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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

Gila River Project  
Rivers, Arizona

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

Employment

August 16, 1943

Mr. Walter N. Parmeter  
Relocation Officer  
City National Bank Building  
Omaha, Nebraska

Dear Mr. Parmeter:

Mr. Shotaro Hikida one of the Issei leaders in our Center has compiled an interesting report of his sojourn in Chicago during April. This report goes beyond his experiences on this trip and hence, we thought it might be of interest to you in reference to general relocation problems.

Sincerely yours,

*William Huse*  
William Huse  
Employment Officer

Enclosure #3795





REPORT ON MY THREE WEEKS' TRIP TO CHICAGO AREAS  
OBSERVING RESETTLEMENT CONDITION OF EVACUEES

INTRODUCTION

When almost a hundred and ten thousand Japanese, including thousands of U. S. citizens of Japanese ancestry, were forced to evacuate from their Pacific Coast homes going first to the assembly centers and then to the relocation centers of the inland states, their greatest concern, aside from a feeling of resentment against such mass evacuation, was how long they would be confined to the abnormal life of the camps, whether it would be for the duration of the war or whether they would be allowed to resettle themselves within a certain period of time after their removal to the relocation centers.

After less than six months following the evacuation of these people to the inland states, the War Relocation Authority in Washington made a most cheerful announcement to the effect that many of the evacuees in the centers, in order that they may return to their normal life in communities and may also participate in vital war industries, would be allowed to leave the centers indefinitely and resettle themselves in accordance with the regulations set forth by the said authority. This announcement was accepted as the most cheerful and welcome news the evacuees had received. The writer was one who especially welcomed this announcement with greatest interest and with deepest appreciation for the efforts which the War Relocation Authority made in securing this opportunity for freedom for both citizens and residents of Japanese ancestry in the United States. The future of evacuees suddenly changed from darkness to brightness, and I could not help but hope that our people would soon forget their past hardships and be relieved of fear and worry with which they were under constant threat. I prayed that every evacuee, young and old would make the best use of this opportunity and resettle himself in the community in work for which he will be best fitted. I even had a vision of our people resettling quickly to the American communities, living friendly with other Americans and participating industriously in the vital war industry of this country.

As the program of resettlement gradually began to function during the latter part of February and the first part of March this year, it appeared as though greater interest was shown in this program by the nisei with their leave applications coming in very fast. The issei, on the other hand, have shown very little interest. Not only have they shown very little interest, but it was most regretful to find a certain group of them refusing to accept this opportunity in good faith. Some went so far as to resent it and say that this movement for resettlement and relocation is nothing but a war emergency program based upon its own convenience, substituting evacuees for critical labor shortage and that at the end of the war, the evacuees will all be thrown out of employment by returning soldiers. Of course, there were



those who have large families and were not certain about economic subsistence after leaving the centers. In spite of these attitudes on the part of the older generation as to resettlement and relocation, there was no doubt in the minds of these people that this abnormal camp life must not be a permanent one for they know that this abnormal life is detrimental to the general welfare of their children as well as to themselves.

Realizing the seriousness of such a desperate attitude on the part of some issei and the danger thereof to the community as a whole, I felt that something had to be done to correct these views. I felt very keenly that in order to correct such views, first-hand information should be obtained which should be disseminated to these people.

On the moment of this great concern on my mind, Mr. Ralph Smeltzer, the director of the Brethren Hostel in Chicago visited the Gila River Relocation Center and spoke to the issei evacuees on the topic of the new process in resettlement. Mr. Oishi, a close friend of mine as well as myself, were greatly impressed with his talk and felt the immediate need for close study and observation of resettlement conditions in Chicago areas in particular, for that area was considered a logical location in which evacuees may resettle. After a few days of consultation and negotiations with the leave office and other departments of the administration, Mr. Oishi and I decided to take a three weeks' trip to the Chicago areas upon our own initiative and expense to study and observe conditions there with the hope that the result of such study and observation may benefit our people in greater accomplishment of this important resettlement program which has a most significant bearing upon the future of the Japanese in the United States.

In the following paragraphs I shall present in report form the result of our study and observation of resettlement conditions in the Chicago areas. Together with the report, I shall make suggestions and recommendations which I hope will serve toward better and more efficient operation of this program.

At this point, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Smeltzer, directors of the Brethren Hostel in Chicago, Mr. Elmer Shirrell, Mr. Ben Yoshioka, and other staff members of the War Relocation Authority Relocation Office in Chicago, and to Messrs. Leroy Bennett, L. T. Hoffman, Hugo Wolter, John Landward and William Huso for their kind assistance and cooperation extended to make our trip, study and observations most successful.



### DEPARTURE FROM GILA RIVER PROJECT

In accordance with instructions given to us by the leave office, at 9 o'clock on the morning of March 31st, Wednesday, we reported to the administration office and there we boarded a passenger truck. Surrounding the truck were several well wishers among whom were parents of young nisei leaving the centers looking rather worried about their daughters' trip to far and strange cities. The truck left the center about 9:30 a.m. arriving at Sacaton at 10 a.m. from which point we took a bus to Phoenix, arriving there at 11:40 a.m. In the party leaving the center on that day there were more than fifteen evacuees, most of them going to the Colorado River Relocation Center at Poston. Exceptions were two young girls, one going to Texas to join her husband and the other going to Philadelphia to enter college. On the truck going from the center to Sacaton feelings of dissatisfaction were voiced by several leaving evacuees. This dissatisfaction was nothing but complaint and criticism that the leave office of the center does not give necessary information for the trip and that those in the office are not kind in giving assistance to those who are leaving. The young lady leaving for Philadelphia admitted that she did not get much information and she seemed very much worried, especially when she arrived in Phoenix. She did not know what to do at the bus depot with five or six pieces of baggage in her possession. I secured a taxi for her, took her to the railroad station and purchased the railroad ticket for her. The immediate question which flashed in my mind was, "Do young nisei leaving the center have similar experiences of worrying so much at the initial point of their trip because they do not have the necessary travel information?" In checking her baggage for her in the baggage room, I noticed that she had four traveling cases besides the one which she carried with her to the train. The total weight of these four bags was 190 pounds which exceeded by over 40 pounds the allowed weight for each passenger. To my great surprise as well as hers, a sum of \$10.35 was charged for her excess baggage. If she had known these facts before leaving the center, she could have saved that amount. I do not know whether travel information of this sort is not given by the leave office or have not been asked by the evacuees who are leaving. Nevertheless, these nisei evacuees certainly should get such important information and instructions.

### HOSPITALITY IN THE TRAINS

Leaving the Union Station in Phoenix at 4:30 on the same afternoon we arrived in Ashfork at 11:20 p.m. Here, without advance notice, we had to stay overnight in order to take the train for Chicago on the following morning. Two hours behind schedule, we boarded the train at 12:20 p.m. on Thursday. Mr. Oishi, his daughter-in-law, and I were guided to the reserved Pullman car. As we entered the car we were struck by a peculiar feeling of timidity



and discomfort as if all the passengers were staring at us as we walked along the aisle. Immediately, I realized that I must have been overawed because of my being too conscious about enemy aliens. It was just a matter of mental attitude. I tried to collect myself and soon that feeling vanished. As time went on and the train speeded eastward, we made several acquaintances on the train. Through the conversations we had with several American passengers, including many servicemen, I am happy to say that they were all very kind to us and moreover, they were very sympathetic to us regarding the circumstances in which we are placed today. We repeatedly visited the dining car but never had a single incident of unpleasant nature based upon racial difference. There was a party of two men and a woman from Fresno, California, going to Indiana, and they told us that they had Japanese farmers on their ranch for thirty years and remarked on how industrious they were and how sad it was for them to leave. They all expressed their desire of having the Japanese farmers return to California and participate again in agricultural development of central California. I am so pleased to state that, contrary to my fear and worry which I had while I was in the center, the general feeling of the American public on the train was so kind and sympathetic that nothing more can be expected. Many of the servicemen on the train while in the dining car or in the smoking room entered into kind and pleasant conversations with us. We were so grateful to them for their consideration and friendliness shown during our travel to Chicago.

Before the United States entered the present war in 1941, it was common experience on the trains to hear war talk among the passengers; this was particularly noticeable on local trains. But to my surprise there was no war talk of any kind on the train in which I traveled to Chicago. Another surprising fact was that during the travel by train I never saw a single hobo along the railroad which was very different from the common scene prior to the war.

#### STOPOVER AT KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

After traveling more than 34 hours by train after leaving the station at Ashfork, we finally arrived in Kansas City, Missouri, at 10:30 p.m. Friday night. With the hope that we might be able to obtain some interesting information on resettlement conditions, we decided to stop over at that city. Staying that night at the Dixon Hotel, the third largest hotel in Kansas City, we called upon the W.R.A. office the following morning. Mr. Leker, the District Director of the W.R.A. was kind enough to spend more than an hour with us, giving us all available information on resettlement conditions in that city. We were told that until very recently no Japanese had ever lived in Kansas city, except one who operated an Oriental store and, therefore, people of Kansas City never had



a chance to know the Japanese. We were told that three nisei arrived recently from relocation centers, but according to the frank opinion of Mr. Leker, they seemed to be very lonesome for the simple reason that these young men are not accepted very comfortably in the community. Mr. Leker told me that his office is just about to start work along this line and we were impressed that much had to be done here on public relocations. While we stayed in Kansas City, we dined at highly rated restaurants and although we were curiously looked upon by patrons as well as by the waitresses, we never had any unpleasant incidents. Yet we left Kansas City with the impression that a great deal of pioneering work in resettlement of the Japanese in this city has to be done before further flow of the evacuees to this city is allowed. Any Japanese resettling in a city like Kansas City where no Japanese ever lived before must expect one or two unpleasant incidents based upon racial feeling. We hoped that whoever resettles first in a city of this kind certainly should go there being pioneer-minded and such person should be one who is qualified to represent the Japanese people. It was 3 o'clock on that same afternoon when we left Kansas City for Chicago. As we neared Chicago, we were greeted by the unusual view of great Mississippi River as we looked through the windows of the speeding train.

