, was the most difficult case the Adjustment Board had to handle.
5. On October 4, 1944, the Administration asked the Community Council and thus the Housing Committee to aid them in moving all persons out of Block 22 for the purpose of establishing offices and play rooms in that block. The Housing Committee took up this matter with the residents and a great amount of opposition was shown to such a move. The Committee recommended to the administration that the persons not be moved. After a considerable amount of negotiation, the move was postponed, and never did take place.

Within recent months the Committee has had no problems presented to them for solution.

* *

Education Committee

The Education Committee of the Council consisted of eight members including the chairman. Its purpose was to act in an advisory capacity to the WRA school administration and to aid in the distribution of information to the residents concerning the educational set-up of the center. It was also to act as an organization to present the problems of the residents to the administration for action and consideration relative to education.

The main problems faced by the Education Committee might be listed as follows:

1. During the spring months of 1944 requests were made to have school latrines distinct from those used by the residents in Blocks 10 and 32. This was never taken care of by the administration.
2. The problem of curfew laws for children was considered a number of times, but no progress was made on this problem since the residents could not agree on the set-up nor could the administration since the Internal Security would have to take the responsibility for their enforcement and this they seemed reluctant to do.
3. The committee, at the request of many parents, asked for earlier closing of dances. This was partly solved through the cooperation of the activities section of WRA, but no final solution was ever arrived at.
4. A recreation hall exclusive for high school students was requested a number of times by the committee, but it was not until late in the spring of 1945 that this need was partly met by a "teen age" canteen.
5. The committee also requested that all recreation halls be made available for recreational purposes. This was discussed a number of times, and requests made, but at no time at Minidoka were over one-half of such halls ever used wholly for recreational purposes. In many instances, as the record shows, the recreational halls were used by WRA for storage purposes.
6. Requests for play rooms for elementary school children, especially during the winter months. It was suggested that one-half of a barrack be used for this purpose. This did not get the positive response from the administration. Along this same line, swings and slides were requested for the younger children to be placed on certain designated playgrounds. This was not forthcoming, and very poor facilities were always available for the younger children.
7. Upon the request of the residents, the committee submitted a proposal for Japanese to be one of the optional foreign languages to be

taught along with German, Spanish, French, in the high school. The committee thus forwarded the following letter to the Project Director under date of August 21, 1944:

COMMUNITY COUNCIL OFFICE
Minidoka Project
Hunt, Idaho

August 21, 1944

Mr. H. L. Stafford, Project Director
Hunt, Idaho

Subject: Inclusion of Japanese Language
Courses at Hunt High School

Dear Sir:

The many requests from project residents that we negotiate for the inclusion of the Japanese language as an optional foreign language course to be taught at the Hunt High Schools, have been the subject of discussions during the past several months within meetings of the Community Council, its Coordinating Commission, and its Education Committee.

Our investigations point towards the fact that majority opinion within this project is in favor of the foregoing, hence this letter is intended to acquaint you of the residents' wishes in this connection. We fully realize that this matter, brought before administrative and educational authorities, is almost certain to become a controversial issue, and so, anticipating this, we outline hereunder some of the arguments we have recorded, in support of the contention that the Japanese language should be taught here:

1. Of all the Nisei, that group with proficient Japanese language education has proved most useful to this country in its war effort.

2. The elderly Issei parents, in large majority, cannot communicate in writing in the English language, and despite opportunities are not, as a matter of fact, making an effort to learn the language. Some being inducted into this country's armed forces should have sufficient knowledge of the Japanese language in order to correspond with their parents.

3. The above condition is similarly applicable to sons and daughters leaving this project on seasonal or indefinite leaves, and being separated from their parents.

4. Educated peoples everywhere have a knowledge of at least one foreign language, and a Nisei with Japanese language education can put it to practical use.

5. Public relations with the outside in general should not be adversely affected considering that, with proper supervision by a governmental agency, it should be clear that there would be no "Japanization" intended in, or resulting from, the teaching of the Japanese language.

