

Way, Rosalie (Hankey)
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N.B., Readers must not disclose identity of individual evacuees

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FEBRUARY 2, 1944

I arrived at Klamath Falls at 7:40 the morning of February 2. Not being able to locate the car I had been told would take me to the camp, I took the Greyhound Bus. The entire camp is surrounded by a heavy "man-proof" fence twelve feet or more in height. At intervals along the fence are large watch towers capable of holding at least four men. These towers are visible for a considerable distance and are provided with high-powered search lights. Later, when I walked about the camp before sunrise and at night, I noted that at least these search lights near the stockade where the suspected agitators are confined were lit. During the day, these towers must have been manned by soldiers, for I saw smoke coming from one of the chimneys. The high, barbed-wire topped fence, bristling with watch towers, is very impressive.

[I did not here express the intense shame and fear I felt at first sight of this fence and the watch towers. My own government, I thought, is confining some of its citizens in what looks just like a concentration camp.]

A short distance from the entrance gate, guarded by armed sentries, I was given a visitors pass by a soldier who telephoned his superior officer to check my statement that I had been invited by Mr. Best, the Project Director. I then walked to a WRA office about one-fourth mile away to get another pass which admitted me into the premises of the Camp Tule Lake Military Area. A member of the appointed staff offered to drive me to the administration building. Arriving there, (after passing through another fence), I was told that I would not be allowed to enter the "colony", that part of the camp in which the Japanese are confined) unless I was accompanied by an armed soldier. I went to see Mr. Harry Black, Assistant Project Director in charge of Community Management Division. Mr. Wolter (who held the same position at the Gila Center) had recommended him to me, and I hoped that he would suggest some action which would allow me to circumvent the rule that I must enter the colony with an armed guard.

Mr. Black was very courteous but said I would not be allowed to enter the colony alone. I must take a soldier with me even into the barracks, or, I might have an "evacuee" brought to the administration building under armed guard and then interview him in the presence of the guard. This was a WRA, not an army policy.

Mr. Black then outlined the present situation at Tule lake as follows.

Black's Statement - Rise of Coordinating Committee

The first committee, the Negotiating Committee or the self-styled Daihyo Sha Kai, in other words, the leaders of the recent strike, had attempted to force the Cooperative Enterprises to accede to certain demands designed to eliminate various "American" functions of the Cooperative: that no more newspapers be sold, that the beauty shops stop operating, (and others not mentioned by Black). The members of the Cooperative held a meeting and voted nine of one against obeying these demands. Next a group of these executive members of Co-op and Civic Organizations (the Block Managers and Black Supervisors) met and felt that they might contribute to the overthrow of the Negotiating Committee. Four of the most influential members of the Negotiating Committee who were still at large in the camp held a meeting and came to the conclusion that if the colonists (the evacuees) would hold to the status quo policy, i.e., continue the strike, they would surrender. (That is, give themselves up and allow themselves to be placed

in the stockade.) Meanwhile, they hoped to have selected and established other agitators to take their place, men who would be able to keep the people in line and continue the strike.

The members of the cooperative and of these Community Organizations formed a committee which they called the Coordinating Committee. We (the Administration) felt they were the peoples' representatives. At last they felt strong enough to submit the issue, whether to abandon the strike or maintain the status quo, to a popular referendum. They held a secret ballot after they had built up as much favorable feeling as possible among the people. They won by a narrow margin; eight thousand votes were cast and the people voted to abandon the status quo by a margin of 800 votes.(1) So the people decided to go back to work and resume normal operations. Most have gone back to work. However, there is still a guard (of soldiers) at the High School. Japanese are working outside the gates, but must have passes to leave the colony. Those taken back to work are from a list of names submitted by administrative section heads (Caucasians). Every worker is then approved by the Army and by Internal Security.

I was provoked by Black's insistence that I must be accompanied by an armed guard when I visited my Japanese friends. I said nothing, however and decided to see Mr. Best (the Project Director) and tell him he had brought me to the camp under false pretenses.(2)

I waited from eleven o'clock to noon, but Mr. Best did not come in. While I was waiting Dr. Opler entered Best's outer office and said to me:

The name's Opler.

He wished to accompany me immediately to visit my "contacts" from Gila. I said I would not go with a soldier and added that I could accomplish little if Opler accompanied me.(3)

I suggested that if conditions seemed propitious he might accompany me on the next day. Meanwhile, Mr. Robertson, former head of Leupp, (now Assistant Project Director in charge of Operations Division) entered his office which is opposite to that of Best's. He remembered talking to me at Gila, and was very cordial. He invited me into this office, closed the door and advised me that I would not do well to try to get the guard rule set aside. But I might be able to employ the ruse he uses: get the soldier to stay in the car. He gave Mr. Kurihara's address from memory.

[1. When I repeated this estimate of the winning margin to my friend, Mr. Takeuchi he said, "Eight hundred! My foot! It was about 400 and then some blocks didn't vote at all." Actually the "winning margin" was 473 out of 8,713.]

[2. Prior to my arrival at Tule Lake, the idea that I would not be permitted to visit Japanese privately, in their barracks, had not occurred to me. Nor, so far as I know, had Dr. Thomas been told of this requirement.]

[3. Dr. Opler's offer to accompany me may have been well meant, but it took me aback. At the time I felt that he, as Community Analyst, should have been aware that the presence of any member of the WRA staff would tend to inhibit and embarrass my respondents.]

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Tule Lake Fieldnotes

Rosalie Hankey Wax

When Mr. Best had not arrived by noon I went to lunch. We were served by Japanese waitresses. The lunch, two large weiners, beans and jello was considerably below the standard at Gila. At lunch I met Miss Florence Horn, who has visited Manzanar and Gila, and is now at Tule for three days. She expressed the desire to talk over my work and I told her of the restrictions on what I say. [Dr. Thomas had forbidden me to discuss my work with anyone.]

Immediately after lunch I saw Mr. Best and impressed him with my disapproval of his conduct in bringing me here under such restrictions. I said that it was asinine to think that I could see my Japanese friends with a soldier breathing down my neck. Best apologized. Naturally (said he) he could not tell Dr. Thomas about the necessity for the armed guard. He did not say why, but intimated that he did not wish Dr. Thomas to know that matters were still so critical at Tule Lake. I did not comment upon the fact that if I saw that the situation was critical I would certainly tell Dr. Thomas. Best referred me to Dr. Opler, saying that Opler could probably arrange matters.

I returned to Opler. I told him that Mr. Best agreed to my entering the colony with a member of Internal Security who would remain in the car. (This was not true.) Opler telephoned Internal Security and arranged for the escort and the use of a project car.

When the official at the other end of the wire seemed reluctant to give the car, I prompted Opler, saying that I was acting under Best's instructions. Permission was granted. My escort was Mr. Johnson, who proved to be a pleasant, kindly man who did not object to remaining outside in the car reading mystery stories provided by me. I apologized for the boredom which the long waiting must cause him, but he remarked that he was grateful for this opportunity to get into the colony and observe the Japanese at first hand.

Mr. Johnson and I went next to yet another office (WRA Internal Security) to get a pass which would enable me to go inside the colony. At least eight men were in this office. The room seemed filled with idle, lounging, vapid faced men, some having at least the initiative to leer at me, others wearing an expression which implied that they thought I was a "starry-eyed social worker". I received my pass and we approached the gate to the colony which was guarded by four or five soldiers. The soldier in charge knew Mr. Johnson and allowed us to enter without seeing our passes. The Japanese colony was cut off from the Caucasian barracks by yet another "man-proof" fence.

Mr. Johnson did not know his way about the camp and I was obliged on several occasions to leave the car and ask Japanese for directions. But Mr. Johnson observed the courtesy I used while asking directions. He soon picked up the cue and by the end of the second day was profuse with "If you please" and "Thank you very much" and remarked to me several times that he didn't see anything so bad about these people. I gathered that he was newly arrived at Tule and had not had much opportunity of seeing the Japanese in camp at first hand.

INTERVIEWS WITH JAPANESE

MR. AND MRS. ODA (Kurusu)

[Mr. Oda was a Kibei, about thirty years old. He had attended school for 12 year in Japan, and, after his return to the United States, had graduated from Pasadena Junior College and then, for a year, had taken an extension course in engineering at California Institute of Technology. He was a handsome and very serious young man and spoke English with a heavy accent.]

[I had approached him while I was working in the Gila Relocation Center and asked him if he would like to tell me why he had answered the military questionnaire in the negative. He talked to me for an entire afternoon and even wrote an essay for me, describing why he had felt obliged to say "No". After the segregation, he and his wife occasionally wrote to me. At Christmas time I sent them a modest box of candy. Mr. Oda then wrote me that he would never

forget this kindness as long as he lived. Mr. Oda renounced his citizenship and he and his wife went to Japan. After several years, they returned to the United States and took up residence in Los Angeles.]

