

E2.513

67/14
c

THE HISTORY
OF
COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

Prepared by
Solon T. Kimball
Head, Section of Community Organization and Activities

August 1945

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Chapter I The Early History of Policy for Community Government

- A. Legal Limitations and the First Policy Statement
- B. Washington and San Francisco Proposals

Chapter II Problems of Community Government

- A. The Social Setting
- B. Disorganization and the Beginning of Organization
- C. Block Organization
- D. The Early History of Community Government
- E. Temporary Community Councils
- F. The Organization Commission

Chapter III Uncertainties and Confusions

- A. Evacuee Reaction to Community Government Policy
- B. The First Crises
 - 1. The Poston Strike
 - 2. The Manzanar Riot
- C. Administration Attitudes toward Community Government Policy

Chapter IV The Troubled Period

- A. Registration
- B. Misgivings in Washington
- C. The Proponents
- D. Attitudes of Project Staffs
- E. Extending Representation to the Issei

Chapter V The Way Ahead

- A. Segregation
- B. The Policy of Relocation
- C. The Abortive Evacuee Conference
- D. Selective Service and the Councils

Chapter VI Community Government and Community Organization

- A. The "Administration"
- B. The "Council"
- C. The "Official Functions"
- D. The Techniques of Action
- E. Community Participation Through Community Government

Chapter VII Community Government and the Future of the
Japanese in America

- A. The "All-Center Conference"
- B. Post-Conference Activity.

INTRODUCTION

The attack on Pearl Harbor by Japanese forces on the fateful day of December 7, 1941, initiated a chain of events that will have a profound effect on world history. That we all know. As we follow the course of the ensuing war and the triumph of our advancing military forces, we may be forgetful or remain uninformed of the effect of this great crisis on specific areas of our country or segments of our population.

The treatment of the 127,000 persons of Japanese ancestry in the United States has posed particularly difficult problems for us. War did not create these problems; it merely threw them into bold relief. War did not change for most, our beliefs, attitudes and prejudices, toward these and other peoples; it crystallized and intensified them. We have been brought face to face with the paradox of the ideals of American democracy in conflict with practice.

If war brings to a crisis our relations with our cultural and ethnic minorities, it creates equally great stresses within the minority group itself. Individuals become intensely sensitive to the attitudes and treatment to which they are subject. They are forced to examine consciously or unconsciously their sentiments and loyalties, and to resolve their indecisions and conflicts. Since we have been at war with Japan, these conflicts have become doubly deep, because they involve ties of homeland, culture, and race.

The Japanese-Americans, since Pearl Harbor, have been subject to external and internal pressures and demands for affirmations of their loyalty or disloyalty, more intense and inclusive than have ever been exerted on any other minority. The kind, magnitude, and effect of these pressures form a chapter in the history of minority peoples that is unparalleled.

The authorities decided that military necessity demanded the removal of all persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast. On February 19, 1942, Executive Order No. 9068 was issued by President Roosevelt which authorized the evacuation and exclusion of persons from military areas designated by the Secretary of War and the Military Commanders. On March 2, General DeWitt of the Western Defense Command established Military Areas Nos. 1 and 2. Between February 19 and March 27, the Japanese were free to leave the exclusion area and 10,231 left Military Area No. 1. Of this number 4,825 moved into Area No. 2 which at that time had not been scheduled for evacuation. Those who thus voluntarily evacuated met with some unpleasantness, and it soon became apparent that an uncontrolled movement would create confusion, hardship, and possibly trouble. The decision was reached that the evacuation must be regulated. It was decided that centers should be constructed to receive the evacuees, and the administration of the centers should be the responsibility of a civilian agency.

On March 18, the President issued Executive Order No. 9102 which created the War Relocation Authority. This

was to be the civilian agency which received the responsibility for care and administration of the evacuees received from the Army. "By terms of the Order, the Authority is responsible for: (1) aiding the Army in carrying out the evacuation of military areas, (2) developing and supervising a planned, orderly program of relocation for evacuees, (3) providing evacuees with work opportunities so that they may contribute to their own maintenance and to the national production program, and (4) protecting evacuees from harm in the areas where they are relocated. The first specific task of the Authority is to resettle some 100,000 alien and American-born Japanese evacuated from military areas of the far western states."¹

Location and construction of these centers began immediately with two each placed in the States of Arkansas, California, and Arizona, and one each in the States of Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado. On March 27 an order was issued which prohibited all persons of Japanese ancestry from leaving these areas. This was followed by a series of 108 separate orders issued by General DeWitt which ordered the removal of all Japanese from Military Areas No. 1 and No. 2. The exclusion area included all of California, the western half of Washington and Oregon, and southern Arizona. Most of the persons of Japanese ancestry were originally transferred to assembly centers, and from there were gradually funneled to relocation centers as they were constructed. By June 5, the removal had been accomplished for Area No. 1, and by August 7, for Area No. 2

1 (Eisenhower policy statement of May 29.)

Movement to the Relocation Centers began in May 1942, and by November 1 of that year, the last of the 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry had been placed in the centers. The evacuation included everyone except the handful who were in corrective or other institutions.

Evacuation was an orderly process. Many public and private civilian agencies cooperated with the Army and with the Japanese to look after and care for their interests. The Japanese themselves gave full cooperation which prompted the statement from Secretary of War Stimson that "great credit is due our Japanese population for the manner in which they responded to and complied with the orders for exclusion". The speed with which evacuation was decided upon and carried out, made it necessary for the Japanese to make hurried arrangements for the sale or lease of their property, and some liquidated all their possessions, selling houses, businesses, farms, and furniture. Where such haste was required it is obvious that not all these transactions were advantageous, and the memory of property losses stings deeply.

The relocation centers to which the Japanese were sent were similar in construction and plan. The buildings were frame covered with black tar paper, arranged in blocks designed to house from 250 to 300 persons. Each block contained fourteen single story barracks, divided into four or six apartments, a mess hall, a recreation hall, men's and women's latrines, and a laundry room. The number of blocks in a camp depended on its size. Manzanar in California, with a peak population of over 10,000 had 36 blocks. Additional construction included

a frame hospital and auxiliary buildings, offices, living quarters for the administrative staff, and utility buildings for warehouses, garages, construction, industry and agriculture. The school buildings which were built later usually included a combination gymnasium-auditorium and classrooms for the high school. The elementary school students were in several projects housed in blocks vacated by residents.

The administrative responsibility for each center was given to a non-Japanese civilian staff. These included a project director and his three assistants in operations, administrative management, and community management, a reports officer and an attorney. The community management division included education, health, recreation, internal security, family welfare, community analysis, and community government. The operations division was responsible for construction, maintenance, roads, utilities, agriculture, and industry. Administrative management provided the services of procurement, accounting and budgeting, employment, mess operations, etc.

The early policy of the War Relocation Authority was based on the assumption that the relocation centers would be war duration homes for most of the evacuees, or until military necessity no longer excluded them from the West Coast. It was the hope that through agriculture and industry these communities would become nearly self-supporting, and that there would be a measurable degree of local government.

Based on this assumption, the early policy was directed toward the creation of self-contained economic and social units.

The economic development would include the production of agricultural products not only for internal consumption, but also for distribution through regular market channels, and the establishment of factories that would engage entirely in war production. The necessary social services would be provided largely through recruitment from the evacuees. The hospitals, schools, police, fire, maintenance, and other activities would be largely Japanese staffed and directed.

Recognition of the need for community government was demonstrated as early as April 2 in a memorandum which stated, "It is proposed to develop immediately a system of internal government which will place upon the evacuees responsibility for the civic management of the colony and to organize health, education, recreation and other community service using Japanese personnel as far as possible."²

These general objectives and policies were expressed in several documents. The May 29 policy statement read, "The objective of the program is to provide, for the duration of the war and as nearly as wartime exigencies permit, an equitable substitute for the life, work, and homes given up, and to facilitate participation in the productive life of America both during and after the war." Further illumination is provided by an additional statement which read: "In the last analysis, each relocation community will be approximately what the evacuees choose to make it. The standards of living and the quality of community life will depend on their initiative, resourcefulness, and skill. Initially, the government will provide the minimum essentials of living-shelter, medical

care, and mess and sanitary facilities --together with work opportunities for self-support." Administrative responsibility would extend to include work-projects, economical use of labor, employment outside the project on a voluntary basis, a health and education program, and maintenance of law and order.

This policy also envisaged the establishment of a permanent form of community government preceded by an advisory temporary organization. The functions of self-government included the assumption of responsibility for internal security, and the care of dependent children and adults after the project had reached a reasonably self-supporting basis.

Subsequent policy history of the War Relocation Authority diverged from the basic philosophical scheme which was tentatively developed in the earlier thinking and policy statements. The objective of self-supporting, self-governing communities with a sound economic base was realized in only a limited manner and within a different policy and philosophy.

Many factors contributed to the divergence from the original policy. The pressure of vested economic groups to prohibit the production for market of food or the establishment of competing industries, eliminated the possibility for self-supporting communities. To this should be added the insistent pressures of labor-hungry employers from agricultural areas who saw the relocation centers as labor pools to be tapped when needed. The limited industrial program finally decided upon included agricultural production for evacuee use

only, and a short-lived camouflage net project at three centers.

The failure to achieve economic self-sufficiency contributed to a shift in the direction of the program and had an adverse effect on the extension of responsibility in other areas of community life to the evacuees. The only activity in which nearly complete community responsibility was achieved was in the purchasing and distribution of consumer goods and services through cooperatively organized and managed business enterprises. Community government became in actuality an adjunct of administration. Recreation and cultural activities were partly financed, almost entirely supervised and regulated by a non-evacuee staff. The other community services became an adjunct of a managerial hierarchy with policy and supervision arising from outside the relocation center community. It is true that many of the workers were drawn from the community, but the control rested in what came to be known as the "appointed staff." This managerial-administrative combination was established in practice and policy early in the history of actual center management and was never relaxed during the Authority's history.

The result of such managerial control was the institutionalization of the people with almost complete dependence upon the controlling system for food, transportation, employment, housing, clothing, education, health, law enforcement, fire protection, maintenance, etc.

The managerial philosophy was one in which policy decisions were made by the top administrators, implemented by procedures

developed by a staff, and carried into effect by paid employees working as an administrative organization at the centers. These policy decisions were made on the basis of the larger objectives of the top administrative group, and modified by responses to congressional and other governmental pressures and exigencies. As such, they had no inherent relation to the needs and aspirations of the evacuees as defined by them. Although many decisions were undoubtedly related to perceived needs, no provision was made on the level of policy determination for the participation and advice of the evacuees in their formulation. The structure that was created to provide evacuee advice and assistance in execution of the policies operated only at the level of the project and in a limited and circumscribed manner. Managerial administration thus provided the prevailing environment within which the economic, cultural, and political activity and expressions of the evacuees had to grow. The result was, of course, a rather widespread and efficient institutionalization of the population.

It has not been our purpose here to examine the whole of W. R. A.'s history and growth, but it has been necessary to sketch the developmental beginnings in order to place the function and policy of community government within a meaningful framework.

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY HISTORY OF POLICY FOR COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

Reference has been made in the Introduction to concepts of community government as they were related to a developing policy of self-supporting and self-governing communities. It is a matter of history that this early direction of policy thinking was never realized, and in its place came a managerially conceived administration. It was inevitable that the type of community government which arose in this environment should be a function of it. The trend toward a narrow limitation of evacuee authority in self-government became evident early in policy discussions and probably was part of a similar trend appearing in other phases of the War Relocation Authority program.

Contributing to the rather narrow framework with which community government was officially conceived were such factors as the absence of precedent, legal and political considerations, uncertainties of the situation, and the dominating influence of managerial philosophy. The attempt to secure a pattern for relocation center management from two American communities under Federal jurisdiction, the town of Norris in the Tennessee Valley and Boulder City in Nevada, proved fruitless since the situations were different and there was no comprehensive legal or political statement of policy for these communities. The experience of Farm Security Administration or other government agencies where some degree of autonomous control had been practiced was not readily available for application in the new war-borne communities.

A. Legal Limitations and the First Policy Statement

Legal considerations were dominating factors, not only to community government policy, but in the whole area of action possible to the Authority itself. The following statement by the Solicitor of the Authority on April 27, 1942, in San Francisco sets forth the legal basis under which policy would need to be formulated.

"The Legal Framework of Project Self-Government

"It is obviously impracticable to use existing state laws for the creation of local governmental units in the relocation centers, primarily because if cities were organized under state laws, the elected

officers would have complete control over city government and would have powers inconsistent with the administration of the project by the Federal Government. It is nevertheless possible to set up a procedure under which a 'mayor', a 'city council', and 'courts' can be established within the relocation centers with much the same functions as they would have under the regular city form of government. In legal theory the Project Manager would merely delegate certain of his administrative functions to persons designated by election or otherwise by the Japanese. He would retain in that manner such degree of control or veto power as might be necessary for him to discharge his responsibility.

"The WRA through the Project Manager could create a form of criminal court within each relocation center which would operate in the same manner as a city police court in trying petty offenses and other actions prohibited by 'ordinances' of the city council. This mechanism would be nothing more than an expression of the function of the Project Manager to maintain law and order, delegated to a body operating as a 'criminal court'. It will probably be advisable in the case of major offenses such as aggravated assault, murder, and rape, to bring the Japanese involved before the appropriate state or federal court.

"With respect to civil disputes between the Japanese at the center, an arbitration court procedure can be set up under which parties may bring their disputes before somebody appointed by the Project Manager or elected by the Japanese. In the event one of the parties refuses to submit to this type of arbitration, the Project Manager could probably require an administrative hearing before him. In other cases, it might be desirable to require the Japanese to go into the state courts to settle their difficulties. In some cases it will be necessary to have recourse to state courts. The WRA cannot create courts with the power, for example, to grant divorces, appoint legal guardians, or probate wills."

During May, the Solicitor's Office was busy on a document entitled, "Regulations Concerning Organization of Self-Government Within Assembly Centers and Relocation Centers." This was, in essence, a plan for the organization of a Municipal Council, the election of a mayor, and a statement of their functions, together with plans for the procedures of governments, the establishment of a municipal court, the operation of the court, and a list of punishable offenses. It also provided for the appointment of an evacuee Chief of Police by the Mayor and the organization of a Police Department under the supervision of the Chief of Police. Although this document was prepared for the signature of the Director, after its review by a number of people in and out of the Authority,

it was deemed to be over-elaborate, prejudged the problem and precluded evacuee self-determination. It was never issued.

The earliest official statement on community government was made in the Director's policy statement of May 29. This statement was elaborated in the memorandum of June 5, and as elaborated provided for the election of a Temporary Council as an advisory group to the Project Director. It also provided for the selection of the chairman and other officers and the appointment of an executive committee and a judicial committee. Voting was extended to all but only those who were citizens of the United States and twenty-one years of age or over were eligible to hold office.

The decision limiting elective office to citizens provoked much discussion among both the officials of the Authority and the evacuees. Since it was also included in the later policy statement of August 24, it is useful to examine the official thinking for this limitation. The position taken by the Solicitor's Office and supported by several other staff members in the Washington office, was, that since the objective of the Authority was to create a community as nearly American in its outlook and organization as possible, policy should conform with American practice, and only citizens should be allowed to vote and hold office. Those who were concerned with the problem from the point of view of public relations and possible criticisms of the program, maintained that it would be unwise to establish communities in which there was a likelihood that the governing Council would be controlled by aliens. They pointed out that control might pass to those who were not in sympathy with the objectives of the Authority or with the objectives of the war effort.