6. Post-war international relations between this country and Japan are certain to function more smoothly if more Americans understand the Japanese language. This country doubtlessly will have a definite need of such people.

We should like to discuss this matter in a meeting with you and members of your staff. We would appreciate it if you will arrange for a preliminary investigation for the purpose of discovering the nature and extent of the administrative problems involved, for presentation at the meeting.

Respectfully yours,

Y. Fujii
Chairman, Community Council

TTC:am

cc: Education Committee
Mr. E. Huberman
Mr. A. M. Kleinkopf

* *

This request was turned down by the W.R.A.

8. The Education Committee was called upon to request the WRA to make available the workers' convoys for the transportation of high school students. The letter replying to the Project Director's request for the Council to take some action for prohibiting students from riding the workers' convoys follows:

COMMUNITY COUNCIL OFFICE
Minidoka Project
Hint, Idaho

August 31, 1944

Hr. H. L. Stafford, Project Director
Hint, Idaho

Subject: High School Students Riding
Workers' Convoys

Dear Sir:

In response to your letter dated August 29, 1944, wherein you recommend that the Community Council take some action towards prohibiting school children from boarding workers' convoy trucks for transportation to and from the project high school; I assure you that your recommendation will be presented to the Council for consideration at its next meeting being held Tuesday, September 5, 1944.

Meanwhile, I might inform you that the subject problem has already been discussed in several Council meetings, wherein opinions expressed have been unanimously in sympathy with the students and their desire for transportation. Discussions hitherto have revolved about facts, as follows:

1. High school students living near the extreme ends of the residential area cannot, walking from school, reach their dining halls in time for lunch.
2. In severe winter weather, with the present condition of roads and footpaths, some transportation facilities appear to be justified, and,
3. "Discrimination" as construed by evacuee students who cannot help but notice Caucasian students being transported a relatively short distance on a comparatively luxurious school bus, is hardly conducive to proper psychological training; a double standard within the project, if necessary, should be as inconspicuous as possible.

It has been the Council's opinion that workers' convoy trucks should be scheduled to permit student transportation, each truck making two or more trips, if necessary, to accomplish this.

Respectfully yours,

Y. Fujii
Chairman, Community Council

cc: Education Committee

Students did ride the convoys, but always the administration frowned upon such activity. This problem was really never settled to the satisfaction of all concerned.

9. The problem of the most serious nature the committee was presented with was the closing of the schools for the fall of 1945. The residents demanded that some positive steps be taken by the Council and the Committee to have schooling for the children left in the center after September, 1945. Recommendations and suggestions were presented to W.R.A. but nothing constructive ever developed. This was, perhaps, the point

where it was evidenced in bold type that self-government and representation of the interests of the residents could not function democratically under the relocation center set-up.

* *

Public Relations Committee

The Public Relations Committee was made up of seven persons, including a chairman. Its purpose was primarily to sponsor public activities. This type of activity centered around the organizing and carrying out of memorial services both for civilians on May 30, and special services for soldiers in the United States armed forces.

Four special soldier memorial services were held and two on May 30, one each in 1944 and 1945. The special memorial services for the late President F. D. Roosevelt was another memorial service sponsored, in connection with the W.R.A. administration, by the public relations committee.

* *

Employment Committee

The employment committee of the Council was made up of six persons. Its activities were often combined with special committee to investigate and report on various labor problems that developed in the center and can be listed under the labor problems. Its activities as such were thus much modified as such, and toward the close of the center (six to eight months) very little was done by this committee because the W.R.A. curtailment policy made its position more of a farce and a committee in name only with very little if any power or prestige. This was especially shown in the garbage crew dispute during the fall of 1945.

* *

Hospital Ko-Em Kai

The hospital Ko-Em Kai really began in March of 1944 for the purpose of working with the residents and the hospital attendants to curtail special payments for services rendered; to give a cash bonus to evacuee personnel in the hospital for the purchase of books, etc.; to aid in the solution of labor difficulties in the hospital existing between administrative personnel and evacuee personnel as well as between evacuees and evacuees.

