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## FINAL REPORT OF INDIANAPOLIS DISTRICT OFFICE

With the exception of Lake County (northwest corner of the Calumet area of the State) the Indianapolis relocation office handled all the resettlement work in Indiana.

Indianapolis exceeded all other Indiana communities in the number of resettlers, the present number being 71. There are 22 resettlers in Fort Wayne, 14 in South Bend, 15 in Holy Cross and a total of about 45 scattered in various communities throughout Indiana. This number varies each year considerably because of a percentage of students in Indiana. In 1944 there were twelve Japanese American students in Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. In the fall of 1945 Earlham had only six students. Franklin, Indiana, dropped from 4 students to only one. Hanover has four students, Manchester College three students, Purdue has six, and Valparaiso has two. The Indiana University has never had an enrollment of the Japanese American even though its policy to bar students of Japanese ancestry was abandoned in 1944. The Indiana University Extension, however, has had many students of Japanese ancestry since the fall of 1943.

The resettlement of farmers began in Knox, Indiana, where one Japanese family had already been established since 1927. There are approximately four families there now. Difficulty in placing farmers in Indiana was encountered, first because the wage and the proposition offered was poorer than in some other parts of the country; and secondly, because most of the West Coast farmers preferred truck gardening and fruit farming to grain and stock farming.

Most of the towns surveyed, including Indianapolis, were a combination industrial and agricultural towns. Relocation in these places were thought of too late, for these towns had already had its influx of defense workers before our relocation program began. Therefore, housing and employment condition early in 1943 was already like any boom town. According to the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce statistics, Indianapolis itself increased about 68,000 in population over a period of only two years. In 1940, the population of the city was 386,972. On April 1, 1943, (the same month our relocation office was established) the population was recorded as 455,357.

Community acceptance in various Indiana communities came through cooperation from organizations such as the Y. W. C. A., welfare groups, church groups and interested individuals. In Fort Wayne and South Bend, the Secretaries of the Y. W. C. A. took an active part in aiding the relocation officers. They arranged meetings between WRA and heads of other agencies in that community. An attempt to organize a resettlement

committee was made in Fort Wayne in the winter of 1943. Because of a lack of any great number of evacuees arriving into the city, the plan did not materialize. In Indianapolis, however, such a resettlement committee, better known as the Advisory Committee, was formed early in 1943.

Mr. Ted Waller first came to Indianapolis to introduce the program of the WRA. He was followed by Mr. E. T. Cleary, who came to Indianapolis in April of 1943 to open the relocation office for the State of Indiana.

Indianapolis' acceptance of the Japanese Americans seemed highly improbable in the beginning. The political situation, the Negro situation and the labor union all showed negative responses. Any probability of success at that time lay in individuals who were contacted personally and who indicated no opposition but gave some evidence of support of the WRA program. Because of indications discouraging relocation of evacuees, Mr. Waller recommended to the WRA to avoid publicity and to consult individuals in Labor, American Legion, Government and business before releasing Japanese Americans in Indiana or placing them in jobs.

With this policy, WRA established the relocation office in Indiana. Mr. Cleary followed up Mr. Waller's report and contacted many of the individuals mentioned in Ted Waller's report. This group was narrowed down to the most enthusiastic interested persons with whom Mr. Cleary first began the organization of the WRA Advisory Committee.

The principal members at that time consisted of Mr. Rowland Allen, Personnel Manager of the L. S. Ayres and Co., Dr. Howard J. Baumgartel, Executive Secretary, and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Howard E. Nyhart, one of the first families to employ a Nisei in their home, Mr. William Book, Executive Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Eugene Foster of the Indianapolis Service Foundation, and Mr. Alvin T. Coate, a prominent Quaker of the city. With this nucleus of members, the Advisory Committee had its first meeting in May, 1943. In the course of the two and a half years that followed, the Committee swelled in size and then reduced again. Changes in organization and chairmanship took place several times. The reasons for reorganizations and changes are many, but probably the main reason was the lack of new resettlers coming into the city, thereby causing

the Committee to keep the functions of its organization idle.

The last change in the Committee occurred in the spring of 1945. At that time, Mr. Rowland Allen was elected Chairman of the Advisory Committee. He chose to work with an Executive Committee of only a few key men, and the Planning Committee composed of about thirty members worked under that Executive Committee.

Although the Executive Committee was at first composed of only five members, Mr. Allen added persons from time to time, and it is now composed of a representative from the Y. W. C. A., Church Federation, Department of Public Welfare, Council of Social Agency, Indianapolis Service Foundation and three interested individuals prominent in the city.

The C.I.O., the church groups, the Y. W. C. A., and the social agencies have given us staunch support throughout the program of the WRA. Through these members and members of the Advisory Committee and through the resettlers themselves, public sentiment in Indianapolis underwent a drastic change since the office first opened. One of the first major problems--the anti-Japanese attitude of the Negro community towards the arrival of a new minority--disappeared under some of our able Negro leaders' guidance. Mr. Cleo Blackburn, known throughout the city, has been our principal aid. The prejudice of the colored population came not from actual hatred of the people of Japanese ancestry, but from a fear that Japanese-American arrivals would hinder their progress in attaining better jobs which began to open to them because of war-time shortage of men.