I paid my first call at the Oda's, knowing that I would be well recieved. Only Mrs. Oda was at home. She was delighted to see me and ran immediately to get her husband who is block manager and was in his office. When he came he appeared happier and less strained than when I last saw him at Gila. At that time he had been tormented over the decision of segregation and fear that his Caucasian friend, McNeil, would despise him for his decision. At Tule Lake he was, however, far more fearful of his Japanese neighbors than he had been at Gila. He told me that his block was composed almost entirely of individuals who were in favor of keeping up the status quo. He himself believed in law and order and felt that the evacuees should obey the laws of the United States as long as they were on United States soil. He said that now he says nothing. If he advised against violence he would get into trouble. So he just agrees with whomever he speaks to without committing himself too much one way or the other. He is now engaged in translating the Japanese printed matter given out by the Negotiating Committee and the Coordinating Committee and promised to forward this material to me within the next ten days. Oda's Japanese accent which was quite pronounced at Gila was stronger than ever. His wife, who is also Kibei,(1) retained her excellent American English. She, with her practical, slightly flippant American ways, makes a much better informant than her husband, who hesitates to reveal any Japanese attitude which does not coincide with his idealistic frame of reference. While Mrs. Oda served me with cocoa and sweetened puffed rice and presented me with two beautiful shell flowers, [made at Tule Lake] they made the following statements.

Mr. Oda: It's really a disgusting story. I think some of the people want power. They say 'We are working for the people.' I heard a lot of rumors. I believe they're working for themselves. This new Coordinating Committee is all right.

(I asked how this Coordinating Committee had been selected.)

Mrs. Oda: That's what I'd like to know! I think they were elected from each division head.

Mr. Oda: Since November we have had another so-called negotiating committee. They took care of all the camp affairs. WRA and the Army did not recognize them as true representatives. They (WRA) think they were not elected properly. Maybe they really tried to bring the center better. But their demands were more like orders than suggestions. Only a few people really know the inside story. More than two hundred people were put in the stockade. Seventy or fifty have already been left out. Some were taken before, but on November 26 we had the big search. We had a very nice soldier come in. Some were good and some bad. The one who came here was really nice. (Mrs. Oda agreed.)

Honestly, I'd like this center back to normal conditions, but if I said that to the residents they'd say I'm a dog. Since I took office two-three men came over and threatened some of the block representatives.

The leaders have no self-control themselves. There was so much excitement. A really clever man doesn't say very much. The rest of the public just follow them. The most clever men are not taking high positions. They are just resting peacefully at home.

[1. I did not learn that Mrs. Oda had been born in Japan until I interviewed her in 1981.]

When they asked me to be Block Manager I refused. I thought it was going to be hard and tough. The people would be stubborn. But one night we had elections and I was elected.

(Here Mrs. Oda digressed to the motives which had caused people to come to Tule Lake.)

Mrs. Oda: If they say "Yes," maybe they can't go to Japan. Many have relatives there. The people are forgetting the United States now. They say, 'We are Japanese.' The first time they (the newspaper) said there was trouble here, that was the first we had heard of it.

Mr. Oda: At the time of demands they told me that the demands were more like saying to them (WRA) how to run this camp. They took it that way.

Mrs. Oda: The army fellows are very nice at the post office.

Next I tried to call on some of the young men whom Mr. Kondo and Mary Obata had asked me to visit. (Mr. Kondo and Miss Obata were friends of mine who lived in the Gila Relocation Center.) Mr. Johnson and I went to the addresses, but the young men's parents told me that they were working and told me where I might find them. Since I did not wish to disturb them at work, I tried the third address. The door was opened by a young man. I asked for Tadashi and Noboru Obana and the young man said: "They live here." He continued to stand in the doorway and stare at me. I asked him if he were afraid to let a hakujin in the house. He then opened the door wide and said "Come in, come in." I found myself in a large barrack with many cots and a large iron stove. (Unwittingly I had entered one of the barrack rooms where young men who had come to Tule Lake without their families were housed.) About fifteen men and boys were present. One man was being given a haircut by another. I sat down on a cot and asked Noboru if he'd like to hear about Gila. Hesitatingly he said to go ahead, but joined a group of boys who were standing around the stove in a semi-circle so that some of their backs were to me. Noboru kept looking over his shoulder at me. I felt ill at ease but launched into a description of some of Bennett's (Project Director at the Gila Relocation Center) recent actions which I thought might be interesting. The boys warmed up a bit. One kept kicking at the stove in embarrassment. I talked for about eight minutes and then rose to go, thanking them for allowing me to come in. One of the boys named "Lefty" asked that I remember him to Mr. Asami. They thanked me for coming and I left.

Interview with Jim Takeuchi (Tsuruda)

[Mr. Takeuchi was a Nisei about twenty-nine years old, married and with one child. He had graduated from a junior college in Sacramento, California, and, before the evacuation, had worked in a drug store. When I approached him in the Gila Relocation Center and asked him if he would tell me why he had said, "No-No," he responded,

What the hell! I'm going to Tule Lake, so why shouldn't I tell you how I feel.

He had talked to me, I felt, very straightforwardly, telling me that he would have enlisted if he had not been put "behind the barbed wire." But now, he felt that with a wife, child and elderly parents to support, the most sensible thing to do was to go to Tule Lake and "wait and see". After the segregation I had corresponded with him and he had invited me to visit

him at Tule Lake. In September of 1944, Mr. Takeuchi was permitted to resettle in a town in the Middle West.]

Mr. Takeuchi gave me a long verbatim statement before segregation. In Tule he lives in a barrack with all of his large family about him just as in Gila. I saw his wife, son, sister, mother, an old partially paralyzed man, and another women in the two large rooms they occupied. Jim seemed to have lost a little of his pre-segregation cockiness. He has gained about fifteen pounds, "from not working" says he. He talked in a soft half-whisper. At Gila he spoke boldly and loudly "and didn't care who heard what he said." Although he did not speak at such length as at Gila, he gave me more information. Whenever I put a point blank question he seemed to answer it as honestly as he could. He said several times that he did not care about anything now. All he wanted was to be left in peace.

All I'm waiting for is for the war to end. That's all!

His wife served us with excellent tea and a delicious chocolate cake which they had somehow procured for my arrival from Klamath Falls. His wife sent out some cake and tea to Mr. Johnson, my Internal Security escort, by her little son. That gentleman responded with four pennies which the boy came in and showed to his father. Jim laughed. . .

He asked me if it were true that Gila was going to close soon. I said I didn't know. He added that his sister (a "disloyal" still residing at Gila) was expecting to come to Tule Lake soon.

After we had exchanged amenities I told Jim that one of the chief points I would like to get straight was whether the first negotiating committee had been regarded by the people as their legitimate representatives. He replied as follows:

That was one of the things that got the Japanese in an uproar. All of the respective people in the block elected them. When the Spanish Consul was here they went and made their requests. But there weren't any representatives who spoke real good English - their terminology sounded more like a demand. It made a misunderstanding. Some allowance should be made for this lack of education in the English language. The army flatly refused to recognize the representatives.

Then, the first thing that happened, the army started to put people in the stockade. At one time I imagine there must have been from 125 to 150. That is a small estimate. In this block about six out of the block were taken. They weren't any of the block representatives, it so happened. The boys yanked from her happened to be Hawaiian born. They suspected the Hawaiians because the ringleader came from Hawaii. That was Kai. (Chairman of the Daihyo Sha Kai.)

They've got a big farm here. Hogs were slaughtered right and left. I've had hog just twice since I got here. Heck knows where all the chickens go.

(I asked Jim about the popular referendum vote of January 11.)

That election was held in every block.

(The following is verbatim.)

Secret Vote of December 4, 1943

There was one vote that the Army wasn't supposed to know anything about. All the Japanese met in their representative blocks and voted whether to go back to normalcy or adopt the status quo permanently or call a general strike. All the time this status quo was on, the coal crew, the hospital bunch, the garbage and the mess halls were still working. At that time the vote came out that they should adopt the status quo instead of a general strike. They went against the return to normalcy because that would be an insult to the representatives barricaded in the stockade. All their work would be for nothing.

This other referendum vote -(of January 11) the Army more or less called that one. They were supposed to have united the people for the psychological moment to spring that question; whether they wanted to discard the status quo or continue. To help out, the bunch who wanted to discard the status quo kept pulling the people right and left. They said that anybody who was inciting the Japanese to continue the status quo strike -and that more or less damned a large majority -were only hurting themselves.

I came here to be left in peace. If they leave me alone I'll leave them alone.

Anyway, people got wise that the longer they maintained the status quo they were going to yank them and stick them in the stockade. Besides their finances were petering out. Here -they're still paying off on the October checks. These fellows who were not working got no clothing allowance, no welfare, no income.

