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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY ANALYSIS SECTION

CONFIDENTIAL

MEETING OF THE SPANISH CONSUL, THE HONORABLE F.
DE AMAT, WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF TULE LAKE CENTER,
NEWELL, CALIFORNIA

Training Hall No. 6

November 3, 1943
1:10 P M

PRESENT:

The Honorable F. de Amat,
Consul of the Spanish Embassy.
H. A. Benninghoff,
Far Eastern Division,
State Department,
Washington, D. C.
George Kuratomi,
Chairman.
20 Evacuee Representatives.

GEORGE KURATOMI, CHAIRMAN:

Some basic things people wanted to know was that there are quite a few different elements here. There are still some people here who are loyal and, naturally, are different from us. There are a number of volunteers who came with their relatives. A survey reveals that two to four thousand people are loyal Americans within this Center. They asked that segregation be conducted as soon as possible. One thing they asked was, if possible, they would like to have some definite announcement made from Washington to this respect, and the date, anytime convenient-- after this date, this center would be designated for only those persons who have intentions of going back to Japan.

MR. BENNINGHOFF:

I wouldn't know now, but I can see possibilities in the future. What would you do in cases of those persons who are loyal to Japan but do not wish to repatriate? What would be your attitude?

MR. KURATOMI:

A separate camp would be set up for persons in that category.

CONSUL de AMAT:

There shouldn't be any friction between those people.

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MR. KURATOMI:

A question was brought up that the farmers here will produce just enough food for the consumption of the residents, and Mr. Myer said that if that is the will of the people it would be all right.

The reason for being segregated is because it was the intention of the segregees to go back to Japan or that they cannot be loyal to America. Many of the farm goods were sold in outside markets. Unemployment may be caused if we do not produce more than can be consumed here, but there are many other divisions that can employ more people, such as carpenters, block beautification, road improvement, latrine facilities, Mr. Best has agreed to discuss further with the committee chosen by the people to improve such conditions. At the same time, he pointed out that some difficulties may be involved in settling the latrines because many items cannot be obtained due to priorities and scarcity. Such improvements as wash basins, toilets, building uniform proches for the units are absolutely necessary because of the way it is now, in the morning you cannot wash your face because the cold water is so cold and the hot so hot and there is no basin to mix them.

(1:15 p.m.)

MR. BENNINGHOFF:

For work of that nature you will utilize the people here---

CONSUL DE AMAT:

Now, in regard to that food you raise and send out of camp, part of that is changing because you consume here things you don't produce. In a way it is helping the United States and in other ways you are ehlping yourself when you exchange with other centers.

MR. KURATOMI:

That is true in a way. Since induction into the centers were compulsory, if the people did not wish to work beyond a certain point, the government will be more or less looking after the welfare of the people in here. The food will automatically be coming in here, regardless of the work they would perform. That is true, isn't it?

CONSUL DE AMAT:

Yes.

MR. KURATOMI:

Then there are things, such as the mess division. For that point, I think Mr. Sugimoto will have some clear-cut points, which he can bring up.

MR. BENNINGHOFF:

There is no use of my going into that. Is there any other point that you want me to take up?

MR. KURATOMI: (to Representatives)

Is there anything else?

(Discussion among Representatives)

There is a suggestion that the people who in this Center be considered Japanese nationals regardless of whether they have Japanese citizenship or not. That would have to go through congressional proceedings, wouldn't it?

MR. BENNINGHOFF:

I don't know what the proceedings are. That would be very difficult. I am not even certain that it would be possible anyway.

MR. KURATOMI:

Some of the requests are to ask that Japanese government to please grant Japanese citizenship to the Nisei who are in this Center.

CONSUL DE AMAT:

I don't think that is for me to answer. Each individual has to ask himself and you can't take the responsibility for all the Japanese in this Center.

Mr. Kuratomi:

That's right. But supposing we put up a petition, we can carry it to the---

CONSUL DE AMAT:

Yes, absolutely, through the Spanish Embassy.

MR. HORIUCHI:

Japan has a nationality law of 1924 extending Japanese citizenship to any person who stays in Japan for 24 hours. Now, many people here - these Niseis here - do not have, in effect, American citizenship because once here they are treated, virtually, in effect, as enemy aliens; and they do not have Japanese citizenship, so they would like to ask you to ask the Japanese government to amend the 1924 nationality law granting citizenship to the people of Japanese descent, those who have by their actions manifested loyalty to the country.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Without the formality of the 24 hours---

Mr. HORIUCHI: That's right, with you serving in behalf of the Japanese government, the application of those who want to apply for that through you-----

CONSUL DE AMAT: That, I cannot give any answer. I have to consult with my Embassy. Personally I think something can be worked, but I cannot say anything definite now.

MR. KURATOMI: If it is humanly possible for you, I would like to have you recommend to persons who are in responsible positions to select the personnel in this Center to deal with us, because the other day we had a little difficulty. Unfortunately, the administrative personnel in this Center did not quite understand the psychological - the Japanese psychology - so that they more or less misinterpreted and misunderstood their intentions, which caused unnecessary friction. We understand our position and we know the circumstances under which we are put here, so we are not here to cause any responsible riots or disturbances so long as sincerity from the administrative personnel is shown to us and put on type, black and white, and if their attitude would give us the feeling that they are sincere in their words, I am sure that this center will become a much more peaceful center. For your information, I should say something about the hospital. I dare say, it is inhuman, because what Dr. Peddicord, head of the Medical Department, and what four other doctors are capable of doing and how the Caucasian nurses treat the Japanese patients, speaking from the standpoint of humanity, are beyond words.

