

Sept. 7th, 1942

Mr. H. L. Stafford
Project Director

Dear Sir:

I wish under your extenuation, to write a few lines in connection with the camp administration. If my humble opinion could be worth helpful more or less to your information, no greater honor could be conferred upon me.

In my opinion, it is right to say that this camp is for the Alien Japanese, but not for J. A. C. L. -- Japanese American Citizen League. Logically speaking, the responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of the camp should rest upon the shoulder of the former. In case, therefore, sometime later the Self-government is realized under your supervision, it must be organized by the Alien-Japanese, and the Japanese American Citizen should participate only as auxiliary organ, in case of necessity.

On turning the history of Puyallup Assembly over in my mind, I find it very stupid. We do not want to repeat the failure such as. The administration of the self-government at Puyallup had been performed by J.A.C.L., who are all too young and inexperienced in playing the administrative role, and in addition to it, the inter-party fight by the factionalism had resulted in disintegration of the public sentiment, while on the other hand, self-government had been gradually transformed into autocracy, without our being aware of.

Evacuation camp as it may be said in a word, it is from the population point of view, rather one of the cities in the state of Idaho. Starting with this standpoint, we Alien-Japanese are in mind to do our utmost effort with intent to build up a model city under your guidance.

In the end, allow me few more words to say with regard to the public morality. Owing to the shortness of the dwellings, many of us are, as it were, in a gregarious state of living. This is a matter affecting the discipline of the camp. Such as the gamble in a big scheme and something else undesirable are already brought to light in succession. Under these circumstances there is no other alternative but to deal with according to the Provisions of the Criminal Code.

We entreat you, therefore, the strict enforcement of the police authority without delay.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ J. Yukawa

who operates outside the realm of detention, as we know it here.

5. While we are getting around to the ultimate initiation of self-government at Minidoka, we, by no means, have been under a dictatorship. We counsel with many groups on many matters; in fact, I can think of no action of importance where we have left our people out of the question. We are inclined in all of our departments to treat matters of demand and need as may be expressed by the population here. We assume that our people are entitled to the benefit of the doubt and make the most of their talent and initiative. Thus far we have succeeded in getting our people to settle their differences without administrative intervention. I say these things because I want you to know that we continuously work with and among these people, and while we place them in a position of trust, we have not overlooked the necessity of exercising proper vigilance, and have observed many irregularities in time to correct them to avoid their getting out of hand.

6. One other point in closing, we have at all times sought to develop such community interests as would benefit the population as a whole. We have purposely avoided any activity which might amplify the prestige of any one group at the expense of another.

For purposes of their being here for the duration, I would much prefer that our Issei folks had opportunity to hold office, but in view of the fact that they do not hold office in any other project, I am not asking for that privilege. If it is the purpose of your letter to suggest that we initiate self-government immediately I am prepared to do so under the plan common to other projects. However, as you have stated, I, too, feel that perhaps there is no one wise enough to know for sure what the pattern should be.

Very truly yours,

H. L. Stafford
Project Director

HLS:ea

Hunt, Idaho

Project Reports Division

MEMO TO: Harry L. Stafford, Project Director

FROM: John Bigelow, Reports Officer

SUBJECT: Community Government

Mr. Myer's letter seems to call for a two-part answer: I. The extent or lack of evacuee participation in project administration in the absence of formal community self-government such as a community council; II. A personal opinion of the value of or necessity for community self-government as provided in administrative instructions.

I. (a) The most recent and one of the most notable evidences of evacuee participation in project administration was the voluntary induction program. Hardly a step was taken by the project administration in this matter without the previous advice and consultation of acknowledged leaders of the community, both young and old.

(b) In many administrative offices key positions are held by evacuee residents which, in my opinion, gives the residents a feeling of participation in the actual operation of the center. The appointed personnel are not so numerous that the evacuee residents are excluded from positions of trust and responsibility. Staff meetings, both general and departmental, include evacuee resident workers.

(c) In every instance that involves personal attitudes of the evacuee residents, their opinion has been sought through general polling or through representative committees. In most cases project administration is determined by administrative instructions, food rationing regulations, priority ratings and other unalterable directives.

(d) The enthusiastic response to calls for volunteers, whether for the Army or for building sidewalks and hauling coal, is evidence of the evacuee residents' feeling that they are helping to run the community.

II. (a) Setting up of a formal community council or some similar form of self-government would be an empty gesture which would result not in a better community or a better understanding of democracy, but in factional strife, new bitterness toward the government as represented by the WRA and in harm to the real program of relocation of the WRA. Such a community council would lack the authority to put into effect any regulations which would conflict with administrative instructions, rationing regulations, priority ratings, etc.

(b) The community council would be concerned with the relocation center as a little isolated community, complete in itself, where life follows a regular pattern week after week. Relocation centers are NOT normal communities. Their residents have been deprived of many of their civil rights and cannot act as free citizens; they cannot even choose what they want to eat. The population of the centers are constantly changing. The residents are not concerned with the building for the future in these communities; they are looking forward to the time they will return to normal lives, back to their own homes or in some other American community. But assuming that a relocation center is a normal community the community council still would not be authorized to conduct the functions of a normal city council. Since nearly all these functions such as procurement, expenditure of funds, public works, education, fire and police departments, etc., are covered by administrative instructions.

(c) A community council powerless to make and enforce regulations which conflict with administrative policies would seek to express itself or at least to justify its existence in the limited range afforded it and it would magnify such activities beyond proportion.

(d) It is doubtful to my mind whether the council's activities would be a good lesson in democratic procedure. The results of general elections in the organization of a consumers' co-operative and in choosing delegates to form a community government planning commission showed that the elderly non-citizens who are the actual and rightful leaders of the community take the initiative and hold office. But they are barred from community government elective offices. In their present advisory capacity to the administration these leaders have as much or more authority as they would have under formal community self-government. It seems doubtful that the conduct of a community council composed of the older people, the non-citizens, would be according to an American pattern. Meetings would be conducted in the Japanese language and it is likely that traditional Japanese customs would be followed to some extent. There is no assurance that a community council would be democratically representative of the people. It is conceivable that a minority faction could seize control since there have been indications that a majority of the residents do not take a keen interest in self-government because it seems to them of little meaning under the present circumstances. Perhaps such a community council would fall into the ways of machine politics which run too many American cities and I hardly think that the WRA wants to foster this type of education.

(e) A community council would form a barrier between the residents and the administration tending to weaken and lessen close cooperation between all the residents and the

administration. Any resident now feels free (as shown by the callers to your office) to contact administrative officials directly.

(f) There is no question about it, the eyes of the world are on the relocation centers and what they are is of more than local and current importance. In the beginning they might have been little walled cities; perhaps some still are and perhaps all, including Minidoka, will be some day when all the residents who are capable of relocation have left the centers. A community government would necessarily be concerned with local problems while the WRA administration is concerned with much broader problem, namely the restoration of civil rights and individual dignity to the Japanese American people. Administration of the centers is conducted with this goal in mind. There is evidence that the evacuee residents themselves are concerned primarily with getting out of relocation center and back into normal life. Interest in test cases such as the Min Yasui and Gordon Hirabayashi cases has declined in direct proportion to the increase in the number of evacuees leaving the center.

(g) If Minidoka had a community council and this council had decided when the recent registration and Army volunteering was announced that the residents should have a certain length of time to discuss the matter or that certain procedure should be followed; in other words, if the council had taken some action which resulted in a failure of the registration and volunteering program or in disturbances which focused the public's attention on the small disloyal element in this center--then, I ask, would the public at large have stopped to think that the independent community council was responsible and that we were attempting to foster self-government or would the WRA and the whole program to solve this critical minority problem have received a severe setback?

(h) In other words we are attempting to carry out a difficult and sensitive program with far-reaching consequences in a time of war and if an idealistic desire to give these people something which they and a good many other Americans have never had (especially those dominated by gangster-politicians) interferes with and threatens the success of the campaign for the good of all the Japanese Americans, it seems to me we should stay on the practical side of administration.

(i) Minidoka's record of accomplishments for the good of the whole program due to the cooperation between residents and administration seems to be the strongest argument of all for no formal self-government organization and likewise dispels any charge that the Minidoka administration is a

benevolent directorship not in keeping with the finest democratic principles.

John Bigelow
Reports Officer

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
Minidoka Project
Hunt, Idaho

In reply, refer to:
Philip Schafer
Asst. Project Director

Dec. 23, 1942

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Dillon S. Myer,
War Relocation Authority
Barr Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Myer:

We are considerably interested in your memorandum of December 15, which arrived on the Project December 21, and related to community government. Prior to receipt of your letter, Mr. Joseph Smart visited the Project and met with representatives of Community Service, Internal Security and the Assistant Director. At that time the subject was rather exhaustively discussed and Mr. Smart has probably already reported to you on these conversations; so that this should serve as confirmation and extension of the remarks made at that time.

Before categorically answering the questions raised, it seems that there should be a preliminary explanation of the history of community government at Minidoka and some discussion of our philosophy behind the actions taken.

We felt when the authority was given for the establishment of the community government that, in view of the fact that we are in the process of **accepting** additional colonists and later sent out a great number of persons to outside employment, together with the fact that there seemed to be no urgent need for regulatory government, it would be wiser to delay the setting up of a temporary government and begin directly to develop whatever permanent form of government seemed wisest.

A group of the colonists met with the Director to discuss ways and means of going about setting up community government and, at that time, it was pointed out to the group that there was but one concern on the Project, namely, that the WRA was concerned only with the good of the total group and that anything which stimulated factionalism or the pitting of one group against another would be rejected as harmful to the total community wellbeing. The question was raised as to the divisions being made between so-called issei and nisei as to the right to hold elective office and, while the group as a whole felt that it was undesirable to allow only nisei to hold elective office, they accepted the requirements as indicated in the administrative instructions.

At the same time there was considerable discussion as to the ways

and means of providing for the use of the able leadership of the older persons within the framework authorized by the instructions.

Subsequent to this meeting, an election was held in each block on the Project and two nominating members were selected by the residents from their respective blocks. The 72 individuals nominated to the office of the Director a group of 7 individuals who were to act as a constitutional committee, subject to the approval of the Director. The 7 individuals were subsequently appointed by the Director and there was added to the group 2 Project Japanese attorneys and the Caucasian Project attorney; and the office of Community Service was designated to participate in the discussions, attempting to make recommendations for a community government to be submitted for approval of this office.

It is interesting to know that the elections held for this nominating committee, above referred to, resulted in the nomination of a predominately issei group. This in itself has some significance although not all that might be attached to it, as some 2300 Project residents were at the time employed on the outside harvests and this group was composed undoubtedly of the bulk of the able-bodied young men; although at the same time it was noted that the absence of younger colonists from the meeting could not solely be attributed to their absence from the Project, as a number were noted engaging in other activities at the time of the election and could have participated had there been a strong desire to do so. There is attached an analysis of the composition of this group, which was made at the time of the election.

You have probably by this time studied the draft of the colony government as submitted to your office on November 24, 1942, and noted that efforts were made to achieve a degree of leadership by the older group while, at the same time, complying with the explicit requirement that the older, or issei, group could not hold elective office.

We have already expressed something of an attitude towards the exclusion of older colony residents in that we have expressed the feeling that anything which leads to a division of the group unity is, in our opinion, harmful. More explicitly, it seems to us that the artificial division of the Project on the basis of issei-nisei and the assumption that all issei are disloyal and all nisei loyal citizens, is not a sound division nor is it sound to provide for an unrealistic government which fails to take into consideration the paternalistic pattern of Japanese societies, in which the elders are granted a strong voice in policy determination. Still one another factor influences us in our thinking and that is the computation of the colony population made on December 6 (which admittedly has changed somewhat since the return of some of the farm workers, but still reasonably representative) showed that 59.98 per cent of the total population were citizens and 40.02 per cent were non-citizens; but that, of the colonists over 18 years of age, there were only 3449 persons, or 47 per cent of the persons over 18 years of age. The average non-citizen's age is 51.88 years and the average age of the citizen was 18.69 years. When we add to the above facts the enunciated policy of the WRA to promote relocation and realize that relocation in the main will involve those of the younger, more aggressive, more Americanized groups, it should be apparent that a government composed solely of citizens will be representative of a minority of the population.

There is further background which should be taken into consideration in making a determination policy along these lines. It seems that, in the Assembly centers, considerable recognition in administration and community government was given to the issei and out of that came a strong objection on the part of the older colonists to being dominated and legislated over by a group which the older generation feels were "whipper snappers" and who became drunk with power and abused authority because of lack of maturity and lack of the usual parental controls through what appeared to be a mandate to disregard the advice of the elders of the group. From the above it should be apparent that a more unified community and a steadier course will result from the elimination of the limitations against the issei holding elective office.

~~The older evacuees~~

The older evacuees on this Project, as already reported, have attempted to devise a way providing for their contribution to the community government, short of election to the Council and within the framework of the administrative authority now existing, by establishing in the proposed charter an advisory committee to counsel with the duly elected government but having no authority to vote. No violent opposition, however, has been expressed towards the logic of the citizens only being permitted to hold elective office, but it is our belief that the other provision would be more desirable.

We have an impression that the presently recommended form of government is not a completely genuine delegation of authority to the colony to establish its own controls. The pseudo government existing, subject to the pressure and caprice of the Administration, has such limitations that we believe it will be difficult to secure a real participation or genuine authority in the face of the realization by the colonists of its lack of complete transmission of responsibility. The Administration is charged with providing administratively for the wants of the colony and the community government can only act in minor matters or as a device for calling to the attention of the Administration of the community needs. Having no real authority it can only "play at government" and it appears to us that a more genuine and effective approach to this problem might be made, as a device for developing on the part of the Administration a sensitivity to the needs of the colony, an advisory committee, elected on a general basis, and meeting with the Director at frequent intervals; such a group might also provide the Administration with an instrument for developing community attitudes, securing active participation in administrative objectives and a medium for dissemination of general information.

With respect to the administration of law and order on the Project, we feel that it is inadvisable to develop a legal code or to establish too arbitrary categories which result in a necessity for vested determinations of punishment. It seems to us that the vast majority of problems come under the category of social dislocation which can be treated on a case basis, as we have to date handled our minor infractions of community mores. Those acts which represent a serious offense against the community can be punished by recourse to State authorities. In fact, we see a distinct harm existing in the establishment of even a jail on the Project. Civil rights of the individuals on this Project, while not covered by explicit instructions to that effect, have been protected through a procedure which we have adopted of

requiring that, before either a search or an arrest is made, the facts must be presented to the Administration in written form and a written approval of the action granted by the Administration. Community government in its formalized form has not existed on the Project, although we have many forms of development of policy and ways of securing community expression outside of the more formalized channels which usually constitute a government setup. Therefore, we cannot say that there has been any chance for a community government to prove or disprove itself, and our opinions are only opinions, and have not been tested. However, the absence of a formal community government has, in our opinion, to date proved to be no handicap to either good administration or a feeling of complete participation on the part of the colonists in the basic objectives and policy established by the WRA.

To the best of our knowledge there is no strong feeling either for or against the establishment of a community form of government. Soem few of the more aggressive younger men seem to be leading what efforts are being made to establish government and we have a suspicion that it is because they have a hope of achieving a place in that government rather than because of an expression of genuine need for an organized voice. The J.A.C.L. have probably represented the most vocal group along these lines, but it is our impression that the J.A.C.L. by no means represents a unity of thought even among the nisei group, and if the WRA sees fit to reve rse its course and either eliminate or establish a different type of government no real problem is anticipated, at least on this Project, as we visualize that a change can be made gracefully and a substitute program submitted without much difficulty.

This project has been represented by the Project attorney in negotiations for the establishment of the community government and by the representatives of the Community Service Division.

At the moment our draft of the community charter is in the hands of the Regional and Washington Offices and no steps are being taken to accelerate or promote its acceptance; in fact, we have for sometime had a feeling that the actual establishment of a formal type of government might result in the development of conflict, both among the colonists and between the colonists and the Administration, and we have been displaying no real efforts to hurry the approval of Washington nor have we any anxiety to establish at any early date this government.

We have been quite frank in our opinions, as expressed above, and while realizing that they represent only opinion they have been discussed with various members of this staff and we feel that they represent the consensus of those on the Project concerned with this problem. There is much that has been left unsaid and cannot be completely outlined in a letter of this nature, but needs development through discussion. I am sure much of this was clarified in our talks with Mr. Smart and he will probably convey this to you in Washington.

Sincerely,

H. L. Stafford
Project Director

Minidoka Project
Hunt, Idaho

in reply, please refer
to Philip Schafer
Assistant Project Director

December 31, 1942

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Dillon S. Myer,
War Relocation Authority,
Barr Building,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Myer:

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We felt when the authority was given for the establishment of the community government that, in view of the fact that we are in the process of accepting additional colonists and later sent out a great number of persons to outside employment, together with the fact that there seemed to be no urgent need for regulatory government, it would be wiser to delay the setting up of a temporary government and begin directly to develop whatever permanent form of government seemed wisest.