#### OUR ARRIVAL AT CHICAGO

On Saturday night, April 3rd, at 10:30 p.m., we finally pulled into Chicago, the destination of our trip. Hoping that we might be able to rest better that night at a hotel than at the Brethren Hostel where we previously had arranged to stay, we decided to go to the downtown section and find a hotel there. By taxi we went to the downtown section and tried at several hotels to get the rooms, but all our efforts were in vain. We were told that all those hotels, on account of its being Saturday evening, had been filled. Then the taxi driver took us to the residential districts at which we again tried to find rooms but it was also in vain. Finally, the driver himself went into the hotel and negotiated, securing rooms for us, but when we went into the hotel, the clerk upon seeing us and finding that we are Orientals, refused to give us the rooms. It certainly was an unpleasant experience. It was perhaps because we went into the wrong residential district where no Orientals are accepted. Realizing the extreme difficulty of securing rooms in a hotel that night, we finally gave up the idea and decided to pass the night at the station. But when we came to the railroad station, porters were busy sweeping and we were greeted with, "Gentlemen, no trains leaving tonight, so kindly do not come in here." As a result of such unpleasant experiences on the night of our arrival, we were almost in despair. Then, after walking about four blocks we found a restaurant at which we decided to have a light meal. To our surprise the restaurant



was operated by a Japanese named Mr. Yasuma Yamasaki, one of the leading Japanese in Chicago. The kind cashier and waiter greeted us and extended their kindest hospitality to us offering us a place to sleep that night in the back of the restaurant. On the following morning, we were introduced to Mr. Yamazaki, the owner who was also very kind in giving us every assistance in securing information on resettlement as well as making our stay in Chicago a most pleasant one. The difficulties in finding hotels and the unpleasant incidents such as the refusal by hotel clerks on the basis of racial prejudice would have not been our experience if we made previous arrangements at hotels. It was a very good lesson for us so that we will not do it again. The travelers, especially strangers, must always be very careful as to hotel reservations. On the other hand, through these experiences, though unpleasant, it was well to learn that there always is the prejudice based upon the color of the skin, especially in certain districts even in the city which is known to be a metropolitan city. Later, we were told that hotels to which the taxi driver took us were below middle class and were able to know that there often is more discrimination against Orientals among this class of hotels than in higher class hotels. We were surprised to find the acute housing situation of this large city.

#### GENERAL FEELING OF AMERICAN PUBLIC TOWARD JAPANESE IN CHICAGO

To make any conclusion after a short period of ten days observation in Chicago may seem to be a hasty conclusion, but it is the opinion of the writer that Chicago, being one of the metropolitan cities with people of all races, has very little, if any racial feeling. During ten days of our stay in Chicago, we visited department stores, movies, had dinner at downtown hotels and restaurants but never had an unpleasant experience of racial discrimination, and it can be said safely that Chicago is considered as one city in which evacuees may resettle without worrying so much about this racial prejudice which may exist in some other cities. A less racial feeling in that city is perhaps due to the following reasons:

1. Large population of that city.
2. Less strategically located in comparison to New York on the eastern coast and Los Angeles and San Francisco on the western coast.
3. City's population consists of people of many races.
4. Comparatively small number of Japanese resided in Chicago prior to war and they were dispersed in residential section.
5. Non-existence of economic competition by Japanese residents in Chicago.



While we stayed in Chicago, we had an opportunity to meet some of the leading Japanese of that city who have been residing in Chicago for more than thirty years, and they related to us some of the interesting facts which clearly indicate how the people of Chicago react toward Japanese. To cite a few examples: There are about fifteen restaurants operated now by the Japanese in the city of Chicago. Every one of those had been ordered closed immediately after the outbreak of the war, but after a few weeks, they had been allowed to reopen. Although these restaurants had been discriminated against by American customers during the first few months after the start of the war, at present (that is within a period of one year, thereafter) these restaurants are doing a booming business. Mr. Oishi and I went to Marshall Field's Department store one day and Mr. Oishi did quite a large amount of shopping. In payment, he drew a check on his bank at El Monte, California, his former home. His check was accepted by the sales clerk without questioning him about his credit or other information. It certainly was a pleasant surprise. We could imagine what would have happened if it were in Los Angeles or San Francisco instead of in Chicago. This, I believe, indicates the difference in treating Japanese, and it is no wonder that Japanese now evacuated from the Pacific coast still hold the idea that they have been victimized by the anti-Japanese movement of the western people precipitated by the anti-Japanese organizations which always had as their objectives the complete ouster of Japanese immigrants from the Pacific Coast. Such organizations as the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West, American Legion, California Joint Immigration and Grange are the most notable groups working for the anti-Japanese movement.

#### RESETTLEMENT CONDITIONS IN CHICAGO AREAS

According to information received from a reliable person, more than one thousand evacuees must have resettled in the city of Chicago during the past four months. In the early stage of the relocation program, we have been told, most job offers were confined only to domestic work, and it seemed to be rather discouraging then. But through the efforts of the U. S. Employment office and the W.R.A. office, more varieties of jobs began to be offered. At the present time, the following jobs are being offered by the employers:

Domestic workers, nursery workers, mechanics, typists, secretaries, clerks in stores and offices, photographers, hotel workers, dentists, nurses, accountants, defense workers, Y.M.C.A. workers, beauty parlor workers, farm laborers, and restaurant workers.

Wages: Wages in the Chicago area seem to be lower than those of other parts of the country, but it is explained that such low wages have no direct effect upon men's living because the cost



of living in Chicago is also low. Wages for unskilled labor range from 50 to 60 cents per hour while wages for skilled labor are from 75 cents to \$1.00 per hour. To cite some of the examples which the writer obtained directly from nisei who are now employed in Chicago: Nisei stenographers are getting from \$100 to \$125; nursery workers are getting 60 cents per hour for 10 hours work a day with free room; domestic workers are getting from \$50 to \$80 per month for single and \$125 to \$150 for couples; mechanics are getting from \$1.00 to \$1.25 per hour; and office clerks are getting around \$100. It was most encouraging to learn that the reaction of those employers who have hired the nisei is surprisingly good. In the A. C. McClurg Company, the wholesale book store which first employed five nisei, because of the fine ability of these employed nisei, twenty additional placements have been made within two months. Although occupational opportunities in Chicago seem to be bright for resettling evacuees, it is unfortunate to remark that defense jobs in larger industries and in some lines of professions are not open for nisei. It is hoped that as time goes on, through further efforts of the W.R.A. and the U.S.E.S., more such opportunities for the nisei will be given.

While I was in Chicago, I met a young man who came from the Manzanar Relocation Center recently. He is a graduate of the University of California at Los Angeles, majoring in accounting, and I was very much impressed with his untiring efforts in attempting to find a suitable job for himself. For more than a week, he visited several firms, meeting with the executives of the firms and trying to sell himself and his ability. I do not know whether he succeeded in this objective or not, but I certainly liked his sincere efforts in doing this which I believe could not be done without pioneering spirit.

On the other hand, I have witnessed a case in which some young nisei came to Chicago without seriously considering their future and the importance of resettlement program. They neither had much educational background nor vocational training. Immediately upon their arrival in Chicago they had been offered jobs which must have been very fortunate yet they discontinued after a week or two weeks of working, and ever since, they have not attempted to look for jobs. Their future still is in question. It is the hope of the writer that young men who are leaving the relocation centers now and those who contemplate leaving in the future must not repeat the experience of these young men for such an attitude on the part of resettling Japanese certainly will bring unfavorable reactions from employers. These important points should be emphasized to the prospective resettlers before they leave the relocation center.



### HOUSING PROBLEM

One of the critical problems which resettling evacuees encounter in Chicago is the matter of housing. This is particularly true in Chicago. The city being a large industrial center, is flocked with defense workers, and the city itself is facing an acute problem of housing. Nisei resettling in Chicago are meeting considerable difficulty in renting apartments and houses and this condition appeared to be more serious with larger family units. I have visited several apartments where nisei are living and obtained the following information:

1. Four nisei girls are staying in a large apartment with one American woman in the southern residential district of Chicago, each girl paying \$20.00 per month for rent. The apartment was spacious and well furnished.
2. A nisei couple living in the upper floor of a flat in the southern part of the city pays \$45.00 per month. I thought they had very desirable living quarters.
3. Several nisei single men and girls rent rooms in families paying between \$15 and \$20 per month. There are also nisei boys who as a group rent part of a house, two or three living in one room.
4. Some of the girls are very fortunate to be offered rooms in Christian families. I consider these as especially fortunate cases.
5. Several young men and young women are staying at the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., respectively; their rent usually runs between \$25 to \$30 per month.