Dr. Peddicord, not only once, but during the past week about five major cases came up - two happened to be appendicitis victims - Dr. Peddicord refused to grant permission to operate these persons and on the second or third request from Japanese doctors, finally consented and when these two persons were operated the time was too late. Fortunately, they are still living.

MR. KURATOMI (cont'd): Another case is of a little girl, two years old, who fell in hot water and burned her back--major burns, and the young father took this young girl to the hospital. Dr. Mark, an evacuee from Europe - I think, a Jew - put a very thin coat of salve on and left the kid in that condition until next morning. When Dr. Hashiba reported for work next morning at 7 in the morning, he found this kid unconscious. So he did everything in his power to revive the kid and put this kid back to normal condition and found that blood transfusion was absolutely necessary. He had to have two tubes of this blood. One tube was found which wasn't enough and the child passed away a few hours later. And when this kid's uncle brought up the story in front of Mr. Myer, it was very dramatic. This uncle could not sleep the preceding night and when he came to explain the situation it was something so sacred and something so dramatic that the people in there were just speechless.

And there's another case: A pregnant lady went to the hospital because she felt pain and the Caucasian doctor said that the only thing necessary was three or four injections of morphine and she received three or four injections. As a result, the baby came out dead, still born. According to the Japanese doctors, this baby did not have to die an unnecessary death.

By his actions and by his words, Dr. Peddicord has been considered, not only by the Japanese evacuee doctors and nurses and by the residents of this Center, that he is incapable of holding his position and he is inefficient to carry on his duties as a medical head of this center. In fact, the people wonder how some of these Caucasian doctors ever have been given the privilege to practice medicine. The Caucasian nurses of this center are hostile to the Japanese, not only to the patients but also to the doctors and evacuee nurses. In fact, many times, the Caucasian nurses their ability to these Caucasian nurses.

So the situation at the hospital has never been good. In fact, when these facts were known to the residents, the residents could not restrain any more in going to the administrative office to complain their dissatisfaction. The latest information I heard was that all the doctors and Caucasian nurses were asked to be removed from this hospital. I don't know what will become of it but that is the picture as it stands now.

MR. BENNINGHOFF:

And you asked that---

MR. KURATOMI: Not only the doctors but the residents of this Center. They asked that the Caucasian doctors who are here at the present time and the Caucasian nurses be removed from the hospital to protect the safety of the Japanese evacuees and it was decided by the doctors and the doctors brought a resolution to the residents and the residents approved it.

Another thing is the mess problem---

(Individual discussions)

MR. HORIUCHI: We have two more important things to take up. There are several Japanese who have Japanese citizenship who have been put into this country's army voluntarily--they were drafted with implied coercion. Now, their families are here and they are loyal to Japan and they wonder if you could communicate with the Japanese government to see if those with Japanese citizenship--dual citizenship -- could be given a choice of staying where they are or coming here.

MR. BENNINGHOFF: I'm sure that when they were inducted that they had that choice. Don't they take the oath of allegiance? That's my belief. My belief is that all these people are given the opportunity and if they choose that way, it is their own business if they wish to remain loyal. I don't know exactly. Of course, I'm not sure because I'm not familiar with the army.

MR. HORIUCHI: That's previous to the treatment accorded to the families. Many were inducted before the war began, believing that if they served this country, their parents and their brothers and sisters would be given humane treatment as citizens of this country, as human beings. But after the war broke out, their parents and relatives were thrown into centers like Poston, where Indians couldn't even live. I came from Poston. So many of them changed their minds. Many have been in camps and were deprived of their wooden guns. When President Roosevelt visited a camp - I don't remember where - all the soldiers of Japanese descent were kept in their barracks with M. P. guards and deprived of their guns.

MR. BENNINGHOFF: But how does that concern us here?

MR. KURATOMI: They have relatives here.

MR. BENNINGHOFF: And the relatives wish them to be removed from the army and brought here?

MR. KURATOMI: Yes.

MR. BENNINGHOFF: Do the boys want to themselves?

MR. DURATOMI: Many of them do want, but they are held against their will. You see, under this country's law, a man is born with natural human rights. He gives everything -- so many of them changed their minds.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I do agree with you. A lot of boys are in the army and their fathers are in Santa Fe.

MR. BENNINGHOFF: I don't dispute that at all. In fact, I don't dispute anything.

MR. HORIUCHI: Some of them have Japanese citizenship and--

CONSUL DE AMAT: But many don't. I imagine they didn't go through the technicalities.

MR. HORIUCHI: However, there is the group that do have. Do you think anything could be done?

MR. BENNINGHOFF: Well, frankly, I don't know. The first time I have ever heard of this, and I think it is something for them to decide and for them to go to the commanding officer and whatever the procedure is, for them to decide.

MR. HORIUCHI: However, if they do that, they might be court-martialed.

MR. BENNINGHOFF: THAT, frankly, I don't know.