It was further pointed out that the evacuation of citizens from the West Coast was of doubtful constitutionality and had certainly created grave doubts in the minds of many Niseis as to their rights under the American constitution. Those taking this position argued that it was desirable to give some added recognition to the citizens beyond that extended to aliens to indicate to them that the Federal Government was cognizant of their status. A policy which provided that only citizens be eligible for voting and holding office would accomplish this. This point-of-view was advanced by the representatives of the Japanese American Citizens League who were at that time in consultation with officials of the War Relocation Authority.

There were, however, some who maintained that there should be no distinction made between citizens and aliens in participation in self-government. The proponents of this view stated that it would be practically impossible and certainly undesirable to make any distinction in the residents of the community if we were to achieve an organized and integrated society with full participation of its adult members. It was also

pointed out that the wisdom and experience of the elder evacuees, almost all of whom were aliens, would be denied not only to the project manager but also to the community itself. The precedent was cited of local elections for school board members and other minor officials where it was the practice to permit persons who were aliens to participate as electors. From these opposing viewpoints came the compromise which provided that all adults would be eligible to vote, but that only citizens could hold office.

The period between June 5 and August 24 when a final statement of policy on community government was signed by the Director provided an opportunity for further consideration of the role of community government and an examination of the functioning of the recently established temporary councils at three centers. It was a period in which interest in self-government was overshadowed by concern with policies of immediate concern in the fields of operation, maintenance, and supply.

B. Washington and San Francisco Proposals

In July 1942, there was added to the Washington staff, Dr. Charles M. Kneier, a recognized consultant on municipal organization. His approach included the definition of legal limitations, the relation to other policy consideration, and the application of his extensive knowledge of the mechanics of the organization and functioning of municipal government to the problem at hand. The extent to which the Authority could or would confer power to an evacuee self-government was basic as he expressed it in a memorandum of July 22.

"The degree of power to be conferred upon the evacuees living in relocation centers is at the heart of the self-government problem and presents many difficulties. The advantages of self-government in the centers must, it is assumed, be balanced with the responsibility of the Authority in their efficient and effective administration. Some limits must be placed upon the power of the Centers to determine policies. In the actual administration of the Centers, it would appear to be desirable and necessary to limit the degree of self-government. Illustrative of this field where self-government would not be feasible would be control over the non-evacuees administrative personnel, purchasing of materials, and type of streets and methods of construction."

Dr. Kneier offered two alternative proposals defining the scope of authority conferred upon a self-governing body. The first provided for the enactment of regulations and penalties, the settling of disputes, passing resolutions, and for assessments on residents, "but only for the purpose of raising revenue for the support of education, recreation, health, and such purposes as will directly promote the welfare of the residents of the centers." Veto authority for regulations was retained by the Director and all assessments required the approval of the Project Director. The second proposal included all of the powers enumerated in the first, but was stated in more general terms.

Consideration was recommended for a plan to provide for participation of the evacuees in selecting personnel who would be employed to administer the policies established by the governing body. Accepting that WRA would retain the decision for certain positions filled by evacuees, participation by the Council was suggested in selection of candidates for the remainder of the positions. This recommendation was to be accomplished by the creation of a Civil Service Commission made up of representatives of both staff and evacuees. The Commission would classify positions or recommend their classification to the Council together with an examination to determine qualifications of applicants. The Commission would also certify eligibility lists to fill vacant positions, with the proviso that final power remain with the Authority. Dr. Kneier also recognized the need for a court system, to apply penalties for violation of Council regulations and to provide machinery for the adjudication of civil cases not falling under the jurisdiction of state laws.

carefully
A final point, indicated to be used as a basis for discussion and not as a recommendation, was to provide machinery by which the Community Council would advise with the Project Director on the preparation of an operating budget. Under such provision, if adopted, the Council would hold public hearings and submit written suggestions to the Project Director, with the understanding that Council action was to be advisory only and final decision rested with the Authority.

Another expression of thinking on community government policy was found in a "Supplemental Policy Statement on Project Government" prepared in the San Francisco Office and transmitted to the Washington Office on July 20. This statement defined the broad objectives and general principles which were absent from the June 5 policy. It was prepared in response to the need for immediate clarification of policy at the centers. This need was expressed by Project Directors who were striving to bring some order into the confused conditions existing at the centers. Two paragraphs of this statement are indicative of the continuing movement for a broad definition of the functions and responsibilities of self-government, including the measurement of the

success of project administration as a corollary of delegation of responsibility.

"A community government shall have as its objectives the training of residents of the community in the democratic principles of civic participation and responsibility; it shall assume the responsibility for the regulation of community life; it shall assume much of the responsibility for the formulation of policy and administrative direction of services and supply.

"During the initial stages of settlement and community organization, it is recognized that the inexperience of the colonists and the exigencies of the administrative situation prohibit any broad delegation of authority. However, the success of project administration should be considered a direct expression of the delegation by the Project Director and the assumption by the community of the responsibilities of self-government."

Action by the Washington Office on this recommendation was deferred because of the decision to hold a general policy meeting in San Francisco in early August, at which time policy on community government would be considered. It was also decided that interested members of the Washington staff would visit the centers to gain first-hand knowledge to aid in policy determination.

Previous to the August policy conferences in San Francisco, a tentative policy statement offers further illumination of early thinking. It recognized the complete authority of the Project Director for problems of project management and operation, which included authority to delegate responsibilities to an evacuee governing body. It set as its objective the delegation of power to a center government commensurate with that exercised by an American municipality of approximately the same size. The objective of community government would be to secure, under democratic methods, civic participation and responsibility in community life. It would have an advisory responsibility for the formulation of policy and administrative direction of services and supplies. A permanent group would be preceded by a temporary council and the preparation of a "constitution" describing the organization and function of community government.

"The Constitution shall contain the procedures for the organization of a permanent Council, the powers and duties of the Council, the procedures for the establishment of associated administrative and planning groups; and the powers, duties, and

relationships of these associated groups." The only limitations were that it should be democratic in form, should not place restrictions on civil liberties with the exception of the prohibition of the publication or distribution of materials in the Japanese language and/or use of the Japanese language at the discretion of the Project Director.

These functions delegated to the Council would include the enactment of ordinances together with punishments, assessment of consumer enterprises, the expending of monies, the regulation of property and buildings constructed from community funds, regulation of activities of religious groups, the appointment of a permanent staff for the Council and administrative responsibility upon delegation by the Project Director for block administration, Police Department, Fire Department, Maintenance and Repair, Streets and Parks, Courts, Legal Aid Council, Public Welfare, Libraries and Housing. The Council would also act in an advisory capacity in the preparation of the annual budget and in the development of policy and administration in the programs of education, health, employment, community enterprises, and in other ways as the Project Director might indicate. Other portions of this policy statement included plans for the establishment of commissions, boards, and committees and an over-all Civic Planning Commission with details governing the establishing of a temporary Community Council.

C. The Policy Evolved at San Francisco

Policy problems to be considered at the San Francisco conference included education, procurement, welfare, furloughs, health, employment, compensation, consumer enterprises, religion, segregation, food, fiscal, personnel, internal security, public relations, housing, and others in addition to Community Government. Staff members from Washington, San Francisco and the centers faced knotty questions affecting organization and procedures. Preliminary discussions revealed widely divergent attitudes toward basic policy. As issues were clarified and decisions made, the earlier objectives of self-contained and self-supporting communities became subordinated to a new philosophy. The relocation centers were to be primarily temporary havens until it was possible for their residents to establish themselves in new communities or return to their West Coast homes. There were to be created no incentives or symbols that would deter the outward movement. An integral portion of this emerging development was the strengthening of centralized managerial control.

It was perhaps inevitable that any hopes that community government could be a significant and important segment of total policy become an impossibility in this newly defined direction of Authority policy. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that the final policy on community government was cast in a

mould of limitations much greater than had been anticipated in policy or public statements made earlier. A Solicitor's Opinion issued some two months later summarized official thinking in the statement: "...the basic legal concept underlying the contemplated government of relocation centers is that of administrative authority exercised by responsible officials of the War Relocation Authority aided and assisted by the evacuees themselves." Later, in the same document, it was stated:

"Community self-government among the evacuees is not being instituted as an end in itself, even though it is rich in intrinsic values, but is rather a means to the larger and of effective administration of the whole program of the War Relocation Authority. The best way to achieve discipline and order in relocation centers -- an admittedly unique and possibly difficult task -- is what is being sought, and the program offered by Administrative Instruction No. 34 constitutes no Utopian's dream of an ideal government, but rather a practical administrator's attempt to preserve order in a somewhat special type of community. The acts which the Director, by the Instruction, empowers the Community Council to do, are all acts which the Director, under the controlling Executive Order, is himself empowered to do."

The policy on community government was issued August 24 as Administrative Instruction No. 34. It provided that the essential points of the June 5 memorandum for the establishment of temporary Community Councils should continue in operation. It also provided for the establishment of a permanent Community Council. This permanent organization would become effective after the preparation of a plan of government by the evacuees which was then to be approved by a majority of the evacuees. It stipulated that the plan of government should include provisions for the election of a Community Council and the organization of a Judicial Commission. The Council would have authority to prescribe regulations and penalties for offenses of a minor nature. It could pass resolutions, receive and administer funds and property, license business enterprises to an amount not to exceed \$1,000 for any one year, and to exercise such other duties and responsibilities as might be delegated to it.

The Judicial Commission was empowered to hear cases and apply penalties for violation of the law and order regulations of the Community Council. Felonies and civil cases except those subject to arbitration were to be handled by the State or Federal courts. The Project Director retained the right to

set aside any regulation of the Council which he found to be in excess of its functions and to remand to the Judicial Commission for reconsideration any decision which he felt to be inappropriate. The Project Director was also given authority to establish such organization and to promulgate such regulations as he found necessary pending the organization of a formal Community Council under an approved plan of government. The last paragraph of this policy clearly stated that the functions delegated were in addition to and not in substitution for the functions and responsibilities of the Project Director.

Conspicuously absent was the delegation of administrative responsibilities. Earlier tentative considerations to assign responsibility to community government for internal security, fire protection, maintenance, and other services and operations were dropped as possible functions. It is a matter of history that the Authority never relinquished any of its managerial responsibilities in these phases of project life.

The controversial provision that Council membership be limited to citizens remained unchanged although non-citizens were eligible for membership on appointed committees, commissions, boards, and for other administrative positions. The Project Directors of Poston and Tule Lake had expressed satisfaction with the working of the temporary citizen councils. Furthermore, they held no strong beliefs that the exclusion of aliens would seriously hamper the work of community government. At Manzanar, there had been a number of minor disturbances in which Nisei, Kibei and Issei had been involved. The decision by the WCCA to limit membership on Assembly Center Councils to citizens was another influence. The WCCA liaison officer attending the policy meetings on Community Government favored limiting voting privileges as well as office holding to include only citizens.

The policy on community government had one unique distinction. It was the only major policy issued by the Authority which was permissive in character. If, for example, the residents of any particular center should decide either by the rejection of a submitted plan of government or in any other way that they were not desirous of establishing formal community government, there was no direct or implied coercion to force acceptance. Conversely, it was the only policy which required the assent of a majority of the residents before it became operative.

CHAPTER II

PROBLEMS OF COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

A. The Social Setting

government

The problem of community was the problem of the divergent geographic, economic, social, political, educational, and age groups that have plagued all attempts of the Japanese in America to achieve a true community of interest. It was the problem of a racial cultural minority suddenly catapulted from its former adjustment by reason of a world situation. It was a problem of the need for creation of new values and social structure to meet the conditions of a new social and physical environment.

Another difficulty equally insurmountable to the creation of any sort of truly representative self-government was the explicit responsibility of the War Relocation Authority for the administrative direction and policy making function. As long as policy, and as long as administrative direction originated outside the community, without consultation with it, or without regard to its wishes, then self-government (no matter how enlightened or liberal) must remain a truly limited and misnamed activity. Actually, complete autonomy in center management was neither feasible nor contemplated.

The new environment into which the evacuees moved was one of uniformity in housing, food, employment and available services. Not so the people. Their only common meeting ground was that they were all of Japanese ancestry, they had all experienced evacuation, and they were all subject to the same rules and regulations in their present situation. The social and cultural differences within the population were of more significance than were the similarities. The most easily observable difference was that between the older alien generation of parents, most of whom continued to speak their native language with fluency and observed the customs of Japanese culture, and the younger generation of American citizens, almost all of whom used English as their native tongue, and most of whom were American in thought, manners, and action.

There were, however, many differences within each of these two groups, and these were so fundamental that they sometimes led to conflict, and often to misunderstanding. Among the Issei were rich and poor, farmers and city folk, shopkeepers, professional men, and laborers. Some had been educated in this country or in Japan, some had little schooling. There were some who spoke good English, many who spoke only Japanese. There were even a few who spoke a non-Japanese native dialect.

There were those who openly condemned the military machine of Japan, those who lamented that these two countries should be at war, and those who were sympathetic to Japan.

The American born were divided into two major groups. Those who had been educated in this country, with the exception of a few who came from isolated rural areas, were predominantly American in outlook and behavior. These were the Nisei. The Kibei were those who although born in this country had received a considerable portion of their education in Japan, and had subsequently returned to this country to rejoin their families, to secure additional education, for employment, to evade military service in Japan, or for a combination of these reasons.

The Kibei were of especial interest because by and large they were predominantly Japanese in culture and outlook. Careful examination revealed, however, that this group also exhibited significant divergencies. There was no hard and fast correlation between political loyalty, cultural identification, or economic attainment. Politically, they ranged from the few who had assimilated the jingoism of Japanese militarism, to those who were equally vehement in their opposition. The great bulk fell somewhere between.

The Kibei created a particularly difficult problem in the centers. Many of them had no parents in this country. Because they frequently spoke fluent Japanese and little English, and observed Japanese customs they had little in common with their age-mates, the Nisei. Conflict and mutual avoidance between these two groups were widespread before evacuation. The Kibei were neither wholly Japanese nor wholly American in culture. This cultural ambivalence was an advantage among some of the older and wiser Kibei who were able to bridge the gap between Issei and Nisei, and to resolve and reconcile some of the conflicts.

The Nisei were also divided, and their immaturity discriminated against their possessing the confidence of their elders or of others. Although there were 71,900 American born evacuated, only 22,400 were over 21 years of age, and these constituted only one-third of the adult Japanese population. The Japanese-American Citizens League claimed as members many of the Nisei, although there was a group of young intellectuals which was not sympathetic with its program.

In addition to the problems which stemmed directly from evacuation, there were also those problems for which the Japanese in America had themselves been unable to find answers. It would have been difficult to administer a relocation center even without the questions of constitutionality of evacuation, citizenship rights, public antagonism

and many other complicated factors. Many of these questions could not be answered. Nevertheless, they constantly influenced the behavior of the evacuees and the administration.

A report made in late 1942 on the situation existing at one of the centers portrayed some of the crucial problems of this early period.¹

"An immediate problem is that of the conflict between alien Japanese and those who have American citizenship. Relocation (evacuation) has emphasized the conflicting values held by these two groups and the policy which gives control of community government to the citizens is a cause for dissatisfaction and non-participation on the part of some aliens.

"The uncertainties concerning the future expressed by frequent rumors ranging all the way from removal to other relocation centers to repatriation to Japan hinders the creation of a feeling of security and stability and frustrates the incentives for creating a productive and satisfactory community. Many of the more intelligent citizens react to this condition by a desire to leave relocation centers. There are some, especially among the Issei who are willing to wait quietly until the outcome of the war has been decided. If Japan wins they are certain that the future is bright; if Japan loses they will passively accept what fate holds in store for them.