A group of the colonists met with the Director to discuss ways and means of going about setting up community government and, at that time, it was pointed out to the group that there was but one concern on the project, namely, that the WRA was concerned only with the good of the total group and that anything which stimulated factionalism or the pitting of one group against another would be rejected as harmful to the total community wellbeing. The issei and nisei as to the right to hold elective office and, while the group as a whole felt that it was undesirable to allow only nisei to hold elective office, they accepted the requirements as indicated in the administrative instructions.

At the same time there was considerable discussion as to the ways and means of providing for the use of the able leadership of the older persons within the framework authorized by the instructions.

Subsequent to this meeting, an election was held in each block on the Project and two nominating members were selected by the residents from their respective blocks. The 72 individuals nominated to the office of the Director a group of 7 individuals who were to act as a constitutional committee, subject to the approval of the Director. The 7 individuals were subsequently appointed by the Director and there was added to the group 2 Project Japanese attorneys and the Caucasian Project attorney; and the office of Community Service was designated to participate in the discussions, attempting to make recommendations for a community government to be submitted for approval of this office.

It is interesting to know that the elections held for this nominating committee, above referred to, resulted in the nomination of a predominately issei group. This in itself has some significance although not all that might be attached to it, as some 2300 Project residents were at the time employed on the outside harvests and this group was composed undoubtedly of the bulk of the able-bodied young men; although at the same time it was noted that the absence of younger colonists from the meeting could not solely be attributed to their absence from the Project, as a number were noted engaging in other activities at the time of the election and could have participated had there been a strong desire to do so. There is attached an analysis of the composition of this group, which was made at the time of the election.

You have probably by this time studied the draft of the colony government as submitted to your office on November 24, 1942, and noted that efforts were made to achieve a degree of leadership by the older group while, at the same time, complying with the explicit requirement that the older, or Issei, group could not hold elective office.

We have already expressed something of an attitude towards the exclusion of older colony residents in that we have expressed the feeling that anything which leads to a division of the group unity is, in our opinion, harmful. More explicitly, it seems to us that the artificial division of the Project on the basis of issei-nisei and the assumption that all issei are disloyal and all nisei loyal citizens, is not a sound division nor is it sound to provide for an unrealistic government which fails to take into consideration the paternalistic pattern of Japanese societies, in which the elders are granted a strong voice in policy determination. Still one other factor influences us in our thinking and that is

computation of the colony population made on December 6 (which admittedly has changed somewhat since the return of some of the farm workers, but still reasonably representative) showed that 59.98 percent of the total population are citizens and 40.02 percent were non-citizens; but that, of the colonists over 18 years of age, there were only 3449 persons, or 47 percent of the persons over 18 years of age. The average non-citizens' age is 51.88 years and the average age of the citizen was 18.69 years. When we add to the above facts the enunciated policy of the WRA to promote relocation and realize that relocation in the main will involve those of the younger, more aggressive, more Americanized groups, it should be apparent that a government composed solely of citizens will be representative of a minority of the population.

There is further background which should be taken into consideration in making a determination policy along these lines. It seems that, in the assembly centers, considerable recognition in administration and community government was given to the issei and out of that came a strong objection on the part of the older colonists to being dominated and legislated over by a group which the older generation feels were "whipper snappers" and who became drunk with power and abused authority because of lack of maturity and lack of the usual parental controls through what appeared to be a mandate to disregard the advice of the elders of the group. From the above it should be apparent that a more unified community and a steadier course will result from the elimination of the limitations against the issei holding elective office.

The older evacuees on this Project, as already reported, have attempted to devise a way providing for their contribution to the community government, short of election to the Council and within the framework of the administrative authority now existing, by establishing in the proposed charter an advisory committee to counsel with the duly elected government by having no authority to vote. No violent opposition, however, has been expressed towards the logic of the citizens only being permitted to hold elective office, but it is our belief that the other provision would be more desirable.

We have an impression that the presently recommended form of government is not a completely genuine delegation of authority to the colony to establish its own controls. The pseudo government existing, subject to the pressure and caprice of the Administration has such limitations that we believe it will be difficult to secure a real participation or genuine authority in the face of the realization by the colonists of its lack of complete transmission of responsibility. The Administration is charged with providing administratively for the wants of the colony and the community gov-

ernment can only act in minor matters or as a device for calling to the attention of the Administration of the community needs. Having no real authority it can only "play at government" and it appears to us that a more genuine and effective approach to this problem might be made, as a device for developing on the part of the Administration a sensitivity to the needs of the colony, an advisory committee, elected on a general basis and meeting with the Director at frequent intervals; such a group might also provide the Administration with an instrument for developing community attitudes, securing active participation in administrative objectives and medium for dissemination of general information.

With respect to the administration of law and order on the Project, we feel that it is inadvisable to develop a legal code or to establish too arbitrary categories which result in a necessity for vested determinations of punishment. It seems to us that the vast majority of problems come under the category of social dislocation which can be treated on a case basis, as we have to date handled our minor infractions of community mores. Those acts which represent a serious offense against the community can be punished by recourse to State authorities. In fact, we see a distinct harm existing in the establishment of even a jail on the Project. Civil rights of the individuals on this Project, while not covered by explicit instructions to that effect, have been protected through a procedure which we have adopted of requiring that, before either a search or an arrest is made, the facts must be presented to the Administration in written form and a written approval of the action granted by the Administration. Community government in its formalized form has not existed on the Project, although we have many forms of development of policy and ways of securing community expression outside of the more formalized channels which usually constitute a government setup. Therefore, we cannot say that there has been any chance for a community government to prove or disprove itself, and our opinions are only opinions and have not been tested. However, the absence of a formal community government has, in our opinion, to date proved to be no handicap to either good administration or a feeling or complete participation on the part of the colonists in the basic objectives and policy established by the WRA.

To the best of our knowledge there is no strong feeling either for or against the establishment of a community form of government. Some few of the more aggressive younger men seem to be leading what efforts are being made to establish government and we have a suspicion that it is because they have a hope of achieving a place in that government rather than because of an expression of genuine need for an organized voice. The JACL have probably represented the most vocal group along these lines, but it is our impression that the JACL by no means represents a unity of thought even among the nisei group, and if the WRA sees fit to reverse its course

and either eliminate or establish a different type of government no real problem is anticipated, at least on this Project, as we visualize that a change can be made gracefully and a substitute program submitted without much difficulty.

This Project has been represented by the Project attorney in negotiations for the establishment of the community government and by the representatives of the Community Service Division.

At the moment our draft of the community charter is in the hands of the Regional and Washington Offices and no steps are being taken to accelerate or promote its acceptance; in fact, we have for some time had a feeling that the actual establishment of a formal type of government might result in the development of conflict, both among the colonists and between the colonists and the Administration, and we have been displaying no real efforts to hurry the approval of Washington nor have we any anxiety to establish at any early date this government.

We have been quite frank in our opinions, as expressed above, and while realizing that they represent only opinions they have been discussed with various members of this staff and we feel that they represent the consensus of those on the Project concerned with this problem. There is much that has been left unsaid and cannot be completely outlined in a letter of this nature, but needs development through discussion. I am sure much of this was clarified in our talks with Mr. Smart and he will probably convey this to you in Washington.

Sincerely,

H. L. Stafford
Project Director

PS:ea
attachment-1.

MINIDOKA PROJECT
Inter-office Memorandum

Date December 16, 1942

TO Mr. Philip Schafer DEPT. Office of Project Director
FROM Norio Wakamatsu DEPT. Inductions, Records, Stats.

<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	<u>9496</u>	(Dec. 6, 1942)
	<u>Number</u>	<u>% Total Population</u>
Total Citizens	5696	59.98%
Total Non-Citizens	3800	40.02%

TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE - 18 YEARS AND OLDER 7225

Citizens	3449	47.73%
	(60.9% of total Citizens)	
Non-Citizens	3776	52.27%
	(99.3% of total Non-Citizens)	

AVERAGE AGE:

Non-Citizens	51.88 years
Citizens	18.69 years

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MINIDOKA PROJECT
Hunt, Idaho

Project Director

January 28, 1943

Mr. Kinya Okajima
Chairman
Government Charter Commission
Block 31 - 12 - A
Minidoka Project
Hunt, Idaho

Dear Mr. Okajima:

This is in answer to your inquiry dated January 25, relative to the probable time the proposed charter can be approved.

The proposed charter has had local project administrative scrutiny and, in a few details, minor changes have been inserted prior to transmittal to the Washington Office for the inspection of the War Relocation Authority officials there.

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 these projects have had prior initiation of self-government activities. Some difficulty has arisen at Gila. I am not informed, however, whether Gila has self-government or not.

There has been instituted more recently, an "all-out" emphasis on relocation of our people. Prospects of continuity of project operation have been greatly curtailed. Adverse outside public sentiment has recently been given widespread publicity to the point that Congress is now contemplating a series of investigations to determine the merit of public charges that the War Relocation Authority administration is pampering the residents of these projects. Definite proposals have been made to return the supervision of all projects to the United States Army.

I wish to be quite frank in saying to the members of your Commission that I do not believe the charges above stated to be true. I do not believe the residents of these projects are being pampered. I do not believe the move to restore army supervision to be justified. However, I wish to be equally frank in saying that I do not understand why

these projects which have operated under self-government have experienced riots, demonstrations, and trouble. I think the advent of these uprisings and the storm of public sentiment that followed, places the evacuees in a very unfortunate circumstance. It is the worst possible situation, affecting us adversely. 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 Minidoka Self-Government. Unless I am sure that our proposed charter is free from any instrument or appendage affording factional strife and bitterness, I shall indeed be very reluctant to execute the same. On the contrary, I have full faith and confidence in our North Pacific people, irrespective of the fact that South Pacific Coast people have found themselves in trouble.

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.

Respectfully,

H. L. Stafford
Project Director

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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
Central Utah Project

in reply, please refer to
Community Gov't.
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Chairman of the Council
Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

As it is with us, one of your most pressing issue must be that of relocation and its attendant problems.

While our center is occupied over-whelmingly by those evacuees from urban districts such as San Francisco, Berkeley, Oakland and peninsula cities, hence non-agricultural as a group, the problem of relocation is necessarily and understandably somewhat different from those centers composed mostly of evacuees from rural districts, we feel definitely that there should be an unified program on relocation taking into consideration vocational training, public relationship, federal grant for rehabilitation and resettlement. Therefore, the Community Council of Topaz, at its last session, unanimously went on record to initiate a movement to bring about a coordination and co-operation among all the centers in order to uniformly guide our future destiny.

It was the expressed opinion of the members of our Community Council that as the first step a conference of all the chairmen of all the centers be inaugurated. In order to bring about the said conference, they felt that I, as the chairman of the Community Council, should correspond with all other Community Councils to push this matter through.

Please refer to the attached memorandum sent to our Project Director which is self-explanatory.

In all probability you must have already instigated some measures of steps along the line of thought which we are now transferring to you. If that is the case we will be much obligated if you can communicate with us, informing us what you have done. If not, your ideas, suggestions and advice will be tremendously appreciated by us. On the other hand, we promise to keep in touch with you, letting you know of any further developments about this matter.

I hope you will give this matter your sincere consideration and priority attention.

Cordially yours,

/s/ Tsune Baba
Chairman of the Council

CONFIDENTIAL

February 12, 1943

TELETYPE MESSAGE _____

Harry L. Stafford
Project Director
Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

Would like permission to send copies of your confidential letter of February 9 regarding questions raised by evacuees with reference to registration and voluntary enlistment to the War Department, Justice Department and perhaps others who could be helpful in solving these problems.

/s/ D. S. Myer

CONFIDENTIAL

Let. from H. L. Stafford, Director, Hunt, Idaho to D. S. Myer

February 9, 1943

Mr. D. S. Myer
Director
War Relocation Authority
Barr Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Myer:

The registration program for clearance and for voluntary induction in the army has been inaugurated on the Project, and we felt that you might be interested in some of our preliminary comments.

Immediately upon the return from Denver of our staff members, the Project Director called together an advisory group of the older, more acceptable individuals to discuss with them the objectives of the program. They expressed considerable doubt as to the wisdom of the segregated unit, and raised numerous questions as to the kinds of security which could be developed for their people as a result of enlistment in the army, especially in the light of previous history of discrimination and bad faith which has existed. However, after extensive discussion, there was an expression on the part of this group that they would be willing to assume responsibility for the successful completion of this registration and voluntary enlistment, and would heartily endorse the methods and the objective. Beginning immediately, they assumed responsibility for promoting the registration and answering possible objections which might arise on the Project. A series of meetings was organized, and the general philosophy of enlistment discussed in these forums. On the whole, we are impressed with the favorable response.

Immediately upon return of the Employment Officer from the conference in Washington, the administrative details were worked out, and a crew of interviewers put to work.

Beginning Sunday, February 7, a series of meetings are being held with the Project Director and the commanding officer of the army team, presenting the official announcement and general discussion of the program. On Monday, February 8, registration was begun in Blocks 1 and 2 on the Project. Our schedule at this time calls for approximately 18 working days to clear up the registration. This may, however, need revision in the light of our experience as the registration progresses.

To date, we anticipate no major obstacles in successfully carrying out this program.

We are impressed in our discussions, that one of the most frequently-raised problems has been the failure on the part of the government to take necessary steps to benefit individuals who are in the army, or the parents of individuals who have already enlisted. It seems to us that wherever possible, as a manifestation of the government's good will, that certain problems should have immediate attention through the War Relocation Authority by the proper authorities.

The first relates to the possibility of securing release or hearing on releases from internment or parolee status of those individuals who have sons already enlisted in the armed forces. Two such cases have already come to our attention. Mr. Seichi Hara who has one son who enlisted before the war began, and another son who enlisted from this Project and is now at Camp Savage, Minnesota, is still held on this Project on a parolee status.

Mr. Setsujiro Uno, we understand, has been held in Camp Livingstone, Louisiana, pending a hearing which he is apparently unable to secure. He also has a son in the army. The question is frequently raised that if the government intends to give special recognition to individuals who contribute members of their families to the armed forces, an advance indication of that evidence of good faith would assist materially in breaking down the barrier to voluntary enlistment.

It may be suggested that a status of friendly alien be given to those parents who have sons in the armed forces, as a manifestation of good faith.

A recent request from the commanding officer of the Military Police for the installation of search lights and phones and the manning of the guard towers, indicate that this group is contemplating that at an early time, they will carry out the orders of their headquarters. It would seem to us extremely unfortunate if such an implication of disloyalty and possible danger should occur simultaneously with our efforts to induct men voluntarily into the armed services. Certainly, such action evidencing distrust would bolster the arguments that no status is achieved, nor any additional benefits accrue to the parents or relatives of the boys in the armed forces, and we urge you to call this matter to the attention of the War Department.

One other point we feel should be called to your attention; namely, the matter of alien property laws, which are at present in the process of being strengthened in several states, notably, Washington and Utah. It appears that in these two states, at least, political action is occurring, tending to either establish or strengthen the prohibition against aliens holding property. Many of the older people on this Project feel that if their sons volunteer in the army, they are, in fact, sending their sons to fight for a principle which will, in turn, make it impossible for them to exist, in that if their sons who now hold the property should die, the parents could not inherit and would therefore suffer a severe hardship. We are quite aware of State rights in this matter, but are convinced that the War Department could point out to the various states that in light of the disunity and insecurity which these actions are causing, they are affecting

our total war effort, and as such, the states themselves might be encouraged to discontinue such legislation.

We have raised some of the objections which the residents on the Project have raised with us in the hope of securing action.

Will you take whatever action you see fit on these matters, and we, in turn, will currently report and post you on developments on this program on the Project.

Sincerely,

/s/ H. L. Stafford
Project Director

AIRMAIL

CONFIDENTIAL

Feb. 25, 1943

Mr. Harry L. Stafford
Project Director
Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

Dear Mr. Stafford:

As requested in your letter of February 10, we are enclosing the names of Minidoka residents appearing on the segregation lists submitted by Gen. DeWitt and on the Class "A" list submitted by the Navy Department. The Navy is preparing a Class "B" list, and names of Minidoka residents appearing on this list will be sent you later.

The FBI reports on parolees are being sent to you as promptly as possible. Due to the press of other work it has been difficult to complete duplication of the reports.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ D. S. Myer

Director

CONFIDENTIAL

AIRMAIL

March 5, 1943

Mr. Harry L. Stafford
Project Director
Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

Dear Mr. Stafford:

The exchange of correspondence of late January between yourself and the Chairman of the Organization Commission for Community Government has just come to my attention in connection with your weekly report of February 13. Certain statements in your reply to the Commission, with particular reference to the relationships at other projects between attempts to establish evacuee government and internal disorders, seem to me not to be justified, and I would like at this time to discuss somewhat fully the philosophy and experience of WRA in this whole difficult field of evacuee participation in project administration.

