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WELFARE COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN LOS ANGELES

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WELFARE COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN LOS ANGELES
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 7, 1946, 12 noon, ninth floor Chamber of Commerce Building.

Present: Mrs. Katherine Kaplan, Chairman	Layman
Arnoldine Ickes	Layman
Newell Steward	American Friends Service
Elsa May Smith	Thomas Jefferson High School
Edith Wellen	City Health Department
Harriet Lund	Guest
A. C. Price	Volunteers of America
Stewart G. Cole	Intercultural Education Bureau
Anne M. Mumford	Haynes Foundation
H. C. Pulley	City Health Department
Stephen J. Keating	Probation Department
Charles Bratt	War Manpower Commission (USES)
Virginia Peterson	Church Welfare Bureau
G. Raymond Booth	Council for Civic Unity
William M. Jones	L. A. Urban League
Robert W. Bowling	L. A. Police Department
Earle O'Day	War Relocation Authority
Helen D. Davis	War Relocation Authority
J. B. Tietz	Civil Liberties Union
Beulah L. Lewis	Bureau of Public Assistance
Beryl Cox	Bureau of Public Assistance
Melvin Harter	Church Federation
Vada J. Somerville	Nat'l Council of Negro Women
Curtis Whaley	California Youth Authority
J. H. Burford	C. I. O. Community Relations
H. W. McCanlies	Layman
C. Whit Pfeiffer	Welfare Council of Metropolitan L. A.
Genevieve W. Carter, Sec'y	Welfare Council of Metropolitan L. A.
E. T. Grosselfinger, Student Sec'y	School of Social Work

Mrs. Kaplan, as chairman called the meeting to order at 12:45. She pointed out that since the February meeting a new student secretary had been appointed to the committee. Mr. Edmund T. Grosselfinger replaces Mr. Farrell. Mr. Grosselfinger because of his activities with committees on interracial matters in Long Beach brings understanding and experience to this setting.

The secretary was asked to read the minutes of the February 7 meeting. Copies were distributed to those present. A call for corrections or additions brought forth the suggestion that "integration" be substituted for "infiltration". The typing error of "promotion" in place of "prevention" was corrected. Virginia Peterson of Church Welfare Bureau was present February 7.

The chairman then introduced two resource people, Mrs. Beulah L. Lewis of BPA and Mr. Earle O'Day of WRA. Reports from these agencies followed.

REPORT ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR JAPANESE

Mrs. Beulah Lewis first indicated that the County Department offers no specially earmarked assistance to the Japanese but rather treats them as any other client might get service. It is the federal government which has considered itself specially responsible and through a special fund administered by the BPA and has assisted the county greatly in meeting the additional financial burden resulting from the return of the Japanese and the problems these people face in becoming

reestablished. The federal appropriation from the Presidents fund however expires June 30 and requires Congressional action to increase appropriation to Federal Security Agency.

Mrs. Lewis highlighted historically the return of the Japanese to the county. The first few appeared in March 1945 and because they were few in number were reasonably well absorbed. However, as the stream of returnees grew and the opposing forces became more active, need for resettlement assistance mounted. While many families refused aid and lived in subsistence conditions large numbers were forced to seek help. In addition to giving financial assistance, the County BPA found itself counselling on inadequacies of housing, employment and family problems stemming from these. One group most inconvenienced is the Japanese owner-manager group because they sold their equipment and lost control of locations.

Further concern exists in the county, over the discontinuance of WRA on April 30, 1946. This agency heretofore has acted as referral agency for returning Japanese, contracted for temporary housing and generally interpreting relocation. Mrs. Lewis had just come from a joint meeting of WRA and BPA where the question had been discussed: Can the county take over the present temporary housing responsibilities of WRA? The outcome of this discussion was that the county rejects the plan of administering the present trailer housing and hostels because they are substandard. Since inadequate housing will continue to be a problem, the county will seek other ways of meeting it.

Mrs. Lewis hesitated to give statistics since they are so fluid but for purposes of approximation pointed that about 1,000 - 1,200 active cases of single persons and families have had assistance while counselling has been to many. Mrs. Lewis stated it should be kept in mind that in 1942, of 35,000 Japanese persons who lived in the county, only 23 cases were active totalling 81 persons effected. These are significant figures when trying to anticipate the ability of Japanese to care for themselves if given an ordinary chance to do so.

Mrs. Kaplan thanked Mrs. Lewis for the informative report and posed the question: What will BPA do June 30 if no new federal appropriation is forthcoming? The answer was: BPA will continue to serve although some financial pressures can be expected. Further federal subsidy is indicated.

