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# The Manzanar Riot: An Ethnic Perspective

By Arthur A. Hansen and David A. Hacker

In his recent book, *American Historical Explanations*, Gene Wise reproves American historians for naively assuming that "the real aim of historical scholarship is to discover just what happened in the past; that what happened has been recorded here and there in what historians call 'primary documents'; and that the only true scholarship in the field of history must be based directly on only those primary documents."<sup>2</sup> While granting that this approach has eliminated much flagrant bias and derivativeness, Wise nonetheless maintains that it has led historians into some profound epistemological fallacies. First, it has fostered the scholarly ideal that "objective history"—the whole Truth, nothing but the Truth—can be realized once historians learn to behave as "ideal observers"—i.e., cease viewing reality through existential frames of reference. Secondly, this approach has promoted the correlative notion that the way for historians to attain this ideal is to devote themselves to an intensive examination of primary sources, for in these documents the original experiences inhere in pure and unfiltered wholeness.

To refute these nostrums, Wise explains that "objective" history is impossible precisely because the historian's mind is grounded ineluctably in experience, and therefore he observes through selected frames of reference. This same relativism pertains to primary documents since they too are merely commentaries upon original phenomena by similarly bounded minds. Accordingly, Wise suggests an alternative model of historical inquiry—the "perspectivist" model—which he believes more realistic and productive than the "ideal observer" one. This new model would ask different questions of its sources. Because the ideal-observer model is preoccupied with *what happened* in the past, its questions are designed to untangle the objective truth of history from the snares and delusions of assorted interpreters. On the other hand, since the perspectivist model

discounts *what happened* as its sole or even fundamental concern, it queries its sources in a different manner. Although mindful of what happened, its chief concern, according to Wise, "is with the question, 'How do particular people *experience* what happened?' And further, 'How do they *put form* on their experience?' And yet further, 'How do these forms connect into their particular locations in time and place' "<sup>3</sup>

The present paper utilizes the perspectivist approach in studying one celebrated episode occurring during the internment experience of Japanese Americans in the Second World War, the so-called Manzanar Riot. We have given our study a tripartite division. The first section offers a brief summary of the event itself. The second attempts to delineate and account for the dominant perspective influencing the interpretation of this event in the past. The third and longest section offers a new perspective for interpreting the Manzanar Riot. Although this portion of the study adds considerably to the existing stock of information about the riot (and relies heavily on primary documentation), we feel its major contribution is that it presents a strategy for explaining this information in a significantly different way.

## THE MANZANAR RIOT

On the evening of December 5, 1942, some unidentified evacuees at the Manzanar War Relocation Center assaulted Fred Tayama, a Nisei who had returned the previous day from Salt Lake City where he had served as the center's representative at the national convention of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). The beating administered to Tayama, formerly a Los Angeles restaurateur and chairman of the Southern District JACL, was severe enough to hospitalize him and prompt the camp authorities to arrest three Kibei. Two of these suspects were taken into custody at the Manzanar jail and released after questioning, but the remaining one, Harry Ueno, president of the Kitchen Workers Union, was removed from the camp and jailed in nearby Independence, California.

Ueno's arrest aroused widespread hostility and resistance among the internees. Contrary to the War Relocation Authority (WRA) rationale for this action—that Ueno had been identified positively by Tayama as one of his assailants—many internees charged that Ueno was innocent and was being victimized due to his recent allegation that certain WRA officials were appropriating meat and sugar intended for the internees in order to sell them for profit outside the camp.

At 10 a.m. on Sunday, December 6, about two hundred internees assembled in the mess hall of Block 22, Ueno's block, to discuss his arrest and consider ways of effecting his return to the camp. This meeting, comprised of Block 22 residents and a sprinkling of Kitchen Workers Union members, entertained several plans of action,

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including the imposition of a center-wide strike of kitchens. After about twenty minutes, the meeting was adjourned, and a second meeting of Block Managers, mess hall workers, and Kibei groups was arranged for 1 p.m. in Block 22.

News of the one o'clock meeting apparently spread throughout the entire camp population, for the crowd that subsequently arrived was so large (estimates place it in excess of two thousand people) that the gathering had to be moved outside the mess hall to the adjacent firebreak area. Following the delivery of some fiery speeches over a hastily-constructed public address system, a Committee of Five was selected to negotiate Ueno's reinstatement with Project Director Ralph P. Merritt. This committee included two Issei and two Kibei who were associated in some way with the Kitchen Workers Union. Its principal spokesman, however, was Joe Kurihara, a Hawaiian-born Nisei and World War I veteran who, while a friend of Ueno's, was unaffiliated with the Union.