The general tendency seem to be that some of the landlords are willing to rent apartments to nisei, but they are afraid that the other tenants might resent it. Although the W.R.A. office in Chicago, through its housing department, is endeavoring to improve this condition, it is the impression of the writer that, with the ever increasing number of nisei relocating to the city of Chicago, the housing situation will no doubt become a more and more serious problem for resettling evacuees. With this in view, I have come to the conclusion that resettlement of large family units in Chicago is one which I am not able to encourage for our evacuee residents in the center.

### BUSINESS PROSPECTS IN CHICAGO

Although several Japanese who are engaged in business in Chicago (especially those operating restaurants) are very prosperous, business opportunities for newcomers is very small. In



fact, there is no opening of any kind and this can be reasoned as follows: The city is reluctant to issue such licenses to the Japanese and there are no prospects of sales or assignments of business establishments for the reason that they are doing a booming business.

#### FARMING OPPORTUNITIES IN CHICAGO AREAS

Through the kind arrangements of Mr. Charles Yamazaki, a pioneer Japanese in Chicago, and Mr. Lessing of W.R.A., it was possible for me to visit some of the farms near Chicago, both in Illinois and Indiana. After meeting several representatives of farming interests, such as the Curtis Candy Company and others, I came to realize that what farmers in that district are looking for are not farmers, but farm laborers. It seems to me that the difficulty in connection with the resettlement of the evacuee farmers is this point of difference. The farming groups in the relocation centers mostly had been engaged in their own farming in the pre-evacuation period and they do not want to go back to farm labor of old days. Furthermore, the retraining and readjustability of Japanese farmers to the mid-western type of farming is another problem. Above all, general acceptance of Japanese farmers by the communities of the resettling districts is a most important prerequisite. There have been several cases in which nisei farmers were compelled to give up resettlement in the farm districts because of the prejudice of the community as a whole, against Japanese farmers. It is the opinion of this writer that in order to carry out the efficient resettlement of Japanese farmers from the relocation centers to the mid-western farm districts, the following steps should be taken:

1. To start with, the resettling farmers should be family groups which are composed of both nisei and issei members; the former acting as manager or representative, and the latter acting as advisor. The nisei manager or representative should have some knowledge of mid-western type of farming. Preliminary training along this line is very important.
2. Resettling farmers must entirely give up the idea of going back to the west coast in future and must resettle in the new farming community with permanent relocation as the primary aim and objective.
3. General acceptability by the community of Japanese farmers must be assured so that no dissension may arise upon their resettlement.
4. Inducement of Japanese farmers to resettle in a given district should not be the result of initiative by an



individual farm interest but should be the result of community-wide interest and acceptance where there are acute farm hand shortages.

When these matters are gradually worked out, I know that the resettlement of large family units of Japanese farmers can be accomplished and the success of it, eventually, will mean the success of the whole relocation program.

ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION GIVEN BY DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS HOSTELS, Y.M. AND Y.W.C.A. CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS.

In the history of the Japanese in the United States, there has been no other time such as the present period in which so many young people left their parents, brothers and sisters behind, relocating themselves with adventures in far and strange parts of the country. And because of this experience on the part of young people as well as on the part of their parents who have great concern thereof, the assistance and cooperation given to these nisei is greatly appreciated by them. Two hostels, namely the Brethren and Friends in Chicago, are outstanding institutions giving aid to these resettling nisei. The Brethren Hostel under the able directorship of Mr. Ralph Smeltzer, has helped more than two hundred nisei up to the present time. Not only is their help and advice so valuable to the nisei, but they follow up and help in the proper orientation of these young people in the strange city. This is greatly appreciated by the parents of these nisei and should quite relieve the parents anxiety over the future of their sons and daughters. There are other organizations such as the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. and the Joint Church Committee which are also rendering much aid and guidance toward nisei in Chicago. It is sincerely hoped by the writer that with the guidance of such able leaders, our young people may make their new life most valuable to the community.

DEPARTURE FROM CHICAGO AND STOPOVER AT DENVER, COLORADO

After staying ten days in Chicago, during which we made close observation of resettlement conditions there, on April 12, we left Chicago and continued our return trip by the northern route, stopping at Denver. We stayed only two days in Denver during which we made a brief study of resettlement conditions in that city. Although we were not able to observe as much as we had hoped to, we were impressed with the following points of interests:

1. The general attitude and feeling of the American public in the city of Denver toward Japanese appeared to be excellent.
2. In other than domestic work, jobs for nisei are scarce.



3. Wages are comparatively low.
4. The housing situation is one of the most difficult problems for the resettlers.
5. There is a tendency of unhealthy and unclean living conditions for the resettling evacuees in what they call the Japanese section of the city along Larimer Street. Also, there is danger of undesirable elements such as gamblers relocating from relocation centers. It is hoped by the writer that some step will be taken in order to avoid the reaction which may come from the American public to such conditions.

#### RETURN TO GILA, HOME OF EIGHT MONTHS

On Tuesday morning, April 20th, we finally returned to our home of eight months, the Gila River Relocation Center. It is an emergency war camp in which our home temporarily rests, but we felt a comfort upon our return here. During three weeks of our trip we have had a very pleasant experience with no resentment of any sort shown at any place from the American people. For this we are so grateful. Yet, to my surprise, when I opened an English paper which was waiting upon my return, I found many unpleasant articles which indicated a most discriminatory attitude of some people on the west coast toward Japanese in the United States. Reading such anti-Japanese propaganda, I could not help but wonder if I had been traveling in the same America or whether the America in which yellow papers such as the one which I have just read are allowed to be published is another America.

#### EVACUEES' REACTION TOWARD OUR TRIP

When we returned to our home in the center, to our great surprise, we were told that there have been some rumors going around in the center to the effect that Hikida and Oishi had been sent by the W.R.A. at government expense in order to carry on the propaganda work for resettlement. Upon hearing it, I immediately suspected that such rumors must have been originated by the same group of issei who always try to criticize administrative edicts including the relocation movement. Realizing that our immediate appearance at any public gathering and making a report on our trip might cause more resentment on the part of such evacuees voicing the disapproval of the resettlement movement, we kept ourselves quiet for about one week. After about a week or 10 days, several blocks expressed their desire for our reports on the recent trip. We had been approached by several people and had been requested to consent. Mr. Oishi and I, after discussing this matter decided to consent and make a report to the public provided there would be no



misunderstanding as to the motive and objective of our trip to Chicago. They all expressed complete understanding of it and furthermore, they themselves offered to combat any rumor which might exist in connection with our trip.

Through the arrangement of the C.A.S. issei block activities we appeared six times in six different districts, each meeting having more than 200 in attendance. Those who listened to our report have expressed their appreciation of being able to know more about outside conditions and more about resettlement conditions in the Chicago area. Some parents came to see us after the speech and told us that they are happy now and that they are able to make their decisions upon the proposed resettlement of their sons and daughters. I have also appeared before specially arranged nisei gatherings expecting to make a report of our trip as well as to give valuable advice to those nisei proposing to relocate. But such meetings failed twice because of very few attending. There were about five nisei at the first and about ten at the second meeting. I am still at a loss to find the reason for such poor attendance of nisei while resettlement is more active among the nisei than issei. I cannot help but be concerned over the blind eagerness of nisei toward relocation without thinking much about their future and other qualifications which we all believe are most important parts of relocation. I am hoping that the lack of interest on the part of nisei to our report may not be the result of such an attitude on their part. I also spoke to the Young People's Fellowship at the Rivers Christian Church and the Y.W.C.A. and there was a splendid response from both of these groups. Besides speaking before public meetings, several people came to see me and inquired about conditions outside.

Judging from our experience in contacting the prospective resettlers and their parents, the most concern of these people seemed to be the following problems:

1. General attitude of American public toward Japanese outside.
2. Job offers and wages; cost of living.
3. Housing situation in resettled community.
4. Weather conditions.
5. Educational facilities and attitudes toward children of resettled evacuees in schools.
6. Business and farming opportunities for evacuees.

While speaking to the group on the experience of our recent trip, we especially emphasized on the following points:

1. It was surprising to find the kind and sympathetic attitude of the American people outside toward Japanese in this country; that there was no outward expression of anti-Japanese feeling in existence.



2. Pre-requisites for relocation are, employability and adjustability.
3. Importance of pioneering spirit and strong determination to open one's future.
4. Conduct in trains, in the community upon arrival, etc.
5. Constant communication between members of families in the center and resettled evacuees.

We are happy that we made more contacts with issei on resettlement than with nisei but realizing that at present, more nisei are leaving the center, we should have been able to make more contacts with them so that more immediate benefits would be obtained for relocation.



## CONCLUSION

### SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM

Before anyone makes comments or expresses an opinion upon this important subject of relocation and resettlement of Japanese evacuees from the relocation centers, he must understand the social organization of that community in which these people live. Therefore, I feel it is important to make a social analysis of the community in which we live at present.

Briefly, the Japanese community is made up of the following social groups:

1. Issei who came from Japan several years ago and are the parents of so-called nisei. They follow the Japanese pattern of life because they have a Japanese cultural background entirely different from that of the nisei. Their knowledge of America is very limited.
2. Nisei who were born and educated in America have an American cultural background, entirely different from that of the issei.
3. Kibei who were born in America but educated in Japan whose cultural background is Japanese.