CONSUL DE AMAT: When a fellow is taken into the army, the authorities ask whether he is loyal to Japan or America. You are right in that. But it is also true that during his separation from his family he may change his mind.

MR. HORIUCHI: Can you report that to the Japanese government and find out?

CONSUL DE AMAT: I can report to the Spanish Embassy if you ask me to report. I feel that most of it can be reported to the Japanese government.

(Off the record)

1:40 p.m.

MR. KURATOMI: Do you have any other questions to ask?

MR. BENNINGHOFF: No, I don't have anything to ask. I came up to see what you had on your mind.

1:40 p.m. Mr. Benninghoff left.

MR. KURATOMI: One thing we have to have cleared up is the hospital case, the really inhuman way we are treated. The reason why the more hot-tempered people assaulted Dr. Peddicord is the reason for that. It only happened last week.

CONSUL DE AMAT: How long has this doctor been here?

MR. KURATOMI: I really don't know because I only came in about a month ago.

MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: He's been here about half a year before segregation. About a half year before you folks came in.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Where was he before? You see, we go to the administration and hear one side - that he is a saint - and we come here and hear something different - that he's a devil. There is a way of knowing by his past history, the way he has worked--

MR. HORIUCHI: I don't know whether this is true here, but I heard that the people here, some of the Japanese supervisors and also the project attorney, Mr. Silverthorne--

Mr. Kuratomi: Silverstein.

Mr. HORIUCHI: That he was a German refugee---

(Interruption. Discussion among Japanese)

MR. KURATOMI: Four new doctors came in recently; two of them refugees from Germany - Jewish people. We are not condemning them as Jewish, to be frank with you. But as doctors,-- two others are Jewish -- nevertheless, these doctors---

CONSUL DE AMAT: How many Jews are there?

Mr. Kuratomi: I don't care about that.

CONSUL DE AMAT: But how many are there?

MR. KURATOMI: I don't know. What I want you to know is that as doctors they are incapable, inefficient; in fact, the Japanese evacuee doctors feel that they should not be allowed to practice medicine, because in many cases-----

CONSUL DE AMAT: What is his name?

MR. KURATOMI: Peddicord. Dr. Peddicord. (Spelled name.) He is in the Klamath Falls Hospital recuperating.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Is that the Jew, that Peddicord?

MR. KURATOMI: I don't know. We frankly don't care, although some of them say so.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Peddicord - that's a French name--

MR. KURATOMI: There has been a petition once before. However, the administrative authorities stopped it. He is still here. Personally I didn't know what kind of a person he was until we received further information from the doctors in the hospital. These doctors that are working here - two of them I know personally - they are not the kind of people who would condemn others for no reason at all.

Another thing we would like to have you know is that these doctors have been asked to use their own equipment. Could there be some possible way of having the WRA purchase the equipment when necessities arise.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I don't get that.

MR. KURATOMI: You see, many doctors are using their own equipment and some of the equipment is not sufficient to perform some major operations.

CONSUL DE AMAT: You need more equipment?

MR. KURATOMI: If the need arises, shouldn't the WRA be responsible for purchasing the supplies?

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes.

MR. KURATOMI: Another thing - true or false - it has been reported to the doctors here that the government or the WRA cannot purchase certain types of medicine, which are absolutely necessary, and the doctors here feel that many times patients have to go through undue hardship or suffering because of lack of medicine. I wonder if this could be rectified.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes, we are going to correct that. The main cause of the disturbance was the hospital?

MR. KURATOMI: That was for one and the mess for another.

CONSUL DE AMAT: You know that I am here to help you. Why haven't you come to me before instead of going on a strike.

MR. KURATOMI: The reason is we have come here very lately; we have been here only a month. It was very fortunate for us to have Mr. Myer visit us and we thought he could take our grievances first to see if they would take proper action to rectify some of the wrongdoings.

CONSUL DE AMAT: But up to that moment you resorted to violence---

MR. KURATOMI: That wasn't done by the residents. There were two or three - some of the hotheads. That was not the produce or part of the program at all. We just went to the administration building to let them realize how much the residents were dissatisfied with the administration and with the way the administrative personnel were running the center. For one thing, many units don't have mops, buckets nor brooms and they can't even sweep.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I realize that.

MR. KURATOMI: Many walls are only put up on one side. You can hear what the next door neighbor is saying. If you want to speak, even to your wife, you have to whisper. Many places don't have closets. Women can't change clothes without being detected from the outside. In some units two families are living together. Of course, they are forced to stay this way because of overcrowded conditions. According to Mr. Best, this lies with the U.S. Congress, but that doesn't hold much water and we would like to have those things improved just as soon as possible.

CONSUL DE AMAT: But my impression, and I am reflecting the opinion of the Spanish Embassy, is that it is always better to get things by the most peaceful way.

MR. KURATOMI: We realize that. If anything of major importance comes up again we will come in contact with you first.

CONSUL DE AMAT: In my experience among the ten relocation centers, I find that if they ask for ten things, out of the ten, I get six. Eight are really the reason for their grievance. We get part of it. But that is that. I mean by this that by asking me is not a waste of time. Things get done.

MR. KURATOMI: I have found that out with you. I have written from 20 to 25 letters to you.

CONSUL DE AMAT: What is your name?

MR. KURATOMI: Kuratomi. George Kuratomi.