Director Merritt, a recent appointee, was so alarmed by police reports of the huge assemblage that he requested the military police form outside the center's gate in case trouble threatened. To ward off this contingency, he then accompanied the center police chief to the meeting, which was just concluding. In fact, the Committee of Five had already left to confer with Merritt. Accordingly, he returned immediately to the staff area to await them.

Presently the mob arrived in front of the Administration Building, where it was confronted by a massed rank of armed soldiers. When attempts by the authorities to disperse the crowd proved useless, Director Merritt agreed to hear its demands. Urged on by the large throng, the Committee informed him that he must immediately obtain release of Ueno from the Independence jail and return him to Manzanar. Merritt refused to capitulate, but he did express his willingness to air this and other grievances with the Committee, provided that the crowd disperse and return to its quarters.

The highly volatile mob was determined, however, to stay put until the officials had satisfied its demands. Perhaps sensing that it was no longer in control of the crowd, the Committee urged Merritt to concede before matters got completely out of hand. Although the Project Director publicly reiterated his earlier refusal to this demand, a private conference with the police chief and the commander of the military police convinced him that this concession was necessary in order to avoid bloodshed. Out of the crowd's earshot, Merritt then met with the Committee and informed it that Ueno would be returned to the Manzanar jail within one hour after the crowd had returned home if the Committee agreed to certain conditions: (1) that Ueno stand trial before Manzanar's Judicial Committee; (2) that no attempt be made to release Ueno from the camp jail; (3) that the Committee would meet with Merritt to decide on any other matters it wished to discuss; (4) that there would be no more mobs or mass meetings of any sort until the center had

resumed normalcy; and (5) that the Committee would help maintain law and order in the center and would assist the police in apprehending Tayama's assailants. Merritt also announced that a subsequent statement pertinent to Ueno's return would be issued at six o'clock that evening at Mess Hall 22.

That afternoon Ueno was returned to the camp jail. When the Committee appeared at Mess Hall 22 at six o'clock to affirm this fact, it encountered a crush of two to four thousand internees. Again the meeting was transferred outside. On the grounds that it had accomplished its objective, the Committee attempted to resign. This suggestion was shouted down by the crowd which felt that the administration had not gone far enough by merely returning Ueno to the Manzanar jail. Ueno should be unconditionally released, even if release required his enforced removal. Moreover, the crowd demanded that internees like Fred Tayama, whom they suspected of collaborating with the administration and informing to the FBI about pro-Japan activities in camp, should be killed. Having degenerated into an uncontrolled demonstration, the meeting broke up when a hurried plan of action was outlined. The crowd divided itself into two main groups, one to ferret out Tayama in the camp hospital and finish the job begun the night before, and the second to liberate Ueno from jail.

After failing to locate Tayama, the first group broke into splinter groups bent on searching out and killing Tokie Slocum and Togo Tanaka, two other JACL leaders reputed to be stooges. This quest also proved fruitless. By now the second group was approaching the jail. At this point, Director Merritt ordered in the military police, which immediately placed a protective barricade between the crowd and the jail.

From seven o'clock to nine-thirty, the administration attempted to negotiate with the evacuee representatives. At first the crowd contented itself with singing Japanese songs and gesturing menacingly at the soldiers. But when some of the internees began throwing stones and bottles, the military police were ordered to fire tear gas into their midst. Shortly thereafter, for reasons never clearly established, the soldiers opened fire on the crowd, killing a young Nisei and wounding ten other evacuees, one of whom died several days later.

During the night, the camp remained in a turbulent state. Kitchen bells tolled continuously, beatings of alleged informers ensued, and military police units patrolled the camp, breaking up numerous evacuee gatherings. Those whose names appeared on the internees' blacklists and deathlists were spirited out of camp and placed in protective custody, and the administration began a roundup of those believed responsible for the disruption. Within the next few days, the first group and its families were sent to an abandoned CCC camp in Death Valley, while the latter group was imprisoned within local jails and then transferred to a temporary isolation center in Moab, Utah.