We are fully aware here that your administration at Minidoka has been ~~extremely~~ extremely successful and effective, and that such administration has been accomplished without so far establishing at the center any formal machinery for evacuee government. I appreciate also that your recent experience with registration has been beset with fewer difficulties than at some of the other projects and that the incidence of incidents at Hunt has been low. For this smooth operation I am extremely thankful and appreciative. Are we justified, however, to place so much credit for the absence of trouble upon the lack of evacuee participation?

As you probably know, even though you were not present at the policy meetings in San Francisco last August, evacuee government has two main objectives:

- 1) To mobilize for assistance in project administration the active support and sanction of the entire body of evacuees, permitting them to participate responsibly in administration, in planning and adopting regulations, in maintaining law and order.
- 2) To provide opportunity for greater acquaintance with and training in democratic, representative local government procedures of the type found in the normal American community, an opportunity denied most people of Japanese ancestry in the pre-evacuation period.

It was realized in the beginning that the achievement of such objectives would not be easy and that the initiation of evacuee government would probably stir up discontents and cleavages among the evacuees and put an additional burden and responsibility upon the Project Director. This has actually happened. In many projects evacuee government has indeed become an issue, and the controversy between alien and citizen in governmental responsibility has been debated hotly.

Even so, all projects other than Minidoka are going ahead with varying degrees of speed to develop community government, and this fact itself may have bearing upon your ability to deny for much longer the same rights to the residents of Hunt. The letter of the Chairman of the Charter Commission indicates that the residents of Minidoka, or at least the Commission members, are asking if we intend to make good on our promises of evacuee government. Denial of this request, or resistance to it, can easily become a cause for complaint and for accusations of broken promises on the part of WRA.

I have reviewed again your earlier statement outlining your position on local government, and at the Denver meetings in late January both Mr. Shaffer and Mr. Townsend argued persuasively for the course of action you are following. Since no one in WRA is at present wise enough to know for sure what the answer to evacuee government really is, I have not been unsympathetic to the experimental divergence from policy which you have instituted at Minidoka. Possibly you are right that under the temporary and uncertain conditions of center residence the best administration is the one which operation of the center with the least discussion and conflict. Perhaps this smoothness of operation justifies retaining in the hands of appointed personnel all responsibility for rules, regulations, discipline, and other features of law and order. There are even evacuees who argue that the government should take over and run everything, since the government got them into the mess originally. There is validity in these considerations.

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 accepted 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~~ 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 program. 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

MINIDOKA PROJECT
Hunt, Idaho

In reply, please
refer to H. L. Stafford
Project Director

March 16, 1943

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. D. S. Myer, Director
War Relocation Authority
Barr Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Myer:

This is in reply to your letter dated March 5 referring to matters of project self-government and setting forth the objective policy of the War Relocation Authority.

I am very glad to have your frank expressions for they convey to me the possibility that the absence of self-government at Minidoka is not understood. I find it impossible to give a brief answer and will proceed with full explanation of this situation.

I hope to be clear at the outset in stating that conformance to departmental policy and regulations have at all times been my aim and purpose. I have no ground for assuming that the question of self-government at Minidoka was a matter of personal opinion or choice. Without reference to dates, I recall that a Charter Commission of seven members was elected. This election occurred during the absence of a majority of our young Nisei employed in the harvest fields outside the Project. The constitution as drafted by the members of this Commission represented a composite of the charters from the other projects. The Project Attorney very carefully examined this document and made some corrections. Pending the inauguration of the constitution, after all matters of correction had been attended to, disturbances developed at Poston. At this point I felt very much in the position of one who saw a traffic jam ahead and instinctively put on the brakes. It was caution that I sought to convey to the Chairman of the Commission in my letter of late January. Perhaps I made a mistake in making project comparisons in that instance. I have, at all times, sought to avoid project comparisons. However, concluding that project self-governments did not appear to cope with internal strife, I further questioned the potentialities of such instrumentation.

There are many factors which contribute to my thinking on this problem. However, let me clarify once more the fact that I have not interpreted the prerogatives of the project

director to include the choice of self-government or no self-government.

The following represent some of the factors which contribute to my reaction on this whole matter of self-government:

1. I consider the so-called Issei-Nisei question to be a family matter. Official intervention in family matters of this proportion is very questionable, especially when aggravated under the restraints of detention.

2. We are handicapped by the absence of the mainstay of a normal population, that is, the prime and vigorous medium-aged group. In the absence of this mainstay group, we are dealing with the immaturity of youth and the infirmity of old age. The total group are super-sensitive with a persecution complex. There is much evidence that the normal exercised faculties may be questioned. Self-assertion in the duties of Camp operation, wherein considerable responsibility of the individual is required, is limited as a rule. I think this is because they are too preoccupied with the bewildering state of their economic lot. Each day at Minidoka we are rewarded for kindness, confidence and charitable attitudes--nothing more.

3. Our first is the fundamental problem of developing and guiding the environs of a community. I take this to be the job in hand. Were this the case, under the present scheme of things, our governmental plan would take the form of a minority group exercising governmental control over a majority group, who were without representation. For the purposes of their being here and for the purposes of conducting a peaceable community, I question such a pattern. I arrive at this conclusion on the assumption that were we to sweep aside all the minor of our Nisei population, we would have majority of Issei without franchise. If self-government is being instituted for vocational purposes, I think it would better serve the Nisei as such when added to the curriculum of our local schools.

4. Our first meeting of the Commission group brought forth violent protestation of the principle of limited franchise. We had suggestions from a few medium-aged Nisei individuals to the effect that perhaps we had better not have government of this sort instituted. Another point which has bothered me no little is the tendency of these people to form cliques and clans of every sort. We appear to be dealing at all times with some distinct subdivision of the population. The instrumentation of self-government offers opportunity for factional rivalry and activity to be rampant over issues that would belittle the ward-heeler of our city government

C O P Y

March 18, 1943

Mr. H. L. Stafford,

This is in reply to your memorandum of March 17. I shall outline my points of considerations rather than frame a formal letter.

1. I agree to the idealistic basic principles of self-government including the two main objectives set forth at the San Francisco meeting last August.

2. I object to any form of government or administration that tends to stir further cleavages between evacuee groups.

3. Public opinion and Congressional investigations must be reckoned with and internal strife resulting from disorderly mob actions will cause greater public resentment against ALL JAPANESE.

4. It is my understanding that the proposed charter restricts elective positions to citizens only. This provision is definitely against all basic democratic principles including that set forth at the San Francisco meeting "to mobilize for assistance in the project administration the active support and sanction of the ENTIRE BODY of evacuees..". Such a charter is unworkable and undesirable because,

- (a) over half the population of voting age are alien.
- (b) during the harvest season the majority of evacuees leaving the project are citizens.
- (c) the greater percentage of persons obtaining indefinite leaves are citizens.

Each of these three facts would aggravate the situation of a majority being governed by a minority. We have only to look to central Europe for demonstrations of the fallacy of this form of government.

5. It would be impossible to have a purely democratic government in a project, such as this, enclosed by a fence and an armed guard without. We might as well admit this and proceed with a half way measure.

6. My recommendation would be,

- a. Limited self-government with representation from both groups, citizens and aliens.
- b. If the above is not possible, continue on as at present.

Yours truly,

/s/ H. Mann

In reply, please refer to
Joseph G. Beeson
Employment Division

March 19, 1945

Memorandum to: Harry L. Stafford, Project Director

Subject: Evacuee Government

In answer to Director Myer's recent letter, I am at a complete loss in following some of the implications therein. The principal implication that there is no evacuee participation in the administration of the Minidoka Relocation Project is entirely groundless. We can without hesitation say that much of the success of operation is due to this participation in a straight forward, unapologetic manner, and not by kidding the people into believing that they are in a world unto themselves.

The two main objectives of the evacuee government plan, as outlined in Director Myer's letter, can be accomplished in various ways.

1. "To mobilize for assistance in project administration the active support and sanction of the entire body of evacuees, permitting them to participate responsibly in administration, in planning and adopting regulations, in maintaining law and order."

Change the "participate responsibly" to "participate cooperatively" and this objective has been accomplished on the Minidoka Project. Cooperation without authority can be accomplished; however, responsibility without authority is next to impossible.

2. "To provide opportunity for greater acquaintance with and training in democratic, representative local government procedures of the type found in the normal American community, an opportunity denied most people of Japanese ancestry in the pre-evacuation period."

We must admit part of this denial was due to racial prejudices; however, part was due entirely to distribution. I lack information on the proportion of the total to which this opportunity was denied.

It is doubtful that the relocation center can be operated as a normal American community, principally due to the fact that it is not being accepted as even semi-permanent either by the Authority. The entire relocation program frowns on the assumption that these centers will be permanent reservations. This fact in itself makes the establishment of evacuee government exceedingly difficult and doubtful.

as to its merits.

There is every reason to feel that divergence from a stated policy in this instance is not taking the easy way out, and there is nothing whatever to indicate that free discussion has been denied a single colonist on the Project. The action of this Project does not tend to create a feeling that fundamental rights of citizens are being ignored, but it does tend to create a feeling that the Center is a temporary haven on a road to much better and happier condition.

While the policy has been stated and perhaps promises have been made, there is a great difference between a broken promise and a discovery that former policies and promises only tend to complicate a very delicate situation. It would be much more satisfactory to explain away a broken promise than to explain away a program that has brought so much dissention among this minority group that it might not be possible for them to again be received as free people.

Joseph G. Beeson
Sr. Employment Officer

March 22, 1943

TO: Project Director

SUBJECT: Community Government

From the viewpoint of this department, a democratic Community Government is wholly desirable. The Cooperative developed here by this department, is, of course, a community-side organization, through which we are able to see democracy at work. All of the chief problems which a community government would have to face, we have already experienced. All of the reasons for withholding self-government could be similarly advanced for withholding self-ownership and operation of the Community Enterprises.

The first point to dispose of is efficiency. Would operations function better if the businesses were run directly by a member of the appointed personnel than they do now? Since December, for most purposes the Coop has been run by the temporary Board of Directors and with a decreasing amount of control by the Community Enterprise Superintendent. There has been no observable decrease in efficiency. From my position I am free to see that when entrusted to take of things for themselves, the evacuees show a complete ability to assume all of the necessary responsibilities. The same principle applies with equal force to community government. If there are things to be lost by community control such a lack of initial authority, unwillingness of evacuees to take orders from other evacuees, etc. then there are at least an equal number of compensating advantages which increase efficiency, such as loyalty toward one's own organization, a distinct difference in code of honor regarding "our own property" as compared to "WRA property" the assumption of responsibility which rarely is separated from the granting of authority, and so forth.

Secondly, what about creation of internal strife? A principal cause of discord has been the ineligibility of aliens to hold office. Our Cooperative has granted equal vote and equal eligibility to office to all adults. The result has been to obtain a preponderance of older persons in responsible offices in the Coop. Since the elections are free and equal, there is only one conclusion to draw--that the second generation adults are not yet ready for assumption of authority and responsibility.

A further probability is that when you force Community Government control on those not ready to assume it, is likely to create ill will and an arbitrary rigid division of Issei-Nisei which is only partly existent in fact. The structure of the Coop organization will permit Second Generation Japanese to take up authority, when they are ready, but not before. I

would be inclined to favor community government only on the basis of equal franchise and eligibility to office for all adults.

Neither has emphasis on relocation held back development of the coop. The coop, the same as community government, is functioning for the here and now, and in spite of persons believing they may be here for no more than a few months, they still are active participants in the coop organization.

As to the charge of government pampering, my idea of government pampering is when the government assumes the ordinary responsibilities of life and leaves few duties and obligations to its charges. Since certain of the normal life responsibilities unavoidably must be maintained here by the government, it is more than ever necessary to see that those normal decisions and functions in which the evacuees can participate should be permitted. This certainly must explain the wise decision of the WRA in allowing consumer coops to be formed. Fundamental democracy never must be considered an unnecessary frill, but rather as the most basic of all the social needs.

Finally I believe that for all the extra trouble to the project administration in holding elections, listening to complaint committees, having to take the community government into consideration before acting, and the like, that it is worth the effort. While a single cemetery caretaker can administer the needs of thousands of persons under his charge, the residents under his control are in no position to talk back. Although it might complicate our administrative problems to give the evacuees a means of taking back, perhaps for their own welfare it would be just as well if they could.

Cooperatively,

/s/ John Essene

Health Division

Minidoka Project Hospital
Hunt, Idaho
March 24, 1945

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

Subject: Proposed Reply to Mr. Myer's Letter
on Community Government

Dear Mr. Myer:

Thank you for your full and frank discussion of the question of community government for and by the residents of the Minidoka Project. However, our impression on this subject, remains very much as previously outlined, an attitude which although not completely in accord with your own views, we will attempt to justify.

It is not our intention to boast, but we do feel the record of the Minidoka Project and its Administration is such, as to justify thorough scrutiny before the entire system is scrapped in order to place in effect, an admittedly transitory, constantly changing form of self government, which throughout the balance of the Projects has shown itself to be incapable, as satisfactorily, of handling the problems which arise. This must be admittedly so, as evidenced by the way in which disturbances in other Projects have been handled. It is our feeling that the institution of the proposed plan of self government, would tend to weaken the excellent moral and workings of the Project, rather than to strengthen them.

At the present time, the Administration of the Project is for all of the people of the Project, and their desires when presented to us we attempt to place in effect. This certainly could not be as true if the government of the Project would be placed in the hands of only one portion of the residents, namely, the United States' citizens. Another aspect of this situation which we have not seen mentioned, is the over-all relocation of the Evacuees, which is only now beginning to develop in earnest. It is recognized that the relocating residents of the Project will in the most part, be those individuals who are younger, and have the greater sense of self responsibility and initiative, and will comprise to a great extent, the group seeking relocation during the time the war is in progress. Since this is true, the governing persons and voting members of a system of community government will constantly be decreasing both as to total and as to percentage of the Project residents. We are forced to feel that this no more democratic and no more a government of true representation than is our present system, whereby, any resident of the Project has an equal voice in the

development of Project policies.

We, in this Project, feel much more alarmed over the racial discrimination, attempts at their disenfranchisement, motions for mass deportation of American Japanese, etc., which have been shown by a few State Governments throughout the nation, than we do concerning the more minor matters of the internal workings of the individual Projects which admittedly and avowedly are only a war-time expedient, and some of whom may not even exist for the duration, as relocation progresses.

To summarize:

1. We feel that the record of the Minidoka Project to the present time, has been such as to justify the continuation of the present administrative procedures in this Project.
2. The record of certain other of the Projects has not been such as to cause us to wish to become involved in the same type of problems.
3. While self government at the present time would consist of governing of the total, by a majority of the majority, as relocation progresses, it would tend to become a government of the whole, by a majority of a minority.

Also, you mentioned the possibility of our delay in placing self government into effect as a possible cause of complaint. We would like to feel free to continue the same system that has been in effect until such complaint, validly justified, occurs.

Very truly yours,

L. M. Neher, M. D.
Principal Medical Officer

LMN/cu

Mr. H. L. Stafford, Project Director

March 24, 1943

Ralph J. Moore, Project Attorney

Sample Letter to Mr. Myer re Community Government

Mr. Dillon S. Myer, Director
War Relocation Authority
Barr Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Myer:

Your letter of March 5, 1943, concerning the subject of community government at the Minidoka Relocation Center requests me to give you any further reaction that I have on the whole problem.

It has always been our intention to establish evacuee government in accordance with the Administrative Instruction No. 34, and in accordance with the policies that you state in your letter. However, it has also been our intention to observe strictly the official limitations upon the establishment of evacuee government. It is provided in Administrative Instruction No. 34, paragraph II, D. that "the Project Director shall satisfy himself that none of its (plan of government) provisions violates any regulation or instruction of the War Relocation Authority." Administrative Instruction No. 34 contemplates a real government by citizen evacuees. It is my opinion that the plan of government submitted to me by the Government Charter Commission establishes a multiplicity and complexity of governmental organs completely defeating the purpose of the instruction that a real government by citizen evacuees be established.

In the next to the last paragraph of my letter to Mr. Kinya Okajima, Chairman of the Government Charter Commission, dated January 28, 1943, I made clear that I shall not stand in the way of a charter that is free from any instrument or appendage affording factional strife and bitterness.