CONSUL DE AMAT: What about have you corresponded with me?

Mr. Kuratomi: Various problems.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Now we are talking about that. I would suggest that you stick to real problems, not to international law, not to discussing jurisdic questions. The food is bad and that is the real problem. Some of the problems are really for the League of Nations.

MR. KURATOMI: Mr. Sugimoto, are you here?

MR. SUGIMOTO: Yes.

MR. KURATOMI: He will explain the food situation to you.

CONSUL DE AMAT: The first cause, did you say, was the hospital?

MR KURATOMI: Yes, the hospital, the next would be the food problem. And the employment proposition in this Center-----

CONSUL DE AMAT: Too much unemployment here? There's going to be more if you don't want to work.

MR. KURATOMI: Aside from the 600, the unemployment is very great here. And there are many divisions that could support more people, such as, the mess halls. The mess, it is the unanimous opinion of the chefs---

CONSUL DE AMAT: That they don't have enough?

MR. KURATOMI: Yes, they would like to have 36 persons working instead of 26.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Where else can we employ? Mess halls is one.

MR. KURATOMI: Yes, at the present time the men are cleaning the women's latrines, which is ridiculous. We would like to have women take care of that. We could have about 500 additional

MR. KURATOMI:(cont'd) carpenters. All other centers have enough to take care of their particular blocks. In this center even for minor repairs, there is no one to take care of them. We could have caretakers to take care of the beautification of blocks. As you know, this center is very dusty. Windstorms occur very occasionally. If we could have these caretakers initiate some active program to control this dust -- we could have at least 300, I'm sure.

CONSUL DE AMAT: 300?

MR. KURATOMI: Yes. We could ask for more. We could have recreation leaders within the blocks, such as block mothers, who would take care of small children.

CONSUL DE AMAT: How about your schools. Are you going to start school?

MR. KURATOMI: I have a little notice here. The problem we are up against is---

(Interruption. Discussion among evacuees)

The only place open is the rec halls at the present time, if the residents consent to it. I don't see why we can't use them.

(Memo, mimeographed and signed by Mr Best, shown to Mr. de Amat.)

CONSUL DE AMAT: What was that?

MR. KURATOMI: For school purposes, should the residents consent. Isn't that what it says?

CONSUL DE AMAT: We may ask that.

MR KURATOMI: Majority of the blocks are so fully occupied, the only available space is the rec halls.

CONSUL DE AMAP: You want me to ask the administration?

MR. KURATOMI: The quickest way will be to ask the administration before you leave.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Now---

MR KURATOMI: Yes, ask the administration if we can use the rec halls for school purposes. We would like to have clothing allowance for each person in here whether they be working or not.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes.

MR. KURATOMI: Some centers do provide and others don't.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I don't think none of them do to the non-workers. Now, I'm not here to give advice but I can't help doing it. The administration is feeling pretty sour and we don't want to have more trouble than is necessary and so wait until some of these things improve.

MR. KURATOMI: You see, there is this truth in it, that unfortunately for everybody, but the fact still remains, that most of the Caucasians on the West Coast are very hostile to the Japanese. They have utter contempt for the Japanese people. We don't like the atmosphere.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I don't think your compatriots, the Japanese, are feeling very sweetly toward America either.

MR. KURATOMI: Yes, but they could at least treat us as humans instead of looking down on us as an inferior stock of people.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I really don't see any difference with the treatment you have received from the Germans and Italians' treatment.---

MR. KURATOMI: I don't know. I haven't seen it.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Naturally on this Coast it is harder for you because the Germans and Italians live on the other side.

MR. KURATOMI: We have never had that kind of feeling in the other relocation centers in the interior, in Arkansas - Jerome and Rohwer - Heart Mountain, or Granada. They were at least reasonable. Like this Project Director here would promise you one thing one day and contradict your request the next day. I hope he will show a sign of cooperation. He always says he will cooperate but by his actions, he proves contrariwise. We could use quite a few more people at the hospital--

CONSUL DE AMAT: Do you have enough girls here to take care of Caucasian nurses?

MR. KURATOMI: Could we notify you later on this?

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes.

MR. KURATOMI: At the present time the only reason they asked for the removal of the Caucasian nurses and doctors is because they want to protect the lives of the Japanese people and if they were here they would be hampering the efforts of the Japanese doctors and Japanese nurses rather than helping.

CONSUL DE AMAT: The trouble is you don't have enough doctors. Should I ask to have some sent from Santa Fe?

MR. KURATOMI: The feeling of the evacuee doctors in this center is that we would rather do away with the doctors we now have at the present time at the hospital. They would rather work overtime to take care of the Japanese people than ~~turn~~ turn them over to the Caucasian doctors. They can't guarantee their lives.

Another thing, they would like to have equal authority within the hospital. In the past, for every little thing, permission had to be received from the Caucasian doctor before the evacuee doctors could even touch the patients. They ask that within this center they want equal authority so far as taking care of ill persons are concerned.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Is Mr. Okamoto here?

MR. KURATOMI: No.

CONSUL DE AMAT: And Mr. Kai?

MR. KURATOMI: Yes. Rev. Kai.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Who is Rev. Kai? You have written to me?

Rev. Kai: Yes. Thank you very much for your help.

CONSUL DE AMAT: And Mr. Kuratomi?