Then we have the following family groups which have a very important bearing upon relocation:

1. Single men and single women group.
2. Small family unit or group.
3. Large family unit or group.

Over and above those different groups we have another classification which we must take into our consideration; it is the occupational groups:

1. Employees of all kinds who work on salary or wages.
2. Business men who, in pre-evacuation days, were engaged in business and never have been employed.
3. Farmers or farming groups who operated their own farms and had no other occupational experience.

Although these groups and classes may be interwoven, the problem of resettlement should be carried on with due consideration and study given separately to these different groups. For example, resettlement of a mechanic who is a single man and resettlement of an issei farmer with six children are entirely different problems. It is the opinion of this writer that the resettlement program should follow certain stages with each group following one another



and that consideration should be given differently and in accordance with the need and help that may seem to be important for each group as outlined before.

#### SINGLE MEN, SINGLE WOMEN, AND EMPLOYEE GROUP

The resettlement for this type of evacuees is a very easy problem as far as the economic problem of resettlement is concerned. We are at present in a stage of relocation for single men, single women, and the employee group. Since most of those who fall into this group are nisei who are energetic and ambitious, their relocation should go very smoothly. The most important problems for this group of evacuees in their resettlement are:

1. Selection of qualified type of men or women so that he or she will be well accepted in the resettled community.
2. Social and moral education as a new member of the community on the outside.
3. Careful adjustment of these evacuees in new employment and in new society so as to avoid any possible failure which there is a danger of and which would cause other evacuees to become reluctant about resettlement. Follow-up and supervision of these young people must be continued constantly by responsible organizations or individuals.

#### SMALL FAMILY UNIT OR GROUP

It is common to find among this group of evacuees the following characteristics:

1. Older nisei with few children.
2. Younger issei or "yobi-yose" and kibe who are well Americanized.
3. Those who had been employees in pre-evacuation period, and have the possibility of re-adjusting to new occupation and new community.
4. Less economic worry because of smaller family to support.

In view of the above facts, I believe, the resettlement of this group will not be a difficult one, especially when the social and moral responsibility of this group of people is much lessened in comparison with the first group. It seems to me that the primary concern of these people in connection with relocation is the educational facilities for their children. I am hoping that this group of evacuees will follow the first group in resettlement. Public acceptability of this group of Japanese evacuees will be the best of all.



### LARGE FAMILY UNIT OR GROUP

It is the opinion of the writer that the resettlement program will encounter its most difficult problem with this group, the large family unit. In pre-evacuation days among Japanese people, it was common to find large family units engaged in their own farming or business. It was not because they were financially able to invest, but they were forced to do so even with the financial aid of their friends in order to support such large families. Therefore, we have had several unsuccessful farmers and business men as well as successful ones. A man with a large family employed in a farm, in business, or industry with a limited salary is considered to be very unfortunate. There are several problems which may hinder the smooth operation of relocation for this group of evacuees; they are as follows:

1. Parents of families of this type are old and are not willing to take the chance of resettlement. They would rather remain in the center and be content with their present economic status. In order to make the living which is the same as that of camp life, the head of the family, if he is the only bread winner, must earn at least \$200 per month which is absolutely impossible on the outside.
2. They are attached to their properties left in California and are inclined to wait for a chance to go back to California rather than risk themselves in a new community. Also, there is a tendency of their unwillingness to do away with the Japanese pattern of life, especially noticeable among rural evacuees.
3. Anxiety over discriminatory attitude of American public as they see it through the newspapers, particularly when and with the turn of tide in the war situation.
4. Inability of readjustment to new economic and social conditions outside.
5. Many parents of nisei are concerned over matrimonial problems of their sons and daughters. In pre-evacuation days due to lack of proper associations, matrimonial opportunities were considered limited. In the center, close associations have alleviated this problem greatly. It is considered by many parents that by relocation to new communities dispersing will again create this problem and, as a result, their sons and daughters may face this serious problem.
6. Lack of business and farming opportunities and lack of financing.



From the above reasons, one can realize the difficulty which these large family units are facing. Of course, the family whose younger members have already resettled is different because upon complete settlement of their sons or daughters they may follow and join their younger ones. The greatest difficulty lies with families of smaller children. In order to solve this problem, the writer wishes to present the following recommendations:

1. Setting up of government-supervised farming colonies of Japanese evacuees. The location of the colony must be the place of least anti-Japanese sentiment. The colony should not be so large as to cause the alarm of the nearby community. Financial aid in the form of a loan should be provided for them.

The plan suggested above should be based on a reclamation project. Throughout the United States, there are many waste lands upon which our Japanese farmers can, and I am quite certain, will be willing to settle and engage in farming. Their contributions toward emergency war industry by producing badly needed farm products as well as development of waste lands for cultivation, I believe, are exactly what America needs today and such a plan should be considered most desirable and significant for the final solution of the Japanese problem. There are many nisei farmers who are eager to spend their whole life in farming but, unfortunately, opportunities are not plentiful to induce these nisei to relocate and farm. It is the opinion of this writer that most of the Japanese farmers will not relocate until and unless farming opportunities upon a safe economic basis are offered and their safety in the communities is guaranteed. Such an economic and social guarantee by the Government is no national burden nor any great sacrifice; in fact, it will be a great benefit to the United States. As important a program as this should always be planned with ultimate return as the primary objective.

#### SPECIAL GROUPS OF EVACUEES

There are two special groups of evacuees whose relocation will never materialize. One of these groups is the disloyal element and the other is the helpless solitary individuals. The relocation of the former, according to information which I obtained, will not be allowed and they, perhaps, will repatriate to Japan whenever an exchange ship is available, while relocation of the latter group may create a social problem and, therefore, resettlement of these people may be impossible. The problem of these, such as old, helpless bachelors had been one of the greatest social problems of the Japanese communities in pre-evacuation days. It is the opinion of the writer that a suitable institution such as an old home should be provided for them instead of relocating these people in the communities and creating a serious problem. The disloyal elements, because of their being deprived of privi-



eges to resettle, may take an adverse stand. There is already a tendency of this group to originate rumors which are a serious damage to the successful operation of the resettlement program. I have heard several rumors recently which are alarming prospective resettlers and parents of those who have relocated already. They are: That some of the young men who resettled in midwest are very much disappointed in the new communities because they are not given wages and working conditions as agreed upon at the time of their negotiation in the center and therefore they are hoping to return to the relocation centers; that some young girls in Chicago are turning out to be prostitutes. The case which the writer referred to at the very outset of this report about the attitude of some issei on relocation is one example which clearly indicates the adverse propaganda originated by this group of disloyal elements. In view of these facts, it is very important to set up an educational program of relocation so that correct information may be given and false information can be destroyed.

#### EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR RESETTLEMENT

Educational organization and programs are proposed as follows:

1. Organization of sub-committees. The present resettlement commission may be divided into sub-committees, each sub-committee concentrating upon the study of resettlement of a different group of evacuees, such as small or large family groups, farming, or business groups. Study various angles of problems attached to each group, to disseminate true and correct information, to combat unfounded rumors, to educate evacuees on industries and geographic condition of the mid-west.
2. Appointment of one or two representatives in each block who can aid evacuees in relocation.
3. Compulsory attendance by prospective resettlers at the lectures (preferably a series of two or three lectures on resettlement) so that each evacuee before leaving the center may be well qualified as a desirable member of a new community.
4. Cooperation and coordination between members of commission, block representatives, and administrative offices such as the employment and leave offices.

By: Shotaro Hikida  
Rivers, Arizona



December 4, 1943

Memorandum to: Relocation Supervisors and Officers

Subject: Impressions of a Rohwer Evacuee

I attach for your information comments written by an evacuee who formerly served on the Rohwer Reports staff, following a recent trip which he took to the Middle West. From time to time we plan to send out similar material bearing on the relocation program as it is received from the centers and other sources. We will welcome your reactions in terms of your own experience.

Edwin G. Arnold  
Chief  
Relocation Division

Attachment



ROHWER RELOCATION CENTER

October 21, 1943

SPECIAL REPORT

IMPRESSION OF THE MIDDLE WEST AND WRA FIELD OFFICES

By An Evacuee

I have been traveling considerably throughout the mid-west and I find the reception accorded our people to be friendly and wholesome. Quite unlike the long prevailing animosity, discrimination, and prejudice experienced on the coast, the people of this area are far more receptive. For the most part, the people here have never had the opportunity to meet Orientals, and I believe they gaze upon us more out of curiosity than hate. If the evacuees possess the initiative to talk with some of these more curious individuals in public places, invariably such conversations make toward understanding and good impression. I have found most of the people that I've approached to be ignorant of our nationality. I firmly believe that most of the now relocated evacuees will want to remain in this area after they grow accustomed to the strangeness of the environment and climate. However, I wish to emphasize that prejudice and discrimination are not absent in this region, but these conditions are not magnified to such an outstanding degree as on the coast. We cannot ignore or forget the fact that our country is at war with our mother country, but if evacuees maintain themselves properly, I am sure that society will not ostracize or punish them because of their race.