## THE PREVAILING "WRA-JACL" PERSPECTIVE

To date, most of the accounts of the Manzanar Riot have been filtered through what might be labeled the "WRA-JACL" perspective.<sup>5</sup> The appellation is apt because nearly all of the original documentation was prepared by WRA or JACL affiliates and because secondary compilers almost have without exception simply buttressed this official version. This perspective has resulted in uniform meanings being drawn from disparate information. The reasons for this stylization of form inhere within the historical experience of its creators and custodians. But before tracking down these connections, let us first outline the most conspicuous features of the WRA-JACL perspective.

One dimension can be glimpsed through analysis of the language used to describe the event. As a general rule, the primary sources refer to it as an "incident," while the secondary works term it a "riot." Since the former denotes an "occurrence" and the latter signifies a "violent disorder," these designations, at first glance, appear radically different. This impression is reinforced when one encounters statements like the following, which appears in a recent account written from a modified WRA-JACL perspective: "The incident, properly called a riot, at Manzanar early in December, 1942, was handled quite differently from the Poston strike."<sup>6</sup> In perspectivist terms, however, the difference is more apparent than real. What places both words within the WRA-JACL perspective is that each trivializes the event's cultural significance.<sup>7</sup> "Incident" accomplishes this effect by scaling down the affair to commonplace proportions, while "riot" achieves the same by inflating it to melodramatic ones. Because neither term allows for meaningful contextual inquiry, both invite descriptive treatment but discourage explanatory analysis.

A second, closely related, feature of this perspective is its tendency to view the "riot"<sup>8</sup> episodically. This myopia has stamped itself upon the literature in various ways. First, it has militated against sustained, in-depth analyses of causation. Most accounts practically ignore the causative factor, and even those aspiring to explain cause have confined their investigation within the parameters of the immediate pre-evacuation, evacuation, and camp experience. Secondly, it has caused the riot to be misconstrued as a denouement rather than seen as one development along a continuum of internee resistance. Thus, for example, in direct violation of the available evidence, one account concludes that "the easing of tension, and a return to normal life [at Manzanar] came shortly after Christmas of 1942";<sup>9</sup> and another posits that "events which [subsequent to the riot] occasioned conflict in other centers, such as [loyalty] registration, segregation and selective service, occasioned no conflict in Manzanar."<sup>10</sup> Thirdly, it has unduly parochialized the riot; that is, the riot has often been reduced to a purely local phenomenon instead of being related to the metapattern of resistance activity within all the internment centers.<sup>11</sup>

Another distinguishing mark of this perspective is its chauvinistic orientation. As a result, the riot has been viewed as a microcosm of the Second World War. This outlook has hampered seriously an understanding of the event in its own terms. It has, for instance, dramatized the riot as an ideological confrontation between pro-American and pro-Japanese factions. This interpretation can be seen vividly in newspaper accounts of the period like that in the *Los Angeles Times*: "Shouting 'Pearl Harbor, banzai, banzai' an estimated 1,000 pro-Axis Japanese, many of whom are Kibei, adherents of Japan, demonstrated in a firebreak and hooted down Japanese-American Nisei . . . who protested their antics."<sup>12</sup> But even the secondary work which dismisses the *Times*' version as "fanciful or at least exaggerated," prefaces its own description with the similar assertion that "trouble broke out around the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor, between pro-American and pro-Japanese factions."<sup>13</sup> The above quotations reveal two additional by-products of this filiopietistic outlook. First, it has confused the aggressively patriotic posture of the JACL—a small minority—with that of the Nisei as a whole (excepting, of course, the Kibei, who have been represented indiscriminately as "troublemakers"). Secondly, it has displayed an incapacity to understand ethnic identity in terms other than subversive. This fact explains why most accounts of the riot minimize or ignore the massive participation of internees and instead focus exclusively on the actions of selected groups like the Kibei and colorful personalities like Joe Kurihara.<sup>14</sup>

With this picture in mind, we now must see how the WRA-JACL perspective derives from its promoters. Our task is a dual one. We must account for its origination in the primary sources and explain its survival in the secondary literature.

It would be a pointless tautology to say merely because WRA and JACL representatives compiled the original accounts of the riot, they were written from the WRA-JACL perspective. More pertinently, we need to inquire into the connection between their interpretation of the riot and their overall attitude toward internment and to relate both to their conception of American society.