"An additional uncertainty is found in the relationship between the project administrative staff and the evacuees. There has been misinterpretation on the part of some that self-government would eventually mean the complete control of administration by the evacuees. Others believe self-government to be meaningless.

"The failure or inability of formerly responsible persons to assume an active leadership further complicates administration. The attempts of the J. A. C. L. to claim leadership of the evacuees has been almost universally repudiated. This repudiation is based on the belief that the J. A. C. L. leaders were in large measure responsible for the decision to evacuate and that they sacrificed members of their national group for their own selfish interest. This distrust of the J. A. C. L. is held not only by the alien group but also by a large contingent of citizens although for a different reason. The citizens' group feels that it has received ineffective leadership with the failure of this body to take a strong position previous to the war against the Fascist countries.

1 Memorandum to E. R. Fryer by S. T. Kimball

"The alien leaders have failed to take an active part because of the policy of the F. B. I. in detaining the many Issei leaders. They feel that to assume a position of leadership within the project would result in scrutiny and probable arrest and removal by Federal agencies. In some instances they have failed to take a position of leadership because of the reliance of administrative personnel on the younger and more aggressive evacuees. By and large the informal Issei leadership that has developed at Tule Lake has come from persons who are not respected by other members of the community either previous to their evacuation or since. Issei and Nisei who have expressed themselves are in agreement that the so-called agitators and those responsible for administrative difficulties have come from this group.

"An additional problem facing the administration is that of the difficulty of creating a normal community when many external aspects resemble a concentration camp. The presence of troops, guard towers, restrictions on free movement and the imposition of rules and regulations without consultation are all evidences of the fact that evacuees are not free persons.

"A further problem is the need for the occupation of time and interest of all evacuees. Primarily, there is the need for the development of an employment policy which will absorb large groups of persons and give purposeful and productive work relationships. This is necessary if satisfactory community life is to be achieved. If achieved, the result may conflict with the desire to relocate.

"The problem of communication is a serious one. It is complicated by the fact that many evacuees do not speak or understand English. It is hampered by the inability of the channels of communication which have been established to either fully inform the residents of policy and the reasons or for the evacuees to communicate to the administration their wishes and desires.

"Specifically, there is as yet no real understanding of the complicated process by which the administration is able to secure foodstuffs, clothing, building materials and so forth which are needed for the health and comfort of the residents. Lacking such understanding, it is also impossible to appreciate the

difficulties which the administration faces in securing these things or to understand why it is impossible to secure many things which are essential. Whether we like it or not the procedures which we follow to secure food, clothing and other essentials are institutional procedures and verge toward paternalism. The inability of people to have any say in what they do or do not receive and thus in the final analysis to be helpless to control whether they do or do not get what they need must inevitably create insecurity."

B. Disorganization and the Beginning of Organization

Broadly defined, community government was inclusive of more than the Community Council and its associated bodies. It also included Block Councils and Block Managers. The Block Managers as an organized group and with systematic communication with the Administration and the residents was a significant administrative and political factor in community life. It was much later in center history that a more definite separation of managerial and representative functions was achieved.

It is significant that the first organized evacuee group, the Block Managers, was administratively sponsored and supervised. The Block Manager system included an appointed evacuee for each residential block, a coordinator and his staff, all under the supervision of a non-evacuee Civil Service appointee. It was the Block Manager's responsibility to distribute supplies and materials, to maintain records, to conduct censuses, and to perform a myriad of other tasks which had direct relation to the welfare and comfort of the residents of his block. He filled an administrative need for an immediate channel of communication with the residents and for the control of distribution of supplies to the residents of the block. An equally important function was his ability to report to the Administration the needs, problems, and attitudes of the residents of his block and to interpret and make suggestions for meeting problems of a block or community nature. Thus it was that the Block Manager, as an individual and as a member of a group, was in a strategic position in administration - evacuee relations, and filled an immediate and important function in the total plan of project management.

Too much credit cannot be given to the conscientious efforts of the Block Manager to work for the welfare of the residents. Especially in the early period of confusion, his was a twenty-four hour job. If a resident became ill in the middle of the night, he was the one most frequently called to get help. He was often called in as arbitrator for disputes. Organized cooperative efforts to improve block or

community conditions often came from his initiative.

If the managerial and liaison functions of the Block Managers were invaluable to the residents, as an administrative device it was basic to administration. The advice and assistance of this group was frequently sought and was the only major contact between the Administration and the residents in the early period. The fact that the Block Managers frequently found themselves considering problems which were political in nature was not disturbing to the Administration unless those problems were controversial and of a kind the Administration wished to avoid at that moment. On the other hand, the Administration frequently introduced problems of a community or administrative nature at Block Manager meetings for the purpose of securing advice.

The organization and function of the Block Manager system was significant not only as an administrative device, but also in relation to the development of community government. It was of great importance in quickly developing block cohesion. It also contributed to the early development of block loyalties as opposed to community loyalties and to a response to problems based on block needs in distinction to community needs. As an example, the Block Managers at Poston were concerned, as they were at several other centers, with the inadequate health facilities which the earliest evacuees found. This concern was transmitted to the Administration, but it was not until the temporary Community Council was organized that there was a concerted effort to investigate conditions and to make specific recommendations to the Administration.

At most projects, by the time that efforts were directed toward establishing either a temporary or permanent community government, the Block Managers were well-organized with clearly defined responsibilities and functions standing in high favor with both evacuees and the Administration. It is not surprising that when discussion on establishing a political body to be known as the Community Council was initiated, many people favored the status quo. It is also not surprising that the Block Managers, in some instances, expressed opposition to the formation of a group which threatened the position of prestige and status which they held both in the eyes of the Administration and of the residents. Many of the administrative personnel expressed similar opinions and were quite willing to continue with an organization which was responsive to their needs and at the same time not unduly critical of existing conditions.

C. Block Organization

A second development of considerable importance affecting the future of community government were block organizations frequently called Block Councils. These existed at all centers in one form or another. The basis of organization, the function, and the history has varied widely from block to block and from center to center. Gila River is the only project where the formation of the Block Council was encouraged by the Administration as the first and most important step in community organization. There, the Project Director or his representative appeared at a mass meeting of each newly occupied block, and in addition to discussing general policies and problems, outlined a plan for block organization. The plan as conceived at Gila River included a Block Council to be composed of one representative elected by the residents of each barracks, the Block Manager and the head chef. This group to be known as the Block Council was to elect its own officers and work for the welfare and happiness of the residents. This included, "improvement of the grounds of the block, recreation for the residents of the block, health, and sanitation for the block, the need of preventing fire hazards, the adjustment of problems that arise among the residents of the block."

In August 1942, at a meeting in Canal camp at Gila River, the minutes indicate that 15 blocks had organized their Block Councils and the response of the Block Managers to a question of the usefulness of Block Councils was answered that they were found to be helpful with no adverse comments. The Block Councils at Gila River continued to function in Canal Community throughout the life of the project. Their relative importance lessened at all centers as problems of an individual or community-wide character entered the picture. Nevertheless, there always remained in most blocks a nuclear organization which met to discuss and decide upon a course of action whenever a crisis threatened the equilibrium or stability of the block. This organization was much utilized by the Councils to determine or influence community opinion.

The Block Council was another of the significant and important groups which contributed to the stability of project life and brought individuals into meaningful relations with each other to allow a group approach to the solution of community problems. Block Councils were never fully utilized by the project administrations. In fact, one center officially discouraged any type of organization within the blocks. This failure to understand and to utilize the Block Council as a significant group to which problems and policies might be presented was to some extent compensated for by the administrative plan of Block Managers and by a system of political representation

based on the block group. Policies and procedures adequately communicated either to the Block Managers or to the Community Council would in a properly organized system be readily transmitted to all block residents. This terminal transmission was not a particular concern of the Administration and was well or badly organized depending upon the leadership qualifications of either the Block Manager or Block representative.

In community-wide crises, such as registration, segregation, selective service, labor difficulties, etc., the Block was frequently the group of original decision. During the registration crisis many of the decisions were reached in block meetings and represented agreement for a common course of action. There appears the obvious contradiction of a registration form designed to record each individual's declaration of intentions and loyalty actually reflecting group decisions. There is the case of the old man who appealed a negative answer to the "law-abiding alien" question on the grounds that his Block Manager had inaccurately recorded his affirmative answer. His argument, in brief, was that he had been a member of the group in the block which decided that all should answer "yes", and obviously he would not have gone against the group decision in the registration. The attempt of the Issei Planning Board at Tule Lake to overcome widespread resistance to registering failed because it was counter to the more powerful force of block group pressure. This organization prepared a statement (which was rejected by the Project Director), advising against group decision and emphasizing that registration was a matter of individual judgment.

This general outline of the organization and function of the Block Managers and of Block Councils and the function of the block as a group of original decision, will help us to understand the organization and function of Community Councils through their period of establishment and growth.

D. The Early History of Community Government

Community government began its center history in mid-May 1942, at the Colorado River Relocation Center. Representatives of the first four blocks occupied by incoming evacuees met in a messhall to discuss organization plans for preparing a permanent form of community government. The original meeting was conducted in an atmosphere of pioneers who were looking forward to creating a governing body for a peaceful and productive community. The nuclear group under the chairmanship of Rev. Mitani, a Christian minister, established a Civic Planning Commission. Subsequently, a legal bureau staffed by evacuee lawyers provided technical assistance. As new blocks were occupied, members of the Planning Commission met with residents explaining the objectives and purposes of the group and securing the election of additional representatives.

This initial attempt at community government was abortive, although the plan that was developed was later utilized during the November strike. The receipt of the June 5 memorandum in the middle of that month brought to a halt the efforts of this group. Subsequently, a temporary Community Council was elected and inducted into office in July and was the first representative body for Poston.

In the confusion of continuing construction and the reception of additional hundreds of evacuees, Project Directors encouraged the beginnings of the political institution of community government as best they could. The Project Director at Tule Lake met with each new incoming group. He explained the policies of the project including the election of representatives to a Community Council. By July an organized group was meeting regularly. The history at Gila River was similar. There, the Project Director met with the new residents, block by block. He encouraged the formation of Block Councils. When the first unit was completely occupied in July, plans were made for the election of representatives to a Community Council. One of the first petitions prepared by an evacuee group was presented to the Project Director at Gila River in August 1942. These resolutions requested among other things, street lighting, completion of the water system so that the grounds could be watered, tables and chairs for apartments, screening of windows and laundry rooms. They also requested the establishment of a canteen which would be owned and financed by the evacuees and operated on a non-profit basis. They requested clothing and wearing apparel and laundry soap for those in dire need. They also requested that there be established a recreation program, that there be opportunity for the education of their children, and that there be provision made for religious observances and facilities for religious gatherings. They requested completion of hospital facilities and that non-citizens be given the privilege to hold elective positions in the community government.

It is incorrect to assume that the residents were either entirely in favor of or vitally interested in the establishment of local government. The exclusion of Issei from office engendered some opposition. The vast majority of residents, however, remained disinterested spectators. The group most actively interested was composed of a number of the more mature and politically minded Nisei including many JACL members and some of the better educated and more Americanized Issei. Opposition, as it developed, came largely from the Kibei, plus others who because of resentment, bitterness or loyalties to Japan were opposed to any action which would give cooperation to the government in any way.

There was a third group which took the position that since the delegation of authority was so limited self-government was an impossibility, and therefore it would be wiser to let

the government assume the full burden of center operation and management. These differences all found expression in the attempts to formulate a permanent plan of community government.

E. Temporary Community Councils

The early problems of center management were largely beyond the effective responsibility of a politically organized evacuee group. The responsibilities for providing food, preserving law and order, establishing fire protection, purchasing equipment, construction, maintenance of public facilities, recruitment of staff, employment and manifold other major and minor details of providing goods and services to a newly established community were assumed by the Project Director and his staff. Decisions were made without consultation with the evacuees. The problems were many, and there was no organized evacuee group except the Block Managers which could be of any assistance. Even the Block Managers were able to do no more than to call attention to dire need and to explain inadequacies to the residents.

The problem was not one of assuming joint responsibility with the evacuees in project management, but one of communication of the difficulties facing the administrative staff on the one hand and of meeting the more pressing needs of the residents on the other. This function was generally assumed by the Block Managers. The frequently recurring inability of the Administration to secure fuel, lumber, machinery, sometimes even food, produced many complaints and contributed to the insecurity. Pressures placed on the Block Managers and subsequently on the Administration all too often could not be relieved. There did develop among many evacuees, however, an appreciation of the sincere efforts of the Administration. There were, however, several areas of project life where incompetent personnel, inefficient management, and bad organization were obvious to the evacuees. If for example, babies died in the hospital from dehydration, not only the families affected, but also the entire community was disturbed and demanded a remedy for conditions permitting the situation. Where people were cold from lack of fuel or from the failure to secure equipment for heating, there was a tendency to reject explanations of delayed shipment and to accuse the Administration of inefficiency or in some instances of deliberate acts designed to contribute to the discomfort of the evacuees.

It was in this atmosphere of confusion and uncertainty that temporary Councils were created. To their credit there was no difficulty too great which they were not willing to tackle. Council officers and committees conferred with Project Directors and staff members. They made investigations which included interrogation of Administration staff members. Resolutions were passed calling attention to the conditions,

solutions were offered, but in most instances correction of the situation was beyond the immediate control of any one person and the efforts of the temporary Councils were often regarded by the residents as unproductive and by the administrative staff as meddling.

This activity, including criticism of the Administration on the part of temporary Councils was in part an attempt to determine the responsibilities, the authority, and the limitations under which Councils could operate. Their investigations inevitably led to questioning of either the administrative or technical ability of the members of the appointed staff with the result that some of them became irritated and resistant to not only investigations, but also to proposed solutions.

The administrative staff, including the Project Director, was equally uncertain of the separation of Council and administrative responsibilities. The tendency was to look to administrative action rather than community participation to bring solutions. A few Project Directors did attempt to explain conditions and secure understanding of the handicaps under which the Administration was operating. Most did not.

That there were numerous labor difficulties is not surprising. These sometimes came to the attention of the Council, but more often were negotiated directly by the Project Director or one of his staff. The inability of the Council to secure acceptance of its views frequently led to the conclusion that the Councils were either ineffective or obstructionist or both. There were examples, such as the attempt of an OWI unit to secure broadcast material at Tule Lake where the Council although first giving its approval was later forced to retract its stand because of Community pressure. Another instance in the same center involved the use of Community funds to construct a building for showing motion pictures. The proposal favored by the Council was rejected by a referendum of the residents. Council action was not always attended by failure. There were instances in which its recommendations were followed with benefit for both the residents and the Administration. These, however, were frequently inadequately publicized.

At some centers, there were groups of both evacuees and administrative staff who were disappointed at the failure of the Councils to take an aggressive stand on some of the larger issues. Instead, Councils concerned themselves with the immediate problems and pressures and in so doing were politically realistic. They were also aware that many issues were extremely controversial and would have led to internal strife and factionalism. Where the Council cooperated with the Administration, it was suspected by the residents. When it opposed the Administration, it was attacked as being obstructionist and in some instances individual members were accused of being subversive and disloyal.