During the course of the last few weeks I have talked to dozens of personnel managers and business executives to gain their views and attitudes on hiring evacuee workers. On the whole I have been rather pleased with my findings. A large majority of the employers voiced no objections or resentment. Employer, however, must be approached properly. The proper and subtle method is to phone for an interview and ask the employer if he would consider employing evacuees, and if so, if he would interview such a party for employment, specifying the position or work desired. Invariably an evacuee cannot only gain entrance to the office, but if he possesses the qualifications to fill an opening, he will come out with a job. If there were no job openings which the employer thought the evacuee could properly fit into without disrupting the operation of the organization, he will have left a favorable impression which may lead to the eventual employment of other evacuees. I was curious to know the answer to this question since so many of the evacuees returning to the center reported that many of the prospective employers refused evacuees interviews or consideration for job openings which then existed in such organizations. Many instances evacuees reported that they were refused entrance to the offices of prospective employers. Although there are isolated cases to the contrary, I am partially convinced that many evacuees use the wrong tact of approach in such instances. Also, I made this investigation because I wanted to be sure that I wouldn't relocate in an area



where there was employment discrimination to any marked degree.

Although I still have my differences with the WRA field offices, I am now much higher in my esteem of the progress of their work in the field of public relationship. I am sure their achievements are worthy of high praise. However, I believe they are now over-emphasizing public relations work. At the earlier stages of relocation this was essential, but upon approaching so many different employers and seeing their willingness to hire evacuee workers, I am inclined to think that more emphasis should be placed on the realistic problem of actually obtaining more and possibly better offers than has been done up to the present date. With reference to the WRA field offices, the general consensus of opinion of an average evacuee can be best summed up by the expression "travel bureau." Briefly, they are serving as convenient guides to relocating evacuees, but when the immediate problems of employment and housing are approached, evacuees are indirectly instructed to shift for themselves. These are the problems that evacuees are immediately concerned with when arriving in a strange community, and it is with these problems that they must obtain immediate assistance before bitter disillusionment is experienced. There is nothing more pitiful than an evacuee arrival who cannot find a rapid solution to these problems. I chanced upon one such individual who refused to consult further with the WRA office, and I walked the streets with him for two days before we found him a satisfactory job. Once evacuees reach



their destination they are no longer interested in fancy post-prandial speeches that may be delivered in their behalf by some well-meaning WRA officer. Certain amount of this public relations work must be carried on continuously, but I believe there are now other more important problems which should be given more emphasis.

There is more truth in the statements received in the center from various sources regarding the deplorable types of jobs obtained through WRA channels than I would care to put down in writing. After investigating several such complaints I can give substantial proof verifying the stories given by other evacuees. The WRA has complained blatantly about evacuees leaving jobs that it has solicited. Until recently I complained likewise, but I now raise the question whether the WRA made a thorough enough investigation of such job offers before attempting placement. As I observe the field offices in operation, I can readily see that more effort should be placed in smaller details of working conditions. It isn't sufficient to have an employer call and say that he wants so many workers of a certain type. Jobs are too plentiful for such a crude method which many of the offices are employing. This complaint is not applicable to those cases where evacuees failed to show up at their destination, but with some exceptions, I am inclined to believe that each case of an evacuee leaving his job is a direct reflection of the inadequacy in the functioning of the WRA itself.



WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

GILA RIVER PROJECT

RIVERS, ARIZONA

NOTES ON THE PROBLEM OF RELOCATION

I. The General Nature of the Problem.

The problem of the relocation of evacuees is not a unitary problem but is a different set of problems for different groups. Some problems are common to all. In varying degree, every, or nearly every evacuee has fears of relocation. These fears of course, are based upon the experiences of evacuation and subsequent events. Some degree of insecurity is felt by everyone. But, that allowed for, the problems vary. For the purposes of this analysis, the two main groups to be considered are the Issei and the Nisei. Within each group there are sub-groups. Such factors as family ties and responsibilities, degree of assimilation including knowledge of English, economic resources, skills and previous experience, all these create variations. In these notes an attempt will be made to show the factors both favorable and adverse to relocation, and size of the different groups in terms of their attitudes towards relocation.

II. The Nisei--Factors Favoring Relocation.

A large number of interviews (over 100) with Nisei indicate that the majority of Nisei favor relocation and plan to relocate in the near future. The time set by themselves ranges from "as soon as possible" to such terms as "in the Spring", "as soon as good employment offers", "as soon as the family is settled" and similar statements of limited delay. Relocation is favored by a number of considerations. It is realized that life on the Project is a dead end, that the group must be reassimilated to the American community, that economic rehabilitation is necessary and possible, and that the future "outside" has possibilities while none exist "inside."

The group favoring immediate relocation is made up, for the most part, of young Nisei either unmarried or married but without children. To this may be added a relatively small number of Nisei with children and a small number of



Issei; these have either exceptional enterprise, special skills or, in a few cases capital to start new enterprises, farming or other. Appended interviews numbers 1, 2, and 3 contain samples of the statements made by members of this group.

### III. The Nisei--Factors Adverse to Relocation.

While the majority of Nisei plan to relocate in the not-too-distant future, a considerable minority are either planning indefinite delay, in doubt, or opposed to relocation. A major cause for hesitation or opposition is fear.

Fears may take different forms, or be expressed in different terms. There is a general fear of segregation and discrimination. This would include fears of economic frustration, fears of failure to get housing, even fears of violence. *Current generally no expressed as discrimination*

The news from those already relocated, while not all unfavorable, does indicate to many that while employment is possible, it is not always good employment. For those already inclined to doubt or hesitation, the bad news will always seem more significant than the good. Thus, while the economic situation of some relocated evacuees is good, many report that they can just make ends meet, or that they are unable to get ahead. Accordingly, relocation seems a doubtful venture, with advantages inconsiderable when balanced against the hazards. *How about hazards of life?*

There are also fears, variously expressed, of adverse or violent reactions of the communities in which the evacuees settle. Reports of actual violence are surprisingly few; but the fact that any occur is enough to confirm pre-existing doubts. More than violence, however segregation or its equivalents in residence, in social relations, in public conveyances and similar situations, is considered more than a possibility. *Social or economic segregation?*

While employment is procurable, many fear it may not last. They fear that in the event of an economic depression, or when soldiers return from war, they will lose their jobs and be, in fact, the first discriminated against. This is a fear particularly hard to dissipate. *Draft should help that*

Finally, some fears are more obscure because more difficult of utterance. Many dread the loss of family or community ties, believing that they will not be able to replace them by equally satisfying ties in the new community.

*Are "community ties" in life "satisfying"?*



All these fears are reinforced by adverse newspaper comments, by news of anti-evacuee resolutions, by unfavorable letters and by the unpleasant reactions in the state of Arizona.

Resentments, probably related to fears, also play their part. There are some whose resentments are not great enough to cause disloyalty, who yet feel it strongly enough to induce them to resist relocation. While the number of these is probably small, resentment may be a reinforcing factor in the attitude of those primarily motivated by fear.

An appreciable number are retarded by family ties. In addition to those who believe they cannot support wife and young children on what they may expect to earn, many have responsibilities to parents or to younger brothers and sisters. These feel that they cannot leave helpless dependents without adequate support and without the comfort of physical contiguity in the center. These familial bonds are often complex and many individuals cannot be reassured by blanket encouragement. In addition, many parents forbid or discourage adult children from relocation; and the evacuee family ties are sufficiently strong to enforce conformity to parental wishes.

Some do not consider relocation because of lack of money. They feel that the amount granted on relocation is not sufficient; there is not a sufficient margin of safety. Reduction in internal employment accentuated this consideration. A number of families previously breaking even or getting a little ahead with two or three working members, now find themselves getting behind financially.

The official procedures required of those applying for leave are adverse to relocation in a small number of cases. By themselves, they would probably not be significant; added to hesitations and doubts, they sometimes turn the scale.

I have given more space to adverse than to favorable factors. This may give the impression that they are the stronger. I do not believe that to be the case. The majority of Nisei who are of age and unencumbered by families will probably relocate in a matter of months. But the adverse factors will prevent or delay relocation for an appreciable minority and they will pose continuing problems for some time to come.



Interviews 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 illustrate the beliefs, attitudes and problems of the Nisei on this topic.

#### IV. The Issei.

With the majority of the Issei the case is far different. It is given as a strongly held opinion that, without a very marked changed attitude, which would, *on whose part?* in any case, take a long time, or without a modification of government policy, the Issei will relocate only in small numbers, and will prefer to remain within the center for a long time.

The factors adverse to relocation in the case of the Nisei hold also for the Issei; but in the case of the Issei they are intensified. Their cultural handicaps are greater; many speak the language imperfectly. Living in a community of their own kind is consequently a matter of more moment to them than to the Nisei. Their fears are greater, because the outside world is stranger. But the most considerable factors are their age, their hopes of returning to California and their fear of not being able to support their family. If we are to judge by their statements the last is the consideration of greatest significance.

An appreciable proportion of the evacuees in this Project are agricultural. Some estimate that 75% have an agricultural background. While statistics of pre-evacuation occupations do not bear this out completely, yet it is true that the majority come from rural communities and were directly or indirectly dependent upon agriculture. Of the actual farmers, many have lost their farms and none can return to them until the end of the war. Most interviews and discussions show that the majority consider it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to adopt a new occupation and, at the same time, impossible to start farming in another state without financial aid, either as a grant or as a loan.

Age is a definite bar to a new occupation. This is sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit in discussion. Some would be willing to try a new occupation, but for the belief that they could not earn enough to support their families. For the same reason they are not willing to become agricultural laborers. A considerable proportion have dependents (exact statistics have not yet been compiled since segregation) and they believe that



they can earn enough to support themselves and families only at the occupation they know best.