REPORT ON WRA'S SERVICE TO JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS

Mr. Earle O'Day indicated that materials he was distributing had been produced by the WRA Public Information Officer as one effort to make the community aware of the situation particularly in view of pending discontinuance of WRA on April 30. He hoped to get this representative group's reaction and hoped that each person present would use the material in an effort to press home the urgency of need to absorb WRA's task locally. He then referred to material (see appended pages) highlighting volume of evacuees by months appearing at WRA offices; major concentration of Japanese population living in temporary housing and hostels. He also presented two organization charts (see attached) as proposals supported by WRA for: (a) a temporary organization on the readjustment of American Japanese, a community-wide body and (b) a permanent organization of Japanese for integration of their people. Mr. O'Day also distributed materials (see attached) concerning: "Problems Facing a Community Dealing with Japanese After WRA Terminates". He concluded saying that the local community must face the problem immediately and be ready to give some additional financial support to such organization.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWING THE PRESENTATIONS OF BPA AND WRA

Dr. Cole wanted to know from Mr. O'Day whether the organization proposed by WRA implied an effort from within the Japanese group. The answer was "yes" but with the backing necessary from a temporary community-wide organization as indicated. Dr. Cole wondered whether this was a WRA local effort or are other offices doing the same? Similar efforts are being suggested in Chicago, New York and Cincinnati.

Mr. Booth commented that WRA had been a big help locally but handicapped at many points. The solution of problems is an indigenous job. Just glancing at some of the problems submitted by WRA (see attached) proves the point. Mrs. Kaplan wondered whether BPA as a county agency might do this job. Mrs. Lewis responded that the specific service to individuals mentioned in her report were the extent to which BPA could go but it can't handle the major social problems. Mr. Keating supplied information that county supervisors had set up a committee to follow interracial tensions in each department. In addition there is the County Committee on Interracial Progress guided by Dr. George Gleason. Miss Mumford a member of that group pointed out that the committee in question had followed specific problems in discrimination. Mr. Keating added that certain adverse newspaper comment neutralized such constructive efforts.

Mr. Burford indicated that CIO in its effort to integrate the Japanese workman had met two obstructive attitudes: the Japanese who are pessimistic and the public which is either hostile, indifferent or uninformed. Some methods of encouraging the Japanese such as representation on interested committees must be supplemented by a community program of interpretation. He suggested an all day conference similar to the one held on Alcoholism.

Dr. Cole referred to the minutes of February 7 in which a subcommittee was authorized to act between sessions of this assembled group. The chairman reported that the subcommittee had met and as a result today's speakers were brought in to present facts to the total committee.

This prompted discussion of next steps to take. Mr. Booth was not for a permanent organization to sponsor welfare of any one minority group. Mrs. Lewis supported this point of view cautioning that such separate approach might result in more injurious action for the minority group unless very carefully thought through since certain forces exist who are looking for an opportunity. Mr. Booth suggested a referral center to replace WRA in the next months. Mrs. Ickes pointed out a similarity to a Veterans Service Center.

Mr. Burford stressed that any community-wide "selling effort" is more apt to succeed if handled by non-political auspices. Political bodies must be more alert to public attitudes and opinions thus tempering plans accordingly. He suggested a conference committee of eight or nine persons representing the Welfare Council, County Committee on Interracial Progress, Council for Civic Unity and others; the conference to be called for late in April. There was discussion concerning Council procedures in arranging for such a meeting with Executive Board approval. Mr. Keating asked Mr. Pfeiffer whether in view of the fact that the Executive Committee would not meet until April, could the Interim Committee be called to handle proposal? Mr. Pfeiffer thought such approval could be secured within one week's notice.

SOCIAL SECURITY CORRESPONDENCE

At this point, the chairman requested reading of correspondence from Mr. Richard M. Neustadt, regional director of Social Security Board. This letter dated February 25, 1946 is in answer to an inquiry from the Community Relations Committee dated

February 19, 1946. In essence Mr. Neustadt indicated that no special funds for Japanese relocation beyond normal grant-in-aid to state and county could be expected beyond June 30, 1946 unless a factual report from Los Angeles indicated further need. Mrs. Lewis (BPA) reported that federal review of the situation had already been conducted by Mr. Neustadt's assistant and a visit from a representative of Federal Bureau of Budgets is now expected. These two studies should furnish the facts above-mentioned.