Although different in some respects, the WRA and JACL viewpoints on internment were fundamentally the same. Roger Daniels has summarized the WRA stance: "Although some of the staff, particularly those in the upper echelons of the WRA, disapproved of the racist policy that brought the camps into being, the majority of the camp personnel . . . shared the contempt of the general population for 'Japs.'"<sup>15</sup> Similarly, A. J. Leighton has divided the staff into those who were "people-minded" (i.e., regarded the evacuees as people first and as Japanese secondarily) and those who were "stereotype-minded" (i.e., regarded the evacuees as Japanese first and people secondarily).<sup>16</sup> For our purposes, the distinction is less significant than it appears. Whether or not an individual staff member possessed a humanitarian outlook significantly affected his day-to-day treatment of the internees; however, it mattered little



with respect to his overall perspective, for the decision to affiliate with the relocation program implicated one, at least tacitly, in upholding the policy objectives of the WRA.<sup>17</sup> These objectives were concerned with social control and social rehabilitation, i.e., with developing protective communities where the evacuated Japanese American population could be detained and imbued with American principles and practices. Staff members who resisted these objectives were eliminated. For those who remained, active participation in the camp bureaucracy effectively instilled these corporate goals within them so that ultimately they came to measure their own worth in terms of their fulfillment of the goals.

The JACL posture complemented that of the WRA: while the JACL leadership assuredly was not contemptuous of "Japs," its identification with Americanized behavior and attitudes was complete enough to cause disavowal of and dissatisfaction with traditional Japanese customs, social organization, and values. This helps to account for what Douglas Nelson has described as the JACL's policy of "*deliberate and calculated* compliance" with the relocation program. JACL compliance, according to Nelson, began from the outset of the evacuation program:

JACL members assisted the FBI in the initial roundup of suspect Japanese aliens. They were usually among the first volunteers to go to the assembly centers and later to the interior concentration camps [And] in November 1942, the JACL, meeting at Salt Lake City, resolved to endorse the administrations and goals of the War Relocation Authority.<sup>18</sup>

In return for their cooperation, JACL leaders were accorded a measure of responsibility and influence in the camps. Not infrequently, they were selected for the preferred jobs, chosen to edit the camp newspapers, and granted other social, political, and economic perquisites. As a result of their integration into the WRA administration, however, they too came to evaluate their personal status in terms of the successful realization of WRA objectives.

Behind the WRA's and JACL's shared attitude toward the relocation objectives rested a common social ideology. Put simply, both subscribed to a "progressive" view of American history. Central to this persuasion was the idea that the American past made sense only if read as a triumphant progression toward the fulfillment of the nation's democratic potential. This view acknowledged the existence of a long line of reactionary men and groups who, for selfish ends, had attempted to thwart the advance of democracy. But it took succor from the fact that liberal, humane individuals always had emerged who transcended themselves and rallied the nation into overcoming anti-democratic challenges.<sup>19</sup>

Given these situational and philosophical considerations, we are better able to comprehend the WRA-JACL perspective on the Manzanar Riot. We can now appreciate, for example, why the original accounts chose to describe it innocuously as an "incident."

Like all good bureaucrats, the administrators (a term which is used here to embrace the JACLers as well as the WRA staff) intuitively sensed the wisdom of the adage that "no news is good news." For them even to have intimated that what happened on December 6, 1942, was more than slightly non-routine would have been tantamount to admitting that WRA policies were wrong or unsuccessful.

In keeping with this psychological imperative, it followed that causal explanations were largely unwarranted. Interpreting the disturbance as the outgrowth of serious, underlying grievances would have called into question the administration's oft-repeated claim that Manzanar was a "model" American community. That a resistance movement could arise in such a "happy camp" was unthinkable. It made better sense, therefore, to perceive the "incident" as either a transitory release from unanalyzable "frustration" or, as was more often the case, the pernicious work of a small but committed minority of pro-Axis sympathizers.<sup>20</sup>

The latter explanation gained currency among WRA-JACL analysts because they could readily incorporate it into their Manichean view of history. Envisioning themselves as selfless inheritors of America's democratic heritage, they justified their complicity in the relocation program by the belief that their efforts furthered the democratic cause. The WRA could argue that the attendant loss of civil liberties was unfortunate, but that perilous times sometimes necessitated short-term undemocratic means to promote long-range democratic ends. The JACL could uphold relocation by the argument that it would provide Japanese Americans an opportunity to prove their loyalty, thereby paving the way for the enjoyment of democratic liberties in the postwar world. Given that the administration equated the existence of the camps with the cause of democracy, it is hardly surprising that they should interpret the riot as engineered by an anti-democratic faction.<sup>21</sup>