Thus, confining attention for the moment to farmers, relocation would mean farming in a new part of the country, with new and strange problems of soil and climate to deal with, and, for many, with little or no capital to begin with.

Their fears and doubts thus intertwine. Their age makes a new occupation difficult if not impossible; the fact that many have dependent children accentuates the fears and doubts; and the total or partial loss of capital makes farming in their belief an impossibility. The fact that many were only farm laborers before evacuation in no way lessens the force of these considerations. Many farm laborers were experts at the particular agriculture jobs they performed, and they were paid well, as agricultural wages go. At a new type of farming their special skills would be of no use, and their pay would be accordingly less.

Other occupational groups have similar opinions. Small merchants believe they would be unable to adapt to new occupations, or to make an adequate living at them. Lack of capital, and discrimination, make the old occupation impossible or hazardous.

*Representative  
Thinking?*

The fears for the family are not only economic; some fear for their children's education. While the educational facilities of the project are not considered ideal, they are at least available. It is feared that in many communities, public opinion or official action will deny the schools to children of Japanese descent; so that many postpone relocation to ensure the education of their children.

The fear of future unemployment is of graver consequence to the Issei than to the Nisei. If they find themselves out of a job, with a large family, and lacking the strength and adaptability of youth, their plight would, to them, seem desperate and they fear discrimination even more than do the Nisei.

Living in a new and strange community is also a greater problem for the Issei. They are dependent upon each other not only for moral support, and for insurance against illness or other adversity, but also for community contacts. For many the language difficulty is such



that they rely upon one of their number to deal with other group in business and other transaction. Resettlement individually or by families would deprive them of such intermediaries.

A final adverse factor is the hope of returning to California. It is not often given directly as a reason, but hints are frequently dropped that indicated the hope. Accordingly, many plan to remain here until after the war, or until California is reopened to them. Here they are sure of subsistence and protection. Why face the hazards of a resettlement which may be only temporary, and which is not essential to their future well-being?

Discussions on resettlement with individuals and groups always end with specific proposals. These proposals are always that the Government make long term loans, with which a new start at an old occupation may be made. This occupation is usually assumed to be farming. However, one respected and able member of the community proposes such loans for farmers, small-business men and fathers of large families. The suggested amounts range from \$1500 to \$2000.

These proposals are frequently backed by other arguments. The need for food and ability of the Japanese to produce it is stressed. It is also pointed out that the Government would eventually save money by making these advances. It cost over \$2000 a year to support a family of five persons in the Center. A father of five children emphasized that it cost over \$3000 a year for his family. A loan of the amounts suggested would thus be a smaller outlay than the amount which will actually be paid out with no ultimate profit and no hope of return; the implication being that the burden to the government will be much greater than a year's outlay if these people do not resettle.

Another proposal is that, for the Issei, resettlement be by group rather than by families. It realized that large groupings would excite or increase race prejudices; but it is hoped that small groups would be considered harmless. Suggestions range from ten-family groups to communities of thirty or forty families. In this way they hope to have the satisfaction and assurances of a homogenous community, and to have available representatives to deal with Caucasians.

*How about  
5 or 6 family groups?*

Interviews number 9, 10, 11, and 12 illustrate the Issei attitudes on this matter.



## V. Summary and Conclusions.

In this center, there are a number of people who will resettle within the next six or nine months. They consist for the most part of young Nisei, and a few Issei. There are, however, some Nisei who will not readily relocate and the majority of the Issei will constitute a problem for an appreciable length of time.

Resettlement is retarded by fears which are partly rational and partly pathological. The pathological fears, though deep-seated, may be diminished by a constructive policy within the Project, aimed at restoring the confidence of the evacuees in themselves and in the American community. But the Project and the WRA can work only within limits. They cannot completely overcome the results of the adverse reports from outside, and thus they cannot completely banish the exaggerated fears of the outside world. The center offers security; "outside" means danger.

Still less can the internal policy of the Project or of the WRA remove the more rational fears of economic adversity. Belief in the impossibility of resettlement without financial aid has both a rational and a pathological basis.

The future of the relocation program is thus uncertain. The possibility of an abrupt decline in the rate of relocation must be kept in mind. While we are not yet in a position to give accurate statistics, the use of numbers, not to be taken too literally, will give an idea of the sort of thing that may take place. Of the approximate 9500 evacuees now on the project, possibly 2000 will relocate within a reasonable time. When the population is down to 7500, it may become almost stable, with relocation diminishing to a trickle. This opinion, of course, is subject to alteration if there is any radical change in WRA relocation policies.



APPENDIX

TWELVE ILLUSTRATIVE INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW NO. 1

August 21, 1943  
T. Sakurai

Relocation:

Age 21, Female, Block 32

Background: Los Angeles, 1 sister, was enrolled in UCLA.  
Plans to become a teacher of commercial subjects.  
Has taken Civil Service Examination.

Is definitely planning to enter college, and has already been approved by the Student Relocation and was accepted for entrance to a teacher's college, and has in the meantime she has been planning to obtain a position as secretary or stenographer in order that she may keep up with her line of work. Part-time work will aid her in meeting expenses while attending college.

An older sister is in her senior year at a university in the Midwest finishing her course in pharmacy. Her parents are not, as yet planning relocation, but are willing to go out if they can receive full assurance of adequate living standards and assurance of safety from harm. And if the older daughter can obtain suitable position in some hospital pharmaceutical department.



INTERVIEW NO. 2

August 21, 1943  
Tek Sakurai

Relocation:

Block 30, Male, 25 years.

Married: 1 child, Stockton hometown.

Up to the time of evacuation, helped in family grocery store. Has one brother in the Army. The family ran the store in a group. After graduation from high school, I became a notary and I performed dual duties as a clerk in the store and as a notary public.

At the present time he has realized that he had no skills, no special interest. The effect has been retardation of his relocation plan. He has also considered his parents. He does not want to leave them alone in camp with the younger children but according to a Caucasian, he has been influenced in the following way: that family consideration should not be a major factor, If you are going to consider that, you'd better go back or go to the place where such ideas are thought to be best.

Now he is working steps towards relocation immediately. He states that because he has no special skills or abilities, he must go without any job. He is attempting to obtain a hospitality invitation as the best method where by he would be able to rent a portion of someone's residence. He is not contemplating relocation by means of the hostel plan as the long waiting list would prolong his stay in camp.

In regards to his folks he find that they are becoming more and more tired of remaining in camp and are contemplating relocation beginning with spring of next year. Cold weather would or might endanger health of father. The chief reason for this has been that the younger children are not receiving adequate education in the relocation center.



INTERVIEW NO. 3

August 25, 1943  
T. Sakurai

Relocation:

Block 10, Approx. Age 20, Female  
Formerly from Fowler, California near Fresno (Central California) Previous to evacuation her contacts were with Caucasians more than Japanese Americans. Since evacuation she has come to know her people better.

She has been planning relocation for some time. Fear and uncertainty have kept her from taking a more aggressive attitude towards relocation. Her line of work is secretarial. In the beginning, her desire to relocate were directed towards some office work as a stenographer or secretary. But as reports from the outside indicated that housing was difficult to find and that cost of living had risen so much that it was necessary to reconsider the plan of relocating. At the present time she is still willing to go out of the center, but in the capacity of a domestic worker. When asked, if she had any previous experience, she stated that she had. She seems to be able to take a domestic job. However, she did indicate that it was only a means for her to be assured a place to stay and be able to eat.

Her parents are not in favor of her relocating unless she has a definite job confirmation previous to leaving the center. She is not contemplating a hostel invitation.

As for locale, she indicated that her preference was New England. She is not in favor of the long train trip due to uncertainties of war time travel conditions. Here, she was hesitant about relocating in such a distant part of the country due to the fact that she had heard rumors, stories which were not favorable. She would prefer making the trip with someone else. Although she had little contact with Japanese previous to evacuation, she now feels that she would like to have others of her kind with her when or where she relocated. No matter how many new friends she may make, she feels that she would like to have one or two Japanese Americans friends whom she can visit.

She feels that if she prolongs her stay in camp it will not help her, although she states that she has learned much about the Japanese people.



INTERVIEW NO. 4

August 26, 1943  
T. Sakurai

Relocation:

Block 46, Female, Age 22  
Parent's age: Father 63, Mother 50.

Three children, she is the oldest, a girl-the next is a boy-19 years and youngest girl 17. The responsibilities of the home have been placed upon the eldest child. She has managed to handle all contacts with Caucasians pertaining to father's business as farmer. Father did not drive, therefore, she was a chauffeur as well. The brother was young and could not drive.

More than that he, being the only son, was the most privileged person in the family, he was catered to by the family, all his needs were met. Today, as resident in a relocation center, at 19, he is still incapable of handling the affairs of the family. He has been kept unaware of the problems which have been met by the older sister. Even under the present conditions he is still spending his money freely, without restraint.

The younger sister has just graduated from high school and as yet, is incapable of handling business affairs of the family according to the older sister.

Under the circumstances she feels that she cannot relocate.

Another point is that she has not acquired a special skill. Although she had wanted to attend some school after graduation from high school she was unable to do so due to the fact that her father needed her help.