It very well may be that the situation of the evacuated people in this Center, as perhaps in other Centers, is of such character that it will be impossible for a plan of government to arise from them or to be imposed upon them that will actually meet the test of acceptability which I judge to be that of WRA. In other words, the deep-seated desire of the Issei to strongly influence, if not actually control, any evacuee government, the indifference of the Nisei to evacuee government arising from their greater concern with the future and from their attitude toward their present situation as ephemeral, and sectional jealousy and pride may occasion not only the stirring up of "discontent and cleavages among evacuees" men-

tioned in your letter, but they may make absolutely impossible the execution of the policy of WRA within the limitation of that policy.

If other projects have resolved the impossible situation mentioned in the preceding paragraph by setting up a form of government perhaps exceeding the limitations upon policy, that is no reason, it seems to me, why I should, against my conscience, approve a plan of government that purports to carry out the policy of WRA while at the same time, in my opinion, flagrantly violating and exceeding the clear limitations of that policy.

From your letter it is, as I have always thought, a clear policy of WRA that evacuee government will not be set up where it is not wanted. It has been a matter withing my contemplation for some time to have a referendum or to establish some other test of determining whether or not the people at this Center actually want evacuee government. The difficulty with respect to such a referendum or test is that it cannot be worth much if it merely determines whether the people want evacuee government as an abstract proposition. It seems that any such referendum or test to be practical must relate to some specific plan of government. When a plan of government is devised that will at the same time carry out the policy of WRA within the limitations of such policy, I shall most gladly submit it to a referendum.

Frankly, our experience without self-government has not prevented the attainment at this Center of the objectives of evacuee government as stated in your letter of March 5. We have mobilized for assistance in the project administration the active support and sanction of the entire body of evacuees. We have permitted them to participate responsibly in the administration, and in planning and adopting regulations, and in maintaining law and order.

The business cooperative has provided them with an opportunity for greater acquaintance with and training in democratic, representative, local government procedure, which if not of the type actually found in the normal American community is very similar thereto. A separate social and recreational cooperative which we are contemplating will provide them further opportunity for experience of such character. The running of their own business and recreational enterprises and activities constitutes real and substantial functions and consequently attracts sincere and genuine interest.

It is questionable in my mind what particular democratic and representative local government we desire the evacuees to practice and to come to know. Is it the actual local govern-

ment of invisible committees, bosses, unconscionable bargaining and deals, the abuse of police, and of the many other undesirable characteristics that we deplore while still taking pride in our local government as a whole, or is the local government, that we desire them to know, that of Jeffersonian ideals which actually does constitute the warp and woof of American local government? Can we actually "train" evacuees in real American government in the Centers? Can we actually "train" them in ideal government in the centers? To my mind the ideal and the real in government are so intermingled that their divorce and separate treatment are impossible except in the class room. It seems doubtful to me that we wish to introduce real American local government, with all its faults and viciousness, into the political scene in our Centers. It also seems doubtful to me that we wish to mislead evacuees into thinking that a type of academically ideal government is a real thing.

To conclude this letter, allow me to again assure you that it is my sincere intention to observe both WRA policy and the limitations of that policy. Furthermore, it is not my intention to seek the easiest way of administration; on the contrary, I desire to follow that administration, irrespective of difficulties involved, that will best, everything considered, administer to the evacuees and at the same time conform substantially to WRA policy.

Very truly yours,

H. L. Stafford
Project Director

Ralph J. Moore

REMoores:ek

Minidoka W.R.A.
Hunt, Idaho
March 24, 1943

Mr. Harry Stafford
Director, Minidoka, W.R.A.
Hunt, Idaho

Dear Sir:

In regard to the formation of a self-governing body for the residents of Minidoka, I submit the following opinions.

The residents of Minidoka Center came to this place in the middle of August and we have already spent six months here. During these months, fortunately, everything went smoothly without a self-governing body.

The Minidoka Charter commission has been elected by the residents of Minidoka for the purpose of formulating the self-governmental plan for the Minidoka Relocation Center. Fortunately or unfortunately, the majority of the members are Issei and the Administrative instruction states that the Issei have no right to hold elective offices in this self-governing body. At this time, it is dangerous for the Commission members to declare that self-government is unnecessary because we do not know the opinion of 70 block delegates who are acting as the representative of block residents. The residents might have feeling that since Issei have no right of self-government, that would have no desire to form the self-government although their duty is to formulate a Constitution.

As I understand that the welfare of the residents is far more important than a mere formality of making rules and regulations, I feel that if it is the will of the majority that self-government is unnecessary, we can follow that course. We cannot disregard public opinion since we are living under a peculiar circumstance in which everyone should be regarded as equals.

In true sense, there is no true democracy existing within the Relocation Centers for the simple reason that we must abide with the W.R.A. rules and regulations. If grave disturbance do take place the W.R.A. must step in and straighten the matter out. The incidents of Manzanar, Poston, and Tulelake are living examples.

There are the dangers if the Community Government is set up. It will create friction among the younger generation for a struggle to attain powers and also conflicts will probably arise between the Issei and the Nisei groups. Another possibility is abuse of powers by the elected persons.

Six months ago it appeared that the establishment of a self-governmental body was very urgent. Things have changed since then. Due to the relocation problems and voluntary Army enlistments, potential leaders of this community are gradually leaving Minidoka. As is, it is still desirable to have a community-government whose leaders are composed of persons of average ability.

Nevertheless, there are dangers in drawing hasty conclusions. The absence of conflicts and strifes here is largely due to the fact that residents here are sensible and peace-loving. It might be interesting to note at this time the psychology of the Japanese people. Among Japanese, the struggle for attainment of high social status is very strong and they have a tendency to sacrifice many things for that goal. It is indeed disheartening to see many residents assume airs due to their being block-managers, or their being members of the internal security force. Their minds are indeed very naive, simple and childish.

It is up to the residents of the Minidoka Relocation Center whether or not they desire self-government. My personal opinion is that it is unnecessary at this time to set up a complicated form of self-government, although I believe some simplified plan is needed in the near future. What I mean by that is, we must have some sort of organized body which can act as medium for the administration and the residents, in order to meet with various problems which arise in the Center.

Yours respectfully,

/s/ Dick T. Kanaya
A member of Charter Commission

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Minidoka War Relocation Project
Hunt, Idaho

High School Principal

March 25, 1943

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. H. L. Stafford, Project Director
FROM: J. T. Light, High School Principal
SUBJECT: Community Government: reply to Mr. Dillon
S. Myer

In my mind the primary question concerning community government is the nature of its organization rather than the question of whether or not there shall be any. A constitution which prohibits Issei from holding elective offices in the community government very clearly establishes a situation which we are advised to avoid in Community Analysis Report No. 2 by John Embree, of February, 1943; namely that of making an "out" group of the Issei; that is, taking away from them the social predominance which is inherent in the cultural pattern that so strongly influences their thinking and feelings.

I note in your letter that in the next to the last paragraph you state: "There is not sufficient evidence to support the conclusion that the evacuee governments of Poston, Manzanar, or Gila, have been the responsible factors in the difficulties encountered there," but in the Weekly Press Review No. 8, for the week ending March 9, there is a reference to an analysis made by the staff of Common Ground in which it was indicated that the "colonists feel that the root causes of the riot were: discrimination against Issei in favor of the younger, less experienced Nisei in administrative positions and also in community government--." This analysis was characterized by the editor of the Press Review as being "a complete, accurate, and factual account of the December 6 outbreak at Manzanar,--".

It is true that this analysis does not constitute sufficient evidence to support the conclusion mentioned, but we have felt that every time we approach a situation which called for apparent discrimination against the Issei that there arose a feeling of tension. We have been very careful to take into account this aspect of the Japanese cultural pattern and feel that it has saved us a great deal of trouble. The establishment of community government on the basis of the present regulations would tend to negate our efforts in this respect. We would be very reluctant to establish any community government which would violate this very important psychological factor in the mental and emotional makeup of the colonists.

If the regulations concerning community government were to be revised in this respect, we would then favor the establishment of community government. We would be particularly interested in using it as an avenue through which to promote the educational objective of the Project relative to preparing all colonists to more effectively take their place in normal American communities. Even though the Issei may not vote in public elections or hold public office, there are many situations of a quasi-public nature in which they have participated in the past, such as the establishment of farm and marketing cooperatives, consideration of labor policies, discussions in chambers of commerce on problems of public significance, and the like.

We feel that it is necessary to provide actual experiences for an increasing number of these people regardless of whether or not they perform their functions perfectly. It is a basic educational principle that the best way to learn is by doing and even by making mistakes. We would regard it as one of the most important tasks of the administrative staff to guide these learning experiences in a manner which would give them a real genuine feel of democratic group action. We would expect to deal with many unfavorable factors in the situation less crucial than the one discussed above.

We have been able to achieve, in part at least, the other WRA objective mentioned in your letter of March 5; namely to mobilize the active support of the colonists in administering, planning, and regulating; through less formally organized groups in which we recognized the social importance of the Issei without ignoring the Nisei.

We feel, however, that properly organized community government will enable us to approach this objective more fully than we have.

Sincerely,

Jerome T. Light
High School Principal

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Minidoka Project
Hunt, Idaho

March 26, 1943

TO: Mr. Harry L. Stafford

SUBJECT: Community Government

This is in reference to Mr. Dillon S. Myer's letter on the subject of Community Government.

Earlier I drafted a memorandum to Mr. Myer dated December 23, 1942, on this subject for your signature; as these remarks bear directly on this subject and as I believe are still apropos, I have attached a copy. The following thoughts should then be considered as extensions of these remarks.

Mr. Myer's remarks are in error in that he refers to "lack of Evacuee participation" and assumes that the Administration of this project is opposed to Community Government.

Nothing could be further from the facts as you well know. While I have never seen any other Projects and therefore cannot speak from personal observation, I am conscious that in many respects we have a great deal of colonists' participation and I suspect, to a greater degree than in any of the other Projects. To this condition, we should attribute a large measure of what little success we may have had in Project Administration.

In terms of Administration, our staff of appointed personnel is low as compared with the high percentage of resident personnel, especially in positions of responsibility. This is in keeping with our basic philosophy of placing responsibility directly on the resident personnel for good order and the maintenance of their own community. Incidents could be cited as infinitum: of the group who sponsored the volunteering program; our Internal Security operation; coal hauling; Recreation and Community Activities program; our Employment and Outside Placement; the Coop; the Housing Program to mention but a few. In all of these activities where we might have had a minor degree of success, we have either none or only one appointed personnel directing the activities; in fact, it might be said that the programs having the highest ratio of success have the lowest appointed personnel ratio, all of which should be considered as Evacuee participation.

It is true that we have delayed inauguration of a formal Community Government. In this, I believe we have been fortunate; for now we may take advantage of the mistakes made by others in the development of our future organization.

Certainly, we have no resistance to the establishment of some form of Community Government, but our delay has been the result of, to some degree, sensing some basic errors in the arbitrary form of the government plan as allowed by Washington and we were of the impression that no optional form of government was permissible. Had a plan been submitted of a flexible nature which permitted Project variation, I am quite sure we would have, before this time, established some form of Community Government.

We have no objection to the establishment of Community Government provided that opportunities are given for the establishment of a plan which seems to be desirable on this Project and providing that it does not create problems of Administration greater than that which already exists, and providing further that such a government overcomes some of the basic conflicts which were inherent in the plans originally submitted to us. We believe in Community Government and are anxious to inaugurate it. We feel that we would be extremely negligent if, having had this period of time for study and analysis, we still went ahead and reproduced the identical mistakes made elsewhere. In this, I believe we have been fortunate that we have delayed the inauguration of a formal Community until such a time as our community was ripe for such action.

I might add in partial defense of our delay that it was done with the partial encouragement of the Washington office, in that they, in a memorandum of December 15, 1942, suggested that "no action to accelerate should be taken", and further our plan of Community Government drawn up by the Charter Committee was submitted on November 24, 1942, with the request that it be reviewed in light of the other Projects' experience. We further indicated that we would take no action until we heard from them. Since that date, we have had no word.

The delay has been fortunate in that we avoided the danger which would have occurred had we crystallized Community operations at an unnatural point, or perhaps, we should say, while the Project residents were in the process of arriving at the degree of stability and unity, while they were becoming a homogeneous unit. Had we done so earlier, it is my impression that we might have shattered asunder and frozen in that position, a group who were completely unfamiliar with each other. Freezing the Project's residents into factions and arresting their development at that stage would have been extremely unfortunate.

Enough space has been devoted to the questions relating to the cleavage between the Issei and the Nisei so that I need not add any further comments, however, because we frankly

were opposed to such a condition, wherein a minor quarter of the population could dominate the whole and in view of the fact that Washington was adamant in their position on this matter, we frankly felt unwise to proceed.

Two additional factors have been present concerning which not enough attention has been given. It is already apparent that if we permit only citizens to vote in this unnatural community and split the citizens into two factions, slightly more than a quarter of the population will be the ruling faction. It has already become apparent in other Communities that the Community Government has been unable to control and speak for the Community; and it is to the above factors that I would attribute this failure. In other words, if that were a truly representative government, when it moved, it would be in a position to guarantee the cooperation of the whole of the Project.

I would say that there is considerable confusion manifest in the Administrative Instructions relating to the establishment of Community Government. There is a confusion as to what should constitute the content of the Community Government. There is failure to distinguish between what constitutes the executive responsibilities of Administration and Legislation as well as a failure to be honest in either granting complete authority to the project residents or to honestly admit that the Administration must assume responsibility for its actions and actions of the residents.

In other words, it is my impression that looking at the Project realistically, the Administration and they alone are responsible for Administration, and there is no possibility of temporizing and granting to the resident personnel responsibility for the Community Activities, unless such responsibility is clearly and completely transferred. There always should be a clear division between Administration and Legislation. The functions of the Project is to administer to the needs of the residents. This is not a Legislative responsibility, nor can it be delegated or divided between Administration and Legislative agencies.

Further, the fact that if there is a delegation of this function to a legislative group with that Government group having only a limited or impotent authority, with no Budgetary control, appropriations, in fact, any real authority, will result not only in lack of real government but in a complete frustration of the people concerned with government and all of the Project's residents who will realize the limitations imposed on them. They will either seek to extend to the ultimate point their authority and responsibility, or recognize the futility and frustration and give up responsibility completely.

One of the objectives of Community Government is to provide a medium of communication of the needs and wants of the residents to the Project Administration as well as providing the Administration with a channel by which its aims and philosophies may be disseminated throughout the camp.

As a channel of communication, the use of Community Government becomes instead of a facilitating device, an obstacle to such an objective. If the Community Government hears complaints or gets request for action, these needs go into a repository or through a screening process and the full impact of the need is expended upon the Community Government rather than upon the Administration. It becomes two columns of which the bridge from one to the other is either non-existent or tenuous and confused, so that instead of Community Government being a medium of communication, it is a blocking factor.

The approved composition of the Community Government would in our opinion block the second objective of the Community Government, namely, providing a method of dissemination of information regarding the methods and objectives of the WRA, on the Project in that the Government, not being representatives of all groups, not reaching into all categories of people, and not being a controlling group, could not assume responsibility nor guarantee effectiveness of its actions.

The formalization of Community Government will immediately result in the crystalization of laws and regulations which in turn will prevent a humanized, individual determination of problems on a case by case basis.

The present system in effect in Minidoka, in that we have a substantial number of residents in responsible positions and place responsibility upon them, makes for an informal, interested, and responsible group who participate in the Operations as well as the formation of policy, so that they are in a position to interpret need and inform the rest of the colony through channel of authority of objectives and methods of accomplishment.

We believe the present method of operating the Project is good but only because the Administration is responsible and sensitive. The method is however subject to the caprice of the Director and its power has not been limited as defined, so it is our belief that there is some need to lay down a form of Government which is not subject to the whims of an individual and permits individual treatment and is flexible.

Because we have made certain commitments, because so

many of our community functions are conditional upon the existence of some form of Community Government, it does not seem desirable to completely negate the Administrative Instructions. We are suggesting, therefore, that there be established a formal Community Government which would be substantially as follows:

There would be established on a democratically elected basis an Advisory Council, which Council would be so constituted as to represent the majority of the residents in the Project and its function would be clearly and honestly set down as being limited to represent the individual's need on the Project and medium of information back to the Colonists and it would be so set up that when it made a commitment, it would speak for the total group and could guarantee the united support of their recommendations.

May we summarize our points made in the above lengthy review. It seems to us that there has been delay in the establishment of Community Government because of the inflexibility of the Administrative Instructions, and a lack of reality in the suggested plan for a government adequate to cope with our needs, in that responsibility is neither completely delegated nor completely withheld and there is a lack of complete participation in the government. It appears further that there is confusion in the administrative instructions established in the Community Government between the legislative and the administrative function and in view of the fact that it is the administration's primary job with practically no legislative function existing. We most certainly have participation in government and a medium or channel of information, both to and from the administration. We most certainly have participation in government and a medium or channel of information, both to and from the administration. We feel that the development of Community Government as submitted would have resulted in the development of factions and impeded Project operations, without having developed compensation agencies in terms of adjustment ^{of} Project residents for later government in their own communities subsequent to relocation. In addition to the above, we feel that there should be now established some form of Community Government but in view of the limitations imposed, we hesitate to recommend its immediate inauguration until an adjustment has been made in these instructions.