MR. KURATOMI: That's me.

CONSUL DE AMAT: You're the only one who asked me to come. That's why I'm here.

MR. KURATOMI: This gentleman brought up the subject that there is a definite budget for hospital use. Instead of using that appropriation, this administration here and the center hospital

MR. KURATOMI (CONT'D) Staff make the evacuee doctors supply and use their own equipment. There is graft within the center, your honor. We can understand the position of the United States government in trying to give us decent treatment. However, graft which has been committed among the administration personnel is hampering the true intentions of the United States government. That is one thing we should clear up for the administrative personnel is entrenched in enormous profits that they cover each other up-----

CONSUL DE AMAT: Washington is ready to give you what you need but that is made impossible by the administration of the camp?

MR. KURATOMI: I think that has lots to do with it, I'm sure. Because his (Sugimoto) report would prove to a certain extent some of the graft that is---

CONSUL DE AMAT: Some of the what?

MR. KURATOMI: Graft.

CONSUL DE AMAT: My English is not very good. What is that?

Mr. Kuratomi: You know, to stick money away for personal use -- graft. (Spelled out.)

In the event that I should ask your honorable presence in this center would just a personal letter be sufficient?

CONSUL DE AMAT: A letter, yes, but don't believe that it's that easy, because they have to send a representative from the State Department. Now these men have to come by plane. They don't want me to come alone. This person arrived yesterday morning by plane. They don't want me to come at all, but I'm coming back very soon. We are planning a visit to every center in a very short time.

MR. KURATOMI: This is a personal question but there were quite a few people coming to my place asking what could be done about the registration of foreign owned bonds and interests. Should they register with this country or not?

CONSUL DE AMAT: I haven't got that. Will you repeat?

MR. KURATOMI: Many people own foreign bonds. In the case of the Japanese---

CONSUL DE AMAT: Where are they?

MR. KURATOMI: They are in Japan. Should they register with this country in this country?

CONSUL DE AMAT: Certainly not. If you have it in Tokio or Yokohama, there is no way of checking. There is no necessity of declaring that.

MR. KURATOMI: These people wanted to hear you say that.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Have you been asked to do that? I will have to ask my Embassy. I cannot say, but offhand, I would say you don't have to do a thing like that. That's not their business.

(Discussion among evacuees)

MR. KURATOMI: As you might have heard, your honor, one person died as a result of an automobile accident.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes.

MR. KURATOMI: According to the WRA regulations, this man will be compensated. For the widow's benefit, I would like to know in the post-war conference - at the post-war conference - can she claim further indemnity from this government. That is, is there any channel such as that open for further negotiation.

CONSUL DE AMAT: You can write to me and I shall pass it to the Embassy and the Embassy will write to the proper authorities.

MR. KURATOMI: No, what I mean is, it is evident that she will receive proper compensation from the WRA. Should she feel that she wants more at a later date and feels that compensation was not enough, can she claim that after the war through the Japanese government?

CONSUL DE AMAT: Oh, yes, absolutely. After the war your Embassy will claim all those things.

MR. KURATOMI: In that regard, are records necessary to be presented to your Embassy?

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes. If you want to keep it in the files. Every letter I receive from you is kept in the files for the Japanese Consul and when the Japanese Embassy comes, we turn over all of the files.

MR. SUGIMOTO: Shall we go into the food problem? Are you familiar with the WRA budget of subsistence?

CONSUL DE AMAT: More or less. But if you will refresh my memory it will be better. 31¢ -- something like ----

MR. SUGIMOTO: Thirty-one cents, that amount the WRA is supposed to purchase from the Procurement Office from the outside. In other words, the 31¢ will cover just the basic subsistence. Then that 31¢ is the 1944 budget and 1943 was 45¢. They made a deduction of 14¢.

CONSUL DE AMAT: That, you are producing here yourself?

MR. SUGIMOTO: That's right and whatever we produce here or manufacture would be over and above 31¢. That is the policy of the WRA for 1944.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes. Well, the WRA has to spend 31¢ outside the camp. That is additional, and you produce the 14¢ with your work and vegetables.

MR. SUGIMOTO: If you keep this in mind, this will clarify the investigation we made in camp. During the month of September, because at the time we made this investigation the records of October weren't available, so we based all these investigations on the records of September. The total, including manufactured and vegetables produced within the center, including all those items, the average cost is 27¢ per day; even less than what the basic subsistence WRA is supposed to pay.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Can you prove that?

MR. SUGIMOTO: Yes. I have the records and all the figures to prove all this. We're making a copy and sending it to you.

CONSUL DE AMAT: That will be very useful and very good material to work on.

MR. SUGIMOTO: The next item - it so happened that the record of October 3 was available at the time, so we took the average of that day. The cost per person per day was only 17¢ per person on that date. That's all they furnished us on subsistence. In this center we have produced and we have eaten \$11,000 worth of vegetables and manufactured food. If this is divided into the number of persons within the center in September, it will come to about 3¢ per day. Deduct 3¢ from 27¢, that makes only 24¢ WRA spent for food per person for the month of September.