Because she has no special skill, she is afraid that she will not be able to support her folks. Her father is now at an age where it would be difficult for him to start anew. There is a possibility that her brother who is 19 will be drafted soon so she feels that the responsibility of taking care of her parents will be upon her shoulders for some-time to come.

Her feelings regarding the general subject of evacuation, Prior to evacuation her farm was taken over by the Government.



for an army encampment due to its close proximity to government land. She still feels bitter as no remuneration was given or any indication that the government will pay for the damage done to her crops at the time the land was taken over.

Her brother answered "no" to 27 and 28 but has now changed and is about ready to contemplate volunteering for the Army.

#### INTERVIEW NO.5

August 19, 1943  
T. Sakurai

#### Relocation:

Block 65, Male, Age 23  
University of California Graduate in Business Administration.  
Has one other brother, a recent graduate of High School

This person was formerly in charge of applications to a hostel in Chicago. As a result of his work, he found that very few persons who have gone out on hostel invitations had special skills and ability warranting such action. In general, these people were relocating merely to get out of the Center.

At first, he was reluctant to discuss his plans but his reluctance was due to several factors.

He plans to send his younger brother to a school. Being an oldest son and already a university graduate, he believes that his brother should be given a chance to relocate at some school first.

He is uncertain regarding relocation plans because he feels that he had not taken up the right course in college. As a graduate of university in Banking & Finance, he has come to the realization that his interest is not in that line.

Unless a definite, promising and favorable job comes up, he will not consider relocation. But apparently the positions offered by the WRA offices are not suitable to him.



By the beginning of next year, he believes that better opportunities will be available as the question of segregation will be of the past.

INTERVIEW NO. 6

September 3, 1943  
T. Sakurai

Relocation:

Block 58, Male, Age 40  
American citizen, born in Hawaii

Formerly a resident of Pasadena, California where he was in a partnership with brother and brother-in-law in floriculture, specializing in carnations and chrysanthemums. Instead of raising these merely for the purpose of marketing cut flowers, this group had considerable space set aside for a continuous flower show where their best flowers were on display. From these flowers, next year's cuttings were sold for future delivery. To uphold their quality one of the partners took a trip to Japan for new varieties. Others were developed on their own. At the time of evacuation these people had become quite established and had begun to make a name for themselves. Plans for expansion of their operations by means of a tour to acquaint garden clubs and people interested in flowers and to show motion pictures and still slides had been contemplated. Besides the flower raising these people had bought the property and built their residences upon it.

His background indicated that he is reluctant to relocate. His first thought is to return to California and go back to his work. He states that in raising flowers there is more than just to make money. When a new variety is created or placed on the market there is a creative satisfaction in attaining successful propagation.

To start anew elsewhere in the United States would be difficult as weather conditions were ideal in California. Movement to the middle west would mean changes in soil and climatic conditions. It would mean the necessity of



using artificial means of heating in the winter which is difficult now with the fuel shortage which will be more acute in the winter months.

The evacuee property section urges him to sell equipment and automobile and then relocate. He feels that this is not helping relocation. If we were able to bring care sight of a neighbor's car next to his barrack loaded ready to relocate would cause others to follow suit. The sale of the car now, may mean that the person relocating would have to buy another upon relocation, so why not let him drive out?

As for equipment in California, personal or real, the majority of the evacuees are wondering what is, or has happened to it.

Letters from Pasadena area are disheartening. One of the homes used for private storage was burned to the ground on the third attempt. Another was burned without a trace of its contents. These homes held the personal properties of more than one family. Also many people who have placed their personal property in storage with the government have not found all of their belongings in the shipments to relocation. In some cases such property were damaged beyond repair. The clause in the application for government storage states that if the government so chooses, it may terminate its agreement to hold the property in storage for the evacuee on 10 day notice. Also the Federal Reserve Men who were taking applications for government storage in some cases stated that it would be best not to place in government storage due to the long wait and because it is indefinite as to delivery.

He now feels that people in the relocation center would relocate more if they were allowed to return to California to make a check up on their stored property. In many cases to ship their necessary furnishings to their new homes and to see what property they have has been properly taken care of; where there is a mixture of necessary and unnecessary property; to divide it and send the necessary

... .. would be on a permanent basis.

The amount that the government issues as grant money is insufficient to meet needs of a family group. It is difficult to take a family of 4 (size of his family) out on the amount that is allowed per family. It would be even more so in cases of larger families as the maximum



amount of this grant per family remains the same. The WRA should be more generous in their grants as the savings per individual resulting from relocation is far greater than the amount of the individual grant. In many cases there is a definite need for that money before they can contemplate relocation.

For the Isseis it is difficult for them to relocate due to language handicap. In their early days it was possible for them to take almost any job, but now they are old and they will not accept menial jobs as many of them have been in business on their own for many years. Regarding the language difficulty, because they are now old, they are not inclined to start on a new life, as they do not have the drive they had in their youth and feel more conscious of their language handicap because of the war.

For these older people it would be better in the WRA would set up means for grouping several families and relocating the group so that they may be dependent upon each other in solving relocation program.

Altho no definite step has been taken regarding forced relocation he believes that conditions in camp and every move made at present is towards making life unbearable within the center.

#### INTERVIEW NO. 7

September 7, 1943  
Tek Sakurai

#### Relocation:

Block 59, Age 41, Male  
Graduate of Pasadena Junior College  
Major--Business

This person has no father, the family consists of mother and 3 brothers of which he is the oldest. He formerly answered no to questions 27 and 28. However, he has changed his answers. From the interview he indicated the reason for his answering no was that his family has enough in Japan to allow a comfortable living according to Japanese standards. At present, he is planning to relocate somewhere in the Eastern part of the United States. His preference is for a large city such as New York or Washington where he would not be conspicuous as a Japanese-American. He feels that



that large numbers in a small community would increase race prejudice against Japanese American. His youngest brother just graduated from High school and is now in need of further education. In order that he may continue his schooling it would be necessary for this person or his brother to relocate in order to be nearby to take care of the youngest brother. One of the boys must remain to take care of the mother.

Although he contemplates relocation his real intention is to feel around and wait. To make his decisions regarding where he shall reside is difficult now. At the end of the war when things are more settled he will make his choice, whether to remain here or go to Japan for his permanent residence.

#### INTERVIEW NO. 8

October 25, 1943  
G. Brown

#### Relocation:

Nisei, 25, former beet and beet seed farmer. Now unit supervisor on farm. Had to sell a farm worth \$10000 for \$2000. on evacuation. Unmarried.

He planned to relocate on a farm near Minneapolis on a 50-50 share basis; the owner to provide seed and equipment and to underwrite grocery bills. The evacuee was to provide the labor. The arrangements were not made in time for this year's planting, so the plan was abandoned. He would consider doing the same thing next year, if arrangements were made in time. He would take his own labor force with him, also on a share basis. I gather that his abilities are sufficiently respected and he would have no difficulty in recruiting labor. He apparently does not reconsider relocating on any other basis. From various remarks, I gather he is in no hurry to relocate but will wait for a really good opportunity.



INTERVIEW NO. 9

September 18, 1943  
S. Oguchi

Relocation:

Block 32, Age 45, Female, Housewife, An Issei  
Block 36, Age 44, Female, Housewife, An Issei  
Block 36, Age 60, Female, Housewife, An Issei  
Three women as a group.

Women have fear in camp life and we are not enjoying daily life. But if asked why don't you resettle, we feel like we are getting old and do not like to take chances either. In our minds there is much confusion and we hear many rumors; for instance; worry on the bus, train and outside sentiment, about jobs and in case of sickness, etc., if we intend to go out.

Such an unpleasant atmosphere may be unavoidable as the result of the war to some extent. But it is a proven fact that we lived in this continent so long and raised our children as American citizens, so there will be no such ideas and desire that we will be harmful to this country in any way.

Yet we are under uneasy pressure, we have such fear that we don't know our future. Such feeling detains us to go out. To go out to total strangers' community as employees at our age is really painful. We can't ask too much, but feel like there might be some better way. One half of our population had their own business, so it is very painful to return to the life of employees at an advanced age.

We hear that to make a living outside for a family of four, it costs about \$6.00 a day. It is difficult to earn that much for us. If the Government would provide ten acres of land for each family and let us do the farming, I think we could make a living for ourselves.



INTERVIEW NO. 10

September 9, 1943  
S. Oguchi

Relocation:

Block 31, Age 28, Female, Housewife, A Nisei.

My fear is regarding my two boys who are five years old and seven years old. If we resettled, will they be able to get along well with other children in a new community where we will be a total strangers.

However when the time comes and we should resettle I prefer the country to city, for my boys will have more freedom. If possible we want to resettle with few families in a group.

INTERVIEW NO. 11

September 8, 1943  
S. Oguchi

Relocation:

A farm supervisor, Age 30, Nisei, Farmer.

I have a desire to relocate but as I am not familiar about outside conditions I am not ready to resettle now. I want to go back to California, where I know the conditions; but for Middle West I have no knowledge. There, the farming season is short, that is a disadvantage. I have young growing children and I wonder whether I am able to support the family.



INTERVIEW NO. 12

October 18, 1943  
G. Brown

Relocation:

Issei, 46, Graduate of U. of California, formerly  
produce merchant.

Family: wife and five children.