It was not surprising that the majority of the residents who were interested, and that number was not great, considered the Council less effective than the Block Managers, lacked confidence in its judgment, or in its ability to negotiate with the Administration, and resented control of the Nisei and exclusion of the Issei. It was also not surprising that many administrators felt the Council to be generally a useless and innocuous group at best, and a trouble-making and critical group at worst. It was surprising that Councils were able to survive at all. Their survival was due to the confidence and efforts of a few members of the appointed staff and the evacuee community who saw in community government potentialities beyond that realized in the beginning.

F. The Organization Commission

The procedures for establishing an Organization Commission was left to the discretion of the Project Director. Several methods were followed. At most centers, the responsibility was given to the temporary Community Council to appoint a Commission. At Manzanar and Gila River the Project Director selected its membership. Minidoka followed the plan of electing two delegates from each block to a nominating convention which in turn elected a seven-man group.

Tule Lake was the first to establish a commission, appointed by the Community Council, and the first to complete and secure ratification of a permanent plan of community organization by the residents. Central Utah in December of the same year also completed its plan and secured ratification. During the first six months of 1943, charters were also approved by Granada and Poston and rejected at Minidoka. During the last half of 1943, Gila River, Heart Mountain, Rohwer, and Jerome joined the others, and the Minidoka charter was resubmitted and accepted. Manzanar remained the only center with no organized form of representative community government, based on W. R. A. administrative suggestion; instead at this center, a Town Hall of block delegates served in an advisory capacity to the project director.

The essentials of both organization and function of community government were provided for in the policy statement. Each charter made provision for the election of a Community Council with the authority to enact regulations and to provide penalties. Provision was also made for the establishment of a Judicial Commission, the organization of the Council, the election of officers, elections, appointment of committees and commissions. The arbitration commission was universally functionless.

There were some variations to meet local conditions. For example, the Poston charter provided for the election of local Councils for each of the three units of that center.

Each local Council then elected representatives to an over-all Community Council. The over-all Council was responsible for enactment of regulations for the entire center and for general policies and problems affecting all the residents. Variation in Council organization also appeared at Minidoka and Gila River. At the latter project, each of the two separate camps approved almost identical plans of government, but no provision was made for the coordination of the two. This was overcome by the creation of an executive board composed of members drawn from each Council. The Minidoka Council was unique in that it provided for the election at large of seven members from a list of candidates nominated by delegates elected from the separate blocks. It also provided for the election of a Block Commissioner from each block. Council organization composed an executive committee of seven members and a consulting and advising group of 35. Several of the projects attempted to overcome the unwieldiness of a large Council composed of one representative from each block by the election of an executive committee from within the Council group. This plan worked with indifferent success.

CHAPTER III

UNCERTAINTIES AND CONFUSIONS

A. Evacuee Reaction to Community Government Policy

The reaction of the evacuees to the announcement of policy for the establishment of a permanent plan of self-government was varied. There were expressions of disappointment at the negligible delegation of responsibility following the realization that the evacuees were given only a minor role in managing their own affairs. Some took the position that the evacuees should allow the WRA to assume full responsibility and to offer no cooperation. Others believed that the policy was better than nothing, but the vast majority indicated little interest either one way or the other.

The most controversial point and one which provoked most discussion was the provision excluding Issei from holding elective office. This policy was protested and requests for revision made at several centers. A group at Gila River submitted a resolution on September 18, 1942. The resolution requested the right for non-citizens to hold elective office. It supported this request with statements to the effect that no better evidence of the sincere desire of the non-citizens to cooperate with the War Relocation Authority could be found than their desire to be treated equally in the matter of community government. The resolution pointed out that there was a "strong unity of purpose between the citizens and non-citizens in all matters which are of vital concern to the people of this community...In view of this situation to permit the citizens alone to hold elective positions would undermine seriously the harmony, which so happily exists between the citizens and non-citizens."

It was also contended that there should be an equal sharing of responsibility by both groups, and that this could be achieved only by equal representation. They argued that the present arrangement placed an undue burden upon the citizens alone. The petitioners also declared that many of the non-citizens were that in name only because of legal prohibitions to their assuming citizenship. They pointed out that "they have also assimilated many of the finer American ideals; they worked continuously in America ever since coming to this country; they brought up their children to be loyal American citizens, many of whom now serve in the Armed Forces of the Nation; they also bought property and invested heavily in United States War Bonds with the intention of permanently

making this country their home." The last point was that the non-citizens were the economic leaders with long years of experience in the operation of extensive areas in the state of California; that these skilled and experienced agricultural leaders should be given a voice in the administration of self-government and through such participation contribute to the well-being of the people of the center and the war effort of the United States.

The Director answered this resolution October 6, 1942 with an explanation of the reasons for the policy and stated that reconsideration was impossible. The letter pointed out that:

"In the first place, we believe that the citizenship status and privilege of the evacuees who were born in the United States needs to be given special recognition. The fact that, as a matter of military necessity, all persons of Japanese ancestry were evacuated from the West Coast, both aliens and citizens alike, has caused some of the citizen evacuees to wonder what value their citizenship has. We regret that fact very much. We understand, also, that a few among the alien evacuees have been taunting the young Niseis with this fact, and have stated that the citizenship of the Niseis was valueless.

"It is our intention, therefore, to help make up for this fact, as much as possible, by giving special recognition to the citizenship status of the Niseis.

"In addition to making elective offices open only to evacuees who are citizens of United States, it is our intention to give them preference in considering application for leave from relocation centers, in assignment of work opportunities, and in other respects.

"A second consideration had a great deal to do with our decision. In general, the Niseis are much more Americanized than are the Isseis...We are of the opinion that if the Niseis alone are eligible for membership in the community council, the general character of the action taken by the community council will be more in keeping with American institutions and practices."

The reply also pointed out that Isseis were not barred from participation in community government but were eligible to hold appointive positions, thus the wisdom and experience of the alien evacuees would be utilized. It concluded by affirming that the original decision was a sound one and should be adhered to.

Copies of the resolution and reply were sent to all centers. No more petitions came to Washington, but project staffs remained aware of the difficulties which faced Organization Commissions in their efforts to give suitable status and opportunity for Issei participation in community affairs. Policy or no policy, the evacuees were determined that some means be developed to include the Issei in a representative system. The first such effort was at Poston where soon after the election of a citizen Temporary Council, arrangements were made for the election of an Issei Advisory Board. There thus arose a dual system of representation with one Issei and one Nisei from each block, organized in groups meeting separately, but in close communication with each other.

Tule Lake moved toward a solution of this problem in a different manner. There, the temporary Community Council authorized the establishment of an Issei Planning Board. Although the Planning Board had no legislative function, it worked in close cooperation with the Community Council and presented community problems to the Project Director jointly.

The Organization Commissions at Heart Mountain and Granada attempted to establish a two-house representative system, the upper house to be composed of Issei without legislative function and to be advisory to the lower house which would be composed of Nisei. This plan as developed by the evacuees in consultation with project officials was disapproved by word from Washington that such a plan would be contrary to the intent of the community government policy.

Granada then solved the problem by a mass resignation of Nisei occupying Block Managers positions with an understanding with the Administration that Issei would be appointed to these positions. The Community Council became known as the Nisei Council, a distinction which stuck with it for a long period. Even after the removal of the bar to Issei membership, several elections passed before an appreciable number of Issei were willing to stand for election.

Gila River attempted to meet the same problem by formalizing a group composed of chairmen of the Block Councils all of whom were Issei. Rohwer and Jerome solved the problem through an advisory Issei group and by establishing close working relations with the Block Managers who were almost entirely non-citizens. Central Utah had a somewhat similar arrangement.

Although the exclusion of Issei from elective office aroused the greatest controversy, there were other and more fundamental questions with which those engaged in drafting plans of government had to face. These included legal, political, and ethical considerations affecting the purpose and functioning of an evacuee self-government. From the Charter

Commission of Heart Mountain came a statement objectifying and discussing some of these problems.

The Commission considered four fundamental questions. The first was, "Is this real self-government, or is it only so-called self-government?" The opinion expressed was "If it is going to be real self-government, then it is O. K. If it is going to be a self-government in name only, then, we do not want it."

This attitude was held most strongly. The Commission then asked the question, "Why is it that the members agreed to support a document which they know is not really self-government?" The answer given was: "Firstly, within a relocation center where freedom of the residents is restricted, is it possible to ask for complete self-government? Secondly: Perchance that such complete self-government is granted, is it advisable for the evacuees to fully exercise such right? Thirdly: The consideration that the Heart Mountain community consists of both the American citizen of Japanese ancestry and the alien Japanese had to be taken into account."

The statement continued "After thorough discussion, the Commission came to the conclusion that it is not only impossible to ask for complete self-government, but it is better not to ask for it. In other words, we concluded that it is far better for the evacuees to leave the final responsibility of the center management to the WRA staff, while specifying in written documents evacuees' right to have limited voice in the management. If this plan is adopted, neither the citizen nor the non-citizen residents need to fear about jeopardizing their rights."

The next question asked was, "Why not stick to status quo?" The Issei members who were objecting to the discrimination favored the status quo. This objection was resolved, however, with the issuance of an amendment to the instruction permitting Issei equal rights.

The final question asked was, "What are the advantages of adopting a Charter?" The advantages were seen as a formalization of experiences gained during the preceding several months, which upon being reduced to a formal code gave greater assurance of the continuation of the status quo. An additional advantage was that provision was made for an orderly election of representatives and enactment of regulations and the guarantee of a voice in the management of a center no matter how limited. The preamble of the Charter expressed these basic considerations.

B. The First Crises

In the latter part of 1942, major disturbances occurred at two centers. In late November, a general strike was called

in Unit I of the Colorado River Relocation Center. Two weeks later, a series of incidents at Manzanar culminated in a riot and forced the Project Director to call in the military police. The great difference in the final results of these two disturbances, however, was that at Manzanar the Administration emerged as the dominating and controlling factor in community life, while at Poston, there emerged a strong and responsible community organization.

1. The Poston Strike

Although the Poston strike was precipitated by the arrest and confinement of two evacuees in the project jail, it is accepted that its causes could be traced to evacuation, assembly center experience, and conditions at the center. The combination of heat, dust, primitive facilities, alleged broken promises, misunderstandings, and factional conflict were all contributing factors to a general condition of unrest. News of the arrest of two men created wide excitement. Rumors spread rapidly and demands grew that the two men should be released. The Community Council held several meetings with project officials and presented the community view with the proposal for release of the individuals in question and their trial within the project. They were supported in this position by the Issei Advisory Board. The Assistant Director found it impossible to accede to these demands and the Council and Advisory Board resigned.

The situation developed rapidly with almost complete suspension of communication between the Administration and the residents. There was quickly established in the center a committee of 72 composed of one Issei and one Nisei representative drawn from each block. This group aided by the revived City Planning Board decided on a general strike to secure recognition of community demands. Most workers willingly complied with the strike decision, and pressure was applied to the recalcitrants.

The full details of the Poston strike and its many ramifications have been adequately documented and reported elsewhere.¹ Our interest arises from the unbelievably rapid strides in community organization achieved by a well-organized, adequately led evacuee organization which remained in control during the course of the strike and left its imprint on the whole future course of community government. There emerged from the strike a Central Executive Committee selected by the Executive Council of the City Planning Board composed of four Issei and four Nisei. There also emerged an agreement for the election of Block Managers which had been a controversial point previously. Agreement was also reached for the establishment of an Honor Court which was never realized and for a Labor Relations Board which was to be an adjunct of the Central Executive Committee. The attempt to make the City Planning Board the responsible representative group was not acceptable to the Administration which took the position that the Community Council was the only official body which would be

1 See A. Leighton - The Governing of Men

recognized by the Administration. This was agreed to and in December a new temporary Community Council and new Issei Advisory Board were elected. In the meantime, the attempt by some of the more radical and disgruntled leaders to overthrow the Central Executive Committee was thwarted, and the pattern of organization which persisted to the end of the project with only minor modifications was firmly established.

The Poston strike produced a system of Community representation and organization acceptable to residents and Administration. It also served to crystallize and resolve many of the previous conflicts and to give a cohesion which permitted the application of concerted effort to community problems. It forced the Administration to review not only its own policies, but its relations with the evacuees and produced a unity of purpose within the Administration staff previously absent. It is of some interest that the plans which were developed in late May and early June by the evacuee Civic Planning Board and shelved because of the June 5 memorandum, were the basis of the strike organization and community government.

2. The Manzanar Riot

The resolution of the diverging interests between Issei, Nisei, and Kibei was never achieved at Manzanar where conflict focussed on the policy of community government. This center which had at first been under the administration of the WCCA had established a system of semi-appointed, semi-elected Block leaders with no distinction based on nationality. After the assumption of WRA administrative responsibility in June, no attempt was made to observe the provisions of the June 5 memorandum. The Block Leaders continued as a representative administrative group. The Administration believed that no distinction should be made between citizens and non-citizens and wished to continue the cooperative relations which existed between the Administration and the Block Leaders. The announcement of the new policy of community government as made by the Project Director in late August was to the effect that the Block Leaders would be disbanded and in its place there would be established a Nisei Community Council. This threat to the vested position of the Block Leaders was not readily accepted and even later when it was explained that their activities would continue much as in the past, the harm of the original announcement was never completely dispelled either with the Block Leaders or with the community from which it drew support.

It was also at Manzanar that the conflict between openly loyal Japanese-Americans, and Kibei and aliens with pro-Japanese leanings broke into the open in dramatic fashion. This split in the community which became organized into two opposing groups was led by equally aggressive leaders. The issue of community government policy was one point of disagreement. Not only was

there opposition to a Nisei elected Community Council, but also opposition to the establishment of any kind of representative system which would cooperate with the War Relocation Authority in administration of the centers. The pro-American group, largely Nisei and JACL, was equally vociferous in its support of self-government. The Project Director with the assistance and advice of members of his staff and evacuee leaders appointed a commission to prepare a plan of government. The commission was so constituted that it included both Issei and Nisei, but did not include radical leadership from the two opposing factions. It was hoped that through this device acceptance could be secured for the establishment of a Community Council.

After several weeks of deliberation, this commission finally produced a document which was approved by the Project Director and ready for submission to the people of Manzanar. An educational program was started for the purpose of informing the people of its provisions and to secure pre-election approval. It soon became apparent, however, that opposition was so widespread there was no possibility for the acceptance of a charter by the voters. This opposition was based on the belief by a number of Issei that the provision limiting membership to Nisei was the responsibility of certain Manzanar individuals and was not a policy established by the WRA. The belief was also current that this Nisei group would gain control of the cooperative enterprises which at that time were Issei dominated. It was also believed that the Council would supplant the Block Managers who were largely Issei and in whom the residents had a considerable amount of confidence.

As a result of this opposition, it was decided to postpone the election and to call for the selection of a new group of delegates elected by blocks who would take the plan of government prepared by the Organization Commission and make such amendments and changes as were possible. An election was held. The new delegates were unanimously opposed not only to the plan of government prepared by the Organization Commission, but also to any form of local government which might be proposed. The administrative attempts to salvage community government for Manzanar were abruptly halted by the riot of December 6, and no serious attempts were ever made subsequently to revive it.

Thus it was that a combination of passive opposition from the block leaders, organized and violent conflict between segments of the population and misunderstanding and misinterpretation of specific points of policy, were responsible for the failure to establish Community government at Manzanar. Many of the same factors and conflicts appeared at other centers, but through more skillful handling and opportunity for opposing groups to resolve their differences, it was possible to achieve an acceptable plan of government.