Sincerely,

/s/ Philip Schafer
Ass't. Project Director

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31-12-A Minidoka W.R.A.
Hunt, Idaho
March 26, 1943

Mr. H. L. Stafford
Project Director
Minidoka W.R.A.
Hunt, Idaho

Dear Mr. Stafford:

In compliance with your request for my personal opinion concerning the proposed Community self-government, I would like to make the following statements:

1. We are under unusual circumstances, with the nisei and issei, citizens and aliens, placed inside the same barbed wire fence. I have always held and still hold that this is not and cannot be a normal community, as long as we are in the custody of the Government. Such being the case, the members of this community should be treated as one group in the matter of self-government, making no distinction between the nisei, whose citizenship rights are temporarily suspended to a certain degree, and non-citizen Japanese. This viewpoint seems to be in accord with that which the "evacuee government has", as adopted at the policy meetings held at San Francisco, which is mentioned in Director Myer's letter to you, namely, "To mobilize for assistance, in project administration, the active support and sanction of the entire body of evacuees, permitting them to participate responsibly in administration, in planning and adopting regulations, and in maintaining law and order."

As, however, Administration Instruction No. 34 excludes Issei from holding elective office, in the Community self-government, we provided in the draft of the Community Charter that "there shall be established as Advisory Board composed of five members, elected from the community at large," with the alternative, reading, "composed of not less than five and not more than seven, who shall be appointed by the Community Council and shall hold office at the will of the Community Council". The Organization Commission tirelessly labored for many days with a sincere spirit of cooperation with the Administration and the residents.

2. In your of January 28, 1943, addressed to me, as Chairman of the Commission, you mentioned the difficulties which have arisen in other Projects where they have established self-government, as a reason for your unwillingness to put the Charter into operation. On this point, I would like to say that, according to information obtained by me, the existence or non-existence of self-government had no relation whatsoever to the disturbances which occurred in those centers. And, I take

this opportunity to say that the Japanese people in the centers referred to, are practically the same as the people of the same race in the Pacific Northwest. The surrounding conditions in the matter of greater restrictions and hostile attitudes in California and Arizona had much to do with the incidents, not the inherent quality or lack of quality of the evacuees. During my long residence in this country, I have lived both in the North and South Pacific coast, so know the people of whom I speak. In the work of self-government or in any collective human undertaking, leadership, in my opinion, counts the most, and where people are living together under subnormal conditions, it is even more important.

3. In your letter dated March 16, addressed to the W.R.A. Director at Washington, a copy of which you furnished me for my information, you mention that the election of seven members of the Commission occurred during the absence of the majority of our young nisei, who were employed in the harvest fields outside the Project. But, we were elected and appointed by you as members of the Charter Draft Commission, and now as would-be Councilmen of the proposed Community Government. We have submitted the final draft of the Charter to you, so our part of the work is finished. The Charter is in your hands, for your approval or rejection and for the final approval of the residents of this Project. The Charter provides the way to correct any defect that may be found in its provisions. Absence of those young nisei at the time of election, of which I had no knowledge, was very unfortunate, but the same thing may happen in an election in any American community.

4. I am greatly concerned about the moral effect of your decision, concerning the matter, upon the residents generally. The Government provided a way for us to establish a Community Government, and I think we should have it in some form or another. We need some kind of agency or body as a moral force to correct unhealthy opinions expressed by unscrupulous persons, and to check persons who do and say things in a sneaking and underhanded manner. Then, too, we are in need of assistance from some organized group for the solution of our social, domestic, youth and children's problems.

If the draft of the Charter should not meet with your approval, I sincerely hope that you will create an organ which will exercise a high moral influence over the entire body of residents. Such an instrument, in my opinion, is necessary for us, even if our population should decrease to one-third.

Knowing that you are desirous to have me say truthfully what I think, I have made the above statements, freely and frankly.

Thanking you for your untiring efforts for the welfare of all of us.

/s/ Kinya Okajima

TO: Mr. H. L. Stafford, Project Director

3/26/43

FROM: W. L. Yeager, Fire Department

SUBJECT: Community Government

Due to ever-changing conditions relative to the prosecution of the war and the turn-over of evacuee personnel, and that fact that self-government always sets up the machinery of dividing the evacuees in two or more political divisions, while not undesirable in our form of government, it will no doubt create bitterness within a population composed of evacuees whose degree of Americanism has been allowed to be displayed in other projects where self-government has been instituted.

In this discussion it must constantly be in one's mind that the disloyal evacuees are in a small minority; but when allowed self-government privileges, create a disloyal following. Each evacuee has had the privilege of expressing his or her opinion to the division heads, who have conveyed their thoughts to the Project Director or proper division for the possible solution of their problems.

In conclusion, it appears our present form of simple self-government has proved its worth under conditions equally as trying as other projects where self-government was tried and seemed to have failed.

/s/ W. L. Yeager
Fire Protection Officer

Minidoka War Relocation Project
Hunt, Idaho

March 26, 1943

MEMO TO: Mr. H. L. Stafford
Project Director

FROM: R. S. Davidson, Chief
Agriculture Division

In your memorandum of March 17, relative to Community Government, you have requested by suggested reply to Mr. Myer's letter.

Permit me to state first that I have been in a position to observe first hand, the operations at six relocation centers during my visit to them over a period of ten months. I have attended staff meetings at four centers, and what follows represents my impressions and observations:

Mr. D. S. Myer, Director
War Relocation Authority
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Myer:

The Administration of a War Relocation Center is a challenge to any man and constantly puts him to the test. A dominant, firm and courageous directorship must be tempered with a real and sincere attitude of tolerance and understanding. Whether evacuee self-government is instituted or not, the Director must make decisions and numerous matters are constantly referred to him for approval.

Someone has said that we are living in a "lawless community." In a sense this is a true statement, but contrasted with frontier towns where outlaws run amuck, Hunt represents a peaceful, law-abiding people who have shown little need for laws, courts of justice or methods of punishment for violators.

The principles of Democracy and popular sovereignty are operative in normal American cities, but a War Relocation Center is not a normal city. The theory of self-government is of little assistance to the residents unless representative government actually represents all and not a part of the population in its various functions.

Lessons in Democracy and Freedom without the active practical participation is an empty vessel and an idle dream.

Basically the WRA personnel represents Uncle Sam to the evacuees. Uncle Sam passed an exclusion act, has denied the rights of citizenship to all Issei and now has placed them under military units behind barbed wire fences with WRA officials as their guardians. Now consider a WRA officials' position addressing these Issei on the subject of Democracy, Liberty, and Freedom in this environment with elective office holding reserved to Nisei!

The respect of the young people for their parents is a Japanese tradition. Likewise family solidarity has been the controlling influence upon its younger members. Community self-government as prescribed under WRA regulations violates that respect for elders, breaks that family tie, and fails to recognize the traditional leadership and responsibility of older men.

We feel that the family unit should be maintained at a family table in the Mess Halls. We are striving to make no promises that cannot be fulfilled. We are strengthening the confidence of residents in the Federal Government by issuing pay checks and granting temporary leave permits without delay. Faith in Project Administration is being deepened by full and frank discussion of all problems and attentive ears are lent to complaints brought to us by block managers.

Respect for WRA appointed personnel on the part of the residents is strengthened by a full agreement and cooperative spirit among staff members, thus avoiding friction and discord which have proven to be very contagious. Adequate recreational facilities are being provided here. There is no juvenile delinquency. Many big, important jobs have been accomplished here by volunteer labor groups. The record of those who have worked outside in industry, on the farm and in business establishments is clean. The patriotic record of our volunteers for military service speaks volumes for Minidoka.

Do not assume that the absence of community self-government means a lack of evacuee participation in the events and activities of the Minidoka Project. This place is buzzing with activities in natural, normal relationships without an artificial law making body superimposed upon this society.

The evacuees participate in planning and regulating this community. We attempt to avoid controversies between aliens and citizens, and certainly within this center segregation is something foreign to us.

Under present WRA policy all Divisions on the Project are suffering from constant turnover. Those going into mili-

Memo to H. L. Stafford 3/26/43--3

tary service or gaining leave clearance must be replaced by others. A governing body or council would lack stability and permanence for the same reason. As it stands we have a well disciplined people.

After World War I many people inexperienced and untrained in democracy had Democracy thrust upon them and there followed successive blunders and all manner of confusion in the world. What did those people seek? Security. In the center there is security for these evacuees. Opportunity knocks from the outside. Those who would heed its call are granted leave to go and to take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself.

The Nisei are expected to leave the Project under the present relocation program. The Issei who remain are not granted equal rights and privileges under the present policy. The prospects for a permanent, efficient community government appear to be not very bright.

Very truly yours,

R. S. Davidson, Chief
Agriculture Division

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MINIDOKA WAR RELOCATION PROJECT
Hunt, Idaho

March 26, 1945

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. George L. Townsend
Chief, Community Services

SUBJECT: Evacuee Government

This may not be exactly the information you requested. It is not a reply to Mr. Myer's letter, but rather some of my thinking on the problem of evacuee government, a problem with which I have not been closely indentedified.

First, I would like to point out that I have heard very little discussion about community government among the evacuees, themselves. There may be some question as to whether a formalized community government such as that contemplated under present WRA policy is actually desired by the majority of the residents of Minidoka. I have not been close enough to this situation to make a definite statement, however.

I have had some indication that community government is not wanted. Recently, Mr. Hara, Head Block Manager, expressed to me the hope that we could continue on as at present. He said that elections created factions and that this was bound to lead to trouble. He cited the recent queen contest as an example, stating that it created considerable disturbance. I am aware that it did cause some trouble as I found it necessary to recommend to the Housing Department that two neighbors be separated as a result of disagreement between them brought about by this contest.

Since he is Head Block Manager, Mr. Hara could have had some personal interest in the status quo. Without doubt, the block managers would be in a less important position if we had a formal community council. On the other hand, Mr. Hara's statement may reflect the feeling of a majority of the evacuees.

I am unable to entirely agree with the position that all forms of community government should be discouraged for fear that some difficulties may be encountered. Whether or not the present elaborate plan is adopted does not seem to me so important as that some more or less formalized channel of communication be established between the evacuees and the administration. This would not have to be a policy forming body, but could act in an advisory capacity to the administration. It seems to me that on many matters of policy representatives of the evacuees should be consulted beforehand in order to get their reactions and suggestions. They

Mr. George L. Townsend 3/26/43--2

in turn should have some means whereby they could bring suggestions on policy to the attention of the administration.

Up to now, this has been done informally. The block managers, the fair labor board, the constitutional committee, and certain individuals have all acted in this capacity at times. This should really not be the function of any of these bodies, however, as they were formed for other purposes. Acting in this capacity may well create problems for them. For instance, the block managers were organized as an arm of the administration. They have now worked themselves into the position of representing the people of their respective blocks. It must be confusing to them to attempt to represent both the administration and the people at the same time.

I would like to elaborate a bit on my statement that there should be some formalized channel of communication between the people and the administration. It is my opinion that at the present time we do not have an adequate system by which people who have grievances or suggestions can make them known to the administration. I know that many of the residents do want to appear to complain. I know also that many hesitate to come directly to you or Mr. Schafer with problems and suggestions.

I would like to point out that psychiatrists believe that it is conducive to better mental health for an individual to express his dissatisfaction or feelings than to keep them entirely within himself. Little grievances added to each other may become big ones and may result in a serious outbreak. It seems to me that it is important for us to have a recognized channel through which the people individually and as a whole may express themselves. I believe that taking the little things one at a time will help to keep an important incident from developing. It seems to me that this might be one very important function of community government.

At present, this process is working to some extent through the block managers, delegations, etc. Under the circumstances, the number of delegations has been extremely low.

Under present circumstances, in the absence of many rules and regulations and in the absence of strict police supervision, public opinion plays a great part in determining the actions of the people. I believe that among the Japanese, the opinion of the community carries greater weight than among Caucasians. As time goes on, I believe

Mr. George L. Townsend 3/26/43--3

that it may be necessary to have a greater number of restrictions or ordinances in the form of traffic regulations, etc. Having these come from a community council, would, it seems to me, give the sanction of the people and take advantage of the weight of public opinion.

In this connection, however, it seems to me to be important not to set up too many regulations and restrictions. It would be very easy in this situation to have all kinds of rules. This might mean that the system would become too inflexible. Such a situation could easily lead to petty irritations and grievances which could cause trouble.

Part of our success in the past has been due to the lack of regulations and to the willingness on the part of the administration to make exceptions to regulations in those cases that seemed to justify such consideration. This had prevented many of these people from feeling that they have been unjustly treated and becoming potential trouble makers. There is danger in having a system of self-government so formalized that individual considerations cannot be provided for.

I am concerned about the seeming acceptance of authority on the part of the people. An example of this is the dominating position held by the chief cook and the block managers in each block. Both of them seem to have the residents of their blocks pretty well under their thumbs. I understand for instance, that the block manager may announce that an assessment is to be levied on all families and not a protest in such a situation even though they do not agree. I believe that the people need some practice in self-government.

To my mind, the form of government provided for by present WRA policy will, however, create more problems than it will solve. Limiting office holders to niseis may be good in theory, but it is basically unsound in practice because it is at cross purposes with the cultural pattern of the people. It is not necessary for me to point out to you that this culture puts great stress on the dominance of the aged, and that the average issei has little faith in the judgment of the average nisei on such matters as government. This situation may be undesirable but we must recognize that it exists and that it will continue to exist long after the duration. To ignore this fact is to invite disaster. I don't know what the answer is but I think that we should accept the fact that this is not a normal community and allow the non-citizens to hold office. Perhaps, some proportional representation could be worked out. It would give both groups practice in self-government. The

. George L. Townsend 3/26/43--4

number of issei and nisei of voting age are somewhat the same at present. Before long the issei will become by far the larger group in numbers. At that time the present policy of allowing only Nisei to hold office will become all the more intolerable.

Because this question is so fundamental to the success of any community government, I would rather see the present situation continue than to establish a council entirely made up of nisei.

I would like to point that I am sensing a growing group or community consciousness on the part of the people here at Minidoka. They are becoming increasingly aware that they have a reputation to maintain and are becoming jealous of their position. The community leaders are doing everything that they can to see that nothing happens to mar the record of the people on this Project. I believe that they will have increasing resistance to accepting persons from other projects. There may well be a crisis at the time some other project might be closed out and the residue of the population moved to this Project. Some form of community government representing the people could be of great assistance to the administration at such a time.

Briefly, my opinion on community government is this: Some recognized organization should be established to serve primarily as a channel of communication between the people and the administration. Whether or not it would be a policy forming or an advisory body is not of fundamental importance. It is important that all residents should be eligible to hold office. This is basic.

I believe that Mr. Myer is at a loss to know how we have been able to maintain a high moral on this Project without more participation from the residents. I think he would be receptive to suggested changes in the present policies on community government.

CARL V. SANDOZ
Head Counsellor

March 26, 1943

Mr. H. L. Stafford
Project Director
Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

Dear Sir:

In accordance with your request, I am herewith going to express my own opinion with regard to the question still pending on establishment of the Self-government.

First of all, here is a question which should be analyzed with care. That is the cause of the troubles between aliens and citizens in the evacuee project. As far as my knowledge is concerned, it is axiomatically clear that within the evacuee project everybody regardless of his nationality, ought be all the same in right and duty as well. It is, however, incontrovertible that the discrimination of treatment in the political circle of self-government is the powerful incentive to sow dissention among the residents. The psychological phenomena created therefrom appear on everything, and upon the establishment of evacuee government with such political discrimination, our project would never be happy.

It is axiomatic that government organized by instruction #34 can create nothing else but the pernicious influence. Here, I say, proof is better than argument. Look into the project, except Tule Lake, where self-government is already in operation without organization supplemental to instruction #34. They certainly have had lots of trouble.

At Tule Lake, however, there is no discontent derived from governmental organization by virtue of the Planning Board such as advisory board of ours supplemental to #34.

From this point of view, I should say, that discontents and cleavages among the evacuee are mostly derived from the Instruction #34 which disfranchised Isseis in the community government. I do not vest responsibility upon the self-government, and if there is anything responsible, it is the Instruction #34.

In anticipation of these troubles to come, we have drafted our charter with the Advisory Board additional to #34. In case, therefore, Washington government would reject our Advisory Board, we would be none the better for such fallacious self-government. I do believe that it is absolutely impossible to gain two objectives of evacuee government which were declared at the meeting of policy in San Francisco last August.

Mr. H. L. Stafford 3/26/43--2

Here, however, we should bear in mind that the most extreme opposites have some qualities in common, which we must find.