MR. SUGIMOTO: (cont'd): That is one item. Then by computing on the basis of OPA point system, I found out that they purchased enough food items that comes under meat point ration - meat and processed food ration - they have purchased enough meat to feed 14,700 people and during the month of September the census strength was less than that, less than 14,000 people in September. Consequently, if the distribution were made on a fair basis, we should have gotten full point value of meat but the record proves that 95,000 points were short-rationed to the evacuees and 34,000 points were over-rationed to the Caucasian personnel.

CONSUL DE AMAT: How do you know that?

MR. SUGIMOTO: By going through the records, because I checked the daily delivery sheets and adding up the figures and I came to this conclusion. In other words, the Caucasian personnel working within the camp and evacuee mess or kitchens are sharing whatever subsistence coming into the project. By the way this mess management is operated, they give less to the evacuees.

CONSUL DE AMAT: They don't share it in a brotherly way, do they?

MR. SUGIMOTO: They certainly don't. That is proven in the records. This, I think you can find out from the Army Quartermasters, that the Army Quartermasters will give enough ration points to individual projects for ensuing months to be consumed. That point - the necessary points - to be consumed during September is 627,000 points, whereas the Procurement office only purchased to the extent of 168,000 points. By this figure it's natural that processed food is short-rationed to the extent of 7,325 points for that month. So you can see the picture there of the unequal and unfair distribution of food made within the camp.

Now, when you go over to Washington and look through the books in the WRA office in Washington, they probably have a book with beautiful figures - only that does not prove that these things are actually so.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I am going to have that in writing.

MR. SUGIMOTO: I don't know whether this is our business or not, but through the investigation, there is a 9,000-pound sugar shortage in the warehouse as of October 1, 1943. I took the shortage in the warehouse as of October 1, 1943. I then took the record of the inventory of October 1, then I got the record of all the amount of sugar that came into this project during the month of September. Then I figured all the deliveries made to the kitchens, including personnel ditches and the

MR. SUGIMOTO (Cont'd): hospital, added all those figures up and subtracted. I found this difference in figures, the book figure and the actual figure is different. There is a 9,000-pound shortage of sugar in the warehouse. But this might contribute to the shortage of food, too, because this deals with beef. In the existent record in the butcher shop over there, 1880 pounds of beef was dumped for the reason of unfit for human consumption and this amount of beef was dumped during the time the beginning of September 17 and 30; within 14 days 1800 pounds of beef was thrown away. You can't say that this might be bones taken out of beef--in the records, it says that bones are distributed as soup bones. If these beef are government-inspected, I don't see any reason behind it to throw that much away because it is unfit for human consumption and this goes back to that food produced within this camp. For the sake of record, 532 pounds of chickens and 5,278 pounds of salt pork, 5040 dozen eggs, 286,809 lbs and 22,900 crates of vegetables were produced by the evacuees and consumed during the month of September. Yet these items were charged against the 31¢ a day budget, which is the same as they were bought from the outside.

In other words, these farmers who went over there to produce those vegetables, they worked for the government for \$16 a month and they turned right around and bought the items from the government and ate them. From that you can clearly see that it is pure exploitation of labor on the part of the United States government.

CONSUL DE AMAT: You have everything here? (Noting sheet)

MR. SUGIMOTO: Every point I am reading here now, I have figures to prove.

The next point deals with unfair distribution of food, too. From the record - the daily record - of distribution I found that in the personnel mess all of the good part of the beef was sent to them. In other words, parts like where you could get rib steak or the t-bone or tenderloin steak - they were butchered out and were sent out to the personnel mess and what was left were sent over to the evacuees. So from the piece of the hind quarter or back quarter, there is very little weight of the good part of the meat could be gotten but if those things were taken out of the quarter you could imagine how much beef the evacuees would get and that is shown in the records, too. All these points are investigated by us, based on the records existing in the mess management office. So I will prepare the copy. This is a copy. I would like to make other copies and give one of the copies to you so you could look through the WRA or Army Quartermasters.

(Interruption)

MR. SUGIMOTO (Cont'd) There is a matter of menu making - it is in practice all through the relocation centers.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes.

MR. SUGIMOTO: Many instances, the chefs in the kitchens cannot follow that menu for the simple reason that--

CONSUL DE AMAT: That there is no such food---

MR. SUGIMOTO: No such materials come with the menu. That point has been stressed by the people working in the kitchen time and again to the administrative personnel. The way we understand that, the effectiveness of that menu, the copy of it goes to Washington, the main WRA office; and that remains there of what is being fed to the evacuees in the centers. In other words, that menu itself is a misrepresentation.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Because you don't eat that?~~2-2~~

MR. SUGIMOTO: But that does remain as the record as what we have been fed so we have been asking that they be changed, but nothing has been done about it.

MR. KURATOMI: This might be only a minor point. If we look through the record, the mortality rate, the rate the chickens die at the chicken farm, the rate is over a thousand per month and there are 22,000 chickens in this farm, according to the people who have taken care of the chickens in the past. You know that chickens don't die that easily. Mortality could be interpreted in two ways; whether the chickens die voluntarily or involuntarily, forced to die or do on their own accord. Lately we have been watching where the chickens have been going. We find that the chickens have been going to the personnel mess hall.---every other day or three times a week and that chicken comes from the farm over here. According to Mr. Best, everything that is raised in the farms here, including chickens and hogs, should be given to the evacuees. However, it is coming into the center, all right, but not to the evacuees.