Another point of view: the people here are supposed to be loyal to Japan now. Here's an argument some of the bright boys advanced. (They were members of the group who wished to abandon status quo.) They said, in returning to normalcy we'll be drawing salaries. Then on top of that the government will have to pay us clothing allowance. That's just that much less money that the U.S. government is going to have to manufacture armaments to beat Japan. I couldn't see it. I know myself that regardless if the Japanese draw this monthly stipend, they'd not make much difference to the U.S. treasury. But it sounds good on the surface and it swayed some of the stubborn people.

They had a referendum vote. Two soldiers were present. They took a vote of all persons over eighteen. The soldiers with one Japanese present counted and tallied the votes. There was a majority over 400 [actually 473] voted to return to normalcy.

A couple of days after that all those desiring of work could report to a place. The only trouble with this is they don't have enough work to go round. So many with large families have no way to get money. Under WRA arrangement, if you won't work, you can't get clothing allowance.

(I asked Jim what he expected would happen in the near future.)

I look forward to the end of the war. That's me. There's no future until I see what happens after it ends.

In camp here, I believe I can truthfully say there will be one of two things.

One, they'll either continue going back to normal and naturally, eventually the Army will relinquish control - or there's only 400 people difference for status quo than against.

(The following is verbatim.)

The Draft

When I say something's liable to pop, I mean the newspaper account of the War Department Release saying that Nisei are again eligible for selective service. And that report called for ten centers. That includes this one. But, if and when they start to draft the avowedly disloyal group in camp that is going to be the psychological moment for the next riot. That really is going to be a riot if it ever happens.

Co-op Influence on New Coordinating Committee

I don't think the Co-op itself had much influence. I don't think the Co-op had anything to do with forming a committee to bring back normalcy. It was essentially an organization to serve the people in camp. There were no political officials in it at all.

The first I heard of going back to normalcy, the heads and the former employees of some of the divisions called a meeting. That was the first trend toward normalcy. They held elections for this committee January 11. The committee - they are so called men with ability. Akitsuki was an official of the Co-op here. I don't think they want political power. They were elected by the wards.⁽¹⁾ Each fellow was elected from a ward. There are seven wards each with ten blocks.

Concerning the Block Representatives

The block representatives in camp were already holding office when we were moved in here. The representatives here are elected the first month of every year. Some of these are stuck in the stockade. It was just a case of which representatives seemed most able. After every meeting the representatives always came back and at supper called for silence. They'd get up in front of the mess hall and give a brief summary of what went on before the meeting. They'd take Ayes and Nos for any question then. If there was no time in mess they'd call a special meeting at night.

Of course, a lot of their requests as far as I'm concerned is purely nonsense. They asked for porches for all the apartments. WRA had promised lumber for all the porches. It was never supplied. That's where that request came in. We were promised. That's inefficiency as far as I'm concerned.

The only thing everybody in camp absolutely endorsed was the dismissal of Dr. Pedicord, and more care in placement of drivers and an improvement of food, and I think, the request for an investigation of grafting. Grafting started the whole works. It was asinine asking for porches.

Some of the representatives weren't exactly the people who ought to be acting as representatives. You can understand that trouble can arise from a fanatical Kibei being a representative.

The people hiding out had information that was vital for maintaining peace and normalcy in the center. But if they showed their face outside they would be put in the stockade. And, so, naturally, the only thing they could do was hide out.

[1. Jim is mistaken. The Coordinating Committee was not elected.]

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(The following is verbatim.)

Then also at that time they had a second negotiating committee that wanted us to go on a hunger strike. That didn't last long. Everybody ignored it altogether. They sent people to the block representatives to try to influence people. The blocks were to go on a hunger strike. The people ignored this second negotiating committee.

The Army had a house to house search. They said it was to get contraband. They were saying too much in the newspapers about weapons. Personally I think it was to locate these four boys.

(I remarked that a member of the administration had told me that the decision to return to work had been made on a majority of 800 votes.)

Eight hundred my foot! One block didn't even vote. There were quite a few blank ballots too.

I spoke to a soldier here when they were making the house to house search. He was a sergeant from Idaho. He had a very low opinion of the WRA. WRA is always pulling boners. They got themselves in hot water and had to call the Army.

There was a very small minority group of young radicals. They took it upon themselves to do things for the people in camp, without the peoples' permission. It was this group who first went around demanding the removal of the American flag, and also demanded that the Co-op stop selling newspapers. They were all for Japanese stoicism. Nobody paid any attention to them. They were not real representatives. Quite a few were Hawaiians. There were many Hawaiians in the troublemaking group.

There were a large number of Hawaiian boys who were in Hawaii at the time of Pearl Harbor. The Japanese of Hawaii are fisher-folk. These folks were out fishing when it happend. They didn't know anything about it. So when they pulled into the docks the guards just mowed them down. A Jap was a Jap. These guys got fanatical Japanese ideas, such as may have been had by a goon-squad.

The majority of the people want to be left alone till after the war. They want to be left alone to be dealt with under any circumstances.

Another thing that gets my goat is the propaganda of the American Legion, especially in Klamath Falls. They want the Army to take over. The Army doesn't want it. The American Legion has practically terrorized the people of Klamath Falls, warning them to arm themselves to get ready for an emergency. If the people wanted to get out of this place they'd have done so by stating they were loyal and going outside.

Putting up all these barbed wire fences and watch towers - that's all a lot of bunk. They're not going to go out and kill anybody. They want to go back to California and temporarily this is home.

(I next asked Jim whether the requests of the Negotiating Committee had been presented as demands.)

The requests might have been couched in dictatorial terms.

(I questioned him as to whether Best had actually promised the people that he would not call in anyone to break the strike without notifying them.)

Best said he'd stand pat until the people went to work.
He just called them (harvesters) with no warning.

(I asked about terrorist methods used by some of the negotiators.)

When this came about, it so happened the goon-squad went on the war path. They took Dr. Pedicord in hand. He admits he struck one of the fellows.

The people gathered in some blocks. In some blocks the representatives asked the people to come because Myer was going to give a speech. Then, when there wasn't enough people there, a few members of the goon-squad got cars. They said it wasn't safe to remain in the barracks and asked the people to head for the Administration area. I sat tight. I figured if I'm going to get shot I can get shot here in this barrack. They talked to the people trying to make them go, saying, 'Are you a Japanese or not?'

(I asked whether Myer and Best had made promises to the people when they gathered around the Administration Building. Jim related what he had heard from friends.)

Then Myer and Best came out. Myer got up and talked to the people in public over the public address system. He promised the people the dismissal of Dr. Pedicord. As far as the dismissal of Best, Myer was against that. Myer said Best had done all right.

First Meeting With Joe Kurihara

[Joseph Yoshisuke Kurihara was a Hawaiian born Nisei about fifty years old. In 1915 he had come to California and in 1917 he had enlisted in the U.S. Army and served with an occupation unit in Germany. At the outbreak of World War II he was working as navigator on a tuna fishing boat. In January of 1942 he tried to enter the merchant marine but was refused. He then tried to obtain employment in two shipbuilding firms but was again refused. He wrote the following account of his encounter with the port master of San Diego:

I went to see the Port Master in San Diego to get a permit to sail the sea. Seeing that I was a Japanese, he said, 'No permit for any Jap.' We argued awhile. Losing his temper he said, 'Get out or I'll throw you out.' So I told him, 'Say, officer I wore that uniform when you were still unborn. I served in the U.S. Army and fought for democracy. I may be a Jap in feature but I am an American. Understand!' I saw fire in his eyes, but he had no further words to say. (Thomas and Nishimoto, 1946:367.)

Mr. Kurihara was one of the volunteers who went to the Manzanar Relocation Center to prepare the camp for the main body of evacuees who were to follow later.

In spite of my experiences in Los Angeles, I was still optimistic enough to think and believe that, soon, the

citizens amongst us would be given some kind of consideration, and not just herded about like prisoners of war.

As optimism was replaced by a deep feeling of grievance, Mr. Kurihara became an outspoken critic of the WRA administration. He also denounced the Nisei leaders of the Japanese American Citizens League, who, he felt, were meekly submitting to injustice. When one of the Nisei leaders at Manzanar was beaten and his accused assailant jailed, the residents of Manzanar staged a demonstration which culminated in the project director's calling in the army. Kurihara and several other men suspected of being agitators were arrested. He was sent first to Moab and later to Leupp isolation camps. Transferred to Tule Lake as a segregant in December of 1943, he was, at first, placed in the stockade by the army. Mr. Best, the project director intervened, and Kurihara was released from the stockade into the "Tule Lake Colony".