Early in 1942, however, a group of evacuees approached the administration and requested that the doctors be placed on a civil service basis equal to their positions. This was turned down. Thus, in order to try and equalize payment of all professional persons in the hospital, the

Ko-En Kai was established and the residents were to pay five cents per person into its treasury. This was then distributed to the workers on the basis of their work. In the year 1945, with a great decrease in center population, this fee was increased to ten cents per person. Finally it was on a purely donational basis and one could donate as much as desired.

At first the W.R.A. local administration was negative to the establishment of a Ko-En Kai, but when the Ko-En Kai aided in the curtailment of private practice, the administration became more tolerant.

The Ko-En Kai went out of business on August 31, 1945.

* *

LABOR RELATIONS AND THE COUNCIL

The position of the Council in terms of labor relations within the center was one of significance. The main problems and situations are recorded in other documents and can be checked for elaboration, but the main points desired to be made here are:

1. The Council was a governing body and was not a labor relations committee. This was one of the things the administration seemed to be ill-considered of in terms of its demands, as shown by other documents. For example, during the gymnasium dispute, the Council was in no position, legally or otherwise, to become responsible for the building of a government building and to act as a hiring or firing agent for the W.R.A. administration. This, however, was requested by the local administration, and when this request could not be fulfilled, the Council was considered as failing in its job. (See correspondence between Project Director and Council)
2. The Council was in no position to ask the residents to volunteer their services for the construction of government objects. This was, in some instances requested of them, and when they could not comply, the Council was considered as being non-cooperative.
3. The Council, as a duly elected representative of the people, was duty bound to present the point of view of the residents on various issues, and not that of the administration. When this was done, the administration more often than not condemned the Council as being anti-administration on a personal basis, and non-cooperative on a personal basis as well.

The Council feels that in terms of its labor policy it was holding to the principle of equal and fair treatment for all concerned, and was willing to have open and cooperative investigations carried on in trying to solve labor difficulties within the center. However, it was objecting to any form of ultimatum, wholesale terminations without due investigations,

and the attempt on the part of the administration to force it to take over "construction jobs" on the project, especially when this sort of thing was against the regulations of W.R.A.

IV

SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS

In reviewing the activities and problems faced by the self-governing unit at Minidoka, the following points may be made, at least from the point of view of the members of the Council and the residents.

1. The people within the center have at many and varied times been divided as to their belief and faith in the efficiency of the Council. This "going back and forth" in their attitudes and support toward the Council can be laid at the following forces:

- a. Divisions within the community as to needs and policies.
- b. The presenting of the Council with problems of a contradictory nature by the administration.
- c. The fact that the Council was never called in, as a body, by the administration to aid in the smoothing out of simple problems concerning community life. The Council, however, was always heir from the administration to serious problems. Thus the Council was not given a chance to gain prestige by showing what it could do.
- d. Conflict of personalities within the Council tended to weaken its working ability, especially where "tough" problems were concerned. This the administration did not seem to understand.
- e. The Council was under pressure, at many times from the administration to "act in a hurry, or else..." This, due to the psychological and social set up of the center, was hard to do in the "fast" time allowed.
- f. In the early days of the Council, it was necessary to experiment with techniques of government, and when some of these failed both the administration and the residents became intolerant of what the Council was attempting to do.

2. The Council always found itself faced with the rapid relocation of persons within the community. This made it impossible for the Council to carry on the type of educational program desired, and to gain solid supporters for its programs. This became even more apparent when the members of the Council themselves relocated.

3. The refusal on the part of many nominated to the Council to run for office tended to act in a negative manner toward the residents in support of the Council. This refusal to accept nominations seemed to rest on the belief that the Council could be nothing but a "stooge" of the administration due to the set-up in the W.R.A. personnel and administrative orders.

4. The concept of self-government at Minidoka was positive as far as the theory of the process went, but in reality it was not successful when compared with other Councils in other centers. This was due to some of the factors mentioned above.

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