CONSUL DE AMAT: How many are there in the personnel mess.

MR. SUGIMOTO: About an average of 150 to 180.

CONSUL DE AMAT: But they cannot eat a thousand chickens. About all that beef you were talking about -- even if they ate all day, they couldn't consume that much. Suppose 200 persons ate from breakfast to dinner, they wouldn't still take care of a thousand chickens.

MR. SUGIMOTO: Food is disappearing. There must be some loophole, but the point we are trying to prove is that food is disappearing and that we are not getting it.

MR. KURATONI: We don't care what we eat, but we would like to have honest records kept of what we are getting. We are not going to complain if we get rice and salt every day but we want that recorded instead of something else. The menus that go to Washington are not true. We might be eating chicken every day. If honesty and sincerity is shown by the administration, I know the people are not going to complain for unreasonable reasons.

That is about all.

Mr. Best has promised us that he will talk things over with the committee, in fact, committees that are chosen by the evacuse residents here and he wanted a true representative body to represent these people. He further promised us that he will cooperate with us to the fullest extent so that some of the complaints and the request and the suggestions that we make will be fulfilled. He has promised us that he will send in a request to have standard porches to each and every bar⁺ rack in this Center. He further stated that he is willing to talk things over about latrinal facilities, so that we wouldn't have to burn our hands or freeze our hands and to improve our toilets. In fact, he is interested, he said that he will be treated humanly and that our requests or complaints will be fulfilled. So we have to wait to see whether he is sincere or not. In case he should fail to keep his promise maybe we will have to call you in and have your presence in this center again. Will that be all right with you?

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes. That is why I am here -- to protect the interests of the Japanese people. When I read in the papers that you strike, I get very upset, because I want you to do all you can and I want to do all I can to help you.

MR. SUGIMOTO: It wasn't as they reported in the papers at all. It was a very peaceful demonstration. At the conference we had with Mr. Myer and Mr. Best, Mr. Myer did agree and gave us assurance that if this record was presented to him that the investigation, which he is going to make in the very near future-- he said that he will make sure that he is going to take care of all these, which I believe he will do. He has gone now.

CONSUL DE AMAT: All these things you have talked to me, you have talked to them before.

SUGIMOTO: I talked to them about this day before yesterday at the conference so this is not new to them, but this is my side of the complaint or accusation and not Mr. Myer's. And if this is found to be true he says that he is going to rectify all these mistakes at once. So I believe in his sincerity, that he is going to do all that he promised. Through your influence, if you could talk to him about this, we would appreciate it very much.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Well, I don't talk with them, the embassy talks with the department.

SUGIMOTO: I will send this copy with the minutes to you and you can forward this to the embassy and use this as evidence in making the negotiations with the WRA or whatever agencies--

CONSUL DE AMAT: I am sure the Embassy is going to take interest because you are going to be here for a very long time and in the other centers everybody will relocate. It is not important if they are not so well off, but it is important that you are taken care of here. That is very important because of the length of time you are going to stay here.

SUGIMOTO: We are working on the investigation of Oct., the month of Oct, just finished so all the records are available now.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I think that Sept. is enough.

SUGIMOTO: If we could get done with the investigation in one or two days I will include it with this. She will take a couple of days to transcribe these notes.

KURATOMI: One thing Mr. Best emphasized was it was his desire to have a true representative people chosen from the people into various committees that the residents might feel that they needed in order to get a true picture to the residents we have to have mass meetings held from time to time. Is that no so?

CONSUL DE AMAT: Yes, I think so.

SUGIMOTO: Through the papers he has announced that there will be no more mass meetings in this center.

CONSUL DE AMAT: In the Administrative zone.

SUGIMOTO: Is that so?

CONSUL DE AMAT: You have been celebrating this morning. Is that not so?

KURATOMI: That was not a meeting, but only a rite--r-i-t-e.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Large groups of persons were uniting together. What they told me was that they weren't allowed to go in a mass group any more. If you go enmass to the administrative area, I am afraid they will take drastic measures. They didn't tell me that you can't get together. I won't take the responsibility.

SUGIMOTO: Will you see to it that we will have--

CONSUL DE AMAT: Before you have meetings you should ask permission.

KURATOMI: Like the last time when Mr. Kashima died, the center residents felt that the funeral should be a center wide affair. So it was decided that the representatives meet to have this centerwide funeral. We went to Mr. Best to ask permission of the use of the outdoor stage over there and he refused and we went to the auditorium to get permission to use that auditorium. He refused that, too. His reason was that Mrs. Kashima, the widow, did not want herself to have her husband's funeral to be a public affair. For information and verification we went down to see her and she was furious. You should have seen her expression. She said, any time any person or man makes a false statement I would like to grab his neck and pull him down.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I heard the story that she didn't want to have---

KURATOMI: That is the other side of the story. The Project Director at Topaz, Mr. Ernst, was very considerate and sent a telegram of condolence. We asked the same of Mr. Best, or someone representing the appointed personnel to extend a word of condolence. Mr. Best said that -- he refused such a presentation. So I want you to hear our story. Mrs. Kashima did want a public wide funeral and felt that her husband was being honored. She was very furious that she couldn't use the stage or the auditorium and because Mr. Best had used her as the reason. She wanted someone in a responsible position to know how she felt about the affair. I am just saying this for your information.