During his confinement at Moab and Leupp, Kurihara had written several articles denouncing the evacuation, the living conditions in the centers, and the treatment of the Nisei by the U.S. government. [He had sent one of these articles to The Saturday Evening Post and Collier's, but it was rejected. Mr. Robertson (the man who had advised me to take a policeman rather than a soldier with me) had suggested that he send it to Dr. Thomas, head of the Evacuation and Resettlement Study.]

Kurihara

I made my last call on February 2 on Joe Kurihara. He was in a large barrack room with two other men. The barrack was extraordinarily neat and I received an impression of business-like order. With its tables holding neatly stacked papers, well-made cots and suspended lights, the room might have been a well-kept army-officers' quarters. One young man was reading a newspaper spread out on a table. Kurihara, a short, slightly bald, stocky man was extremely polite - politer than any other individual I met at Tule Lake. He invited me to be seated. I told him who I was, told him how much the study had appreciated his paper and said I was glad to meet a man of his honesty and ability. As best I could, I described the aims of our study. I mentioned that Mr. Robertson had spoken highly of him and we agreed on the sterling quality of Robertson's character.

That is one man I really respect, said Mr. Kurihara.

Sensing that Mr. Kurihara would approve of a direct approach I explained our study, in attempting to get a true picture of developments in relocation centers, naturally had difficulty in getting data from those individuals who were at the core of activities and that therefore any material from this source was of inestimable value. Anything that he would be kind enough to write for us would be recieved with gratitude and would be kept confidential.

Kurihara had not known that we had received his article. Fixing me with a steady gaze he asked me point blank why I personally had liked his article. Taken aback, I said just what I thought. I said that honesty shone out of it and that I admire honesty. I said that I also realized that anyone who would make the statements he did must be very courageous or else crazy. He smiled. He then said that since he had been in Tule he had been watching, thinking, and studying. He would be glad to write an article on Tule Lake but needed time to get the truth and state it properly. I gave him the Study's address on a piece of paper. He said he would memorize it and then burn the paper. We shook hands again and I left.

Talk With Dr. Opler

That morning I had committed myself to call on Opler after dinner. I felt extraordinarily tired, but elated at the amount of information I had been able to get. I cudgelled my brain as to how I might avoid giving Dr. Opler confidential information and still remain on friendly terms. I had been given Dr. Pedicord's quarters and it was while I

was in his bathroom that I got my inspiration. I decided that I would feign disappointment at my progress and play the part of a discouraged, puzzled, female anthropologist, whose hopes to get information had been frustrated. Since I felt ready to blow my top to the first intelligent listener, this was difficult. Yet it worked better than I had anticipated. When I said I had received almost no information he looked very satisfied and said,

Now I know by that statement that you're a good field worker.

Thereupon he proceeded to show me how vast his knowledge of the situation was.

I saw to it that my remarks on the information I had received agreed substantially with the impressions he had given me in our conversations of the morning and the early afternoon. He asked me if I had been able to get any leads as to who the ring-leaders were. I said "No" which was the truth, forbearing to add that if I did know who they were I would not tell him.

During the course of the evening I asked his advice on the question of interviewing some of the members of the Coordinating Committee. Opler advised strongly against it, saying that they were very busy and besides Akitsuki was a sick man. He added that a meeting of this evacuee Coordinating Committee and the administration's Advisory Council was to be held the afternoon of the 3rd. I expressed a strong desire to attend this meeting, but he said it would be very bad policy if I did. He gave me the following information:

The Advisory Council was composed of two of the Assistant Project Directors: Harry Black, Head of Community Management - Paul Robertson, Head of Operations - Mr. Lechlitter, the Project Attorney - Mr. McNeil of the Cooperative, Opler, and Huycke, of Community Activities. This Advisory Council, meeting with the Coordinating Committee had been responsible for the existing though precarious rapport between the colony and the administration.

The following disjointed notes are mostly verbatim and were taken down during the course of the evening.

Evacuee Attitudes Toward Soldiers

Hankey: The evacuees seemed to bear no ill will toward the Army.

Opler: The simplest group will respect the army coming in with jeeps, tanks, etc. That's a Japanese cultural trait. The smartest resent the Army and want to see it out. Generally the people feel it's safer if the Army were out provided they knew there wouldn't be a reign of terror again.

Byron(1) and I were talking about the psychological moment to lift the curfew. He thought that now is the psychological time. It would gain the confidence of the people in the community.

The Army tossed all the Leupp boys into the stockade for a couple of days when they first came here. That was an Army decision. The local people could have used them. Some of them were held there until they were under the influence (of the agitators).

[1. Opler always calls and addresses Byron Akitsuki, the chairman of the Coordinating Committee, by his first name. This lack of respect was commented upon by Miss Horn.]

(The following is verbatim.)

During the army search it was found that one of the soldiers had taken a watch out of someone's drawer. The party yelled to the captain. The soldier was frisked and the watch returned.

I was in headquarters when they brought in two packages of ritz crackers. They were returned. Some people had tremendous stores of sake and rice.

(I asked why people would keep rice in their barracks and was told that it was used to make mash for sake.)

In one apartment two of the guys (soldiers) were at odds on the whole procedure. One was throwing things around; the other was practically apologizing for it.

It was a damn cold morning. Some of the soldiers had sake for themselves. One kept very warm. It was rumored that the whole military camp was supposed to be drunk.

[Readers who desire a detailed description of the complex course of events to which Dr. Opler refers should consult Thomas and Nishimoto (1946:122-176)].

On Promises Purported To Be Made By Best and Myer

That was clever staging by the committee (of the Daihyo Sha Kai). A meeting was held in Mr. Best's office. The minutes indicate that there were no complete promises made. After the meeting inside, there were some speeches. Kuratomi interpreted (the speeches) in Japanese only, what had been decided at the meeting. 'Remember what this man has promised,' (said Kuratomi). This was followed by a speech by Kai of the Dai Nippon order. Kuratomi was not an independent operator. He was under the influence of Kai.

The Administration couldn't listen to them as demands. They were really sympathetic to all of them except the dismissal of the staff members. The Negotiating Committee demanded promises. We said we'd do what we could. They took it as a promise and insisted we'd broken a promise.

\$275,000 worth of vegetables were spoiling. 300 Japanese were brought in from other centers to harvest them. Food was taken at night because the trucks were busy in the day time.

The Jerome Group

The Jerome group had a pressure group in the background that Kai had the greatest influence over. They whipped the whole bunch into line. Kai always talks about himself, how he came from San Diego, a marine town, where the sailors spit on orientals.

It was pathetic. Certain parties could be set on the right track if they were removed from the Kai influence and if they see that it was impossible for him to take the Japanese back to an arrogant tone.

The Jerome group was the most prominent in agitating. They were status seeking. The original negotiating committee was composed of people from Jerome. My informants say the Jerome group started organizing before they came.

The Deadlock

The fellows in hiding laid down the points for the deadlock. The Coordinating Committee broke the deadlock. The Army had a meeting of the block managers. They said, 'Give us these men. They're the cause of all the trouble.' The guys didn't appear. The following Saturday the Army searched. The Army found one of the five guys.

Hiding Agitators

These were the five top men on the committee. It was funny how the Army would rush in and find their beds still warm. They must have kept a wonderful watch and spotted anyone coming. The Committee delivered an ultimatum: They would surrender themselves if every person detained in the stockade were released. As soon as they had the signatures they gave themselves up. They demanded that the Army move to the periphery of the project, and that all the WRA employees here before November 4 be removed.

(Here I remarked that this sounded like a breach of faith by WRA. Opler said then that WRA had never promised to release the people in the stockade. They had made no promises to the four men. They eventually gave themselves up to join their "martyred brethren.")

The people were not released. There were more pickups. While the men were in hiding WRA negotiated with them. The Army kept searching and failed. The Daihyo Sha Kai produced resolutions which were extremely violent and numerous. Then the people suffered by the Army's search. They couldn't go from ward to ward. The Army had them from two directions. The Army even requisitioned WRA personnel to help identify the men. The soldiers might not know one face from another.

Their [Daihyo Sha Kai] arrogant tone is a reflection of great egocentrism. I heard that the names of some of them were heard over the radio from Tokyo. They told the Japanese in camp, 'We created the international incident!'

The Funeral of the Farm-Worker

At the funeral the Kibei boys were beside themselves. Their faces were contorted; they were shouting. I saw at least twelve completely off the beam. The people around were saying: 'Too excited. Bad.'

Demands of Negotiating Committee

The group said: (1) We represent the center; the people believe in us. And in the same speech usually (2) we've got to have further segregation. There are two big groups here. By this they mean unconsciously the minority they did not control.

Best and the Funeral

On the matter of holding the funeral in the gymnasium, two men who said they represented the widow said to Best, you send an answer to a certain address. But there will be nobody important there. The message will be transmitted.