I am always in mind to build up, in concert with you, our evacuee project as a model to the rest of all.

Respectfully yours,

/s/ J. Yukawa
Charter Commission

INTER-OFFICE MEMO

TO: Harry L. Stafford
Project Director

FROM: KENNETH BARCLAY
Internal Security

Community Government

As I understand our job at this relocation center, any program we introduce must be judged in the light of it's effect on the process of relocation. Is not our work to be judged by the time it takes, and the manner in which we re-establish these people in the pattern of American life?

We have at Minidoka, the same factors and factions that have caused so much trouble at other Relocation centers. The idle young men, the old hatreds, the newly acquired doubts and fears, the pro-axis agitator, and all the other elements that cause these disturbances are here with us. Let there be no doubt of that. At the present time each little faction stewes quietly in its own juice and the steam drifts harmlessly away, because and only because these factions are not organized. A democratic form of community government, by its very nature, must have an opposition party, and by creating this form of government we are giving these trouble making elements the organization they now lack. Is the risk involved worth the price we pay in public prejudice when things go wrong? Keep in mind the fact that "Relocation" is our primary goal.

In the past our evacuee police have done a wonderful job of maintaining peace and order in this center. They have cooperated fully with the administration and they should receive some credit for the fact that we have had so little trouble here. These men were selected by our evacuee chief and his lieutenant, not for their strong arm ability to enforce rules, but because of their personal standing in the community and for the respect they command among their fellow evacuees. I think the reason they have cooperated so well is that they are convinced that we of the W.R.A. are working diligently and sincerely to get them and their people out of here.

I do not believe that these men would work for an evacuee government which is admittedly weak, inadequate and unable to handle its own affairs, and I do not believe that they should be asked to. The average age of our group is 45½ years, including several boys who will leave soon for the army. Only 22½% are citizens. Would you ask these men to enforce the rules laid down by a community council in which they have no real representation when they know that the trouble makers are organized in the opposition?

It may well be that we have taken the easy way in our

To Harry L. Stafford--2

Internal Security Department. If so I can only point out that we thought our duty was to keep the peace while while the Relocation program worked itself out. If we are to proceed the hard way, we should reorganize our police force and replace our older men with a younger, physically sounder group who may have a real interest in community government.

I am convinced that the evacuees would gladly release W.R.A. from any promise, direct or implied, that could in any possible retard the Relocation program.

/s/ Kenneth Barclay

C O P Y

March 27, 1943

INTER-OFFICE MEMO

TO: H. L. STAFFORD, PROJECT DIRECTOR
FROM: EARL INGHAM, SUPT.,
SUBJECT: COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

Our administrative personnel was well aware of the two main objectives of the evacuee government. Although we have not actually had a community government, we have at all times kept the above mentioned objectives in mind in solving the problems of the project. We believe that whatever degree of success has been attained here is because we have followed the policy, rather closely, as outline in San Francisco last August.

We have felt that it was necessary for us to become better acquainted with many of the various phases in the operation of the project before attempting to initiate a formal type of community government. The responsibilities and confidence that we share with the evacuees is ample evidence of the fact that we are most anxious to have them participate in the operation and government of the project as much as possible under the existing circumstances. As you undoubtedly know, the operation of the project is now done mostly by the evacuees, not only common labor, but also positions requiring executive ability. Several of our sections have only one or two appointed personnel acting in a supervisory capacity, and in many cases, the lack of these persons has made it necessary to operate entirely with evacuees and almost without exception they have accepted this responsibility and successfully filled the positions.

We believe that one of the points in the charter that would be a focal point of trouble would be the exclusion of Issei from legal participation. We feel that an equal opportunity must be given for all the people to play a somewhat similar role in this community as they would in their local communities prior to evacuation. Would it be possible to take this into consideration in the charter? Apparently, we have been in operation long enough for the people to have become acquainted with many of the problems inherent in this particular situation, and consequently they are now ready to assume the additional responsibilities of community government.

We would appreciate your analysis of our situation at the present time and specify your ideas concerning Issei participation.

Sincerely,
Earl Ingham

Mr. Harry L. Stafford, Project Director

3-27-43

R. A. Pomeroy, Supt. of Education

Community Government

Ordinarily I would be first among those advocating self-government for any group of people who had shown themselves capable of administering their own affairs. For some years I have been instrumental in promoting student government in both the senior and junior high schools of the state. The principle is right, the only one tenable in a democracy such as ours. To refuse the privilege to a few while granting it to the many is certainly not in keeping with the tenets of democracy. But there are certain unusual circumstances connected with the relocation program which seem to me to put a different light on the matter.

In the first place residents had no choice whatever regarding either the fact of relocation or the area to which they would be sent. Their homes were torn apart overnight; they were sent willy-nilly to assembly centers; thrown with all kinds of people; and forced to live under the most trying conditions. Later they were relocated in areas entirely foreign to them and in surroundings anything but pleasant--all this without any reference to their status in life, their standard of living, or their wishes in any degree. Now we begin to talk about self-government for these people.

Now only are we operating under unusual circumstances but certain conditions that prevail, at least in the Minidoka Project, militate against anything real by way of resident control of their own affairs. We have here an unusual situation from the standpoint of age groups. We find a sharply defined line between the Issei, those elderly people who migrated from Japan a considerable time ago, and the Nisei, those very much younger people, born in this country, educated here, and actually an integral part of American life today. Also these people are widely divergent in occupation, in their former standards of living, and certainly from the standpoint of the former geographic areas in which they lived. It becomes apparent even to the casual observer that there are sharp clashes between Issei and Nisei, between Seattle people and Portland people, between the urban and rural dwellers. From this standpoint one could liken the situation to the pioneer days along the Atlantic seaboard, when widely varied peoples came from many areas in Europe and attempted to work out a new civilization together. We all remember the difficulties which beset people of those times without the added factors which I have mentioned as impinging upon the present situation.

Mr. H. L. Stafford 3/27/43--2

On the Minidoka Project there is apparent a sympathetic and understanding attitude on the part of most of the appointed staff which in itself has largely nullified the need for a very active participation in self-government on the part of the colonists. Our Director from the very beginning has shown himself to be extremely zealous for the colonists' welfare. He, like the Assist. Director, the Chief of Community Services, and many others has worked almost day and night to make things as right and as pleasant for residents as it has been humanly possible to do. No major problem of administration ever arises but that various leaders among the residents are called in and consulted. It may be well to state that not always are the same people consulted. A great deal of the work on the project has been carried on by the colonists on a voluntary basis, thus evidencing resident attitude in the matter.

There have been a good many outward signs of colonists' approval of the present regime as it stands. People are friendly and cooperative. There have been no strikes. Various gifts have been offered to members of the staff in appreciation for their efforts. Recently, following the campaign of recruitment for the Army, block managers went together to present to the appointed staff a tai fish, which had been secured at considerable expense from Seattle and cooked to be given to the appointed personnel in token of success, congratulations, and rejoicing.

I well realize the need for a share in government on the part of these people if they are to be assimilated by the American way. It seems to me, however, that self-government in a situation like this, where people live behind barbed wire with no reference to their wishes, can be little else than a hollow mockery. Suppose we give them a semblance of self-government. Suppose that the council decided that anyone who wishes may go to neighboring towns without a pass. What happens? We all know the answer. Higher authority steps in and forbids the action. While this idea is extreme, it illustrates the points which I wish to make; namely, that we may call whatever organization we set up self-government, but no one, least of all the residents, would be misled for a moment. Whatever we call it and however it is set up, it is still just playing at government.

As matters stand, we have even limited the rights of suffrage to the American born. Such an arrangement in itself is almost certain prophecy of failure. We presume to set up the rules of government in this fashion for a race in which the elders have traditionally been revered as the true leaders. How can we expect such a radical right about face?

My viewpoint ought to be clear by now. The leadership

Mr. H. L. Stafford 3/27/43--3

here has shown itself thus far able to maintain a peaceful, well regulated community without the artificial and stilted aid of a sham governing body. Even though it may be the policy of the War Relocation Authority, even though the policy is well founded and authenticated, it might be well to allow this one project to go along as it is, as an experiment. Results here could then be compared with those elsewhere. If all projects were administered exactly alike, no basis of comparison would be available. If for one shall have to vote for the status quo in the Minidoka Project, at least until some of the regulations for self-government can be changed.

R. A. Pomeroy
Supt. of Education

Minidoka Project
Hunt, Idaho

in reply, please refer to:
Geo. L. Townsend, Chief
Community Services

March 29, 1943

MEMORANDUM TO: H. L. Stafford, Project Director
SUBJECT: Community Government

In your memorandum of March 17 you ask that I give you my thinking on the matter of local government at this Project. I would like to develop the reply by reviewing some of the events which have transpired here and then comment on some of the statements in Mr. Myer's letter of March 5.

Even before all residents had arrived from the assembly centers we held discussions with various representative groups on how to proceed best in organizing community government within the limitations of Administrative Instruction 34. In those early discussions there was pointed out repeatedly the seeming injustice of an order which would deny to the majority of adults a direct voice in the government of the Center. Only a few persons, principally from among the J.A. C.L. membership, approved the restriction that only citizens could hold elected offices. On September 22, a delegation submitted to you a petition asking that we proceed with some form of government. The petition was signed by 28 persons (mostly Issei) representing each of the occupied blocks. At this meeting we agreed, along the most democratic lines, on a procedure for the election of 7 representatives to be recommended to you as an organization commission. I wish to quote from the minutes of that meeting as prepared by Min Yasui, who, incidentally, was the only Nisei of the eight residents in that delegation.

Akiyama: Question of Issei or Nisei appointees. Possibility of only one appointee or two representatives from each section.

Townsend: Believe that only one person should be appointed for each ward. Not make distinction between Issei and Nisei.

Stafford: Question of Issei and Nisei representation from sections. Should there be both Issei and Nisei?

Consensus of opinion: Only 7 representatives would be satisfactory, without distinction between Issei and Nisei.

Schafer: Points out desirable qualities, such as stability, consciousness of group problem, familiarity with organizational work, ability to speak English, etc. However, points out that in the Instruction from WRA no restrictions are enumerated; therefore, anyone should be qualified to be appointed.

Townsend: Points out that the Project Director has to appoint the members of the Commission. In that respect, administration must impose its will upon the people.

Stafford: Agrees that individuals would have to be appointed. However, might work out understanding that individuals selected by some certain method would be appointed. What would be best preliminary method of making such selection.

Consensus of Opinion: Better to have representatives from blocks to make recommendation, rather than representatives from sections.

Schafer: Suggests that 2 persons be elected from each block, who in turn, a congress of 72 persons, elect 7 persons, to constitute the organizing commission.

Consensus of Opinion: Schafer's plan is acceptable.

Schafer: Clarifying his plan: Instead of electing 7 persons who are to constitute the organizing commission, the congress of 72 would recommend 7 persons. Project Director would still have discretion of appointing the 7 persons named, including some and appointing others, or rejecting the entire group.

Stafford: Believes that whatever plan is adopted, the whole population of this Center must get together for their own mutual benefit. Must avoid factions and cliques, in order to avoid the possibility of jeopardizing the future. Public is going to watch developments and progress of this Project very closely. We cannot afford to have factional difficulties. Says that he is impressed with the importance of cooperation here. Have marveled to see how people will work under handicaps as are present here. The matter of public relations is a delicate one. Best way for the residents here to win public support is to conduct their affairs in such a manner as to be above all criticism.

However, will take no recognition of the Issei-

Nisei conflict. As for qualifications for holding office, favors the policy which will do the greatest good for the greatest number. If this policy is followed throughout, it is bound to advance the welfare of the entire population.

Factional fighting and bickering may bring disastrous consequences. If the war comes to a critical balance, conduct here may easily influence the outcome of the war, and seriously impair the welfare of this Project.

Broad public sentiment may be swayed against the residents here because of the conduct of affairs at this Center, if war comes to such a crucial stage.

The Issei-Nisei question will not concern the Project Director. Is not afraid of meeting that issue at any time.

Mike Masaoka, the National J.A.C.L. Secretary, advocates the limitation of eligibility of non-citizens to hold office in these centers. Cannot understand why he should insist that older, mature minds should be weeded out in the work of government.

Akiyama: Emphasized fact that Issei are cognizant of the smart-alecky attitude of the Nisei. Gave example of some high school kid ordering and demanding an oldster leave and get out.

Townsend: Explains that no one in the outside world would be permitted to hold an elective office unless a citizen. Therefore, only citizens have the right to hold office in the government of such a project. Points out that the WRA is more liberal than the outside world, because it allows the non-citizens a right to vote.

Stafford: Points out that he will not allow young, immature minds to run away with the scheme of things at this Project, yet cannot stifle the young people. Requires a matter of balance. The burden of proof that the people are capable of conducting their affairs in an orderly fashion is upon the people.

From the above quotations it is apparent that the Issei-Nisei issue loomed large in the thinking of the residents and that you, as Project Director, foresaw the seriousness of it and wished only to develop harmony among all groups. It also shows our desire to be truly democratic in our methods.

A typical expression of the concern in the minds of many residents is contained in a letter from J. Yukawa dated September 7, a part of which follows:

"On turning the history of Puyallup Assembly over in my mind, I find it very stupid. We do not want to repeat the failure such as. The administration of the self-government at Puyallup had been performed by J.A. G.L., who are all too young and inexperienced in playing the administrative role, and in addition to it, the intraparty fight by the factionalism had resulted in disintegration of the public sentiment, while on the other hand, self-government had been gradually transformed into autocracy, without our being aware of.

"Evacuation camp as it may be said in a word, it is from the population point of view, rather one of the cities in the State of Idaho. Starting with this standpoint, we alien Japanese are in mind to do our utmost effort with intent to build up a model city under your guidance."

The elections were held in each block dining hall Tuesday, September 29, 1942. On that evening Mr. Schafer and I toured the Project, dropping in on almost half of the meetings. We were amazed and very disappointed to find only a few Nisei present. The meetings were composed almost entirely of male Issei. Walking about the Project were numerous Nisei. I made it a point to stop a number of them to inquire why they were not present. The answers showed an alarming lack of interest or concern. The following morning I was on the program of the Educational Work Shop, where about sixty resident prospective teachers were present. These were mostly Nisei. We spent an hour discussing Project government and the elections. I came from that meeting profoundly impressed that among young persons of Japanese ancestry "one just does not speak his mind before his elders and that government is a prerogative of the elders." It must be remembered that, as a group, the sixty young people present at the Work Shop were probably the best educated of the Nisei on the Project and represented many of our leaders. I concluded at that time that if these selected Nisei were not disposed to participate in evacuee government and only mildly concerned with it, any insistence on our part to "shove it down their throats" would bring not only incompetent evacuee government but one likely to be operated by an opportunistic and vicious minority for their own selfish ends. Nothing has transpired subsequently to cause me to alter that opinion materially.

It is my belief that, although the stipulation in Administrative Instruction 34 restricting elected office to Nisei would receive hearty approval from most citizens of the Uni-

ted States, such a proposal is bucking up against a Japanese cultural pattern that will lead to disunity, if not an actual open break, if pressed into practice.

It is interesting to observe the makeup of the seventy representatives elected to the congress. Forty-one were Issei; twenty-four Nisei; four Kibei; one Sansei. This large number of Issei were elected even though, at that time, great emphasis was placed on the fact that only citizens would be permitted to hold an elective office.

From the table given below it is interesting to note that more than half the Nisei (13) and all the Kibei (4) were thirty years of age and over, while slightly over one-half (22) of the Issei were thirty to forty-nine years of age. The logical deductions from these results seem to be that of the Nisei elected there was a tendency toward selecting older ones while a disproportionate number of younger Issei might indicate a selection of the more active and articulate ones while at the same time preserving the Issei interests.

AGES	ISSEI	NISEI	KIBEI	SANSEI
21 - 24		2		
25 - 29		8		
30 - 34	5	8	2	1
35 - 39	6	2	2	
40 - 44	7	3		
45 - 49	4			
50 - 54	6			
55 - 59	7	1		
60 - 64	2			
65 - 69	3			
70 - 74	1			
	41	24	4	1

The seven-man organizing commission recommended by the congress and approved by you was composed of six Issei and one Nisei. I sat in a number of their sessions and it was most apparent that the commission members wished to preserve the domination of the Nisei by the Issei. This was to be accomplished by including in the proposed charter a provision for an elected "advisory board" which would sit in with the council at its meetings, deliberate on an equal basis with the council members but without a vote. Obviously this would almost guarantee any action favorable to the Issei because, again, the cultural pattern determines that the wishes of the elders shall be obeyed in face-to-face situations.