Before considering a new perspective for interpreting the riot, we must account for the persistence of the WRA-JACL perspective in the secondary literature. The most obvious reason is documentary in nature: later writers had access to copious materials about the riot, but practically all of them were compiled by WRA-JACL personnel. Nonetheless, this fact does not explain why these writers have not penetrated beyond the existing documentation and staked out different interpretative frameworks. We need, therefore, to explain why their own experimental situations caused them to be receptive to the established perspective.

A caveat must be entered at this point: it must not be assumed that because these writers have extended the WRA-JACL perspective they have a similar attitude toward relocation. They have not, in other words, acted as outright apologists for the evacuation. On the contrary, most have bristled with righteous indignation at what they consider a deplorable and unjustified departure from America's traditional democratic practices. Eschewing the official view that the



"relocation centers" were necessary security precautions, almost unanimously they have redefined them as "concentration camps" and attributed their existence to public hysteria, virulent racism, and economic and political opportunism. In light of this condemnatory attitude, it seems paradoxical that these writers have been so obeisant to the entrenched WRA-JACL notion that the riot was inspired by dark, anti-democratic elements.

The paradox can be resolved, however, when we consider another factor. Earlier we noted that the primary accounts of the riot were grounded in the progressivist view of history held by their compilers. This same view, with slight modification, has also informed the secondary writers. While this view was heightened by the overarching wartime distinction between pro- and anti-democratic belligerents, it has continued to thrive in the "Cold War's" atmosphere of emphasizing the ideological juxtaposition of the American-led "free world" and the "communist bloc." One of the liabilities of this persuasion is its criterion that all historical experience emerges as democratic progress. The impossibility of seeing the incarceration of 110,000 Japanese Americans as consonant with the advance of democracy has caused the secondary writers to style the internees as the unsung torchbearers of the democratic mission. Thus, they have been depicted as one-hundred percent Americans who set aside their grievances, miraculously transformed their camps into models of democratic life, and contributed to the defeat of fascism by unstinting allegiance to the war effort at home and abroad. Preoccupied with constructing this heroic portrait, secondary writers have been blinded to the existence of internee resistance. In cases where evidence of resistance is too blatant to be ignored, as with the Manzanar Riot, these writers have seen them either as highly atypical episodes or situations provoked by a handful of subversives.<sup>22</sup>

### THE ETHNIC PERSPECTIVE

In contradistinction to the foregoing perspective on the Manzanar Riot, we propose an "Ethnic" perspective. Whereas the WRA-JACL perspective, as we have seen, has interpreted the riot in terms of its *ideological* meaning within American society, the Ethnic one focuses upon the riot's *cultural* meaning within the Japanese American community (with particular reference to Manzanar's internee population). Although ours is a "new" perspective toward the Manzanar Riot, it conforms closely to and draws much sustenance from a small number of general studies—mostly recent and unpublished—on internment.<sup>23</sup> We believe it is a perspective which, unlike the WRA-JACL's, promotes analysis and understanding rather than ideological reification.

As a first step in this direction, we replace the word "riot" with "revolt." Terming the event the "Manzanar Revolt" forces us to see it not as an uncaused and inconsequential aberration, but as one

intense expression of a continuing resistance movement. This change also credits the participants in the action with a greater degree of purposeful behavior. For while a riot's members are momentarily conjoined because they do not like where they have been, those involved in a revolt have some sense of where they want to go.<sup>24</sup> Overall, then, this redefinition of the collective manifestation encourages us to view it in relation to social change within a larger structural framework, thereby affording a more sociologically meaningful analysis. Instead of dismissing the "riot" as an isolated, spontaneous, and unstructured phenomenon, we now must locate its causes or determinants in the social system.<sup>25</sup>

It will be recalled that while a few accounts written from the WRA-JACL perspective deal with causation, even these restrict their inquiry within the social system to the period bracketed by the immediate pre-evacuation crisis and the "riot." Because the Ethnic perspective is predisposed to see the "revolt" as an expressive moment within a process of cultural development, it is more farsighted. On the one hand, it looks backward to the prewar West Coast Japanese American community in search of explanatory antecedents for the revolt. On the other hand, it looks beyond the revolt to ascertain its connection to subsequent subcultural evolution.