The funeral was not stopped. It was the coldest, windiest day we ever had. (Here Opler snickered.) The whole Buddhist Hierarchy was out there. They were almost blown off the platform.

Best decided against it because he felt they were using it as an occasion for a demonstration. The group we didn't play into the hands of was an unidentified faction. I think the funeral by them would have been all right. When Best sent a message the first address was that of the farmer's widow. They found the house full of mourners. She said she didn't know there was going to be a public funeral. When given the name of Mr. T.(1) she said she didn't know him and didn't want anything to do with it. My informant added that she seemed nervous and under pressure. If Best had let the second group handle the funeral, (the more moderate group) it wouldn't have been handled by a goon-squad.

At the beginning I was one of the two Caucasians present. I saw these boys in back (the Kibei) and thought they were just going to walk behind the bier. Between the wardens' headquarters and the platform they got into a straight line. They were not marching. I got the sense of a drill. It didn't occur to me until the fracas broke out that they were a guard. The photographer, John D. Cook, was acting on his own. Best had told him to go out in his car and not to stick his nose out of the car. He was to act as if he were taking photographs. But he could leave it blank. He was just to act as if he were getting a record. He was to make a threat without making a threat. The photographer parked between the wardens' headquarters. He took many pictures. The fellows took his camera away from him and tossed him in the air. He said they twisted his arms too. But it all happened as I glanced away and glanced right back. He was only tossed once.

[For a detailed account of the holding of the public funeral, see Thomas and Nishimoto (1946:121-23).]

Police Commissioners

The Coordinating Committee is going to recommend men for the police board. The Advisory Council is going to pick three men from these. It is one of our needs for peace.

Talk With Paul Robertson

Although it was by now nine o'clock at night and I had a headache caused by over-fatigue, I decided to call on Robertson to improve my relationship with him and to ask his opinion on Opler's opinion that the ringleading agitators were chiefly from Jerome.

Robertson was very cordial. He said he would be glad to tell me what had transpired but knew little, since he himself had arrived only in the middle of Janaury. He remarked again that he had come to Tule to work in Community Management, that he cared nothing about Operations and that he was disgusted. He agreed with the impression I had received from my informants - that the present Coordinating Committee did not stand high in evacuee favor and that they were considered inu by many. Emphasizing that he was not sure about anything, he stated that he doubted Opler's contention that the Jerome faction had been dominant. He said he knew the boys from Jerome very well and could not see them playing the part of which the Administration accused them.

[1. Mr. Takahashi.]

He drove me to Dr. Pedicord's empty house which I was to occupy with Miss Horn. Late in the afternoon, I had been unable to light the stove and since the temperature was below freezing, I asked Robertson to light it. He discovered it was out of oil and filled it for us. I occupied the notorious Dr. Pedicord's bed and had a bad night. At six the next morning I got Miss Horn up and we set out for the mess hall together. I assumed she knew the way and followed her lead. She mistook the way and led us to one of the entrances to the colony. Here we were re-directed, but ended up before another gate to the colony. We asked the soldier on guard where the mess hall was and he directed us to an evacuee mess hall. It was quite dark; we could not see where we were going. So quite ignorant that we were breaking one of WRA's iron rules, we calmly walked into the Japanese section. After walking more than a city block we came to a mess hall. I asked a Japanese girl outside if this were the mess hall. She said it was, but it wasn't our mess hall. So back we went to the gate, remarking upon the fact that the soldier had not only let us into the Japanese colony without passes but had directed us to a Japanese mess hall. Miss Horn wondered if he thought we were Japanese. After walking for almost three quarters of an hour through the falling snow we reached the "Caucasian" mess hall.

At breakfast we sat with two nurses. Miss Horn, a journalist, began to question these ladies. From their answers I concluded that they probably belonged to that group of unpopular Caucasian nurses who, one of my informants told me, ordered the Japanese doctors around as per Dr. Pedicord's instructions. The older of the battle-axes voiced the opinion that all of the good members of the Appointed Staff had left since the trouble in November. Things were in a terrible state. Miss Horn asked her if she had been present during the trouble, "I'll say I was," said the nurse in a hoarse, tragic tone. Then she turned her back on us as if we were spies and stalked rapidly from the hall. Miss Horn looked at me and asked,

What's the matter with that old bitch?

After breakfast I went immediately to the administration building and met my escort, Mr. Johnson. This time we were obliged to show our passes to gain entrance to the colony. We went to George Yamashiro's address but found that he was not at home. Then, in the hope that I would find Shig Iwohara, a friend of Henry Kondo's, I went to the address his parents had given me - 1608. This proved to be the headquarters of the Coordinating Committee. I entered and found a neat outer office with about a dozen young evacuees standing and sitting about. I asked for Shig Iwohara and was told that he was working in warehouse 268. His sister May was here, however. I asked to be introduced to May. We entered another office. May was sitting at a desk. At the next desk was Byron Atkitsuki, the chairman of the Coordinating Committee. He was a slight Japanese of medium height, with delicate aristocratic features. He was well, even elegantly dressed, and had around his neck a white scarf in an ascot tie. He is the type of Japanese who would be called "handsome" by some of the Caucasian ladies at Gila.

May Iwohara was very cordial, brought a chair and a large wastebasket to use as an ashtray. We chatted about Gila. She asked me to take her regards to Mr. and Mrs. Strickland and Miss Tanaka. I said I would like to meet Mr. Akitsuki but since he was so busy I did not wish to bother him. (He talked constantly to various people who came in.) May was reluctant to discuss the present plans of the committee. I expressed sympathy with the aims of the members and to inspire confidence, began to discuss the state of mind of the administration. She was very interested. She took down a shorthand statement for Akitsuki which I dictated. I said that so far as I had been able to see, the administration's chief concern seemed to be to save face. They did not particularly object to meeting some of the evacuee demands, providing that this could be done with a minimum loss of prestige. (I must have made a good impression on Miss Iwohara, for later in the afternoon, when I was permitted to attend a meeting of the Advisory Board and the Coordinating Committee, Mr. Akitsuki gave me a type-written copy of all the material that the committee presented to the administrators.)

Miss Iwohara's Remarks (Secretary to the Coordinating Committee)

A few people had been going back to work. Then the division heads (evacuees) of each department held a confidential meeting. They selected a committee Friday, January 7, within the division heads. (May consulted a calendar to see that she had given me the correct dates.) Then on Tuesday, January 11 they held the referendum vote.

The meeting of all the division workers was held on the 8th. When they (division workers) cast a vote as to whether they would go back to work or not, those who wished to go back to work won by an overwhelming majority.

On the 11th - when the center-wide referendum vote was held it was barely a majority - a 300 odd majority.

The members of the committee were selected by the division heads and recognized by the project director. The people have to take it or else. Nobody wanted to take the initiative.

The members of the committee have no political ambitions. Before this committee dissolves they want to get another referendum vote and get a real political body elected by the people.

The people say that we're inu.

May added that the camp was full of inu and rats. I asked how a rat differed from an inu. May seemed reluctant to explain but said that a rat was a person who worked against the Japanese - only he was worse than an inu. He was more selfish. He got in the kitchen and ate the food!

INTERVIEWS WITH MR. IWAMOTO AND MR. YOSHIMURA, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF THE COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISES

[At Gila Center I was well acquainted and friendly with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kondo and Mr. and Mrs. Masato Kato. Mr. Kato was secretary to the Cooperative Enterprises at Gila. Mr. Kondo had asked Mr. Kato to write to Mr. Iwamoto, a man who had an executive position in the Co-op at Tule Lake, and explain my purpose in coming to the camp.]

This proved to be one of the most helpful talks I had on this visit to Tule Lake. Mr. Iwamoto was a young Kibei. He took me into a back room in a Co-op barrack and we talked about unthreatening topics, the Co-op at Gila, the staff there, the danger of inu, etc. Then he introduced me to Mr. Yoshimura, the present Executive Secretary. Mr. Yoshimura, an Issei, impressed me as a very intelligent man. He initiated an animated discussion on the justification of segregation and the true meaning of loyalty. I then brought up the virtues of a thorough knowledge of anthropology. When these topics had been exhausted, we discussed the pros and cons of the Japanese as an imitative people. Eventually we got around to the present situation at Tule Lake.

Yoshimura On The Japanese Sense of Loyalty

The Japanese word for loyalty has a much deeper meaning than loyalty in this country. It means loyalty to the emperor and the country; we take it much deeper than the Americans

(The following is verbatim.)

take loyalty. That's why when the American government asks any Japanese, 'Are you loyal to this country or not,' it's pretty hard to answer. Yoshimura wrote the word for loyalty for me - _____. The first character means 'in the center of', the second means 'the heart'.

Yoshimura on Tule Lake

This is really a matter of two factions. The people followed the first leaders, those who had remained here from the first and some segees from other centers joined them, too. We perhaps are conservatives and the others are radicals.