The proposed charter, judicial commission manual, council

clerk's manual and arbitration manual were submitted to the Regional Office on November 2, 1942. During October and November, Mr. Solon Kimball, Mr. O'Brien and Mr. J. A. McLaughlin visited the Project and were consulted about various provisions of the proposed charter. Wires were sent to both the Regional and National Offices by these men, requesting clarification and advice on certain matters, replies to which were either greatly delayed or not answered at all. We have never received approval or disapproval of the charter submitted nor has it ever been returned to this office. While waiting for this approval, incidents occurred at some of the other projects which led many of us here to believe that the restriction prohibiting Issei on the council was certainly a contributing, if not a potent factor in those difficulties. At one project I am informed the whole council resigned. Could it have been because of the age of its members or when faced with really important issues the council felt it did not have sufficient backing of the people to take a position? These were and still are vital questions which have made me hesitant in pushing for the formation of a council on our Project. During all this time it must be remembered we were feeling our way along in administrative practices and relationships with the residents, and what we did and the way we did it was proved successful. We have met each play as it has arisen and, although patterns of administration have been established, these are most flexible, and I suspect more democratic and with greater participation on the part of the residents than the more formalized procedure of a community government found elsewhere. To my knowledge no one has proposed that we should never have a community government of some kind at Minidoka, but rather than we should never had a community government of some kind at Minidoka, but rather that to this time, under the present Administrative Instructions, it was best that a formalized government be postponed.

At the Denver meeting, which Mr. Schafer and I attended, the consensus of opinion of those present was that the restriction holding membership on the council to the Nisei was wrong. I detected what I think was an attempt at "face saving" in not changing a policy which nearly all agreed was wrong. If this assumption be true, then I feel more justified than ever in the position taken at this Project.

In Mr. Myer's letter of March 5, he states, "Are we justified, however, to place so much credit for the absence of trouble upon the lack of evacuee participation?" There is a false assumption in this question. Evacuee participation is not restricted to a formalized type of government. Careful investigation may show greater evacuee participation in community affairs, administrative Project policy and practice here than at some other projects with a make-believe democratic community government. I have been told by some who have visited all the

projects that there is here more evacuee participation in community concerns.

A part of the two main objectives promulgated at the San Francisco policy meeting last fall read, "To mobilize for assistance in Project administration the active support and sanction of the entire body of evacuees." The underscoring is mine. With the restrictions of membership on the council previously discussed, how can the entire body be represented? Factors in the whole cultural situation, accentuated by shocks and attitudes inherent in evacuation, makes such sanctions impossible without direct participation by the Issei.

"To provide opportunity for greater acquaintance with and training in democratic, representative local government procedures." This seems a bit over-idealistic in face of the provisions of the Administrative Instructions which provide for very limited "democratic procedures." Anything subject to the veto power of one man is not very democratic.

Mr. Myer raises the question as to "your ability to deny for much longer the same rights to the residents of Hunt" in relating how other projects have some form of government. Since your discussion with the organization commission and your letter to it, dated January 28, there has not come to my attention one single question about, "When do we get community government?" At this moment I believe the present policy and practice meets with almost unanimous approval of the residents. It may not always be so in the future; in fact, probably will not, but the "wondering", as expressed in Mr. Okajima's letter to you of January 25, does not now exist.

We only kid ourselves and not the evacuees when we speak of "evacuee government". Powers of the council and government provided for under the present policy are so restrictive and subject to veto that some residents have asked where do we get the courage to call it "government" at all. I believe we would get further if we would be downright honest and say to the evacuees, "The nature of the situation of our country at war and this whole evacuation makes it impossible to have a community government along democratic lines as we find in normal communities, but you can have a large participation in the affairs of the community by all concerned through an Advisory Council. As Project Director, I am charged with certain very important responsibilities which I cannot delegate. I need advice and counsel in making administrative decisions and help in executing them. We do not want, nor can we operate smoothly with factionalism. Instead, our problems and positions here are so unique that for present happiness and future welfare all must participate in the decisions and each must accept his

Memorandum to H. L. Stafford 3/29/43--8

full share of responsibility. Through an advisory Council elected by the people, all of them, this can be accomplished." Except for formalizing the procedure this is just what we have at Hunt. Admittedly this benevolent paternalism and, although not wholly desirable, it probably is better than discriminatory attempts at democratic procedures which merely makes mockery of the word "democracy".

George L. Townsend
Chief
Community Activities

INTER-OFFICE MEMO

March 29, 1943

MEMORANDUM TO: H. L. Stafford, Project Director

SUBJECT: Community Government at Minidoka

Reference is made to Director Myer's letter of March 5 on the above subject.

The experience at Minidoka has demonstrated one fact-- Community Government is not a requisite to successful operation of a Japanese relocation center, nor is it a requisite to good morale in the center. To state that community government is not even desired, by the majority of thinking people on this project, would be accepted, doubtless, as an exaggerated statement. While the statement would be difficult to prove, it can be made with a considerable degree to confidence. We do know that there is a definite uneasiness on the part of many residents concerning the matter of starting community government. This uneasiness is traceable to a serious factional difference experienced at the Puyallup Assembly Center just prior to coming to Minidoka. Emotions run deep bordering in some instances on reckless hatred whenever the subject is brought up for discussion. It is significant to point out that all of the expressions of distrust are directed against their own people, not against the administrative staff at Puyallup. The point should be made clear that there can be little question of the intensity of the existing hatreds and it is for this reason that these people will find it very difficult to cooperate for the success of any form of community government.

We on the Minidoka Project have often wondered just why it is that our administration should be comparatively trouble-free and we have been prone to think, without going very deeply into the matter, that we must have a better class of people on this project. We now find that there are serious factional differences here which are potentially as radical as those in any other center. These smoldering strifes have merely been held in check, lying dormant.

The question, "Do you believe we should have community government here?" was asked of several townspeople, and their comments will be of interest: "It is potential dynamite." "You don't hear anybody kicking in the whole town, why change the peace and tranquility we are now enjoying?" "I strongly advise against starting community government because there are deep seated hatreds in this camp which would be fanned to white heat again just like it was in Puyallup." "If you could have experienced the trouble that we went through at Puyallup, you

would know what we are trying to tell you about the depth to which this place would sink if you just hand them something to start fighting about." "How could we possibly improve on what we've got now?" "You don't know what trouble is until you make it necessary for the Puyallup group and the J. A. C. L. group to square off and start battling. There is a truce now and we certainly hope it stays that way." "What do you want Community government for, we've got nothing to settle that can't be settled by Stafford." "Maybe anyway that's my advice too."

The writer has never been aware of any opposition to community government on the part of the Project Administration nor anyone in it. The staff has been expecting it, planning for it. This office has been uniformly opposed to the idea of restricting membership in office to citizens simply because such a restriction would destroy, in this community, the basic concept of democratic government as it would deny the participation of the community's most valuable men, the men who have contributed most to Minidoka's trouble-free record. This office has been very hopeful that the correction of this very obvious fault in the community government structure would be forthcoming from Washington.

It is noted that Director Myer highly compliments the administration of this Project for its trouble-free record, and then the question is asked, "Are we justified, however, to place so much credit for the absence of trouble upon the lack of evacuee participation?" This question raises an important issue: What is the ideal of evacuee participation? Apparently the original policy makers considered only two avenues of approach, first the paternalistic directorship, and second, the authoritarian psychology of the Assembly Center. Perhaps the Minidoka Project has developed a third avenue of approach, that of bringing the evacuees into complete partnership with the administration and utilizing their services in all phases of project management, in supervisory capacities, in lieu of appointed employees. If the Minidoka Project stands somewhat along in its policy of employing the fewest number of appointed employees and filling the greatest possible number of "W" and "WJ" positions with evacuees, it might be well to make a comparison of evacuee participation in active project management at Minidoka with that of other projects where community government has been organized.

In off-the-record discussions of this topic in Denver with representatives of several other projects, the Minidoka representative was immediately placed in a defensive position with the implied contention that its administration must be somewhat naive in its judgment and trust of the Japanese people. It was actually appalling to representatives of other WRA centers to be told that at Minidoka there isn't a single appointed secretary on the project; that all of the telephone operators, telegraph and teletype operators are evacuees; that, of course,

there are no secrets, why should there be if the administration is pursuing a conscientious policy of integrity in dealing with the people.

After experiencing this defensive position, the conclusion was reached that two basic philosophies exist in WRA project administration and management: First, the psychological approach that the project is a place of detention, the evacuees are essentially prisoners and as such rate only limited trust, and associated with that philosophy is the unfounded superior feeling that the appointed staff know more about running the center than the Japanese do. Second, and in opposition, is the psychological approach that the center is an attempt on the part of the government to ameliorate an injustice to a group of its citizens, who in spite of their mistreatment, are willing to respond cooperatively whenever the proper attitudes are demonstrated by representatives of the government--associated with this philosophy is the subconscious understanding that the residents are not handicapped with a complete lack of knowledge of the Japanese people, and among them are those whose intelligence level is probably higher, for the skills required, than any possessed by the appointed staff.

The first approach is a pit-fall into which a large majority of new appointed employees fall. This is so because it is necessary to wean practically all appointed employees away from that viewpoint during their first several months of employment. A few never find it possible, under the peculiar circumstances attendant in a relocation center to readjust themselves away from the prisoner-detention psychology, with its accompanying intolerant attitudes. These few are eliminated at the Minidoka Project.

Under the philosophy maintained here, we claim that 90 per cent of all our problems are "caucasian caused", a statement that was very surprising to representatives of other projects. And as a further indication of the existence of different philosophies in field administration, it was found that Minidoka stands somewhat alone in its recognition of the problem that it is necessary to sell the peculiarities of various appointed employees to 10,000 residents--and in the selling process it behooves the employee not to have too many unsaleable qualities.

In this connection, the following sentence is found on page 2 of Director Myer's letter. "Perhaps this smoothness of operation on the Minidoka Project justifies retaining in the hands of appointed personnel, all responsibility for rules, regulations, discipline and other features of law and order." Here again, it appears to be necessary to point out that the administration does not retain in the hands of appointed personnel all of those responsibilities. They are all passed on to the people through a deliberate program of demonstrating to the people that the administration has confidence in their

judgment, and does not hesitate to give them full credit for the success that result. An example of such demonstration is the absence of any jail on the project and the absence of any need for one.

The editorial written by H. L. Stafford in the March IRRIGATOR, entitled "The Spirit of Minidoka", could not have been written by any project director in the absence of a fundamental administrative policy that utilizes the highest degree of integrity in dealing with all of the people. Trustworthiness is the natural product of demonstrated trust, and this axiom works more effectively with the Japanese people than with most any other group.

The two objectives of community government are set out in Director Myer's letter of March 5. The contention is confidently advanced that the first objective already has been reached at Minidoka through the avenue of a partnership with the people as a whole, and with acknowledge on the part of the people that they are contributing collectively to the welfare of this community. The second objective, it is believed, might also be reached in a more effective manner through the experience of dealing with an arm of the federal government which sought conscientiously to eliminate the present disillusionment these people have in the United States government. It is believed that above all else, the administration function of selling the integrity of the Federal Government back to these unfortunate people. The Japanese mind, for instance, cannot be deluded into thinking that they would have full democratic procedures of the type found in the normal American community, when their accepted and reliable leaders are denied the privilege of holding office in their government. If there is one thing that the project administration has learned, it is that the distinction of citizenship (which was legally denied to many worthy Japanese) is not a mark of reliability for community leadership in a Japanese relocation center. The denial of full representation will introduce stresses and strains which in themselves will prevent the success of community government as outlined in the second objective.

To summarize, it is an important fact that the thinking people at Hunt, the Issei and Nisei, are advising against community government. They are actually afraid of it because it will inevitably stir up factional strifes which carry real potential danger. Apparently the Minidoka record has been influenced by the fact that no opportunity has existed for the various factions to start a fight. All of the objectives of community government can be gained through the proper administrative attitudes which should go much deeper than mere superficialities. The original theory of community government in a relocation center will not stand up under the realities of project experience. Therefore, it would seem that the inauguration of any instrumentality with such obvious flaws would be ill-advised at this time.

R. Sprinkel
Sr. Administrative Officer.

Minidoka War Relocation Project
Hunt, Idaho
March 29, 1943

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. Harry L. Stafford, Project Director

FROM: Roy I. Akiyama, Member of Government Charter Commission

SUBJECT: Community Government

It is my opinion that so long as the Issei are barred from all elective offices, no plan for so-called self-government should be put into effect here. The result would probably be a repetition of the disorders at Manzanar and Poston. I feel that the real basis of these troubles lies in the exclusion from elective offices of the older men who have experience and tact and in the attempt to place the relatively inexperienced Nisei over them.

It should be noted that the average age of the Nisei is nineteen or twenty and that the choice of mature leaders from among them is limited to an exceedingly small group of older ones. Even these older Nisei rarely, if ever, have the necessary tact and insight into the feelings of the Issei and Kibei groups to command the cooperation of the people as a whole. While an elderly person might be excused for an occasional lapse of tact or for the assumption of an air of importance, the same faults would never be tolerated in a younger person. How much more the people here trust and rely on the Issei for leadership as compared with the Nisei is partly indicated by the membership of our local Government Charter Commission which was determined by election. Of this group of seven only one is a Nisei.

According to Mr. Myer the absence of trouble cannot be attributed solely to the lack of self-government. However, the fact remains that peace and order have been maintained on this project. I do not believe that a policy which has shown such poor results in other centers should be instituted here. According to a survey made by the Japanese government some time ago, the education of Japanese immigrants averages third grade of elementary school level. This as well as the fact that the Niseis are immature, must be considered.

If any plan of self-government is to be permitted, the rule excluding the Issei from elective offices should first be eliminated. Unless this is done, I believe any attempt at self-rule would be destined to failure. The alternative is the election of capable individuals, both Issei and Nisei, to an advisory board.

Their duty will be to stand between the colonists and the

administration. They will steer straight to avoid misunderstanding and conflict between the two groups. They should be involved in no task other than to work for the community.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Roy Ichizo Akiyama
Member of Government Charter
Commission

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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
Central Utah Project

Community Government

cc 198

April 2, 1943

To: Mr. Charles F. Ernst, Project Director

From: Chairman of the Council

The Community Council of Topaz unanimously went on record at its last session, April 1, 1943, as favoring the necessity of having a conference of the chairmen of all relocation centers to discuss and to exchange viewpoints on various problems mutual in interest and affecting all the evacuees, particularly in respect to relocation.

They have authorized me to contact all other Community Councils for them to prevail upon their respective Administration to make it a reality.

I hope you can appreciate the reasons which prompted above action by the Community Council. They feel that heretofore the expressions and the desires of the evacuees were not heard, especially in reference to relocation by the WRA authorities formally. Whatever informations or references they now have were mostly fathered from sources outside the relocation centers.

I also hope you can understand the concern existing among the evacuees, planning to relocate and to resettle outside, and primarily interested in reestablishing themselves soundly, economically and socially in their finest sense and meaning.

It is my sincere desire that you give this matter your sympathetic consideration; and through your good office it is my hope that you negotiate for and arrange such a conference.

I trust you will understand that we have acted in good faith and with a motive, none other than to be cooperative and helpful.

Very truly yours,

Tsune Baba,
Chairman of the Council

TB:en

cc Mr. James F. Hughes
Mr. Lorne W. Bell
Chairmen, Community Council of other centers.

MINIDOKA PROJECT
Hunt, Idaho

in reply, please refer to
Harry L. Stafford
Project Director

April 3, 1943

Mr. Dillon S. Myer
Director
War Relocation Conference
Denver, Colorado

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

Dear Mr. Myer:

Pursuant to my letter to you dated March 16, there is transmitted the thinking of various Minidoka staff members in response to your letter of March 5.

We are preparing for your consideration a proposition wherein the present participation of our Japanese residents is formulized.

Our recommendations will be an endorsement of a plan submitted by the Charter Commission and their group of Electors. It will be a simple plan creating an Advisory Commission to work with the Project Director. Such Commission will have powers to receive and disburse funds. It will also provide a medium of communication of the Project needs to the Director and conveying the objectives of the WRA to the residents along with establishing a body within the Project sufficiently comprehensive and representative to be able to commit the whole community to a course of action jointly agreed upon.

Very truly yours,

/s/ H. L. Stafford
Project Director

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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

Washington

AIRMAIL

TO: All Project Directors

The Amendment to Administrative Instruction 34, permitting issei to hold elective office in Community Government, has some far reaching implications. We may expect that future councils will have a preponderance of issei members. There may be adverse as well as beneficial results. Any feeling of loss of prestige by the citizens will be unfortunate. Also undesirable will be the extreme use of Japanese in Council deliberations and possible emphasis of Japanese cultural characteristics which in turn may lead to curtailment of the scope of Council work. The benefits should include bringing issei leadership, that might have been driven underground, into the open; the more experienced issei will cooperate better in solving problems; the loss through relocation of the best nisei and probably decline of quality of Council membership and work will be offset; the broadening of the base of representation is in line with democratic principles and means placing responsibility for a stable community on all.

