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Comments on testimony of Mr. Peter T. Suzuki ...

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COMMENTS ON THE TESTIMONY OF DR. PETER T. SUZUKI
BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON WARTIME RELOCATION
AND INTERNMENT OF CIVILIANS

BY
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Authority

These comments are divided into two parts, first, replies to Dr. Suzuki's specific charges and, second, a general statement regarding the work of the Community Analysis Section of the War Relocation Authority. My comments will be confined to the work of the Community Analysis Section and the Division of Community Management of the War Relocation Authority and the Bureau of Sociological Research. They will not deal with the activities of the Evacuation and Resettlement Study directed by Dorothy S. Thomas; I had no working relations with those who worked in that study and hence will not presume to comment on their activities.

1. G. Gordon Brown. Dr. Suzuki implies that G. Gordon Brown was one who gathered intelligence data, since his discussion of Brown's activities immediately follows the general statement in Dr. Suzuki's comments to the effect that "not a few" social scientists in the WRA carried on intelligence work. Brown did not gather intelligence information on evacuees at the Gila Relocation Center or anywhere else, and Dr. Suzuki's statement does not present evidence that he did. Brown assisted administrators of the WRA during the segregation program. He checked lists of names of persons scheduled for removal ^{to} Tule Lake Segregation Center and served on the review committee which passed on cases for removal. It was part of the Community Analysts' job to advise administrators in the carrying out of their duties. Dr. Suzuki does not supply information regarding the nature of Brown's activities in these instances. The jobs listed certainly involved information about specific individuals; if Brown supplied any of that information he would have violated the policy

of the Community ~~Analysis~~ Section. Dr. Suzuki does not say that he did. In short, no evidence is presented that Brown carried out intelligence activities. My knowledge of Brown's work, with whom I was in close touch throughout his period of employment by the WRA, enables me to say that he was a very scrupulous performer within the policy framework of the Community Analysis Section. He understood that Analysts were not to involve themselves in supplying information about individual evacuees to WRA administrators or to anyone outside the agency. He prepared reports which were models of CA work, always keeping individuals' names out of the reports and reworking the information in the general terms which it was the Community Analysis Section's obligation to present.

2. John de Young. Dr. Suzuki reports, apparently as an example of intelligence work, de Young's transmission of a report to John Provinse in the Community Management Division (through Edward H. Spicer) which contained a transcription of a petition to the Spanish Consul signed by some evacuees of the Minidoka Relocation Center. De Young did not violate Community Analysis policy or carry out an intelligence operation in doing what he did. The document with its signatures was not a piece of information gathered exclusively by de Young's work as a Community Analyst~~x~~. It was available through other channels to Provinse and others in the WRA, as well as to persons outside of WRA, such as those in the office of the Spanish Consul and other agencies. It was a document which had in some degree become a public document through being transmitted by the evacuees concerned to the Spanish Consul.

3. The charge against Asael Hansen is not fully intelligible. / Dr. Suzuki appears to say that Hansen acquainted himself with the activities and viewpoints of administrators in the Heart Mountain Relocation Center. Hansen certainly did so, as I know from close contact with him during his whole period as a Community Analyst~~x~~. This was an important part of his work as a Community Analyst, since Analysts were instructed to study the administrative personnel's relations with evacuees, as well as the evacuee viewpoints. Dr. Suzuki says that Hansen's carrying out of these duties "tended to keep the Analyst [Hansen] from 'going over' to the evacuees." He presents nothing indicating that this has anything to do with the charges of informing and intelligence work. My interpretation of

Dr. Suzuki's vague statement is that it is drawn from an account of his way of working by Hansen which emphasizes his efforts to keep bias out of his reports. He understood that maintaining close contacts with administrators would help to keep him aware of their viewpoints and thus avoid biasing his reports wholly in the direction of the evacuee viewpoints. It was also true of Hansen's work that he maintained close contacts with evacuees and thus avoided reporting any event or relationship wholly from the administrative point of view. In this same section Dr. Suzuki states that G. Gordon Brown (mentioned above) channels his reports through the project director (that is, the top local administrator). This was required practice in the Community Analysis Section designed to make sure that the local administration was not by-passed in the reporting of local Analysts to the Washington office, as well as to assist project directors in their management of the camps through acquaintance with the Analysts' understanding of the local situations. No evidence is presented in this section by Dr. Suzuki regarding intelligence work by Analysts.