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE ACTION

Mr. Burford's motion which precipitated this discussion was called for. Mr. Pfeiffer was asked to comment relative to proposed letter to BPA from the Council. He remarked that BPA's progressive program needed support since some criticism can be expected. The Council should give such support but the recommendations from this committee should be well stated so as to receive favorable and early approval. Relative to a conference Mr. Pfeiffer stressed that it will take time, that the Council staff already has a full program and that this committee must furnish the man hours implied in conference planning. As to the suggestion that city-wide interpretation should be one element of the conference program, Mr. Pfeiffer questioned how far this could be achieved since an educational program is always on long term. His recommendation is that the committee formulate a plan for a conference, but not to schedule it within 6-8 weeks; that the conference concern itself more with stimulation of local agencies to review, to accept greater responsibilities and to coordinate service efforts. Meanwhile, there should be a survey of agency programs as part of conference discussion material.

The motion was reread "That the Community Relations Committee should: (a) Send a letter to the County Bureau of Public Assistance commending them on their handling of the relocation of Japanese families in Los Angeles area. (b) Make a survey of agencies in the community who have been offering services to Japanese with intent to develop coordination. (c) Explore and prepare a tentative plan for a conference program. Council approval for the committee actions would be secured in the manner suggested by Mr. Pfeiffer.

Dr. Cole offered the suggestion that the conference be organized under a sub-committee with several commissions responsible to it for developing stimulating program in the several areas of interest indicated above. Mr. Pfeiffer supported this. Mrs. Kaplan stated she would set up such organization by bringing together a group responsible for working out details of three items mentioned in motion. The chairman called for a vote. Motion approved by common consent.

Mr. O'Day stressed four points in public relations as further steps are taken: (1) WRA is vitally interested but must be treated only as member of the community family of agencies; (2) Be sure to approach community on broad basis of which Japanese problem is only one of others to be considered; (3) Organize well through proper delegation of responsibility; (4) Don't limit the approach to "welfare" but make it more inclusive.

Chairman referred to other item on agenda: a report entitled "Some Aspects of Agency Intake Policies Relating to the Acceptance of Negro Clients in Los Angeles County". Time prohibited its consideration and Dr. Vada J. Somerville was assigned task of preparing digest for discussion at next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:25 P.M.

APPENDIX

The following monthly figures constitute the number of evacuees who appeared in person in the District Office of WRA for information and service.

January 1945.	4
February.	188
March.	406
April.	270
May.	600
June.	501
July.	878
August.	753
September.	2,697
October.	3,133
November.	2,470
December.	1,518
January 1946.	1,822
February.	920

ESTIMATE OF MAJOR CONCENTRATIONS OF AMERICAN JAPANESE IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

(Data compiled from WRA records plus 10% for returnees not registered in the district office)

City of Los Angeles	
Highland Park	198
Southeast Los Angeles	198
Hollenbeck and Belvedere	3,400
Hollywood	1,725
Midtown	4,950
Normandie	2,992
West Los Angeles and Beverly Hills	1,298
	14,761
Communities in Los Angeles County	4,739
5 Housing Installations	2,175
32 Hostels	1,472
TOTAL	23,147

Population figures on FPMA Temporary Housing Centers and Hostels as of the nights of February 21 and 28.

<u>FPMA Installation</u>	<u>February 21</u>	<u>February 28</u>
Lomita	765	815
Hawthorne	387	403
Santa Monica	156	159
El Segundo	137	135
Winona	530	545
Magnolia	118	118
TOTAL	2,093	2,175
Hostels	1,548	1,472