He stated that the most pressing and insistent of problems was how people were to get along after the war; specifically how to make a living. With his family, he cannot consider relocating now; no opening has presented itself which would give a sufficient income. He pointed out that his family costs WRA over \$3000 a year: with only part of that, he could relocate, either at farming or in a small business. He spoke at great length, but added to new points. except that he is keenly aware that race discrimination will always be a handicap to the Japanese, even after the war.



COPY

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY  
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM  
GILA RIVER PROJECT  
RIVERS, ARIZONA

May 3, 1944

TO: Hugo W. Wolter  
Assistant Project Director

SUBJECT: Special Counseling

The family planning discussions as outlined in Manual Release No. 51 were started in Gila on March 21. As the regular family planning counselors were not yet available, the first interviews were conducted by the head counselor, the associate counselor, and the junior counselor. This, of course, meant that only part time could be devoted to the family counseling program. However, the first fifty cases were completed as of March 29. By April 15, three regular counselors had been added to the staff, and after a few days of training and preparation, the interviewing was resumed. Our first 135 cases were chosen at random from the basic family cards, from WRA 95, in the Relocation Office.

All the families in this group (group 1) had at least one member of the family already relocated. This group was chosen in the belief that the balance of the family would be more or less "relocation minded", and would be more responsive to family relocation. Letters were written to these families explaining briefly the purpose of the program, and informing them that one of the interviewers would call at their home on a certain date. They were advised that this arrangement was purely voluntary on their part and if they did not desire this service, merely to notify the office. A 3x5 card file was set up in alphabetical order, giving the family name, address, family number and dependents. After the home call was completed, the disposition of the case was written on the 3x5 card and the cards properly tabbed. The case folders were separated into three main groups. One drawer was for those referred to the Relocation Division (either for immediate placement or for follow-up work by the Relocation Division); one drawer for those cases to be held in the Welfare file for follow-up work (reinterview, etc.); and one drawer for the inactive cases. The inactive cases were those where the family, and the counselor as well, felt that the best plan for the family was to remain in the center. The logging for group 1 (cases where one or more members of the family have already relocated) is attached. It will be noticed that out of the 135 cases reviewed, 72 were favorable to relocation and 63 were unfavorable. Old age and poor health was the most outstanding obstacle, and the problems created by the draft was second. Fear of the "outside" was a very close third. This last group includes those who are afraid of the future, regardless of whether their future will



be in a relocation center or in an outside community. It is interesting to note that out of 135 cases reviewed, only 8 refused the interview. Fifty percent of those 8 intend to make their own relocation plans.

A random sampling of 51 additional cases has now been completed (group 2). Beginning as of April 26, we drew every fifth card out of the housing file and scheduled this family for an interview. Every fifth family was chosen merely to give us a more accurate cross section of the camp. After the family was chosen; the case folder, the face sheet and the 3 x 5 card was made up, entered in the register. The letter was then written to make the home call appointment and the folder forwarded to the counselor. The counselor first checked the individual record in the statistical unit and obtained all pertinent information and the Welfare file was cleared for social information. Then the home call was completed. After the home call was dictated, the counselor made one of the following four recommendations, and it was this final statement that determined where the case would be filed.

1. Refer to Relocation Division for placement.
2. Refer to Relocation Division for follow-up (correspondence, etc.)
3. Hold in welfare files for follow-up (reinterview).
4. Hold in Welfare inactive file (dead file for present - review within six months).

The logging for group 2 (random sampling of every fifth case) is attached. It will be noted that out of 51 cases reviewed, 22 were favorable to relocation and 29 were unfavorable. Old age and poor health was again the most outstanding obstacle, and those desiring to remain in the center was second. Again fear of the "outside" was a very close third. Out of the 51 cases reviewed, 5 refused the interview. A few general observations might be of interest:

1. The feeling is quite prevalent that after a man or woman passes his 50th birthday, he is too old to compete in private industry. Time after time, the records reveal that the person being interviewed says he is too old to think about going "outside" and yet by checking the face sheet, we discover that he is only 50 or 55 years old and is apparently in good health.
2. Quite often, the people to be interviewed will apologize for their poor English at the outset of the interview; then with a little encouragement, they will attempt to continue the discussion without the assistance of an interpreter. A definite feeling of satisfaction is evident on the part of the evacuee when the discussion is completed. He is obviously quite proud of himself for having been successful in making himself understood.



It is interesting to note that several evacuees have explained that since living in the relocation center, they have forgotten most of the English they previously knew. Prior to evacuation, they were forced to speak English in their business transactions, and since many of their friends were Caucasians, they were forced to speak English on a social basis. However, the fact that all their friends in the center speak Japanese, plus the fact that their children make fun of their poor English, results in the almost exclusive use of the Japanese language within the relocation center.

Our family discussions have revealed a great zeal (on the part of the Issei women in particular) to learn to speak and to read and write English. The adult education classes in English are quite crowded, and many of the evacuees hesitate to relocate until their courses are completed. Many of their sons have been drafted and the mothers are most anxious to be able to write to them in English.

4. The much talked about "Japanese family ties" seems to work in two ways. First, as a result of family ties, no member of a family as an individual, or even the family as a whole, can make a specific plan without the consent or consideration of each member of the group--that is, the plans of a whole family may depend on whether or not the son is drafted; or perhaps a whole family must wait until the oldest son decides what he wants to do. In other words, because of the closeness of the family, they do not think in terms of individual decision even though as individuals they would be able to relocate. On the other hand, the strong family tie sometimes results in the feeling that the parents do not wish to burden the children. They, as parents, are primarily interested in the success of their children, and they object to being any sort of a drawback. Furthermore, their feeling is that they have done their duty as far as WRA is concerned by permitting their children to go on without them.
5. The extreme differences in ages of family members is also a factor to be considered. It is difficult for a twenty-two year old son to understand the reasoning of a seventy-two year old father.
6. It has been evident that a number of parents do not approve of their children relocating by themselves because of the high rate of delinquency on the "outside". The parents are not only afraid that their children might receive bodily harm or be insulted, but they are primarily afraid that they will associate with bad company. However, the opposite is



also true. Many parents are anxious that their children relocate because they do not approve of the company the children keep within the center. They are aware of the fact that their children are becoming lazy and unmanageable; therefore, they feel that it will be best for the children to live in a normal community.

7. There are a few cases where a member of the family has already relocated and is doing well and would like to remain "outside". However, when the balance of the family decides to join him, leave clearance is denied to one or more members of the family group; therefore, the relocatee returns to the center to join his family.
8. A small but important group to be considered are those who retired prior to evacuation. They may or may not be employed on the project but they have no intentions of ever returning to any type of private enterprise.

We believe that the counseling program has been of value in many respects but rather than enumerate a list of accomplishments, we will merely list the most important; that is, that prior to the establishment of the counseling program, approximately 90% of the people had never thought of their future in concrete terms. Their plans have been very vague, they have adjusted themselves to camp life, and there has been little reason or incentive for them to think in terms of future planning. We have at least started thinking, and in many cases have helped to crystallize their plans.

(Miss) Mary E. McCarthy  
Junior Counselor



GROUP I  
(Cases where one or more members have already relocated)

SURVEY COMPILED FROM 135 INTERVIEWS

FAVORABLE

Ready for Placement	To Relocation For Follow-up	Welfare Follow-up	Hold in Welfare Files—Family Plans Maturing Without Need of Further Counseling	Relocation Plans Complete
16	25	23	5	3

UNFAVORABLE

(Sick)	Reinterview (No Plan)	(Not Home)	Def. Out.	Refused Interview	Welfare Follow-up
3	19	4	19	8	10

OBSTACLES

1. Age & Health	53
2. Draft	40
3. Fear of Outside (fear of future —outside or inside)	37
4. Plans Depend on Children	29
5. Wait for Calif- ornia or has property in Calif.	25
5. Language Handicap	25
5. Need of Help in Planning	25
6. Wants to stay and feels commu- nity needs him	21
7. Inadequate Hous- ing on Outside	14
8. Dissatisfaction or Inability of Rel. to Support	13
9. Insufficient Fi- nancial Resources	12
10. Relatives not interested	8
11. Plan Depends on Head of Family	7
12. Weather	6
13. Large Family Com- posed of Small Children	5
14. Stop List	3
15. Leave Clearance	1



GROUP II  
(Random sampling of every 5th card from Housing File)

SURVEY COMPILED FROM 51 INTERVIEWS

FAVORABLE

Ready for Placement	To Relocation For Follow-up	Welfare Follow-up	Hold in Welfare Files—Family Plans Maturing Without Need of Further Counseling	Relocation Plans Complete
6	5	6	5	0

UNFAVORABLE

(Sick)	Reinterview (No Plan)	(Not Home)	Def. Out	Refused Interview	Welfare Follow-up
0	2	1	21	5	0

OBSTACLES

1. Age and Health	29
2. Want to Stay Here	16
3. Fear of "Outside"	15
4. Language Handicap	10
5. Wait for Calif.	9
5. Draft	9
5. Lack of Financial Reserve or Capital and no Relative to Aid in Support	9
6. Need of Help in Planning	7
7. Dissatisfaction of Relocatee or Inability of Rel. to Support	5
8. Inadequate Housing (outside)	3
9. Plans Depend on Children	2
9. Weather	2
9. Plan Depends on Head of Family	2
9. Applied for Repatriation	2
10. Rel. not interested in Support of Parents	1
10. Stop List	1
10. Leave Clearance	1