4. E. Adamson Hoebel. Hoebel did not submit names of evacuees resulting from his research to administrators. On the contrary, he was supplied with names and addresses of evacuees by the administrators. He used this administrative information to prepare a distribution map of the center. In other words, he converted information regarding individuals into general information, a common type of activity of Community Analysts. Such general information was used to show the relationships between different kinds of phenomena characteristic of the center life, and thus to isolate significant factors in various administrative problems. Dr. Suzuki does not state precisely either the nature of Hoebel's reports or how the study was utilized. On the basis of what is reported by Dr. Suzuki there is no substance to any charge of intelligence operation carried out by Hoebel.

5. Weston LaBarre. The statement that LaBarre worked with the Project Attorney suggests that the Analyst assisted in the solution of some legal problems of evacuees in the Topaz Center. Apparently Dr. Suzuki is unaware of the nature of the activities of Project Attorneys in the WRA. An Attorney at the project level spent most of his time advising evacuees with regard to the legal problems which many of them had in connection with property which

they held on the West Coast. What sort of assistance in these matters LaBarre rendered is not stated. Nothing of the nature of "informing" or "intelligence work" is indicated. The ecological map mentioned by Dr. Suzuki as being prepared by LaBarre is obviously one of those tools of analysis often utilized by Analysts, taking information supplied by administrators and plotting it in an effort to show interrelationships among various factors operating in relocation center life. Again, there is no evidence presented here that LaBarre supplied information about individuals which the administration did not have from their own files.

6. Alexander H. Leighton. Leighton directed the Bureau of Sociological Research at Poston during parts of 1942 and 1943. He was not employed by the Community Analysis Section. Dr. Suzuki states that he advocated the "policy of segregation." I do not recall the circumstances of the advocacy, but it should be recognized that advice regarding policy and program to the administration was well recognized as part of the role of research workers in both the Bureau and the Community Analysis Section. What does the offering of advice on the segregation policy have to do with "intelligence work.?" There seems to be implicit in Dr. Suzuki's statement disapproval on his part of the segregation policy. This has nothing to do with "intelligence," but it might be helpful to the Commission if Dr. Suzuki would disentangle his personal opinions about War Relocation Authority policy and from his attempts to characterize the activities of research workers in the centers. If Dr. Suzuki disapproves of the segregation policy, what is the basis of that opinion? Has he considered alternatives to it? And does he understand the circumstances which led the WRA administration to choose that policy? Dr. Suzuki repeats an old criticism of Leighton, current in the Poston Center, that he "roused suspicion" by walking around the center in naval uniform. In the first place, Leighton did not wear a naval uniform; he wore only collar ornaments. He did this to make sure that he was not hiding the fact about himself that he was a lieutenant commander in the navy. Any effort to hide that fact would have roused far more suspicion, as well as being dishonest. Of course, the open identification of himself as a naval officer would have been entirely incompatible with intelligence work, and hence his behavior in this connection is a demonstration that he was not engaged in "intelligence."

7. Edgar McVoy. Evidence that McVoy's interviews were "for intelligence-gathering purposes" is not presented by Dr. Suzuki. If the blanket statement about "intelligence-gathering" is to be accepted, Dr. Suzuki would have to give detailed information about the specific form of McVoy's reports, whether or not they included the names of individuals, and about the particular uses to which the reports, if they included names, were put. I think it is possible that McVoy did supply some information on individuals, either orally or in written form, to administrators at Jerome Center. I say this because, as I recall, McVoy did not at first fully understand Community Analysis policy to the effect that reports were to be in general and not in individual terms. The quote which Dr. Suzuki gives seems to bear out McVoy's lack of understanding of the policy, at least with respect to administrative personnel, in connection with whom he ^{however,} expresses an inconsistent approach. However, Dr. Suzuki does not clearly present a definite case. Dr. Suzuki's statement about McVoy's role in the removal of a Buddhist minister to ~~Emhamhamhamhamham~~ Leupp isolation camp is pure inference and cannot be accepted as solid evidence.

8. John Provinse. John Provinse was employed by the WRA as an administrator, not as an anthropologist. As Chief of the Division of Community Management he had responsibility for the setting up and running of schools, hospitals, a recreation program, and what was called the Internal Security program. The last was essentially the police force for maintaining law and order within the relocation centers. Provinse's memorandum to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was written in connection with Provinse's responsibilities for leave clearance from the centers for evacuees. This was a program for ~~enabling~~ enabling evacuees to leave the relocation centers and settle elsewhere in the United States rather than to remain within the centers. The circumstances which led to the involvement of the FBI in the leave clearance program is certainly a subject that should be looked into and understood by the Commission. It, however, is an aspect of the WRA program which the Community Analysts did not take any part in and therefore this section of Dr. Suzuki's testimony is irrelevant to the charges made at the beginning of his statement.