The second group could be called the conservatives. They are opposed to the methods which were employed. And of course we think it very unfortunate that this other group went ahead and started the thing this way.

Kai, Kuratomi and ?--they had done their best for the Japanese in Jerome. Whatever they did there was the best for the Japanese. The people from Jerome worshipped him and believed in him (Kai). He was honest but misguided. The attitude they had in negotiating these things was bad. Instead of asking courteously what they wanted, they demanded.

It was done this way. I'm from Minidoka. Quite a few other people came from different parts of the country (segees) and were mixed up in my block, quite a few from Jerome, Gila, Heart Mountain, Topaz and Poston, and a few that stayed there. They wanted to elect someone to represent our block. I didn't know anybody but from Minidoka. So we had to do something. Naturally, we selected someone from Minidoka. The result is more people from one center got elected. These representatives of the blocks wanted to meet and elected someone among the representatives to negotiate with the government. Nobody knows exactly who they were. Probably they were elected by pressure group methods.

On the First Group - the "Radicals" Demands to the Co-op

The first group one time sent representatives to the Co-op Board of Directors meeting and asked us to cease selling certain commodities. The question was too large for the Board of Directors to decide. The question was so large that if the Co-op acceded to the request, they might have to close up the Co-op. We refused. We said we would have to take it up with the members of the block - that is the members of the Co-op. The members of the Co-op, 5,000 of them, turned this proposition down.

On Promises of the Administration

They did ignore their promises. But you must consider that a few days after that there was another incident (the November 4th fight). Probably they would have kept up their promises had they not been scared. I think the big mistake of the Administration was taking the food from the warehouses. Why didn't they take it out in the daytime?

R. Hankey: A member of the administration told me that the trucks were being used in the daytime for other things.

Mr. Yoshimura: I think that's a very poor excuse.

Beating of Dr. Pedicord

On the other hand, when the people came to the Administration building, they were forced to go. On that day I saw some of the young men drag out Dr. Pedicord. I was about 200 feet away. I didn't know who that old man was. Some saw him dragged and hit by a young fellow. I saw that his head was bald. I felt quite sorry. He couldn't defend himself. I felt they shouldn't do that kind of thing.

I was looking forward for punishment on those young people. But evidently they (the administration) didn't do anything about it. They should have been punished. That was a great mistake. Later when I saw Mr. Myer he said Pedicord started the fight. If I was there and had any authority, I would have stopped them. But with mob psychology, they would probably have hit me.

Iwamoto: One fact we must consider: he was very unpopular here.

Yoshimura: My understanding was that he had been discharged. But he came back.

Iwamoto: The people admire his courage for that.

Yoshimura: The Coordinating Committee is made up of Division Heads here. So on political basis they are trying to control the camp.

(We now entered into a discussion of the true meaning of democracy. When we had finished Iwohara made the following statement:)

It's interesting that the people here lack the feeling for democracy. In the educational training of the Co-op here we must avoid the use of the word "democracy" and use instead "brotherhood".

Just after lunch I called on Mary Hashimoto, another friend of Mary Obata's. Mary was very glad to see me. (We had spoken to each other frequently in Gila when she was working in the Social Service Department.) She and her brother did not have much to say. She said life in Tule was very dull and asked me to take her regards to the girls in Social Service.

At lunch I ate with Miss Horn who told me that she was going to attend the meeting between the Coordinating Committee and the Advisory Board. I thought, 'If she can attend, why can't I?' Thereupon, I caught Black in the Administration Building and obtained his permission to attend. He told me the meeting would last an hour or an hour and a half. From past experience I doubted this. I therefore determined to make my four remaining important calls between one and two o'clock so as to be ready to leave at 4:30 at which time cars left the project. (The meeting was still going full blast when I was forced to leave at 4:30.)

SHORT VISIT WITH GEORGE YAMASHIRO (WAKIDA)

[George Yamashiro was a Kibei, born in 1914 in Stockton, California. He had lived in Japan from 1916 to 1931 and had eleven years of schooling there. Of all my regular respondents, he was probably the most knowledgeable about the life and culture of Japan. On his return to the U.S. he had graduated from high school and had spent one year at

San Francisco State College. He then operated a tomato farm in northern California until the evacuation. Sent to the Gila Relocation Center, he had become a block manager and organized a Kibei club. He had opposed the military registration and had been arrested and sent to the Leuppe Isolation Center. On October 12, 1944 George told me that he had a brother serving in the U.S. Army. At that time I also learned that his wife, Sally, also had a close relative in the Army. George and his wife renounced their citizenship and went to Japan. Michi Weglyn, "Years of Infamy," p. 129, tells us that Mr. Robertson personally spirited Yamashiro back to Gila, his "place of previous residence," long enough for him to get married. In Japan, Yamashiro was to become Chairman of the Board of Tokyo Railway Company.]

My first after lunch call was on George Yamashiro, the ex-president of the Gila Young Peoples Association. He, his wife, and a friend were in a neat barrack room. George is a short very energetic young man of pleasing appearance. His wife, a Gila girl, is very pretty. At the time of the September mess strike in Gila, Yamashiro had been allowed to come to Gila from Leupp to marry his fiancée.

George was very friendly, asked after Spencer(1) and requested that I visit his parents in Gila and tell them that he and his wife were well. He said that he had often wished to write about his experiences and would consider writing them up for the study.

MARY HASHIMOTO

Next I called on Mary Hashimoto to ask her if she would be willing to copy the train lists for Dr. Thomas. She said she would think about it. The feeling against inu was still so strong that she felt that she had rather wait a couple of weeks and then start the work if things looked better. (A special pass is still required if evacuees wish to leave "the colony".)

BILL NISHINO (HIGASHI)

[Bill Nishino was a Nisei, 26 years old, married and with one child. He was born in Monterey, California, had attended the Compton Junior College for five months and a Japanese language school for 12 years. Both he and his wife renounced their citizenship.]

I next called on Bill Nishino, the brother of my block manager in Gila. Bill was not in, and his wife went to call him. Two or three neighbors opened their door and peered surreptitiously at me as I waited. When I glanced at them, they closed their doors hurriedly, but when I turned away, they opened them again. Bill came on the run and did what no evacuee had yet done, invited my escort, Mr. Johnson, into his house. We were given doughnuts and cookies to eat. Bill's wife, who was feeding a baby, offered to make tea for us, but since our time was short, we declined. Bill is block manager. Bill told us that his block was just about fifty-fifty for and against status quo. Consequently, he had to watch his step carefully. He had tried to keep from being involved in camp affairs. When I asked him how the representatives on the Coordinating Committee had been elected, he used Mrs. Oda's exact words, "That's what I'd like to know. Nobody knows."

It was now about five minutes to two. Before going to the meeting, I dropped into the warehouse office and asked for Mr. Iwohara. A young woman took me into the inner section and we walked the entire length of the large building through narrow aisles of stores, occasionally coming upon one or two evacuees checking supplies or weighing food and putting it into packages. Eventually we located Iwohara with a group of men who were weighing dried shrimp. He was shy before the others; we shook hands and I told him that the Kondos were well. I was forced to leave almost immediately but promised to return if the meeting allowed.

[1. The field researcher who had preceded me at the Gila Relocation Center.]

MEETING OF ADVISORY BOARD AND COORDINATING COMMITTEE

I had little knowledge of the proposed agenda for this meeting. Opler or Black had mentioned that the proposition of lifting the curfew was to be discussed and May Iwohara had impressed me with the fact that the members of the Coordinating Committee were most anxious to step out of the picture. The meeting was held in office two in the Administration Building.

When I arrived a half-a-dozen Caucasians were sitting in a semi-circle while two Japanese sat opposite. Mr. Black occupied the position of chairman and sat behind a small desk in one corner of the room. Soon Mr. Akitsuki (Sasaki) accompanied by the remaining members of his committee and by Miss Iwohara, entered. Black introduced Miss Horn and me to them.

Mr. Akitsuki, whom Opler had said was ill, still wore his white scarf and gloves. While we waited for Best, I noted those present. They were: Harry Black, Marvin Opler, Neil McNeil of the Co-op, Mr. Huycke, of the CAS. Mr. Best, Lechlitter (the Project Attorney), and Robertson came in later. Nine evacuees were present: Byron Akitsuki, Masao Shimada, John Naydo, Iwao Namekawa, George Yamatani, K. Okamoto, Joe Nakan, May Iwohara, and one young man whose presence was not explained. Mr. Schmidt, the head of Internal Security, was also present as was Lieutenant Forbes, the Army's representative.

My first impression was the spatial separation between the evacuees and the members of the staff. The evacuees sat in one corner and along one side of the room. The Caucasians sat in a semi-circle facing them.