C. Administration Attitudes Toward Community Government Policy

The disturbances at Manzanar and Poston prompted administrative concern in Washington about policies on community government and of the whole field of administration-evacuee relationships. In December, a confidential memorandum was addressed to all Project Directors requesting their judgment and recommendations on the local government program.

The point was made that WRA was under no obligation to establish, or permit establishment of evacuee government, which policy was a liberal interpretation of the directive from the President and intended to foster self-expression and participation in community affairs on the part of evacuees and to mobilize for administrative support the sanctions of a deliberative and representative body of citizens. The question was raised whether this policy should now be changed and WRA regulatory administration be substituted with only an advisory committee of evacuees.

Comments were requested on Issei-Nisei participation on the Community Council and participation of aliens short of election to the Council. Other items included an evaluation of the extent to which community government had proved or disproved itself; a statement of who among the evacuees was either opposing or favoring community government; and a request for suggested changes if a revision were found desirable. It was also stated that "no action to accelerate charter commissions or other committees engaged in organizational work should be taken."

The replies from the several Project Directors reveal both the attitudes of project administration and of administrative interpretation of evacuee attitudes as of that time. Without exception, all Project Directors stated that the most crucial issue in community government policy was the provision prohibiting aliens from holding elective office. Illustrative of project opinion are such statements as

"The Issei refuse to accept the administration's opinion that citizens alone can hold office. They feel that citizenship status is irrelevant in a relocation center and since all Japanese were relocated and treated in a similar manner, all should be entitled to hold office. Had Issei been permitted to hold office, much of the present unrest would have been obviated, the Issei stated. Issei participation would have enabled them to direct their energies into productive, loyal channels.

"Nisei felt that the present organization tends to intensify the growing cleavage between the two groups. This cleavage is so significant that at times all issues are decided within the community solely on that basis without reference to substance. While some Nisei are of the opinion that the intensification of the cleavage is an inevitable aspect...the majority feel that the problems facing the community can best be worked out through joint effort."

The Project Director at Heart Mountain, who also favored equal elective participation for the two groups, pointed out that the Nisei were fearful that with control in their hands the Issei would be uncooperative probably with the idea of discrediting the Nisei administration and showing the community the impotency of any Nisei governing body. Many Project Directors referred to the willingness of the Issei to cooperate and the disapproval of the distinction made between them and the citizens.

Project administration by December had, in general, come to the conclusion that any policy which emphasized already existing cleavages within the evacuee population would make administration just that much more difficult. From a purely practical administrative viewpoint, there was the desire to lessen existing frictions and tensions within the Centers. It had been learned that many of the older Issei were stable individuals who were cooperative and could be trusted. It had also learned that with the exception of a small group represented largely by those who were members of the JACL, the Nisei did not whole-heartedly support the policy discrimination. Project Directors wrote of difficulties which arose in assembly centers where Nisei councils, largely JACL dominated, had ridden roughshod over the remainder of the population and had shown favoritism and created resentment and bitterness.

Response to the proposal that WRA might withdraw, or seriously modify its policy of self-government brought forth objections. The replies varied from the one Project Director who recommended that each center be permitted to work out its own plan, to the view expressed by the Central Utah Director who wrote "We believe that this policy of permitting a government within the Center should not be changed but rather a more liberal interpretation be instigated." Most Project Directors, however, were of the opinion that the WRA had committed itself to the evacuees on the establishment of self-government and that its elimination would be considered as a breach of faith. These opinions were accompanied with requests that they be allowed to continue with their plans.

Two Project Directors did question the wisdom of the policy in terms of evacuee acceptance of a device which in actuality conferred no authority and was practically meaningless. The Project Director at Minidoka wrote:

"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 cooperation of 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 Project Director at Manzanar, approaching the same question from a slightly different point of view, observed:

"Viewing the plan for creation of evacuee self-government, as an analyst and not as a critic, it now seems clear that the position of the majority of the evacuees towards self-government deserves serious open-minded consideration by the Authority. Evacuees who approach the plan of self-government without emotion and with the desire to be constructive, divide themselves roughly into two classes: those who question the sincerity of a plan of self-government which prohibits a large percentage (and particularly the more mature people) from the holding of office and the exercise of administrative authority, and those who question the sincerity of any plan of self-government prepared and limited by the authorities above, whose authority includes the maintenance of a barbed wire fence as visual evidence of the actual complete lack of the fundamentals of self-government. Their view boils down to the conclusion that it is silly for mature men to spend time playing with dolls."

The almost unanimous desire of center administrators to retain the policy of community government essentially unchanged, with the exception of the inclusion of Issei as eligible to hold elective office, stopped for the time being, concern in the Washington office that Community Councils might be contributory to the disturbances which had occurred or might likely occur in the future. Although the Project Directors found themselves defending the policy, their attitudes toward Council groups were frequently those of disinterest or suspicion. Many of the administrative personnel felt that Community Government was a meaningless gesture which could only cause trouble and that a policy of laying down rules and regulations and enforcing them by authority was most desirable. These attitudes were described in a report by Ted Haas, project attorney at Poston, in which he said:

"Some officials at Poston have said to the staff and residents that it would have been easier to have run the center dictatorily with all rules and policies established by the administration and without consultation with the residents, and that the administration of Community Government, democratic practices and evacuee participation increased the difficulties of administering the Center."

Caught between the pressures of divided and disorganized communities and a critical or disinterested administration, the

advocates of community government faced heavy odds in their efforts to bring political organization to the centers. That they succeeded is testimony to their perseverance and to the basic need for an instrumentality of this type as a coordinate of community life. It was inevitable that some kind of systematic relations would develop between the evacuees and the administration. It was not inevitable that the organization or functions conform to the policy determined by the WRA, but the fact that this policy provided certain guideposts and carried the sanctions of the administrators gave it a decided advantage in the evolving system of relations. The alternative was anarchy and a coercive and possibly terroristic underground.

The vast majority of residents were desirous of peace and stability and were willing to make compromises to avoid trouble. Many accepted community government as a device, imperfect as best, which could allow for an orderly presentation of problems and resolution of crises. Administrators found no such need to compromise. They held the full weight and authority of the Federal Government backed by police power and the Army. They too could accept community government because it held promise of proving a useful administrative tool, and might contribute to law and order.

CHAPTER IV
THE TROUBLED PERIOD

All centers experienced crises during the period of reception and adjustment of the evacuees, those at Manzanar and Poston being the most severe. These developed to the stage of actual or threatened mass rioting involving the major portion of the community and the suspension of normal activities for several days. The crises at other centers were either not compounded at one particular time or involved groups holding separate grievances and with an opportunity for the administration to seek solution of the difficulties or establish better channels for understanding.

Subsequent crises, although intensified by many of the same conditions provoking the earlier disturbances, had one fundamental difference. This difference was that the mass reaction was occasioned by the initiation of policies or procedures administratively determined and imposed upon the entire Community. Not all such determinations or impositions led to violent Community response. The skill with which the local Administration introduced these major policy determinations to the residents played a considerable part in the nature of the community reaction.

A. REGISTRATION

Registration was the first of the administratively determined policies affecting all residents which produced a violent reaction. On January 28, 1943, Secretary of War Stimson announced that the War Department would soon create an all-Nisei Combat Team to be composed of Japanese-American volunteers drawn from Hawaii and the mainland, including the Nisei in the relocation centers. This decision was the result of much discussion and planning on the part of both the WRA and the War Department. In connection with the call for volunteers, it was decided to conduct a special registration for all male Nisei over seventeen years of age. A four-page questionnaire which covered the pertinent parts of each individual's past history, including a loyalty question supplied by the Army was prepared.

The WRA decided that the Army registration would provide an excellent opportunity to secure needed information on the entire adult population for the purpose of facilitating leave clearances. A form was devised entitled, "Application for Leave Clearance," which followed closely the questionnaire to be filled out by the Nisei males.

The plan for conducting the center-wide registration included an Army team which would be responsible for registering citizen males and a project staff responsible for registering the

remainder of the population. The detailed procedures were left to the joint responsibility of the Army team Captain and the Project Director. It was planned that the team should arrive at the projects soon after February 6 and the registration should begin on February 10.

Both WRA and War Department officials anticipated that the registration would be accomplished with little difficulty and that the response to this partial restoration of citizenship rights would receive easy acceptance. Actually, registration precipitated a period of confusion and turmoil, with organized resistance at some centers, and with threats of violence and some assaults at others.

The role of Community Government in the registration attempt varied widely from center to center. The original plan was one which did not call for either discussion or explanation to Councils or assistance in disseminating information or registering. The procedure prescribed by Army and WRA generally followed was an announcement by the Project Director of the visit of the registration team in the local newspaper. This was followed by the reading of the Army statement at mass gatherings of citizen males upon the arrival of the team. Councils, generally, were informed of the plan only after considerable resistance had appeared and not until all or a portion of the registration had been either completed or attempted and failed. Although confusion was widespread, the response project by project differed markedly.

Resistance to registration at Heart Mountain made its appearance first with the Nisei, some of whom protested not only the segregated nature of the combat team for which volunteers were asked, but also the induction of any Japanese-Americans into the Army as long as questions existed as to their legal rights and the alleged violation of citizenship status by evacuation. This opposition was sufficiently strong and vociferous that the Administration became deeply concerned as to its ability to conduct any registration. An ultimatum was issued by the Project Director which was politely ignored. In the meantime, resistance spread among the non-citizens and meetings were being organized to promote a united front. At this point the Block Chairman, composed of elected Issei representatives, stepped into the picture and saved an extremely difficult situation. One of the prominent members of this group by an adroit maneuver shifted the sentiment of his block and secured agreement to register. With the resistance broken at this one point, other blocks fell into line and it was completed without additional difficulty.

Although the registration proceeded smoothly at the Granada Center because of adequate organization and skillful handling by the administration, the results showed approximately

100 citizens answering "No" to the loyalty question and only about 30 volunteers. The administration called in the newly elected Community Council and presented to its members an explanation of the situation and the need for drastic action. The chairman of the Council was placed in telephone communication with the War Department in Washington and following his conversation organized a series of mass meetings at which the volunteering program was more adequately explained. As a result, the number of volunteers increased to nearly 100 and the number of negative answers decreased to approximately 30.

Central Utah was another center at which a tense situation developed. There, opposition among citizens was largely a protest based on civil rights and a demand for clarification of these rights and the status of a segregated Army unit. A petition representing the more radical point of view was prepared and sent to Washington, but was quickly followed by a second petition which came from the leadership of the Community Council, affirming full loyalty with the United States and a desire to serve in the armed forces.

In contrast to these centers where organized groups of evacuees in community government, one of which groups was composed entirely of aliens, were able to help solve difficult problems, we have the example of Tule Lake. At that center, registration was originally announced in the project newspaper and was explained at a joint session of the Community Council and the Planning Board on Tuesday morning, February 9. That evening the War Department message was read at meetings at seven mess halls, and announcement made that registration would begin the following day. During succeeding days, many meetings, large and small, were held by the evacuees to discuss the implications and significance of registration. The inadequate information and the numberless rumors and conjectures which swept through the center secured only a handful of registrants the first week. The Community Council in an attempt to clarify the situation submitted a list of 150 questions to the Project Director on February 13. Two days later a joint meeting of the Council and Planning Board was held, at which time 58 of these questions were answered and the Captain of the Army team reread the War Department message. It was also at this meeting that the Project Director placed full responsibility upon the evacuee representative groups for securing compliance with the registration requirements.

The situation not only did not improve in the following days, but further deteriorated with large numbers of evacuees making application for repatriation. The attempt to conduct registration by blocks was abandoned. On February 18, registration headquarters were moved to the administrative area, and an order issued listing the sequence by which blocks would be registered. The failure of a large proportion of the eligible young men to register either on the 18th or 19th caused the Project Director and the Army officer in charge of registration to

visit certain blocks and call out the names of the recalcitrant individuals. On the afternoon of the 19th, a large group arrived from three blocks with a letter signed by the non-registering young men requesting repatriation. This was followed on the 21st by the arrest of the young men in question. The following days arrests continued and the opposition to registration became more thoroughly organized and reenforced by threats and assaults against some of those already registered. The Council and Planning Board in an attempt to counteract the growing opposition issued an explanatory statement on February 18 and prepared a memorandum on February 20 urging that the decision to register be considered as an individual matter and not as a group decision. On the 23rd of February, this statement was returned by the Project Director indicating disapproval.

After the arrests, the responsibility for registration was placed on the evacuee groups by the Project Director. The Community Council and Planning Board agreed to accept this responsibility on certain conditions. One of these conditions was that the young men who had been arrested be released to the center. With this condition, the Project Director was unable to agree, taking the position that the young men were violaters of the Selective Service Act. Having failed in their attempt to secure agreement of the project administration to their plan, the Community Council and the Planning Board resigned. They stated that this was the only course open to them because of the expressed lack of confidence by the Project Director in their good intentions and abilities, which placed them in the position of holding no confidence of the community.

The sequel to these events is well-known. The Community Council was never reestablished. Thousands of residents failed to register and many hundred requested repatriation. Tule Lake was eventually selected as the center to house segregants drawn from other camps. The "loyals" who braved community censure and registered were transferred elsewhere.

Many lessons were learned from registration which influenced the initiation of future policy and procedure. The failure of adequate planning and communication was generally recognized. There also came a realization for the need to understand the evacuee's point of view and awareness that the objectives and moral principles activating administration were not always in agreement with the attitudes and thinking of the evacuees. Although recognition of the need for thorough understanding of any policy became a fundamental consideration in future actions, the acceptance of the need for participation of the evacuees in policy formulation was never accepted. Instead, additional reliance was placed upon securing understanding of evacuee point of view and potential reaction to policy by dependence on reports of project administrators and the newly established Community Analysts.

B. MISGIVINGS IN WASHINGTON

Severe questioning of the fundamentals of the policy governing community government arose in the top administration as early as December, 1942, and was influenced by the events at Manzanar and Poston. From the fragmentary documentary evidence available, it would appear that the basic anxieties centered on the inability of community government to maintain law and order and to prevent mass demonstration or riots. The alternative to the existing policy would be a withdrawal of the legislative and judicial functions of Community Councils and their lodgment in the Project Director. With this elimination of function, the Councils, would in the thinking then current, become practically meaningless and the question arose as to whether it might not be better to eliminate completely any semblance of community government and substitute a system of advisors to the Project Director. The questions submitted to the Project Directors on December 15 and referred to previously were indicative of this change in thinking. There, the point was made that community government policy represented a liberal interpretation of the directive from the President and that the WRA was under no obligation to allow or encourage self-government.

The narrow emphasis on the legislative and judicial function of community government as its major activity was an unfortunate, if understandable interpretation. A decision was made in January, and steps were taken to remove from community government its sole responsibility for law and order. Administrative instructions were prepared governing the organization of police services; rules governing the making of arrests; the trail and punishment of offenses committed within the relocation centers, and a confidential instruction outlining the procedure by which the Project Directors could secure the removal of trouble-makers.

The substance of these instructions was to place directly on the Project Director the responsibility for law and order and to give him by clear designation all responsibilities of the Internal Security organization and through clearly defined procedures the means to exercise this responsibility. The instructions did not remove the legislative or judicial function from the Community Council, but provided that until such functions were exercised by that body that this responsibility would remain with the project administration in entirety. Even after the assumption of such functions, the Project Director still retained considerable discretion in the apprehension and punishment of malefactors. The confidential instruction placed complete responsibility on the Project Director for handling cases of individuals contributing to lawlessness and disorder.