Mr. Best probably told you that we refused to negotiate with him during this farm stop. Maybe you heard his story.

CONSUL DE AMAT: The thing was that you didn't want to talk --

KURATOMI: That's his point. The day - the following day - we came in here, we went to see Mr. Best to just have an informal discussion. The very first thing he said - "I don't recognize any representative and I don't recognize, in fact any group or organization of any group within this center. That is the thing he said and I have three other persons who were at that meeting and they could verify that he stated definitely and the Asst. Project Director of Jerome was in that conference, too, and he could verify that. He just stated flatly that he would have nothing to do with representatives.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Who do you think would be a good director here?

KURATOMI: That's hard to say---

CONSUL DE AMAT: Whp? Who do you think among the other centers.

KURATOMI: For this place. We will find you a man. I think Mr. Robertson.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Who is he?

KURATOMI: He is at the present at Leupp.

CONSUL DE AMAT: What is he doing now?

KURATOMI: He is the Project Director at Leupp. But, of course, that is my personal opinion. He is a man of understanding. If Mr. Best should not want to cooperate with us and if he should keep his hostile attitude we will contact you again. Mr. Robertson seems to be a nice man. The information I received sounds favorable. He is a good Christian. As far as I know, everybody in his center, although it is a little center, the boys seem to enjoy his administration.

So he refused to talk with any group. We know that when the farm stoppage occurred. Some of the men asked me if you go out there you will be caught for negotiating when Mr. Best does not want any group to represent the people. Until the day Mr. Best put out the notice that no one had come to represent the farm workers, that statement we found out right away that the farm group sent three representatives over to his office to discuss the matter, but he said that he was too busy to talk with them and he didn't want to see them and the negotiations didn't start until the next day, and the result was very indifferent and poor. He likes to highhand everybody. He likes to tell you to obey and if you don't does not want to talk.

The Army made him that way, if guess. Or rather the Marine, they think they are, at least. I came

KURATOMI: (CONG'D) from San Diego and that is a marine town.

CONSUL DE AMAT: What was the celebration we had today?
Birth of the father of the Emperor?

KURATOMI: The death of the Emperor.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Father;

KURATOMI: Grandfather.

REV. KAI: It is the birthday of the grandfather of
the Emperor.

CONSUL DE AMAT: You can't celebrate the death, anyway.

(Pause)

KURATOMI: Will you be kind enough to investigate the
applications of the Jerome Relocation Center. 12,000 signatures
went in at one time from the Jerome Relocation Center within
about two or three days time after March 10. We registered
on March 10 for expatriation and repatriation.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Tell me, after this segregation problem, I
receive a lot of letters. Do you think they were really from
people who really wanted to go back or wanted to come here.

KURATOMI: Many people didn't know the significance of
segregation and they thought that they were going to test out
these people so naturally a lot of them thought that it was
rather a light matter.

CONSUL DE AMAT: After the segregation order was given I
received lots and lots of requests for repatriation. There are
about 8000 now on our files.

KURATOMI: They began to worry. They thought that
registration was only a light matter. I imagine you still
receive some.

CONSUL DE AMAT: Not so much now. But we have a very long
list, about 8000 are now on our list.

KURATOMI: Thank you for your valuable time.

CONSUL DE AMAT: I enjoyed talking with you. Everything was very
reasonable, which is an exception. Frequently I have complaints
that have no foundation but everything we have talked about today
makes quite a lot of sense and I am very hopeful that part of it
will be arranged, not all of it, but part of it.

SUGIMOTO: Another thing, it has been said that people - evacuees who used to live here before expressed their opinion that food in this relocation center was very satisfactory. Better than any other relocation center.

CONSUL DE AMAT: And it isnt now.

Kuratomu;

C
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P
Y

San Francisco, July 29, 1943

CONSULADO DE ESPAÑA
San Francisco

J-50/984

The Spokesman for the Japanese
Tule Lake Relocation Center
Newell, California

Dear Sir:

Towards the middle of August I will be visiting
the Tule Lake Relocation Center.

In order to assure the presentation of the peti-
tions and complaints of the Japanese residents
of the Center, and at the same time simplify the
procedure, I would appreciate it very much if the
petitions and complaints were prepared in advance
in writing and in quadruplicate.

Thanking you, I remain

Very truly yours,

A. R-Martin
Representative of
the Spanish Embassy

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v - Wogc
Tule Lake Center
Newell, Calif.
November 17, 1943

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. D. S. Myer
Director, War Relocation Authority
Barr Building
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Myer:

Enclosed herewith are 2 copies of the notes taken at the meeting of the Spanish Consul, Mr. de Amat, with representatives of the Tule Lake Center on November 3.

These notes were removed from the waste paper basket of the Japanese stenographer, who had taken them and transcribed them, after all Japanese workers had left their jobs in the administrative buildings. Presumably, it was not meant that they should be found. However, we are told by the Federal Bureau of Investigation that we are perfectly in our right to remove anything from a waste paper basket, copy it, and use it as official evidence. These notes are apparently unfinished; but from the comments near the end, we do not believe this meeting lasted much longer.

Very truly yours,

R. B. Cozzens
Assistant Director

Enclosures

cc: Mr. R. R. Best
Mr. P. J. Webster ✓

Aolsen