First, we must turn to the prewar community. A heretofore largely ignored study by Toshio Yatsushiro—*Political and Socio-Cultural Issues at Poston and Manzanar Relocation Centers: A Thematic Analysis*<sup>26</sup>—is especially useful for our purposes. Its thesis is that prewar Japanese American culture contained a limited number of themes—i.e., dynamic affirmations controlling behavior and stimulating activity—which were strengthened by pre-evacuation discriminatory practices, reinforced by the evacuation crisis, and expressed within the concentration camp culture.<sup>27</sup>

Yatsushiro identifies six basic cultural themes which define the prewar community. Each represents an element of traditional Japanese culture, modified by the American setting. The first four themes relate to personal and collective obligation, the governing of human relationships and conduct by precise rules, and the use of go-betweens to avoid possible embarrassment in social relations. The two remaining themes have special relevance to the present study. The first is contained in the following proposition: "Society is an ordered social hierarchy in which status is ascribed largely on the basis of biologically determined factors of sex, age, and generation."<sup>28</sup> This theme was clearly manifest in every aspect of family and community life. In the family, the male Issei wielded near autocratic power; in the community, he controlled political, economic, and social activities by leadership in associations like the Japanese Association and the *kenjinkai* (prefectural organization). The second theme maintains that "the welfare of the group is far more important than that of any single individual."<sup>29</sup> Diametrically opposed to the American cultural strain of individualism, this theme



promotes cultural homogeneity by granting the group omnipotence. Thus, the Japanese American community tended to minimize distinctions between personalities and social classes, to attribute all accomplishments to the group, and to seek group aid and advice in all social and economic undertaking.<sup>30</sup>

The importance of these themes lies in their influence on group solidarity. From the time of their arrival in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century, the Issei had experienced a series of attacks—both legal and extra-legal—which necessitated the development of self-sufficient "Little Tokyos." Each anti-Japanese attack forced the Issei to retreat further from American cultural values and to depend increasingly on their traditional Japanese culture. This, in turn, reinforced group solidarity. Thus, by the outbreak of World War II, the two most significant characteristics of the Issei-dominated Japanese American community were group solidarity and the predominance of elements of Japanese culture.<sup>31</sup>

These characteristics prevailed less among their children. During the thirties the Nisei generation was maturing and represented a potential challenge to the group's solidarity and to its cultural orientation. As citizens, Nisei came into greater contact with American society and consequently underwent increased Americanization. Their attendance in public schools led them to emulate activities of the American teen culture, and not uncommonly they resisted their parents' attempts to direct their lives in accordance with traditional Japanese values and practices. Some Nisei, in their anxiety to be accepted as typical Americans, began to resent their parents and to ridicule their Japanese ways. All this conflict served to widen the "social distance" between Issei and Nisei.<sup>32</sup>

On the other hand, the usual picture of Nisei as thoroughly Americanized is far from accurate, for countervailing forces were diminishing the social distance and returning the Nisei to the Japanese American community. One form of pressure emanated from the Issei, who, in addition to asserting ordinary parental influence, mandated Nisei participation in cultural agencies—e.g., Japanese clubs—which undermined the Americanization process.<sup>33</sup> Other pressures came from without. Socially, the Nisei encountered barriers to their assimilation into the larger society and found it necessary to participate in social organizations, residential patterns, and marital arrangements along ethnic lines. Economically, they discovered upon graduation from high school and college that the only available employment opportunities existed within their own communities. Therefore, while the Nisei returned to the community perhaps more from necessity than desire, the result was a partial restoration of their ethnicity and a consequent maintenance of group solidarity.<sup>34</sup>

Because of their influence upon prewar solidarity, as well as their later involvement in the Manzanar Revolt, two Nisei subgroups deserve special consideration. The first is the Kibei. Applied

literally, the term "Kibei" denoted any Nisei who had gone to Japan, for however short a time, and had returned to America. In some instances it was employed to describe any Nisei, whether he had gone to Japan or not, who "spoke Japanese . . . preferably to English and who otherwise behaved in what the Nisei regarded as a 'Japanesque' manner."<sup>35</sup> But its usual meaning was restricted to those whose residence in Japan exceeded two years and who received a portion of their education there.