These instructions were signed by the Director and released the latter part of February. Their issuance undoubtedly

did much to relieve anxieties on the responsibilities of the WRA to maintain law and order, but also created questions regarding what functions remained to the community councils. These doubts were intensified by events occurring at the centers.

The uproar caused by registration continued through February into March. The resignation of the Council at Tule Lake and the disturbances at other centers contributed to a decrease in confidence of community government. The Councils although cooperative and lending some assistance to the administration in the crises were too weak to direct the conflicting factions into constructive channels. Groups of obstructionists and those of doubtful loyalty were beyond the control of both the available community leadership and the administration.

The loss of confidence in the evacuees and in their representatives to control the internal project situation, together with a combined congressional and public attack from certain quarters, were contributory to an acceptance of the need to tighten restrictions and extend administrative control. The situation was further complicated by the continuing departure of the more cooperative and mature Nisei who were in some measure a counter-balance to disruptive or disloyal elements. Except at one or two projects, no strong cooperative and loyal leadership had appeared among the aliens which as a group continued to be an unknown factor. This was due in large measure to their exclusion from community government.

Many administrative people, both in Washington and at the projects, were extremely apprehensive of the danger of future mass uprisings. Some of them were also either contemptuous, disillusioned, or disinterested in community government as a device to bring stability and order to the center population. The extreme element favored rigid, dictatorial regulation and expressed themselves in such language as "it is our job to tell the Japs what to do and shoot the bastards if they wont." This extreme position, however, was not prevalent among the top administrators at the projects or in Washington.

It was probably the combination of previous events and the shifting toward greater control of the projects under policies and procedures formulated in Washington that led the Director to seriously consider radical modification in the policy on community government. It was accepted that there would need to be some point of contact with the evacuees but this would be through an advisory group. Those centers where a Community Council was already organized would not be disbanded but would have their function changed to an advisory capacity.

This point of view was presented at a meeting in early April. In the ensuing discussion, it was pointed out that such

a change of policy would represent a definite broken promise on our part and that community government could become a responsible instrument in time. The reply to this point of view that changed conditions in the centers made it impossible to create stable groups, and that evacuees were not concerned with community government. The point was then made that the Council had two major functions, one, to determine those acts which were against the welfare of the community and to provide penalties for their violation and secondly, to provide a method of communication between the evacuees and the administration. It was recognized that Councils thus far had failed to enact legislation or establish judicial commissions, but that the recent issuance of the Administrative Instruction on offenses no longer made it important for the Councils to take immediate action. It also appeared that the second major function had not been properly emphasized and that neither the Project Director nor the evacuees had been encouraged or given the opportunity to make sufficient use of the representative function.

The point was also made that the policy limited the method of representation by prohibiting aliens from holding office, and if WRA were to remove this limitation, it would present the opportunity for a completely representative group. The Council could then be in a position to exercise properly its two major functions. The result of the meeting was an agreement to recommend a change of policy to permit Issei to hold office and to prepare a covering letter which would contain a summary of the basic functions of the Council and the need for activation on the part of the Project Directors and the exercise of these two functions.

Although community government as one of the policies of the WRA was saved from radical modification, as a significant part of the total program, it continued to occupy a position of minor importance in the thinking of the policy makers. However, as its limitations and potentialities became better known and understood and as increased stability characterized the relocation communities and was reflected and contributed to by Council organization, its status and significance became greater.

C. THE PROPONENTS

Although the thinking of the top policy-makers in Washington in early 1943 was largely in the direction of the imposition of additional measures of regulation and control and a concurrent limitation of the functions of community government, there were a few opposed to this position.

In the period, January to March, 1943, a number of statements and concrete proposals were made, which if accepted, would have liberalized the policy in the direction of increased responsibility for community government. A memorandum prepared

in the Solicitor's Office in January, in which attention was called to the need for Administration Instructions on trial and punishment of offenders, organization of police services, organization of intelligence, rules to govern the making of arrests, and a program for segregating aggravated trouble-makers ended with the comment that although the suggested measures were repressive in character, the successful solution of law and order problems rests primarily with the administration. A memorandum to Mr. John Provinse from Mr. Solon T. Kimball on January 8, 1942 which discussed these proposals, said in part.

"My observation has been that our administration has been too "good", too perfect. We have over-planned and over-directed. We have not allowed sufficient outlet for aggressiveness through actual participation in the business of running a project, so that the aggressiveness when expressed is against the "loyal" group and I suspect in the future may be directed against us. I think we need to loosen up our administrative organization to permit more of the planning and (mistakes) to come from the bottom. Certainly we need much better channels of communication to allow the steam to blow off than we now have.

"I see in community government a goodly portion of the answer to these two problems--but we must have understanding from the key administrative people of what is being done, and why, and how. In that connection, I believe the creation of evacuee committees to study special problems and to recommend solutions and policy would be helpful. Specifically, we need one immediately to study the functions and operation of community government."

Additional memoranda were submitted on January 15, covering community government policy, summarization of replies to the Director's Memorandum of December 15, 1942, Issei participation in the Community Council, problems of community government, and recommendations on community government. The portion of the memorandum on problems confronting community government pointed out the lack of unity in the evacuee population and problems created by evacuation. It also recognized the conflict of measurable self-government with administrative responsibility of the Authority. This memorandum said in part:

"Perhaps we should recognize the situation (the complete administrative responsibility of the WRA) for what it is and say that it will be impossible to ever have a fully responsible government with opportunity for implementing decisions by administrative action. On the other hand, perhaps it is possible over a period of time to extend to the evacuees a greater measure of self-regulation and planning. If so, policy becomes the formal recognition of an already

existing achievement. In other words, if the development of governmental forms and responsibilities are not limited by hard and fast boundaries, but permitted to meet new needs, we may achieve the type of dynamic living government which expresses a real need and has a real meaning.

"Significant government, after all, should not consist of an enumerated list of specified powers, but should be the opportunity for people to concern themselves with the problems which are of major concern in their lives. Let us examine some of these problems and see which of them might possibly become a function of government."

Some of the suggestions made included the establishment of an evacuee police force under the supervision of the Community Council, controls over food, the planning of productive efforts, the use of manpower, adjustment of differences between Nisei, Issei, and Kibei, housing, health, education, relocation, and recreation.

This was followed in February by the preparation of an Administrative Instruction on police services which visualized a dual system of responsibility and organization. Under this plan, there would be established an evacuee police force with its Chief of Police appointed by a Board of Police Commissioners. The evacuee policemen would have as their responsibility the maintenance of law and order within the center proper. There would also be a Caucasian police force to protect government property and enforce WRA regulations. This proposal was justified on the grounds that the Community Council should have enforcing authority for its legislative acts and its judicial system, and that the attempt by WRA to impose responsibility for protection of government property or enforcement of regulations contrary to community interests upon the evacuees, was inconsistent. This plan was rejected in favor of an Internal Security force composed of both evacuees and Caucasians with official responsibility resting on the Caucasian officers.

A recommendation to establish a position of Administrative Assistant to the Project Director, whose responsibility would include the general field of administrative Community relationships with specific responsibility for Community Government, labor relations, and promotion of understanding and participation of evacuees in the general problems of relocation centers, was made the same month. This recommendation was rejected by the Administration Division on the grounds that need for such a position did not exist and that these functions belonged to the Project Director or his assistant.

Another proposal would have given responsibility for community libraries to the Community Council. The plan included the establishment of a Library Board by the Council with complete

administrative control. This proposal was also turned down, but was covered by committees in some centers.

These abortive attempts to extend the area of community government responsibility failed for a number of reasons. Loss of confidence in the Community Council to maintain law and order, the implementation of a general policy of placing complete responsibility on the administrative staff, and the reluctance to modify a system which had already established vested interest in the control of various aspects of community life, were contributing factors. It became apparent that self-government which would include the assumption of administrative and supervisory responsibility for those portions of relocation center life which were directly related to the welfare of the residents, had become impossible of attainment. It also became apparent that if community government was to have a significant function that it would have to come from a slow growth accompanied by demonstration of responsibility and increased confidence by the policy-makers, the administrators, and the people themselves.

The big task was to interpret the significant contribution which community government could perform and to secure its implementation. To this end, emphasis was placed upon the utilization of the Council as a channel of communication for securing understanding of WRA policies and the reflection of evacuee attitudes to these policies. This was expressed in a statement prepared for a proposed handbook of policy to be issued by the Reports Division in April, 1943. This statement, in addition to listing the formal aspects of Community Government, called attention to this point as follows:

"The increased confidence in the Council will be concurrent with the exercise of the legislative authority and the perfection of channels of communication between residents and administration.

"In the performance of this latter function lies the opportunity for Community Government to weld together and express the varying points of view within the community. Where this has been achieved the Council has established direct relations with block organizations, work groups and other interested groups within the community. Through these relations the Council is able to encourage the expression of the needs and ideas and to transmit these to the administration. This in turn has facilitated understanding and solution of common problems of community life."

It was not until April that the first letter to the Project Directors suggesting a direct contact with the Community Council was sent from Washington. Previous to this time, all

communications which involved evacuees usually included a phrase, suggesting that the Project Director "consult evacuee leaders." This in itself was a failure to recognize the Community Council as the primary point of contact with the evacuee community and the primary role of the Council.

The letter in question suggested consultation with Councils on relocation and the appointment of a committee to consider problems related to this program. It is perhaps significant that Project Directors were the ones who appointed the Relocation Committees and that they were fairly inactive.

D. ATTITUDES OF PROJECT STAFFS

During the same period that a reorientation was taking place in the thinking in Washington, the project administrators, with a few exceptions, remained dubious as to the value of community government. Minidoka, which had no temporary Council, replied to an inquiry from Washington urging action, by letters from most of the top administrative officials. These letters disclosed that the administrative staff was nearly unanimous in favoring a system of advisors to the Project Director in lieu of community government and expressing the opinion that difficulties at other centers might be due to the presence of Community Councils. These administrators felt that there had been a considerable measure of evacuee participation and that it was unwise to change the present system. Included in these letters were four written by evacuees, all of which were in favor of community government, and no one of which referred to any past participation in the affairs of the project.

At centers where Councils were organized there was a pattern of by-passing or ignoring the Council Group. At Gila River, the attitude was expressed by the Project Attorney that community government was a plaything and meaningless. The Project Director there consulted with members of the temporary Council, the Block Managers, or any other group which he designated. At Granada, the Project Director had appointed an Advisory Committee of five, the functions of which paralleled those of the Community Council. At Rohwer and Jerome, the Block Managers were as frequently or more often consulted on center problems than the Community Council. Central Utah provided an exception to this general situation. There the Project Director followed a consistent policy of consultation and kept the Council informed of administrative and community problems. A functioning system of communication had evolved at Colorado River as a result of the November incident.

Part of the explanation for this confused situation was the failure of Project Administrators to recognize the functions of the Community Council as separate and complementary to those of the administration. The residents were similarly uninformed

and had little confidence in the Council to secure amelioration of existing conditions. With each new crisis, rump groups were organized to negotiate with the Project Director. The administration by consulting with such rump groups further contributed to the ineffectiveness of the representative function of the Council.

There were, however, some bright spots in this generally discouraging picture. From Central Utah came a letter from the Chairman of the Community Council, prepared in response to a letter from the Chairman of the Council at Colorado River, which is remarkable in that it anticipated a number of future policies of the WRA and offered the suggestion that machinery be established for consultation between evacuees' representatives and Washington policy-makers on evacuees' problems. The fact that no action was taken in Washington in response to this communication is again indicative of the policy of assumption of complete responsibility by WRA administrators for project management, and the failure to recognize the contribution which organized evacuees might make to the solution of many problems.

The concrete proposals are presented below to indicate the kind of thinking on over-all problems at that early date.

- "(1) To be given the opportunity to have representative in Washington to form the over-all WRA policy particularly with emphasis on the budget which will be soon passed by the Congress.
- "(2) To make a request to obtain transportation expenses to job destinations and also a machinery to secure temporary loan after arriving. This, because of the fact that most evacuees are without sufficient funds.
- "(3) Request to the War Department, WRA and other governmental agencies not to penalize "teen-age" youths without giving them the opportunity to correct themselves. This is in connection with the recent registration because of the fact that they had difficulty in making their decisions and also on account of their youth and immaturity.
- "(4) Concern over the possible and probable chaos in the sense of manpower shortage within the center as a result of the operation of the policy to relocate. Would it not be possible to conduct a survey to determine the possible future labor condition in order to forestall that possibility prior to its actual happening?"*

E. EXTENDING REPRESENTATION TO THE ISSEI

The exclusion of Issei from holding elective office had been a stumbling block to the evacuees in their attempts to

*Extract from letter by Tsune Baba, Chairman Topaz Community Council to Charles F. Ernest, Project Director, March 13, 1943.

establish permanent government. In the course of time, and with the tacit approval of project officials, a semi-satisfactory solution to the problem was being achieved at various centers.

Poston, Granada, Rohwer, and Jerome had established Issei Advisory Boards, which were complementary to the temporary Community Councils. At Heart Mountain and Granada, the attempts to secure approval of an upper advisory elected group of Issei had been disapproved by Washington. The discrimination was overcome at Granada, however, by an agreement that the Block Managers would be a completely Issei group and the resignation of the Nisei then serving in that capacity. Heart Mountain had met the situation by preparing a charter which gave to the Community Council powers far greater than those provided in the policy statement. The rejection of this charter by the administration led to a period of non-activity and status quo with Issei Block Chairmen as representative of the residents. Manzanar had given up all intentions of attempting to establish community government and the project administration was using Block Managers as the channel of communication with the evacuees. Central Utah had appointed a number of Issei to various committees and many were Block Managers. At Minidoka, an advisory group, almost entirely Issei in composition, was consulted by the administration.

The solution of Issei representation at Tule Lake was solved by the establishment of a Planning Board. This board was formally established with a charter setting forth its membership, organization, and responsibilities. The preamble of this charter was a clear statement of the intention of the residents to meet the problem of lack of Issei representation. It read:

"Because of the WRA ruling that no Issei shall serve on the Community Council, there has been a feeling that the former has not been adequately represented. In the face of such facts, it has become necessary that some kind of an Issei organization be formulated to assist the Council in the Community affairs."

The Planning Board was originally initiated by a resolution of the temporary Community Council and its charter closely paralleled the charter of that of the Council. Its membership was entirely Issei. Each block elected one representative, and the representatives from the seven wards selected from their number one member to serve on the Planning Board. The election was by popular vote, and all residents were eligible as electors. The Planning Board was advisory with direct channels of communication with the Project Director, the Community Council, and the residents. Provision was also made for appointment of a staff to be composed of one Issei, one Nisei, and one Kibei. The purpose of the staff

was to gather the necessary information to permit the Planning Board to take constructive action. It also provided that the Executive Secretary and one other member of the Council would maintain permanent contact with the Board. A memorandum prepared in Washington in January, 1943 said in part.

"The organization of the Board and the procedures for influencing and determining public opinion are as truly democratic as could be wished for. The positive character of the Board to investigate and plan for the betterment of the community is commendable. Lastly, the utilization of Issei participation in a complementary and not competitive manner may be the solution to our problem of community government. The Issei may be and probably are the real power in the community, but (here) they operate in organized and systematic manner for the betterment of the community and provide advice to the younger and more American Nisei group."

These attempts on the part of the evacuees to meet the realistic need for Issei representation, together with the recommendations from project personnel and a clearer appreciation of the problem in Washington, were contributing factors to the decision to change the policy of Issei representation. Among those in Washington were some who originally favored the inclusion of the Issei and had gone along hesitantly with the original policy. They, too, pressed for a change in this direction.