9. John A. Rademaker. Dr. Suzuki presents four fairly clear cases in which Rademaker carried on activities which might legitimately

be called intelligence work among evacuees~~x~~ and administrative personnel. He communicated the names of individuals~~x~~ evacuees to WRA administrators and to the FBI and Naval Intelligence for the purpose of having action taken against the individuals. These were clear violations of Community Analysis~~is~~ policy. Rademaker's letter of October, 1943, written early in the period of his employment, quoted by Dr. Suzuki, shows that he was unable to understand that his assignment as Community Analyst prohibited the reporting of the names of individuals and their behavior. His confusion on this matter persisted throughout his service for WRA. Embree made the effort when he was first hired and Spicer continued to try to educate him, but they were unable to make him understand. His separation from WRA after about a year of employment was a great relief to the Community Analysis Section. No other Analyst performed in this manner. It should be said that Rademaker's activities were inspired by his very strong identification^{with} ~~by~~ what he thought were the best interests of one segment of the Nisei population, namely, those who actively sought to make known their loyalty to the United States and were vociferous about this during and immediately after evacuation. Rademaker could not separate his assigned work from what he thought were their interests. It kept him from developing a long term, overall understanding of the welfare of the whole evacuee group. Dr. Suzuki's inference on page 10 of his testimony that Spicer encouraged Rademaker is ^entirely wrong, and evidence for such encouragement is not to be found in the letter quoted.

10. Edward H. Spicer. Dr. Suzuki charges that Spicer "suppressed" information~~on~~ on two occasions. The first instance is the following. Anne Freed of the Community Analysis Section in Washington made a study of conditions in the Assembly Centers set up as temporary locations for the evacuees before they were transferred to the Relocation Centers. Her reports contained information demonstrating that living conditions were generally very bad in the converted racetracks and other hastily converted quarters. The Assembly Cent^ers were managed by the Army, that is, by the Western Def^ense Command. The decision regarding Freed's reports was whether to circulate them in mimeographed form within the WRA and other governmental agencies or to file them without circulating. Spicer, as Head of the Community Analysis Section, thought they ought not to be circulated. He

presented two reasons for this. One was that for the WRA to circulate information critical of the Army at that particular time might hurt working relations between the Army and WRA. It was important that these relations not be impaired because the Army and the WRA were engaged in an effort on behalf of the Nisei. They were inaugurating a campaign to dispel the suspicion aroused by the action of evacuation by publicizing the abundant expressions of Nisei loyalty to the United States, including their performance in the armed services. The second reason advanced by Spicer was that publicity regarding the conditions in the Assembly Centers might be noted in Japan and result in retaliatory treatment of prisoners of war and interned U. S. citizens. On this basis, Spicer recommended against circulating the reports and his superior, Provinse, concurred. The other instance of what Dr. Suzuki calls "suppression" was the following. Spicer expressed an opinion to Provinse that publicity regarding the high percentage of Japanese Americans in the Honolulu police force might backfire against Japanese Americans on the continent. My reasoning, as I now recall, was that much misinformation about the role of Japanese Americans in the attack on Pearl Harbor was still circulating in the United States. The fact that many police in Honolulu were of Japanese ancestry could be interpreted by the misinformed public as a contributing factor in the attack. I so advised my superior, Provinse, and he decided not to encourage the circulation of the information by the WRA. This was, it should be noted, not information to which only the WRA had access. Neither of these instances, obviously, has anything to do with the assertions made by Dr. Suzuki concerning "intelligence work" or "informing." I do not recall the circumstances of the transmission of the names of two residents of Topaz Center to "an official at Tule Lake." Dr. Suzuki gives no information concerning the occasion or the utilization of the information; his statement does not support a charge of "intelligence work."

11. Rosalie Hanke Wax. I will not comment on Dr. Suzuki's testimony regarding the activities of Rosalie Hanke at Tule Lake. She was not connected with the WRA and can comment for herself on Dr. Suzuki's assertions.

12. On page 12 of his testimony, Dr. Suzuki makes sweeping comment on two books --- The Governing of Men by Alexander H. Leighton and Impounded People by members of the Community Analysis Section ---

and some articles published by Community Analysis workers in professional journals. Nothing is offered in support of the series of strange adjectives by which he characterizes all of the publications. His previous comments in his ~~testimony~~ testimony, as I have pointed out, provide no basis for accepting Dr. Suzuki as a competent and authoritative critic of the work of the Community Analysts. His criticism must therefore be regarded as an intemperate and unbalanced outburst of personal emotion.