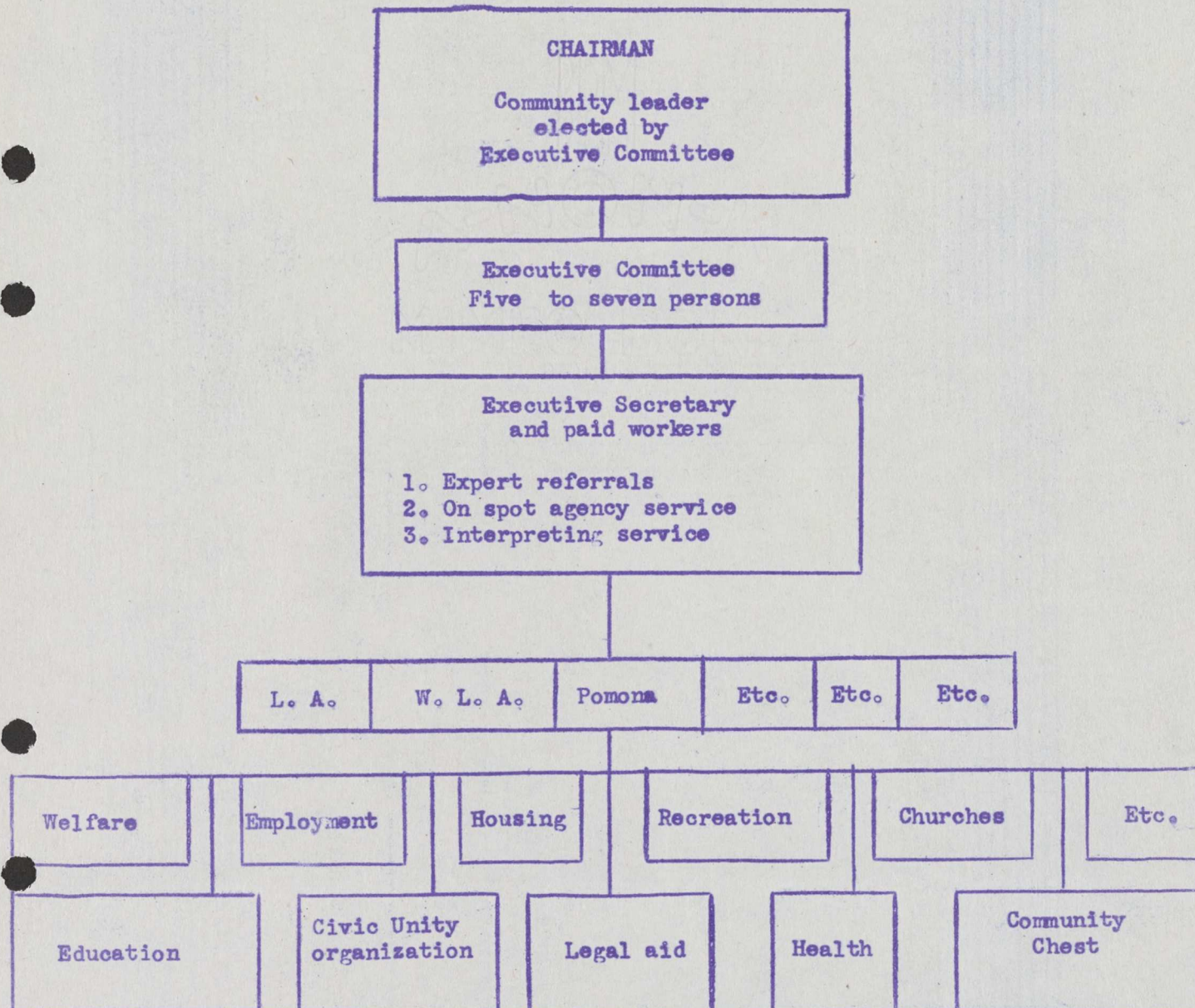
COMMUNITIES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

(Data compiled from WRA records plus 10% for returnees
 not registered in the district office)

Gardena	409
Glendale.	79
Long Beach.	1,025
Montebello.	255
Norwalk	154
Pasadena (South Pasadena, Altadena, etc.)	805
San Gabriel Valley (Covina, Claremont, Azusa, Sierra Madre, El Monte, Baldwin Park, Pomona, Puente, Arcadia, San Gabriel, Monrovia, Temple City, etc.)	444
San Fernando Valley (Van Nuys, Roscoe, Pacoima, North Hollywood, San Fernando, Encino, Tarzana, Northridge, etc.)	450
Santa Monica.	110
Torrance.	132
Whittier.	53
Harbor Area (Venice, Redondo Beach, Culver City, San Pedro, Wilmington, Harbor City, Terminal Island, etc.)	361
Miscellaneous (Hynes, Compton, Clearwater, Artesia, Downey, Bellflower, etc.)	198
Names with incomplete or irregular addresses.	264
TOTAL	4,739

TENTATIVE DESIGNATION: Committee on Readjustment of American Japanese

A TEMPORARY ORGANIZATION



TENTATIVE DESIGNATION: Nisei-Issei Integration Association

A PERMANENT ORGANIZATION

CHAIRMAN

A- Representation on proposed community-wide organization at policy level.

B- Authoritatively articulate on behalf of American Japanese

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Five to Seven Members

ADVISORY BOARD

Reservoirs from which may be drawn qualified leaders for participation in programs of community at large.

Civic

Business

Professional

Retired

Nisei Leaders

Church

Basic Membership and participation in all organized community activities and services

Integration through leadership.

Upward Pressure

Downward Pressure

Integration through neighborhood participation