Black opened the meeting and then asked Akitsuki to present his points. From this point on it was difficult to say who was chairman. Black would appropriate the chairmanship at times and Akitsuki would keep quiet. Then Akitsuki would continue in his insecure position of chief speaker. As the meeting progressed, the Caucasians monopolized more and more of the conversation.

The evacuees were seldom addressed as Mr. Usually they were addressed by their first names. No evacuee called a Caucasian by his first name, nor did any omit Mr.

Akitsuki first reported on the meeting of the Coordinating Committee which had been held the day before. He read a copy of the minutes which stated that nearly four weeks had passed since January 7, when the responsible men of all the divisions had determined to liquidate the status quo. Since then about 1,000 ex-employees had returned to work. The committee recommended that immediate steps be taken to hold a referendum vote and replace their body by legitimate elected representatives.

Black asked that the discussion of this matter be put off till Best returned (he had stepped out).

Akitsuki then brought up the matter of the relaxation of the curfew law, the possibility of placing it at 9:30 instead of 7:30. This had been recommended at a meeting of the evacuee Divisional Heads, held on January 29. There was considerable discussion as to how this should be done and the administrative difficulties involved. Opler, who took a very active part in the discussion, suggested that the curfew might be lifted ward by ward. This suggestion was discarded because it would cause great confusion. Lieutenant Forbes came to the point and asked Akitsuki directly if the committee thought that they could release the curfew over the entire camp until 9:30. "No", said Akitsuki.

Best: If we change the curfew, let's change it over the entire center.

Forbes: That was my point.

Best: I don't think that from the safety standpoint, anything is going to happen before. If we did it by wards, we'd never get through explaining.

Tule Lake Fieldnotes

Black: The schools have asked that the curfew be lifted within wards a week ago.

Best: Let's keep it simple.

Yamatani: Some of the blocks have no block managers. This ought to be settled first.

Huycke: I think the mess hall crew is responsible for that.

Yamatani: Can't you stop delivering them coal?(1) What about mail?

Huycke: They go to the Post Office.

Black mentioned the fact that two thousand people were expected shortly - on the 23rd of February. If they intended to have a Civic Center in the camp, they ought to get it out of the way now or they won't get one later. In making room for these new people, there ought to be as little hardship as possible.

Someone remarked that there were four blocks without block managers.

Akitsuki now read from the Coordinating Committee Memorandum of February 2, stating that on January 28 the Committee had submitted a list of six nominees for the Temporary Police Commission to Mr. Schmidt, Head of Internal Security. They now asked, however, that K. Nakamura, G. Yamatani, and J. Naydo be appointed immediately. They cited the fact that a janitor in block 49 named Matsuoka who was against status quo had been attacked by a man named Hamano on the subject of the back to work movement. As a result, all the other janitors had refused to work.

Schmidt promised that prompt action would be taken.

Returning to the subject of the curfew, it was decided to hold the lifting in abeyance until Internal Security had been reorganized. (Best came back at this moment.)

Akitsuki acknowledged the receipt of fifteen kegs of soy sauce from the Japanese Red Cross. Best reminded him to be very sure to get all the receipts signed by Issei.

Akitsuki: Mr. Schmidt, do you think we should discuss now the Temporary Police Commissioners?

Schmidt: That's already been taken care of.

Akitsuki: Next is the creation of new employment opportunities. (He read from the January 29 minutes of the meeting of Divisional Heads.)

As decided in the last divisional meeting, the Coordinating Committee presented the suggestion to create new jobs for the purpose of increasing employment opportunities, such as clean-up crew, to the WRA. Project Director has stated definitely that the time is not appropriate to be discussing future plans unless the Center is back to normal and all old activities functioning as usual. Moreover, the Administration must get Washington's approval prior to the execution of any contemplated plan.

[1. I was surprised to hear a Japanese suggest that blocks where the residents had not elected block managers be co-erced by depriving them of coal or mail delivery. Clearly, in Tule Lake being a block manager was a difficult, and even a dangerous, job. Later I was to learn that Yamatani was one of the most unpopular men in the center. A number of the people have told me, even in recent years (1979) that the murderers of Mr. Hitomi were really after Mr. Yamatani.]

As an answer Best cited the January 1 figures on project employment. There were 431 people employed in a section I did not catch, 1,000 in Community Management, 163 in Administrative Management, 1,930 in mess, 233 in the hospital. This made a total of 3,848 on the project payrolls.

Black: That is 165 less than the employment in October prior to the work stoppage. There are now more people working than in October. We don't have to step very far before we have more people working than ever before.

Akitsuki: Would it be too much trouble for you to put out a statement, Mr. Black?

Best: (To McNeil) Is it safe to talk about any industry at the moment?

McNeil: We have already launched a sewing factory with 20 people. We hope to run it up to 400 people.

Best: Where is the bottleneck?

McNeil: I've wired Richardson in Washington.

The Caucasians now launched into a long discussion of the possibility of starting tofu manufacturing and the warehouses which might be used.

Akitsuki: On the question of the expansion of farm acreage. Is it possible to reclaim the League-of-Nations tract?

Best: The answer is No. . . . That doesn't mean we won't have a large farm project. It might have been 5,000 acres. But now it will be about 2,500 acres.

Yamatani: What about the Japanese people getting a lease here?

Best: Not now, but perhaps in the future.

(Someone brought up the fact that there were 8,000 employable persons on the project.)

Opler: I suggest we discuss this with Mr. Robertson.

Black: It's not possible to repossess the League of Nations tract. But we can get about 2,500 acres.

Akitsuki: Would it be possible to have a hog farm?

Best: Hogs, yes, chickens no.

(The Caucasians held a long discussion on chicken raising.)

Akitsuki: At the meeting last Saturday they brought up the fact that there was suffering from lack of shower facilities.

Black: We'll refer that to maintenance.

(Here I observed that Best and Yamatani were holding a whispered discussion. They continued to do this at intervals during the meeting.)

(The following is verbatim.)

Akitsuki: The mess managers made a complaint that a man named Foster in mess is abusive to the Japanese employees and if possible, they request his removal!

Best: Better look out there. That's requesting a removal of appointed personnel.

Black: Better just say he doesn't get along. We'll take care of it.

Best: We'll take care of it.

Yamasaki: Also, we had a couple, three-four Caucasian workers come into the garage and the mess. They are new fellows. We thought we'd ask, why these people come in and work when we don't have enough work for the Japanese?

Black: They had been hired a month back.

Best: Those are positions which involve responsibility. They will not effect evacuee employment. Their being Caucasians will protect you as regards lost property.

Nakan: (Member of committee) One can't count numbers straight. He goes up to 56 and he can't go on. This is at the food warehouse. He sends out things to the messhalls and a lot has to be brought back.

Huycke: Maybe he's a Heinz man and can't count above 57. (Laughter.)

Akitsuki: It is also reported that the new applicants for jobs are getting them without applying to the placement office.

Black: The section heads are making requests for individuals whose qualifications they know already.

Akitsuki: I called up Placement and they said they didn't know anything about it. Also, at the last division head meeting, there were some comments made.

He then read the following paragraph:

Upon question raised relative to the method or plan by which the work of the Committee could be facilitated in their efforts to restore normalcy to the Center, it was suggested from the floor that segregation within the camp, the good from the bad, is imperative. In view of the information revealed that some 'scums' of the society, who were also despised in other Centers, have entered into this center, the majority was in favor of this suggested segregation. However, recommendations were not made.

Black: Until we get the Manzanar people here, segregation will be too much of a load for housing. But the organization which succeeds yours can bring about the natural segregation you would like to have. I think it might be done voluntarily - keep like-thinking people together. But housing cannot stand the strain right now. (He continued at great length and I could not get it all down.)

Akitsuki now read the entire memorandum on the Preparation for Referendum Votes prior to the Replacement of the Committee. This memorandum asked that preparations be initiated for a referendum vote to replace the present Coordinating Committee.

Akitsuki: The evacuation of block 18 for a Civic Center would involve a great deal of work as well as confusion among the colonists. If we make preparations to replace the committee, the colonists would feel better. That way, everybody is responsible for recommendations in the center. We suggest a duly elected body present the evacuation of Block 18.

(An involved discussion as to whether this was the proper time for the committee to step down now took place. I was unable to write all of it down. The gist of the discussion, however, was that the Caucasians were unwilling to hold the election soon.) (Lieutenant Forbes again was the first Caucasian to come to the point.)

Lieutenant Forbes: To put it in words of one syllable, do you think you can win it the same way you won the last election?

Akitsuki: I don't think so. But we want the people to realize that we are not like the negotiating committee but are interested in the welfare of every colonist in this center.

Huycke: If you have an election - We've got a couple of bad wards. I'd say the chances are you'd have a negotiating committee selected with about 40% negative point of view. Then, a second point, if you select them now before the Manzanar group comes in, Manzanar will say, 'You're not our representatives.' There is a danger of many persons looking at you as being status quo yourselves. I think we ought to wait until we're sure the trend is getting better.