13. John F. Embree. Finally, the statement by Embree to the FBI quoted on p. 13 of Dr. Suzuki's testimony is not a policy statement of the Community Analysis Section, as asserted by Dr. Suzuki. It is a recommendation regarding communication channels in the relocation centers. It appears to propose a type of channel different from and in addition to that provided by the Internal Security Section. Dr. Suzuki's inferences from it are not clear; he seems to wish to employ it as a confirmation of the broad charges with which he introduced his testimony, most of which have not been substantiated in the body of his document. It obviously does not confirm in any way those charges.

In summary, Dr. Suzuki's testimony brings out the fact that one Community Analyst, in addition to his proper duties as an Analyst, engaged in the gathering and reporting of information about individuals to WRA administrators and the FBI. This violated the policy of the Community Analysis Section and stood out as a different kind of activity from that of the other Community Analysts. The one Analyst, John Rademaker, who repeatedly violated CA policy in this way was employed for about a year at the beginning of the Community Analysis program and was separated from the WRA when it became apparent that he was unable to learn the prescribed role of a Community Analyst. None of the other more than 20 individuals employed by the CA section during the approximate four years of its program behaved as did Rademaker. Except for the pieces of information regarding John Rademaker, the overwhelmingly greater part of Dr. Suzuki's testimony is either irrelevant^{to} or wholly unsubstantiating of his charge on page 2 that "not a few [social scientists] gathered intelligence data and informed on inmates."

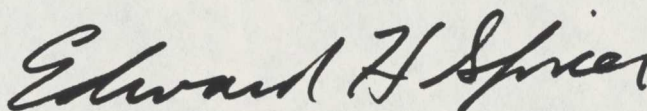
What follows is a general statement designed to make clear what it was the Community Analysis Section did do and to assist in explaining the errors and misinterpretations so numerous in Dr. Suzuki's testimony.

Dr. Suzuki carried out his investigations in the National Archives apparently without any understanding of the nature of applied work in anthropology in general or of the purpose for which the Community Analysis Section was set up in particular. It would have been possible to gain the necessary understanding by following standard methods of anthropology, Dr. Suzuki's profession. He could have interviewed living government administrators who participated in or were familiar with the WRA program, Community Analysts, and persons of Japanese ancestry and thus obtained some perspective for interpreting the bits of information that he dug out of the National Archives. Dr. Suzuki apparently, insofar as his statements tell ~~xxx~~ us, did not proceed in this way, and hence much error and misunderstanding appears in what he has published and what he presented to the Commission.

The Community Analysis Section was established, as was the Bureau of Sociological Research before it, to assist in the problems of administering the relocation centers, in the interests of both administrators and evacuees. It was not established for the purpose of carrying on traditional anthropological research in isolation from administrative problems, but rather for finding ways in which anthropological and sociological techniques and concepts might be utilized for bringing about mutual understanding between administrators and administered people and thus promote mutually satisfactory working relationships. The method required the observation and interview of both administrators and evacuees in their day-to-day ~~xxx~~ interactions, the analysis of the information on social relations thus gathered, and the making of recommendations designed to bring about and maintain good administration. The data with which Analysts worked was derived from individuals, but the method required that that information be re-worked and presented as general conclusions usable in understanding the factors involved in the administrative problems. The Community Analysis Section ~~section~~ insisted that reports not mention individual names and that specific individuals not be identifiable as a result of reading the Community Analysis reports.

Some 20 individuals worked as Community Analysts during ~~the~~ much of the approximate four years of the WRA's existence. Most of the time there was one Analyst in each of the relocation centers and in what became the segregation center. They ~~worked~~ in the way that has been described. Three or four Analysts also worked in the Washington office coordinating the results of the center Analysts activities and, like the latter, preparing reports dealing with aspects of the administrative problems that arose. In the published final report of the Community Analysis Section, Impounded People, are listed more than 100 mimeographed reports which provide a summary of the work accomplished by the Analysts. An adequate and balanced view of the work of Community Analysts could be prepared from that material, which is available in the National Archives and elsewhere.

A careful survey leading to a complete view of the work of the social scientists has not been presented by Dr. Suzuki either in his testimony before the Commission or in his published article in Dialectical Anthropology. Instead, through listing activities of several Analysts which for the most part he misunderstands and through misstatement and exaggeration, his testimony conveys a false impression. It is to be hoped that the Commission will seek other sources in its highly commendable efforts to make clear the conditions under which Japanese Americans were forced to live in the relocation centers.



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