Many Kibei, especially those whose stay in Japan was brief, experienced little difficulty in adjusting to the American milieu, and their behavior was indistinguishable from that of other Nisei. Other Kibei chose to repress their Japaneseness and exhibited hyperbolic American behavior. But for those who had spent considerable time in Japan, the situation was somewhat different. Although Kibei studies customarily emphasize that those in this category were treated as "pariahs within the larger minority group of the Japanese Americans," this remark is at best a half-truth.<sup>36</sup> True, the more Americanized Nisei often derided and even scorned them for their linguistic and social ineptitude, but by no means were they considered "pariahs" by the Issei. After all, many Issei parents originally had sent them to Japan precisely to allow them to absorb Japanese cultural habits deemed essential for economic and social success within the ethnic community. Their Nisei contemporaries might have found them strange and maladjusted, but on the whole the Issei applauded them as "model" Japanese children.<sup>37</sup> These Kibei were mostly non-assimilationists. They formed their own clubs and recreational groups, actively led Buddhist and other cultural organizations, willingly joined the community business structure; and Kibei women married either Kibei or Issei men. For this reason they strengthened group solidarity.<sup>38</sup>

The same cannot be said of the second Nisei subgroup—the JACLers. Properly, this term applied only to Nisei affiliated with the Japanese American Citizens League, an organization formed in 1930 as "a reaction against the Japanese orientation of the Issei leadership."<sup>39</sup> Generally, however, it was applied to Nisei who most fully accepted the attitudes, values, practices, and goals of the American culture. Matthew Richard Speier has observed that while the Issei "retained ethnic perspectives and took account of the dominant society only in the form of a valuation group (i.e., a reference group whose standpoint is not adopted as one's own). . . . Nisei took on Caucasian American society as their reference group . . . and adopted its perspective as their own in the form of an identification group."<sup>40</sup> While this distinction is partly valid for Nisei as a whole, it is more valid with respect to the JACLers. They, to a larger degree, penetrated into the dominant society through social, political, and economic activities. Emotionally, they moved increasingly away from their parents and community. Still, at no time prior to the war did they pose a serious threat to group solidarity. Like other Nisei,



the JACLers were young, uninfluential, and almost wholly dependent upon the Issei-dominated Japanese community for their economic livelihood.<sup>41</sup>

With this sketch of the psychosocial makeup of the prewar community in mind, we must now see how it was altered by the combined impact of Pearl Harbor and the subsequent evacuation and incarceration of Japanese Americans. For the Issei, who were subjected to a barrage of restrictions, harassments, and indignities—including the precipitous internment of their leaders in federal detention centers—the effect of Pearl Harbor and its aftermath was a pronounced increase in social solidarity. For them, the repressive measures exercised by the government represented only the latest and most serious of a long series of discriminatory actions, and they responded in their customary manner—with cultural retrenchment.<sup>42</sup>

The Nisei responded ambiguously. In a study centering on this period, Tamotsu Shibutani points out that while "there was increased social solidarity [among Nisei] in the sense that everyone recognized the cleavage between the Japanese and the out-group quite clearly . . . there was increased disunity among the Nisei after the outbreak of the war."<sup>43</sup> In other words, we can summarize their dilemma by stating that the crisis forced them to choose between their identification group—as symbolized by their citizenship—and their ethnic group—as actualized by their families and community. Many were too traumatized by the swirl of events to choose one way or the other, though this attitude was less common among JACLers.

Even before Pearl Harbor, when war with Japan seemed all but inevitable, some JACLers zealously advertised their Americanism. Unfortunately, their patriotic boosterism sometimes included a repudiation of Issei leadership. Togo Tanaka, a national officeholder in the JACL and the English language editor of the Los Angeles-based *Rafu Shimpō*, provides a case in point. As Roger Daniels has related, Tanaka, in a speech early in 1941, "insisted that the Nisei must face . . . 'the question of loyalty' and assumed that since the Issei were 'more or less tumbleweeds with one foot in America and one foot in Japan,' real loyalty to America could be found only in his generation."<sup>44</sup> Moreover, according to a recent study of the *Rafu Shimpō*, during this period Tanaka consistently voiced this sentiment editorially.<sup>45</sup> (By way of foreshadowing their later involvement in the Manzanar Revolt, it is interesting to note that Tanaka was joined on the *Rafu's* editorial board by Fred Tayama and Tokie Slocum.)