(Akitsuki asked Opler to discuss the matter.)

Opler suggested that an election might be advisable because of the difficult position of the committee.

We should state our hope that the community can get further back to normal before the temporary group come to the point of holding a referendum. Down in the community I feel that there is a growing sentiment that the committee is working for the good of the colony. We are looking forward to still further strides in the direction of normalcy before calling for a referendum vote. I think we should take some responsibility. The committee thinks of itself as a pro tem group.

Black spoke at great length against a popular vote in the near future. (He is given to long speeches and spoke so fast I could only get his general points.)

If we have a referendum now, we're not going to get the quality of men on the committee we want.

Opler: The main point is this group is begging to be released. I think that this responsibility lies on us, since we want them to continue.

He recommended that some small priveleges be granted, such as the establishment of a tofu manufacturing and the lifting of the curfew.

(Black spoke at length in favor of getting something accomplished.) Miss Horn slipped a note to Robertson which said, 'What does the committee think? The Caucasians are doing all the talking.'

Robertson: What does the committee feel would be the reaction of the colonists to the fact that the committee wants to leave. Do you feel they'd clamor for a referendum?

Opler: (answers for the committee) Yes.

Robertson: The committee does not entirely approve of this statement from the Administration?

Akitsuki: Not exactly.

Opler: I don't think it should come directly from the Administration - perhaps from the Advisory Council?

Robertson: If now is not the time for a referendum, we'd better rock along as we are and make no statement until the Manzanar group comes.

Forbes: I think the opposition would seize on it and demand a vote.

Akitsuki: It's not quite democratic. We should leave before our welcome is worn out.

Robertson: Do you feel that a referendum would be fair to the colony with Manzanar coming?

Akitsuki: I do not.

Yamatani: It's too early yet. I feel personally there is more to be accomplished before we submit a referendum. We don't want people to think we're doing this because we like it. We want to accomplish something before we retire. When this is all fixed up, let Mr. Best give a big steak dinner for the incoming and outgoing committee.

The members of the committee were now asked in their turn if they felt as Mr. Yamatani did. They were ill at ease. All but one agreed hesitantly with Yamatani that this was not the right time.

Namekawa: Personally, I take the view of George. Psychologically, I agree with Akitsuki. But right now I think Mr. Yamatani is right.

Shimada: (The one member with guts enough to dissent.) I feel that now is the time.

Akitsuki: (seizing this straw) At least to let the colonists know.

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Rosalie Hankey Wax

Opler: I think what has been wrong is not so much the state of office - the question is would an exchange of notes bring on a colony referendum.

Huycke: Would it be fair to the 2,000 people from Manzanar. Besides, we do not yet have official recognition from Washington for community government.

(It is now 4:30 and I was forced to leave to catch my bus. I left the meeting with Miss Horn who was very upset by the manner in which the Japanese members of the committee had been treated by the administrative staff members. Of Mr. Akitsuki she said, "That poor man looks as if he were on the verge of collapse.")

Permanized

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APPENDIX - MEMORANDA OF THE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

(Given to me by Byron Akitsuki)

February 3, 1944

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Rosalie Hankey Wax

1.

MEMORANDUM
CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE 1608-A

February 2, 1944

TO: Mr. R. R. Best, Project Director
FROM: Co-ordinating Committee
SUBJECT: Receipt of Red Cross Gift

This will acknowledge receipt of 15 kegs of Kikkoman soybean sauce on January 30, 1944, which was part of the gift allotted to the Japanese Nationals of this Center from the Japanese Red Cross.

Upon being appointed by the WRA for the disposition of the gift, we, the Committee, selected two Japanese Nationals as representatives from the Committee namely: Okamoto, Kumaharu, and Yamatani, Jirozo, who assumed the responsibility and made arrangements by holding a meeting with the Civic Organization staff on January 28, 1944. The attached minutes of the meeting will be self-explanatory.

We have already notified the National Red Cross Headquarters, Washington, D.C. of the partial receipt of the gift as shown per attached copy of the letter which was sent on January 31, 1944.

On behalf of the internees, we wish to extend our thanks and appreciation for your service.

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

/s/ Byron Akitsuki
Executive Secretary

Japanese National Representatives:
Okamoto, Kumaharu
Yamatani, Jirozo

February 3, 1944

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2.

MEMORANDUM
CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE 1608-A

February 2, 1944

TO: Mr. R. R. Best, Project Director
FROM: Co-ordinating Committee
SUBJECT: Nomination of Temporary Police Commissioners

According to the meeting held on January 28, 1944, the Committee submitted a list of six nominees to Mr. Schmidt of the Police Department. The attached minutes of that meeting will be self-explanatory. Today, however, we have made a recommendation to Mr. Schmidt again, suggesting that K. Nakamura, G. Yamatani, and J. Naydo be nominated and appointed as Police Commissioners because of the pending troublesome condition existing especially in Ward 6. According to the report we received, one Matsuoka, a janitor of block 49 (who is against status quo), was attacked by Hamano over the subject of back-to-work movement. As a result, all other fellow janitors, in sympathy with Matsuoka, refused to work today. Such occurrences will not only inconvenience the block residents, but will have bad influence on the colonists as a whole. It seems that evacuee police force was notified immediately. However, no action of maintaining order was taken. At this time, the Committee ascertained that it was not the fault on the part of function due to the absence of Police Commissioners. Hence, the Committee arrived at the conclusion that if the Police Commissioners be instituted immediately to formulate plans for prompt execution, it will be beneficial not only to the evacuee police force, but also for the maintenance of order within the Center.

We want to request for the Project Director's approval on this matter so that the plans may be executed immediately. It can also be considered that this is one of the ways of accelerating our step in bringing back normalcy, as well as expediting the election of permanent commissioners by referendum votes of the colonists.

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

/s/ Byron Akitsuki
Executive Secretary

ba/mi

February 3, 1944

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Rosalie Hankey Wax

3.

MEMORANDUM
CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE 1608-A

February 2, 1944

TO: Mr. R. R. Best, Project Director
FROM: Co-ordinating Committee
SUBJECT: Creation of New Employment Opportunities

In spite of the existing friction between the pro and con status quo people, approximately 750 persons have applied for jobs up to date. In view of this fact that many are still on the waiting list, new applicants are aware that their chances of employment are remote, hence, a growing impatience is noted among them. We, the Committee, fear the result, lest they be instigated by the pro status quo group who may aver that this back-to-work movement is beneficial only to those who had worked previously.

In order to relieve this situation, may this Committee again request for your special consideration on this matter of creating new employment opportunities such as general camp cleaning or sawing of kindling wood by crews of 20 to 30.

Subject: Expansion of Farm Acreage (recommendation)

As a result of the current incident the League-of-Nations tract, which was more than one-half of the Project's farm, has been lost. It is indisputable that the agricultural program is one of the most vital matter, and we, the Committee, upon due deliberation, hereby submit a recommendation for the expansion of farm acreage, not only from the standpoint of employment opportunities for colonists, but for the health as well as economy of the colonists.

As far as we know, League-of-Nations tract has been under the control of Reclamation Department. Is there any possibility of reclaiming the tract for Project use as heretofore?

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

/s/ Byron Akitsuki
Executive Secretary

February 3, 1944

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Rosalie Hankey Wax

4.

MEMORANDUM
CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE 1608-A

February 2, 1944

TO: Mr. R. R. Best, Project Director
FROM: Co-ordinating Committee
SUBJECT: Preparation for Referendum Votes prior to the Replacement
of this Committee

The dice cast by the responsible men of all divisions on the morning of the 7th of January, with firm determination to liquidate status quo, hurtle the battle cries of back-to-work and restore-to-normalcy. Nearly four weeks have already passed.

In spite of the existing frictions between the pro and con status quo people, approximately 1,000 ex-employees up to date have returned to work and about the same number of new work applicants have been noted. This is one of the illustrations which exemplifies the fact that the condition of this Center has definitely improved.

At this time, in view of many agenda which embody the future plans regarding the management of this Center, we, the Committee, felt and decided that the road was open for the preparation of referendum votes for the purpose of replacing this temporary Committee. By taking such steps, the Committee believed that the prevailing pro and con feelings among the colonists could be eradicated and overcome, since they will be given opportunity to have a voice in the future management of the Center. In this way, their opinions will be centralized for a common purpose. Psychologically, socially, and economically, we think the time had come whereby representations from the colonists be selected democratically. We want to avoid further public misconception the "we are the whole cheese and running the Center as dictated by our own wills."

With this understanding, we, the Committee, would feel more free to work. A recommendation of this nature must be submitted to sooner or later, why not now?

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

/s/ Byron Akitsuki
Executive Secretary