The amendment to Administrative Instruction 34 opening the way for Issei participation was signed by the Director on April 19, 1943. The change in policy was justified in a prefatory statement which pointed out that continued departure of the more mature leaders among the citizen-evacuees who had taken an active part in community affairs, left the younger and immature citizens, who were not as well-qualified, to assume the responsibilities of community government. It also pointed out that as this process continued, the alien evacuees would soon constitute the majority of the mature population. For that reason, it was advisable to modify the policy previously followed by extending to the Issei eligibility for elective office.

An air mail letter announcing the change in policy was sent to all Project Directors on April 23. This letter pointed out the change should receive favorable reception. The change was conceived as a liberalization of policy in response to the desires and wishes of the community and the recommendations of the staff. Reference was made to some of the fears expressed by various administrative people. These included the election of a preponderance of Issei members, a loss of prestige by the citizens, extensive use of the Japanese language, and emphasis on Japanese social characteristics. The benefits seen were "bringing Issei leadership, that might have been driven under-

ground, into the open; the more experienced Issei will cooperate better in solving problems; the loss through relocation of the best Nisei and probable 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 aims placing responsibility for a stable Community on all."

The announcement was made at the centers on May 5 and had an immediate desirable effect. Within the following three months, charters were submitted and voted upon by the residents of six centers, Rohwer, Jerome, Colorado River, Gila River, and Heart Mountain. All gave approval to the plan of government which included Issei eligibility to hold office. Minidoka also voted on a charter but through a combination of factors it was defeated. At a subsequent election it was approved.

CHAPTER V

THE WAY AHEAD

Community government had won a permanent, if minor role, in the thinking of both evacuees and administrators by the summer of 1943. The Administration was turning more frequently and extensively to the Councils as a medium of communication with the residents. Project staffs had learned that the Councils and Council groups were as anxious as themselves for a well-ordered community and that the Councils could lend real assistance in meeting some problems.

Community understanding and acceptance of the representative system had similarly increased as the channels through the Council to the Administration became better known and more frequently used. The residents began to look to their representatives to bring problems of the community to the attention of the Administration.

The projects had become better organized. The flow of goods and services had become sufficiently routinized that the inefficiencies and unmet needs could be placed in a perspective of relative importance. Many of the residents had settled down to an existence that was generally satisfactory and from which there grew certain satisfactions and benefits. They had learned the limitations of expectancy although many anxieties were still reflected from time to time. These anxieties concerned food, health, employment, education, recreation, etc. They were the normal concerns of a group which had little control of the events which shaped their lives and which feared that what little they had might be taken away or greatly curtailed.

The increasing success with which the Council was able to secure remedial measures in some areas and to provide an understanding of limitations in others contributed to a growing sense of security.

A. SEGREGATION

There were, however, anxieties which rose and fell in intensity with each new move or change in policy by the WRA. One such anxiety was the fear that the Government would decide upon a policy of segregation and forced relocation. Rumors were current in many projects, during registration, that the Government would separate the "disloyals" from the "loyals", and then would disperse the "loyals" throughout the country.

This rumor was a contributing factor to the large number of people who sought refuge by staying at Tule Lake during segregation and to the large number of repatriation requests at other centers by families who sought to escape being ejected by seeking a haven with the "disloyals."

Following registration and the disclosure that large numbers had requested repatriation and others had answered the loyalty question in the negative, agitation for segregation increased from many directions. Pressure was placed on the WRA by the Army, Congressional Committees, administrative personnel, and the residents themselves. The decision to segregate was announced in early July. Previous to this time, however, the Washington staff had been engaged in discussing the plans and policies for segregation and the administration of a segregation center. The decision was welcomed by most project personnel as a solution to the difficult problem of administering a center composed of groups which appeared to be diametrically opposed in their ultimate objective. One segment of the evacuees had declared for Japan or against the United States, and the other for America.

Segregation was in reality a step in the direction of securing the voluntary relocation of all evacuees. It was the hope of the WRA officials that upon completion of segregation, it would be possible to gain widespread official and public acceptance for the evacuees; to remove many of the security restrictions at relocation centers; and thus to greatly reduce center population by relocation and dispersal throughout the country.

The entire program was carefully prepared and contingencies provided for. Both Washington and the centers had learned many useful lessons from the confused period of registration, and strenuous efforts were made to insure that there was complete understanding of the objectives and plans necessary to accomplish the regrouping of people based on national sympathies. A meeting of project directors was held in Denver the latter part of July. Policies and procedures were carefully studied to ensure complete understanding. Preparations had been under way previous to the project directors' meeting, but received increased impetus following their return. Two of the project directors, acting upon a suggestion made at the Denver meeting, called upon their Community Councils for major assistance. At other centers, the movement was under the direct supervision of the administrative staff with the assistance of the block managers and in some instances an advisory group drawn from the Council, from the segregants or both.

The organization of the movement at Central Utah, where the Community Council was given a major share of responsibility, is of interest as an example of the operation of the principles of joint participation and responsibility. There, the Project

Director following receipt of information on segregation, established a staff group called the Administrative Transfer Committee. His next step was to inform the representatives of the Community Council of the new policy. The Community Council immediately called block meetings, at which this information was passed on and the segregants elected one of their members to be a representative. Thirty-four blocks sent representatives to the Transferee Committee. This group elected a chairman who in turn appointed five members from the committee to serve as the executive group. The Community Council delegated to the Community Cooperative Committee of five members the responsibility for representing the remainder of the residents.

Since the movement involved both the transfer of people from Central Utah and the reception and induction of people from Tule Lake, there was a division of community functions. The Committee of Transferees was primarily concerned with facilitating the smooth movement of their group from the center, while the Council Committee was also concerned with the reception of the incoming Tule Lakers. During the several weeks of preparation and movement, the General Transfer Committee, composed of the Administrative Transfer Committee, the Transferee or Segregant Committee, and the Community Cooperative Committee were in almost continuous consultation on problems connected with the total segregation movement.

The merit of this plan of organization was the adequate channels of communication through the Community Council and the Transferee Committee direct to each individual segregant. The organization was not only one for communication, but it was also a planning and action group. Through this organization, the segregants selected from among their own members the train monitor, car captains, and others having responsibilities during the trip. As a result of carefully developed plans with full participation of the community, the movement of Tule Lake bound segregants was accomplished without difficulty.

The Community Cooperative Committee through the Council kept the Council and the residents informed of plans and developments and secured their cooperation. Through the Special Events Committee of the Council, plans were made for welcoming the newcomers. Two or three days after the arrival of each train, a special program under the sponsorship of the Council was arranged for the benefit of the new people. This committee also cooperated in the reception and induction. The incoming people were met at the gate by the Boy Scouts Drum and Bugle Corp, escorted to the induction center where light refreshments were served, and then directed to their permanent or temporary quarters.

The organization of the movement at the Rohwer Center was similar to that at Central Utah. There a committee of the

Community Council and a committee of segregants worked in close collaboration with the project administration in effecting all plans, and as a result of such actions drew favorable comment from the project director.

Segregation was an important event in the development of community government. Its chief importance rested in the removal from the centers of a number of people who were actively opposed to any form of cooperation with the project administration. This removal made possible the hastening of the development of a common basis of action for all center residents by themselves and the WRA. Project administration, with the removal of many who were suspected by the administration of being actually or potentially trouble-makers, was more disposed to have additional confidence that a Community Council could handle internal problems. The active cooperation of the Councils at two centers, and to a lesser extent elsewhere, provided a sound basis for future cooperative action.

B. THE POLICY OF RELOCATION

Even before the completion of segregation, preliminary discussions and plans were being developed in Washington for the initiation of an all-out program of relocation. These plans included staff reorganization, the expansion of the field service, and a concentrated program of information directed at the American public and the evacuees. The reorganization included the separation of the relocation function from the Employment Division and the establishment of the Division of Relocation. Field offices were expanded and increased in number. Citizens' committees were organized and understandings reached with local, civic, and Government groups.

The Authority recognized that so long as the West Coast continued to be closed to evacuees that it was impossible to achieve a complete depopulation of the centers. However, it was expected that many thousands would leave quickly under new relocation procedures and when this did not materialize, it was considerable of a shock for many WRA officials to learn that in spite of desirable economic opportunities, good public acceptance, continued relaxation of security measures by the Army, many, if not most of the evacuees, preferred the institutional life of a relocation center to the then unknown security of living in an American community. The enigma of people choosing the security behind barbed wire and armed guards to the freedom of normal society was not easily understood. It was felt by many that a combination of pressure, salesmanship, and incentives would do the job.

The real deterrents were little understood at that time.

One of the most important of these factors was the belief held by many evacuees that there would be a negotiated peace. Many, especially the Issei thought that they would receive special consideration under the peace treaty terms which would reimburse them for their loss and reestablish them in as favorable, if not more desirable, status than previous to evacuation. An additional and important factor was an intense fear of personal and economic insecurity on the outside. These fears included those of physical violence, destruction of property, and economic discrimination. There was also a large group which had greater security and more comforts than it had known before and was not anxious to relinquish them. The Authority approached the problem on the basis of the need to create interest, the desirability of relocation, the selling of the advantages of a particular locality or occupation, and the providing of services for those who had decided to leave.

Beginning in September and continuing for several months, many of the Washington staff were almost continuously engaged in discussing the pros and cons of relocation, resistance to relocation, organization, procedures, policies, and the like. As agreement evolved, reorganization was seen as the initial step. There was also recognized, however, the need to set objectives for the relocation programs and to secure their acceptance by both the project staff and the evacuees; to provide channels of communication with the evacuees and to secure their participation in a relocation program; and to implement the program with policies and procedures. It was believed that through organization providing services, an educational program to stimulate thinking about the future, and the removal of psychic blocks through counseling, many more would leave the centers.

From these discussions, there were prepared and sent to the projects three memoranda which contained the philosophy, organization, and plans for relocation. A considerable portion of these memoranda recognized the need for evacuee participation and understanding of the relocation program, if it were to succeed. The memorandum of October 28 recognized this need in a sentence which read, "A progressive relocation program can be achieved only through the full and complete participation and cooperation of the evacuee population; and there should be increased delegation of responsibility to the Community Council and other evacuee groups to make their participation possible."

This was elaborated by an additional comment quoted below.

"Evacuee Participation

"The future of the evacuees is of greater concern to them than to anyone else, and they should fully share in

planning their relocation. This should be borne in mind in carrying out the relocation program, and evacuee cooperation should be secured through delegation of responsibilities. Since the Council is elected to represent the community, it is essential that it be involved in the relocation planning, and other representative evacuee groups may have additional contributions to make. The first step in evacuee participation might well be the determination by the Council of the answers to certain basic problems that will affect future participation, such as

1. Kind of organization that should be established by the Community Council to deal with relocation problems for the evacuee community, with full consideration given existing evacuee relocation committees.
2. The relationship of the Community Council and evacuee relocation committees to project staff functions in connection with relocation.
3. The nature and extent of the responsibilities that may be effectively delegated to the Community Council (and the evacuee community) in connection with the relocation program.

"It is recognized that plans for greater evacuee participation are well under way at some projects, and suggestions and comments of Project Directors and Community Councils growing out of their experience will be welcomed. Extra copies of this letter are being sent to you under separate cover so that you can make them available to the Council."

The suggestion was also made that a national conference of evacuee representatives, including both those at the centers and those who had relocated together with representatives of Japanese-Americans who had never been in relocation centers, be held, the purpose of which conference "would be to draw the attention of the Japanese-Americans to the larger problems of relocation, to stimulate them to plan for the eventual absorption into American life of all persons of Japanese descent and to form the basis for a comprehensive assimilation program."

A subsequent memorandum of November 8 elaborated on the earlier statements and provided a detailed plan for achieving the objective of joint planning between the staff and the evacuees. Full recognition was given to the Community Council as representatives of the evacuees and as the group which should assume a major responsibility in the planning efforts.

The plan provided for the establishment of a Relocation Planning Commission to be appointed by the Community Council and to be composed of representatives drawn from various resident groups. This group would then select an Executive Secretary. The Project Director was to appoint a Relocation Committee composed of staff members with the Relocation Program Officer as its Executive Secretary. Three representatives of each of these groups were to constitute the Relocation Executive Board with the Relocation Officer as the Executive Secretary and with the Executive Secretary of the Relocation Planning Commission as an ex-officio member.

The function of the evacuee commission was "to coordinate the efforts of the various committees (of the Council), to prepare regular reports of progress, to receive suggestions for improvement of the program, and to transmit these suggestions and reports to the Relocation Executive Board."

The Relocation Committee had as its responsibility "planning and coordinating the contribution of the various divisions and the sections to relocation. It will develop procedures and provide general guidance for all coordinated operations. It will prepare and submit recommendations to the Project Director on changes in organization or program emphasis which lead to better working relations between the divisions and sections. It will be responsible for planning active participation of all staff members and utilizing interests and capabilities of all persons in whatever capacity."

The responsibilities of the Relocation Executive Board were planning, coordination, and guidance. In this capacity, it would make recommendations to the Project Director for transmission to Washington for changes in policy or program and to secure agreement for policies and plans as they operated in the center. It would define responsibility of the staff and evacuee groups, develop cooperative relationships, determine the sequence of phases of the program and work out details implementing agreements or resolve disagreements.

Further implementation of the new emphasis on relocation was spelled out in a memorandum on welfare counseling issued November 9. This memorandum called attention to the individual and family problems of a social nature which were basic in relocation resistance. It also developed a plan for individual and family counseling and put the responsibility on the Welfare Section. Its objectives were to assist evacuees in developing plans for relocation, to furnish information on the resources of communities to which evacuees might go, to gather basic family data which could be transmitted to the appropriate relocation office when a family relocated, and to provide WRA

with information for an over-all program. It was not intended that the family counseling program be used as a pressure technique to force people to relocate. Its major objective was to transmit reliable information to the people counseled and through the interviewing technique relieve them of many psychological blocks.

A detailed approach to secure community acceptance for family counseling, and to facilitate interviewing was included as a part of this document. It provided that the head counselor of the Welfare Section should discuss the program with the Community Council and having secured its understanding and acceptance ask for the appointment of a Counseling Committee to work with the Welfare Section. This committee would also be thoroughly informed of the objectives and techniques of counseling, and would assume responsibility for advising the Welfare Section on its approach and also familiarizing the residents with the objectives and the basis of scheduling interviews. It was proposed that interviewing be conducted on a block basis and that previous to scheduling interviews a thorough understanding and acceptance be gained by the residents. When this had been achieved, the Block Manager would then schedule each family in his block for the Welfare Section. This procedure would be repeated block by block until the interviewing program had been completed.

These plans represented the most comprehensive and detailed attempt ever made by the War Relocation Authority to bring joint efforts to bear on the solution of a common problem. Their description will help us to understand the subsequent events and to evaluate the kind of relationships existing between the administrative staff, the Community Council, and the evacuees.

The failure of this plan to work as it was outlined rests upon a history of past relationships, inability to develop organization, and a lack of understanding between the WRA and the evacuees. The plan was partially successful. However, a year and one-half later, the Welfare Section was still engaged in conducting interviews or reinterviewing families where an inadequate interview had first been held. A year later one of the centers established its first Evacuee Relocation Commission. Another center which had made a number of unsuccessful attempts to secure evacuee participation finally concluded its attempts were useless. Counseling was divided between the Welfare Section and the Relocation Division and in actual operation assumed a character far different from that originally intended. If we study the situation more closely, we can learn what parts worked well and which did not, and why.