In the beginning employment opportunities of the Japanese Americans in South Bend and Indianapolis were in the domestic field. Salary offered was very low compared to the salary offered for the same type of work in Chicago. Indiana being a borderline state between the South and the North, we can with some truth say, that the attitude of Indiana citizens towards domestics was influenced by the Southern attitude of the Negroes. The domestic job offers continued to come in during the entire life of this office. A drastic change in the pay offer could be noted, however, for where we received calls for domestic offering \$8 to \$12 per week for a single girl at that time, we now receive calls offering \$18 to \$25 per week.

Throughout 1944, we were able to place many resettlers in clerical and skilled positions rather than domestics. Some stenographic and skilled job

offers came into the office. However, many of the positions held by Nisei were obtained through their own efforts. Just as anyone else seeking a job would do, the Nisei answered newspaper want ads or contacted employers through some of their own newly acquired friends. This fact is strong evidence that the general public of Indianapolis ~~was~~ already ~~been~~ undergoing a change through the influence of the churches and some of our liberal-minded individuals of the city.

Only 8 per cent of the resettlers in the city are in domestic work. Although the group in Indiana is small in number, the type of position into which the evacuees worked themselves shows a good cross-section of the variety of occupation for which Americans of Japanese descent are qualified. There are two beauty operators in the city, a number of secretaries and stenographers, telegraph operator, students, nurses, draft designer, mechanics, maintenance men, weavers, garage attendants, custodians, farmers, carpenters and several professional men. Two of the professional men were here in Indianapolis before war broke out.

The International Teamsters' Union, whose National headquarters is here in Indianapolis, gave us a little trouble. Although we cannot say with factual evidence that our attempts to place a couple of laundrymen were affected by the Teamsters' Unfavorable attitude and publicity; nevertheless both Japanese men failed to secure good laundry jobs and to relocate permanently in Indianapolis.

The U.S.E.S. interviewed many of the Nisei who are now employed. The Agency has never hesitated to refer our stenographers to the Civil Service Commission. Mr. Bennett, who is the local manager of the U.S.E.S. has been very helpful and has also attended a couple of our Advisory Committee meeting during the last year.

During the latter part of the year, our office has tried to send almost all resettlers looking for a job to the U.S.E.S.

Where resettlers have made <sup>social</sup> adjustment, they have made very exceptional progress in the program of integration. Unlike larger cities, Indianapolis does not have a hostel or a place for Japanese-Americans to turn to. Their adjustment has either had to be very poor or very exceptional. Hoosiers have a very substantial background. They do not make over strange faces. Yet, once the resettlers have made Hoosier friends, these same people have gone more than the usual way to show hospitality.

One of the most active organization in Indianapolis has been the United Christian Missionary Society. In the summer of 1943, some of its members devoted their time and money to help relocate the Japanese-Americans, to open up new communities and to send speakers out to various churches in the State. They also allotted a fund to finance three Japanese-American speakers from the Centers, for whom they paid travel fare and maintenance. Again in 1944 they repeated the program of sending a speaker to the rural areas of Indiana. Several families successfully relocated to Indianapolis through their efforts. The organization employed a former minister of Japanese ancestry, who has done public relations work, not only in Indiana, but all over the United States.

Indianapolis has made numerous attempts to solve the housing problem. Beginning late in 1943, a Housing Committee was organized. It attempted to write to all the women leaders of all the churches in Indianapolis. The only results that came from this effort were offers for temporary housing and absolutely no housing for families with children. The only way in which we obtained housing for families was by having employers furnish a house along with the job if they wanted to secure Japanese help.

The Indiana State Department of Public Welfare has shown continued interest in the welfare of the resettlers. After discussion with the Council of Social Agency and the Department of Public Welfare, it was decided that WRA should refer all applicants for assistance to DPW so that DPW could secure all benefits available to the resettlers from the social security fund. The Department of Public Welfare consented to act as a referral agency, whereby if other agencies are better able to assist the resettlers, they could be referred to the proper agency.

This office has had a rapid turnover of Relocation Officers ever since the office was established in Indianapolis. Mr. Cleary stayed with the WRA until 1943. Mr. Herbert Keno replaced Mr. Cleary then, and handled the resettlement work in Indiana until January of 1944. Mr. Frank Smith, who was a personnel member in the Tule Lake Project, replaced Mr. Keno, and directed the work of this office until April 23. From April of 1944 to November 1, 1944, the Indianapolis office did not have any official relocation officer. Mr. Norwood Dillman joined the WRA staff on October 31, and was immediately given the Indiana resettlement work. Mr. Dillman made his headquarters in the Chicago office and put a great deal of his time in the northern part of the State. He made frequent trips to Indianapolis and also directed activities in Indianapolis. During the first part of November, 1945, Mr. Dillman was transferred to the Chicago District Office, and Mrs. Marie Kitazumi, Secretary of the Indianapolis Relocation Office was appointed to take complete charge of the closing of the Indianapolis office.