It is important that for the present and future program that a genuinely enthusiastic reception be given to this Amendment. There is every reason to believe that this policy will receive favorable reception since it has been almost unanimously recommended by project staffs that such a change be made. Moreover, it has been advocated as much by nisei as issei. This liberalization of policy, therefore, is in large measure a response to the desires and wishes of the community and the recommendations of the project staffs. Since this is true it is important that the announcement be utilized as a method of strengthening good will and confidence between the administration and the people.

The specific method by which this can be accomplished will vary from project to project. It would seem advisable, however, that the Council, or a group from the Council, be brought into the confidence of the Administration to discuss and plan the action that will achieve the desired result. In order that each project may capitalize on this policy change a uniform date for official release has been set as of May 5.

It should be made clear that the present Council will continue in office until the next regularly schedule election at which time the new policy becomes effective but that the new policy applies immediately in all elections to fill vacancies.

Sincerely,

/s/ E. M. Rowalt
Director

Enclosure

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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

Washington

To: All Project Directors

Pending revision of Administrative Instruction No. 34, Section III-B may be interpreted to read as follows:

"Only citizens of the United States, who are 21 years of age, or over, shall be eligible as elective members of the Community Council. However, non-citizens may be elected, appointed, or otherwise chosen on committees, boards, or advisory councils to assist in evacuee government, and the plan of government drafted by the Charter Commission may make specific provision for the organization and functions of such non-citizen groups."

It is unlikely that the revision of Administrative Instruction No. 34 will permit the election of non-citizens to the Community Council.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ D. S. Myer
Director

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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

Washington

April 13, 1943

To: All Project Directors

From: Solon T. Kimball, Community Organization Advisor

The question of payment of members of the Community Council has been raised by a number of Project Directors. Present policy is to consider Council membership as an honorary position with the incumbents given freedom from their regular duties for Council affairs. This policy has been based on the belief that the Council should be considered as a public service and that to establish Council positions as regular jobs would create political plums with all the possible attendant evils. It is recognized, however, that the work of Community Government is of sufficient importance for the employment of qualified non-Council members on a full time basis. The number of such employees has been left to the discretion of the Project Director.

Councils have been in operation on most projects for a sufficient time to evaluate the wisdom of present policy. The questions on the attached sheet have been prepared to secure the experience and judgment of the projects on this problem. Some of these questions may not be applicable to your project and if so please indicate.

/s/ Solon T. Kimball

Attachment

1. How many members on your Council?
2. Which of these are being paid as Council members?
What are their titles and duties?
3. What non-Council evacuees are now employed in Community Government work and what are their duties and rates of pay?
4. How many members on the Judicial Commission?
5. How many of these are now being paid for this work?
6. How much time do Council officers devote exclusively to Community Government affairs?
What are their duties?
7. How much time do other Council members devote to Community affairs?
What are their duties in addition to attending Council meetings?
8. Have the duties of officers or the members of the Executive Committee of the Council been sufficiently time consuming to justify establishing full time positions?
9. What is your recommendation regarding the establishment of regular paid positions for:
 - a. All Council members?
 - b. Officers of the Council?
 - c. Members of the Executive Committee?
 - d. Members of the Judicial Commission?

Memo to: E. M. Rowalt

From: Solon T. Kimball

4-15-43

I have read rather carefully the statements prepared by staff members and evacuees at Minidoka on the subject of Community Government and submitted recently to this office. These individual statements contain pertinent material to our present quandary regarding the release of the revision of Administrative Instruction No. 34, allowing non-citizens to hold office. For your information I have abstracted portions which are specifically concerned with this problem.

Philip Schafer, Assitant Project Director

Enough space has been devoted to the questions relating to the cleavage between the Issei and the Nisei so that I need not add any further comments, however, because we frankly were opposed to such a condition, wherein a minor quarter of the population could dominate the whole and in view of the fact that Washington was adamant in their position on this matter, we frankly felt unwise to proceed.

George L. Townsend, Chief, Community Activities

Even before all residents had arrived from the assembly centers we held discussions with avrious representative groups on how to proceed best in organizing community government within the limitations of Administrative Instruction 34. In those early discussions there was pointed out repeatedly the seeming injustice of an order which would deny to the majority of adults a direct voice in the government of the Center.

It is my belief that, although the stipulation in Administrative Instruction 34 restricting elected office to Nisei would receive hearty approval from most citizens of the United States, such a proposal

is bucking up against a Japanese cultural pattern that will lead to disunity, if not an actual open break, if pressed into practice.

At the Denver meeting, which Mr. Schafer and I attended, the consensus of opinion of those present was that the restriction holding membership on the council to the Nisei was wrong. I detected what I think was an attempt at "face saving" in not changing a policy which nearly all agreed was wrong. If this assumption be true, then I feel more justified than ever in the position taken at this Project.

A part of the two main objectives promulgated at the San Francisco policy meeting last fall read, "To mobilize for assistance in Project administration the active support and sanction of the entire body of evacuees." The underscoring is mine. With the restrictions of membership on the council previously discussed, how can the entire body be represented? Factors in the whole cultural situation, accentuated by shocks and attitudes inherent in evacuation, makes such sanctions impossible without direct participation by the Issei.

R. Sprinkel, Sr. Administrative Officer

This office has been uniformly opposed to the idea of restricting membership in office to citizens simply because such a restriction would destroy, in this community, the basic concept of democratic government as it would deny the participation of the community's most valuable men, the men who have contributed most to Minidoka's trouble-free record. This office has been very hopeful that the correction of this very obvious fault in the community government structure would be forthcoming from Washington.

Carl V. Sandoz, Head Counselor

To my mind, the form of government provided for by present WRA policy will, however, create more problems than it will solve. Limiting office holders to niseis may be good in theory, but it is basically unsound in practice because it is at cross purposes with the cultural pattern of the people. It is not necessary for me to point out to you that this culture puts great stress on the dominance of the aged, and that the average issei has little faith in the judgment of the average nisei on such matters as government. This situation may be undesirable but we must recognize that it exists and that it will continue to exist long after the duration. To ignore this fact is to invite disaster. I don't know what the answer is but I think that we should accept the fact that this is not a normal community and allow the non-citizens to hold office.

Briefly, my opinion on community government is this: Some recognized organization should be established to serve primarily as a channel of communication between the people and the administration. Whether or not it would be a policy forming or an advisory body is not of fundamental importance. It is important that all residents should be eligible to hold office. This is basic.

R. A. Pomeroy, Superintendent of Education

As matters stand, we have even limited the rights of suffrage to the American born. Such an arrangement in itself is almost certain prophecy of failure. We presume to set up the rules of government in this fashion for a race in which the elders have traditionally been reversed as the true leaders. How can we expect such a radical right about face?

Jerome T. Light, High School Principal

We have felt that every time we approach a situation which called for apparent discrimination against the Issei that there arose a feeling of tension. We have been very careful to take into account this aspect of the Japanese cultural pattern and feel that it has saved us a great deal of trouble. The establishment of community government on the basis of the present regulations would tend to negate our efforts in this respect. We would be very reluctant to establish any community government which would violate this very important psychological factor in the mental and emotional makeup of the colonists.

If the regulations concerning community government were to be revised in this respect, we would then favor the establishment of community government.

Howard Mann

It is my understanding that the proposed charter restricts elective positions to citizens only. This provision is definitely against all basic democratic principles including that set forth at the San Francisco meeting "to mobilize for assistance in the project administration the active support and sanction of the ENTIRE BODY of evacuees.....".

R. S. Davidson, Chief, Agriculture Division

THE respect of the young people for their parents is a Japanese tradition. Likewise family solidarity has been the controlling influence upon its younger members. Community self-government as prescribed under WRA regulations violates that respect for elders, breaks that family tie, and fails to recognize the traditional leadership and responsibility of older men.

The Nisei are expected to leave the Project under the present relocation program. The Issei who remain are not granted equal rights and privileges under the present policy. The prospects for a permanent, efficient community government appear to be not very bright.

Earl Ingham, Superintendent, Consumers' Cooperative

We believe that one of the points in the charter that would be a focal point of trouble would be the exclusion of Issei from legal participation. We feel that an equal opportunity must be given for all the people to play a somewhat similar role in this community as they would be in their local communities prior to evacuation. Would it be possible to take this into consideration in the charter?

L. M. Neher, M.C., Principal Medical Officer

While self government at the present time would consist of governing of the total, by a majority of the majority, as relocation progresses, it would tend to become a government of the whole, by a majority of a minority.

Dick T. Kanaya, A member of Charter Commission

There are the dangers if the Community Government is set up. It will create friction among the younger generation for a struggle to attain powers and also conflicts will probably arise between the Issei and the Nissei groups. Another possibility is abuse of powers by the elected persons.

J. Yukawa, A Charter Commission member

First of all, here is a question which should be analyzed with care. That is the cause of the troubles between aliens and citizens in the evacuee project. As far as my knowledge is concerned, it is axiomatically

clear that within the evacuee project everybody regardless of his nationality, ought to be all the same in right and duty as well. It is, however, incontrovertible that the unfairness in treatment is induced from the instruction #34 which seems to me to be undemocratic. I should say, therefore, that the discrimination of treatment in the political circle of self-government is the powerful incentive to sow dissention among the residents. The psychological phenomena created therefrom appear on everything, and upon the establishment of evacuee government with such political discrimination, our project would never be happy.

Roy Ichizo Akiyama, Member fo Government Charter Commission

It is my opinion that so long as the Issei are barred from all elective offices, no plan of so-called self-government should be put into effect here. The result would probably be a repetition of the disorders at Manzanar and Poston. I fell that the real basis of these troubles lies in the exclusion from elective offices of the older men who have experience and tact and in the attempt to place the relatively inexperienced Nisei over them.

If any plan of self-government is to be permitted, the rule excluding the Issei from elective offices should first be eliminated. Unless this is done, I believe any attempt at self-rule would be destined to failure. The alternative is the election of capable individuals, both Issei and Nisei, to an advisory board.

Kinya Okajima

I have always held and still hold that this is not and cannot be a normal community, as long as we are in the custody of the government. Such being the case, the members of this community should be treated

as one group in the matter of self-government, making no distinction between the nisei, whose citizenship rights are temporarily suspended to a certain degree, and non-citizen Japanese. This viewpoint seems to be in accord with that which the "evacuee government has", as adopted at the policy meetings held at San Francisco, which is mentioned in Director Myer's letter to you, namely, - "To mobilize for assistance, in project administration, the active support....."

John Essene, Superintendent, Community Enterprises

Secondly, what about creation of internal strife? A principal cause of discord has been the ineligibility of aliens to hold office. Our cooperative has granted equal vote and equal eligibility to office to all adults. The result has been to obtain a preponderance of older persons in responsible offices in the coop. Since the elections are free and equal, there is only one conclusion to draw--that the second generation adults are not yet ready for assumption of authority and responsibility.

The structure of the coop organization will permit Second Generation Japanese to take up authority, when they are ready, but not before. I would be inclined to favor community government only on the basis of equal franchise and eligibility to office for all adults.

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Organization Commission for
Community Self-Government
Minidoka Hospital WRA
Hunt, Idaho
April 28, 1943

Mr. Tsune Baba, Chairman
Community Council
Central Utah Project
Topaz, Utah

Dear Mr. Baba:

Thank you for your very fine letter. There is no community government as in other centers inaugurated at the Minidoka Relocation Project. The organization commission for Community Self-government is at present acting as a temporary body. Mr. Townsend, chief of the Community Activities, has brought your letter to our attention.

The Organization Commission is in full sympathy with the views expressed by your council members. We shall endeavor to cooperate in every way to facilitate such a conference as proposed by your council. A movement to bring about coordination and cooperation among all the centers in order to uniformly guide our future destiny is indeed something which concerns each one of us regardless of the project wherein we reside.

The Organization Commission of the Minidoka Relocation Center will endeavor in every way to make this proposed conference a reality in the immediate future.

Cordially yours,

George T. Tani, Secretary
Organization Commission

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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

Washington

To: All Project Directors

Pending revision of Administrative Instruction No. 34, Section III-B may be interpreted to read as follows:

"Only citizens of the United States, who are 21 years of age, or over, shall be eligible as elective members of the Community Council. However, non-citizens may be elected, appointed, or otherwise chosen on committees, boards, or advisory councils to assist in evacuee government, and the plan of government drafted by the Charter Commission may make specific provision for the organization and functions of such non-citizen groups."

It is unlikely that the revision of Administrative Instruction No. 34 will permit the election of non-citizens to the Community Council.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ D. S. Myer
Director

July 5, 1943

TO:

After discussing the recent elections with representatives of the community, I have come to the conclusion that the residents did not fully understand the provisions of the proposed charter. It seems to me that some form of representative counseling with the Administration is necessary for the well-being of the Project. I have asked the Organization Commission to continue in their former function of preparing a form of representative council that will be accepted by the residents. Since the original Congress of Delegates dissolved on June 23, it will be necessary to elect a new body to serve as a Congress to approve a revised charter.

I am asking you to act as special election chairman in your block to elect a new block representative. It has been decided that only one block delegate will be elected from each block. As special election chairman of your block, will you call a block meeting on Friday night, July 9, for the purpose of electing this delegate. The name of the elected delegate should then be sent to the Organization Commission secretary, Mr. Dick Kanaya, through my office.

Sincerely,

H. L. Stafford
Project Director

TELETYPE

CONF CALL TO

WASHINGTON D C
AUGUST 27, 1943

H L STAFFORD
MINIDOKA PROJECT
HUNT IDAHO

C F ERNST
CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ UTAH

SECTION 60.4.3B OF THE HANDBOOK ON LE VE HAS BEEN AMENDED TO PROVIDE THAT PROJECT DIRECTORS ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO GRANT INDEFINITE LEAVE IN ADVANCE OF LE VE CLERRANCE TO MALE U S CITIZENS WHO HAVE RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1935 AND WHO HAVE LIVED TEN YEARS OR MORE IN JAPAN AFTER THE AGE OF SIX, OR HAVE RECEIVED ALL OR MOST OF THEIR FORMAL EDUCATION IN JAPAN, OR HAVE HAD FORMAL EDUCATION IN JAPAN AFTER THE AGE OF FIFTEEN. SPECIAL ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PERSONS IN THE ABOVE CATEGOR-TIES OF ALL OR MOST OF THEIR RELATIVES ARE NOW IN JAPAN. IF PERSONS WHO FALL INTO ONE OR MORE OF THESE CATEGORIES WISH TO OBTAIN INDEFINITE OR SEASONAL LEAVE AND YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED A DOCKET FROM THIS OFFICE UNDER SECTION 60.10 FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION, SEND US THEIR NAMES BY TELETYPE AND THE DOCKETS WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU FOR HEARING.

D S MEYER

COPY

TELETYPE

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H. L. STAFFORD
PROJECT DIRECTOR
MINIDOKA RELOCATION CENTER
HUNT, IDAHO

WASHINGTON, D. C.
SEPTEMBER 2, 1943

TELETYPE DATED AUGUST 27 WITH REFERENCE TO AMENDMENT OF HANDBOOK ON LEAVE WAS NOT CLEAR AND IS HEREBY RESTATED AS FOLLOWS: SECTION 60.4.3B OF THE HANDBOOK ON LEAVE HAS BEEN AMENDED TO PROVIDE THAT PROJECT DIRECTORS ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO GRANT INDEFINITE LEAVE IN ADVANCE OF LEAVE CLEARANCE TO UNITED STATES MALE CITIZENS WHO HAVE RETURNED FROM JAPAN TO THE UNITED STATES SINCE JANUARY 1, 1935, IF THEY HAVE LIVED IN JAPAN FOR TEN YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE AGE OF SIX OR IF THEY HAVE RECEIVED ALL OR MOST OF THEIR FORMAL EDUCATION IN JAPAN OR IF THEY HAVE HAD FORMAL EDUCATION IN JAPAN AFTER THE AGE OF FIFTEEN. WHEN CONDUCTING LEAVE CLEARANCE HE RINGS SPECIAL ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PERSONS IN ABOVE CATEGORIES IF ALL OR MOST OF THEIR RELATIVES ARE IN JAPAN. IF PERSONS WHO FALL INTO ONE OR MORE OF THESE CATEGORIES WISH TO OBTAIN INDEFINITE OR SEAS NAL LEAVE AND YOU HAVENOT RECEIVED A DOCKET FROM THIS OFFICE UNDER SECTION 60.10 FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION, SEND US THEIR NAMES BY TELETYPE AND THE DOCKETS WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU FOR HEARING.

POMEROY
CC: STAFFORD
CC: BEESON
CC: MCLAUGHLIN
CC: FEATHERSTON

D. S. MEYER
9/2/43