Generally speaking, the response to the plan for the organization of staff-evacuee relocation groups indicated better

understanding than that accorded other portions of these documents. Project Directors did appoint staff committees to discuss problems of relocation, even though with a few exceptions, these committees were inactive within a short period. The failure came largely from an inability to convince participating staff members that they could make a significant contribution to the total relocation program beyond their regular duties. At these meetings, the Relocation Officer made a report of relocation progress, new policies, and procedures, etc. This was not the function envisaged for them in the original statement.

Several of the Community Councils established Relocation Planning Commissions. Again, however, there was considerable misunderstanding and misinterpretation on the part of both the administrative people and the evacuees of the function of this group. At some centers, the Relocation Officer attempted to utilize the group as a channel for convincing people to relocate. When the commission resisted his efforts to be included as a part of his propaganda program, he either lost interest or decided that the commission was useless.

Evacuee participation in relocation was a limited success at several centers. An active Relocation Commission was already functioning at Rohwer and Gila River. At both these centers, these groups were directly related to or were creations of the Community Council rather than of the Administration. Commissions were also started at all other centers except Manzanar and Poston. The one at Central Utah was never very active and defined its activities narrowly. The Granada Commission was a creation of the Administration originally, and only after several months did it become identified with the Council. It was not until the fall of 1944 that an evacuee relocation group was established at Poston.

In one respect, these evacuee groups achieved a much larger measure of success than might have been anticipated under the circumstances. For one thing, relocation was not a popular subject among the evacuees, and it was with some difficulty that willingness to serve on these groups was secured. There was the ever present fear, which was frequently justified, that these evacuee groups would become subject to administrative pressure of a kind that was unpopular within the center. The attempt on the part of some relocation supervisors to place responsibility for drumming up trade for the Relocation Office was resisted and was a perversion of the original intent. The fact that these commissions survived the staff Relocation Committee and were generally more active indicates that they did meet a need in the community. At those projects where the Relocation Officer met frequently with the commissions and kept them informed of policy and problems, there was a much better response. The failure of administrative leader-

ship was in large measure responsible for these groups failing to assume the role intended for them.

A third factor contributing to the lack of widespread participation was the inability of the Welfare Section to initiate its program of family counseling within a reasonable period of time. It was not until several months^{later} that personnel had been recruited and that decisions were made as to the data to be gathered in the family interviews. When the centers were finally informed of what was desired, it appeared to many people, including the evacuees, that the counseling program was in effect another registration. As such it encountered considerable opposition. Furthermore, there is no record that any Welfare Section ever attempted to enlist the support of the community in the systematic manner outlined in the memorandum of November 9. By the time the interviewing unit did get under way, its original purpose had been greatly modified and a large portion of the operational job with personnel had been allocated to the Relocation Division.

The inability to achieve the objectives of evacuee participation in a relocation program was due to many factors inherent in the total situation. These factors included a set pattern of managerial direction and supervision by an administrative staff and the failure to appreciate or understand the useful potentialities of consultation with evacuees through organization in the achievement of a goal. There was also the difficulty of definition of objectives. The administrative staff was primarily interested in moving increasingly larger numbers of people out of the centers. Many of the evacuees were not interested in leaving the centers under the conditions then existing, and others were unwilling to leave under any conditions.

Although this situation was fully recognized in the three memoranda discussed above and procedures developed to break down opposition, a general interpretation at the projects was that this new program really meant increased pressures to get more people to move. Many of the actions of the WRA began to be interpreted by Administration and evacuee alike as evidence that pressure was to be a primary motivation for relocation. This attitude, justified or not, did much to increase feelings of insecurity and to prevent discussion which might lead to a commitment to leave the center. There was also the failure of inadequate implementation with personnel and procedures on the part of the Washington Office to initiate the counseling program in such a way that its objectives could be understood by the community.

There was, however, one immediate response from the evacuees. There developed a demand for a conference of center delegates to discuss problems of relocation and relocation centers.

C. THE ABORTIVE EVACUEE CONFERENCE

The first serious attempt to secure evacuee participation on a major policy problem, that of relocation, evoked wide interest at several centers. The suggestion in the Director's letter of October 28, 1943 that a National Conference of evacuee and WRA officials might be desirable was followed up by a resolution of the Community Council at Heart Mountain favoring such a proposal. This resolution was adopted by the Council November 30, transmitted to the National Director, and copies sent to all other centers requesting their support. A similar resolution from Rohwer and concurrence from Councils at other centers caused officials in Washington to give serious consideration to such a meeting.

Agreement was reached with the Director that the WRA would sponsor a National Evacuee Conference on relocation the latter part of January, 1944 in Chicago. It was also agreed that each center should send two representatives and that relocated people in each of the eight areas should also send representatives. It was decided, because of possible public criticism, that it would be unwise for the WRA to pay the expenses of these delegates and that the individuals or communities must defray traveling and living expenses. Announcement of this decision was made by teletype to each of the centers and relocation offices on January 1. The teletype requested a reply by January 10, listing important questions to be discussed and decision as to representation. It said "prior to the conference, you will also want to agree on and have ready a list of the major problems facing center residents in terms of their future as well as specific plans or proposals for creating better understanding and working relationships between the evacuees and the Authority for discussion at the conference."

The response from all centers, except Manzanar, was an agreement of the need for such a conference and willingness to attend, with strong representations that WRA bear the expense of the delegates. The WRA again reiterated its stand on delegate expense.

During the next few days, there was much discussion in Washington as to the organization and purpose of such a conference which disclosed serious disagreement. The Relocation Division maintained that the conference was primarily for discussion of ways and means to increase relocation. Others took the position that the conference objectives should be framed in terms of the larger problem of the future of Japanese in America, part of which was relocation. They also maintained that there was need to develop a working basis for creating understanding between the evacuees on problems besides those of relocation.

The combination of disagreement in the Washington Office, the attempt of the evacuees to secure expenses for delegates, and the need for additional time to develop understanding and agreement on an agenda, led to the decision to postpone the conference indefinitely and the centers were so notified on January 14. Detailed explanation of the position of the WRA for the reasons of its inability to cover expenses of such a conference and of the objectives to be sought from such a meeting were contained in a letter of January 29 address to all the Councils. This letter said in part.

"When we asked ourselves what purpose such a meeting should serve, we came to the conclusion that it should be phrased in the broadest possible language. The many anxieties and uncertainties which the evacuees feel individually and in the group could be encompassed under the general heading of the future of all persons of Japanese ancestry in the United States. There is no delusion that one or many meetings could dispel all those anxieties, but it was hoped that through the opportunity to discuss fully the manifold problems which the evacuees are facing some mutual agreement could be reached on the nature of the problems and of action that could alleviate or help remedy the situation.

"Delegates would undoubtedly wish to present from their point of view the many and complex problems facing the evacuees. Family adjustment, economic security, social acceptance, and the post-war world would all come in for their share of discussion. There should also be constructive discussion where plans and programs could be proposed that would work to remove as many as possible of the hindrances which the evacuees saw facing them.

"Since these problems are also of primary concern to the Authority, there would be an opportunity for mutual exchange of constructive ideas. An opportunity would also be afforded for a statement of our relations with Congress and the American people, the expenditure of money and the legal controls and responsibilities which we must carry. A review of the legal standing of the evacuees as presently interpreted by the courts could be given. The limitation which surround any Federal program and their specific application to the program of the War Relocation Authority could be presented."

This communication also stated that the WRA would assume the responsibility for acting as a clearing house for statements prepared by various Councils. It was assumed that by circulation of these various documents from center to center, it would be possible to reach agreement on the fundamental issues and on an agenda for such a meeting.

The Heart Mountain Council which had taken the initiative, in a letter of February 9 made a counter-proposal. It suggested that the conference be held at the Granada Relocation Center from March 6 to 17, 1944, and that the first half of this period be for evacuee delegates only. It pointed out that the expense of holding a meeting in Chicago was so great that it would work a real hardship. The letter concluded, that Heart Mountain would send delegates to a conference "where and when the conference is called and regardless of expense. The main thing is to call the conference and call it as soon as possible."

The Heart Mountain Council, meanwhile, continued with its plans and in a letter of February 22 reiterated the need for a National Conference. It also proposed the establishment of small family type hostels to house from 50 to 100 families. It recommended financial assistance which might be secured from pooling resources of the cooperatives. In the meantime, the decision had been reached in Washington to postpone indefinitely any conference. The declared reasons were the unrest surrounding Selective Service and the transfer of WRA to the Department of the Interior.

The question of a National Conference was finally disposed of by an Administrative Notice issued April 15, which in addition to pointing out the undesirability of a meeting within the near future disapproved of any evacuee meeting at a relocation center. The point was made, however, that if evacuees wished to have a meeting outside a relocation center, the WRA would have no objection, but cautioned that no action should be taken that would adversely affect the group.

Interest in a conference in the meantime had subsided with the announcement of Selective Service and a new interest in some of the old problems of civil rights, citizenship status, etc. It is not clear that any large segment of the population was ever actively in favor of such a meeting, and those who were, were discouraged because of what they considered to be WRA's lack of good intentions by its failure to pay delegates' expenses.

D. SELECTIVE SERVICE AND THE COUNCILS

The reinstitution of Selective Service for the Nisei in January 1944 precipitated another major crisis. The old

wounds of evacuation were reopened. Bitterness and resentment which had lain dormant for several months were expressed in violent emotional outbursts. Much of the discussion represented the honest effort to secure answers to legitimate questions. Some people used the incident, however, to stir up opposition, while others used the opportunity to recount past injustices and seek a redress of grievances.

Petitions addressed to the President, Vice-President, Secretary of War, Secretary of the Interior, the Director of WRA, and other public agencies and officials were prepared and transmitted through the Community Councils. These petitions represented the reaction of the more responsible residents following the initial outbursts of emotion, and were close approximations to majority thinking. These petitions were also a reflection of the fears of continuing discrimination and ill treatment. Many Nisei felt that the plan of the War Department was in effect an affirmation of a second class citizenship status; others, particularly parents, were fearful that Nisei troops would be used for suicide missions and their treatment as casualties and in training would be inadequate and inferior to that provided for other American soldiers. These uncertainties were a normal reaction of people who had been subjected to a forced evacuation and who had for many months been removed from the main stream of American life. The kind of anxieties were those of an isolated group which lived in an environment of uncertainty. Each petition contained an affirmation of loyalty and a desire to accept the obligations of citizenship, but included a list of grievances and objectives which were considered to be a seeded restoration of rights and privileges.

If we examine the events at several centers, we can better understand some of the factors at work. The Community Council at Granada became the focal point for the conflict which developed at that center. The issue, as first defined, was one of resistance to Selective Service unless a full restoration of civil rights and recompense for losses engendered by evacuation were guaranteed. The more moderate group favored cooperation with Selective Service but asked for favorable attention to evacuee grievances. When voted upon only four blocks dissented from the more moderate course. The alien members of the Council who had originally disavowed any direct interest in the problem aligned themselves with the non-ultimatum group.

Following an expression of loyalty, the petition stated, "we believe, however, that the rights and privileges of citizenship, in all justice, be combined with the duties and obligations of citizenship." It then proceeded to list point by

point the conditions which the signers felt would need to be met before the rights and privileges were fully restored.

The petition asked that citizens be eligible for all branches of the Armed Services without regard to racial ancestry. Request was made for the right for all citizens to travel wherever they wished in the United States which included the opportunity to return to the West Coast states, from which they were still excluded. It asked for the restoration of full civil rights guaranteed under the constitution. The request was made for a guarantee of physical safety and provision of adequate economic means for those who resettled. The need for clarification of voting rights was mentioned and the desirability for extension of eligibility to citizenship to the aliens. It requested fair treatment for those who remained in the relocation centers and an adequate wage for work performed, based on U. S. Army standards. Request was made that the Government would assume the responsibility for enlightening the American public as to the difference between the enemy Japanese and the law-abiding and loyal Japanese in the United States. It requested the removal of restrictions preventing attendance at certain institutions of higher education. The final point urged that the Government take precautionary measures that never again would there need to be an evacuation for either Japanese or any other minority group.

Feelings against certain aspects of the Selective Service program also ran high at Central Utah. There a Citizens' Committee composed of two representatives from each block was established. The Community Council established a Selective Service Committee which included a representative of the Citizens' Committee as one of its members. The Citizens' Committee prepared a petition which in its drafting revealed the divergent attitudes found elsewhere.

The petition was transmitted through the Community Council and raised a number of questions. It posed the question of the legality of induction since the citizens affected were in effect incarcerated and under supervision of military guards. It asked questions regarding the basis for the determination of extending Selective Service to the Nisei, the status of returned veterans, the limitation of service in the Armed Services and the reason for a segregated unit. A request was made for the extension of citizenship rights to aliens; the reopening of the West Coast; and dependency allotments. It asked for the elimination of the special procedure for war plant clearance as applied to persons of Japanese ancestry and for measures to counteract discrimination and to restore full civil rights.

The petition from Minidoka was prepared by a Citizens' Committee and covered many of the points already mentioned, but included a request for special military training in colleges and universities, equal opportunity for advancement,

and equality in employment in industry. This petition also asked for favorable consideration to the parents of soldiers in the Army and their reclassification to a friendly alien status, financial restitution for loss, and action against anti-Japanese discrimination and propaganda.

The situation which developed at Heart Mountain was more dramatic and heated than at other centers, and the results were more serious. There, a small group under the name of the Fair Play Committee agitated not only for restoration of civil rights and protested certain aspects of the program, but also used the occasion to attack the WRA and the local Community Council. As a result of temporary, but widespread support, the Fair Play Committee was able to develop considerable resistance to Selective Service with the consequence that a fairly large group of young men refused to report for induction.

The Community Council composed entirely of Issei had at first maintained a "hands off" attitude toward the whole issue. As the feeling became more intense and the position of the Council came under criticism of the Fair Play Committee leaders, the Council took the lead in preparing a petition which in its contents was similar to that of other centers. This petition reaffirmed the loyalty of the signers, called attention to the hardships of evacuation, asked for universal application of the draft without segregation, and induction into all branches of the Armed Services, the return to the West Coast, full civil rights, and the same treatment for Nisei soldiers as for other American soldiers. There was also a petition signed by Issei which simply commended the Nisei petition to the consideration of the President. During the ensuing period of conflict, Council members were forced to define their position and contributed much to maintain sanity and balanced judgment on the issues involved.

Although the petitions produced little immediate amelioration for the mass of the evacuees, they did clarify the situation and gave an emotional release. As the process of calling young men to the Army proceeded, many of the earlier problems were satisfactorily solved. Nisei were made eligible for the special Army training program at universities and colleges. The long delayed process of induction after physical examination was gradually shortened. Letters from boys actually in the Army must also have had their affect.

Perhaps, as important a factor as any, was the fundamental cooperativeness of the Japanese. The desire to give some expression of Godspeed and good wishes to the departing young men gave an opportunity for organized center groups to

participate. At several centers, the Community Council, U. S. O., and parent soldier groups joined together in sponsoring farewells.

The most significant change came with the announcement of casualties from the ranks of those already fighting. At Minidoka, a chairman of the Community Council requested the Project Director for permission to hold a center-wide memorial service in memory of several young men who had been killed. Other centers organized memorial services with evacuees and staff honoring the parents of deceased soldiers. The war had changed from "the war" to "our war".

Incomplete - Needs
Ch. VI, VII and Appendix

Paul