Bill Hosokawa, a prominent JACL figure, has written of how JACL leaders were summarily seized and interrogated by federal authorities in the wake of Pearl Harbor. (Tanaka, for instance, was arrested under a Presidential warrant and placed in Los Angeles jails for eleven days.)<sup>46</sup> Such persecution, however, only prompted JACLers to redouble their efforts to "prove" their loyalty as

American citizens. They fought their campaign on two fronts. On the one hand, they utilized the limited political influence they possessed to alleviate personal hardship and to exonerate the Japanese American community from irresponsible charges of subversion being leveled against it. More ominously, they cooperated with the authorities as security watchdogs. In this connection, an Anti-Axis Committee was established in Los Angeles, headed first by Fred Tayama and later by Tokie Slocum (and also including Togo Tanaka, Joe Grant Masaoka, and Tad Uyeno—names which would appear on the deathlist announced on the evening of the Manzanar Revolt—as members), to serve as a liaison with the FBI to help flush out "potentially dangerous" Issei.<sup>47</sup>

However well-intentioned its efforts and helpful its services, the JACL came under heavy fire from the Japanese American community. Issei resented the manner in which JACLers, whom they regarded as young and irresponsible, seemed to arrogate the role of community spokesmen. They were angered further by the JACL's apparent complicity with the FBI in Issei arrests. Nor were the Kibei kindly disposed toward the JACL. The Kibei were disturbed that the JACL apparently had forgotten that they too were citizens. They also believed that JACLers were informing on them as well as on Issei, a suspicion which hardened into conviction after the JACL undertook a Kibei Survey in mid-February 1942.<sup>48</sup> There even existed widespread dissatisfaction with the JACL among certain Nisei elements. Leftist groups, for example, "looked upon the J.A.C.L. as a large organization controlled by a small minority of 'reactionary' businessmen who used the body as a means of getting business connections and personal prestige."<sup>49</sup> Other Nisei were disgruntled that the JACL should presume to "represent" the community: in Los Angeles, the JACL totaled 650 members out of an eligible community population of 20,000.<sup>50</sup> Whatever their grievances against the JACL, Issei, Kibei, and Nisei generally believed that it was sacrificing the community's welfare for its own aggrandizement.

During the period from President Roosevelt's issuance on February 19, 1942 of Executive Order 9066 (which authorized the Secretary of War to establish "military areas" and exclude therefrom "any and all persons") until March 21, when the first contingent of Japanese American voluntary internees arrived from Los Angeles to the Manzanar Reception Center, the Japanese American community was rife with rumors about the complicity and duplicity of the JACL. For example:

The J.A.C.L. was instructed by Naval Intelligence to send questionnaires to all members to report on their parents.

The J.A.C.L. started their survey on the Kibei in order to turn in information to the F.B.I. They are taking this as a protective move to whitewash themselves by blaming others.



The J.A.C.L. is trying to be patriotic and they are supporting the evacuation program. They do not have the welfare of the Japanese people at heart.

The J.A.C.L. is supporting the idea of cooperating with the government and evacuating voluntarily because then they could go in and buy up all the goods in Japanese stores at robbery prices and make a substantial profit.

The J.A.C.L. big shots have their fingers in the graft. They are getting something out of the evacuation.

The J.A.C.L. is charging aliens for information that the aliens could get anywhere.

The J.A.C.L. is planning the evacuation with the officials. They are mixing with high government officials.

All J.A.C.L. leaders are *inu* (dogs; informers).<sup>51</sup>

The content of these rumors is less important (many had little basis in fact; others were clearly apocryphal) than their *function*. As Tamotsu Shibutani has observed, rumors function as mechanisms of social control (i.e., they keep errant individuals in line) and social definition (i.e., they disseminate a common mood).<sup>52</sup> At a time when governmental actions threatened the very existence of the community and government policies were fraught with ambiguity and inconsistency, the shared belief in rumors about the JACL buttressed group solidarity and provided some certitude within the confusion. Therefore, the community's branding of the JACLers as "deviants" must not be construed as a simple act of censure, but rather as a cultural rite by which the community attempted to define its "social boundaries"—what Kai T. Erikson has denoted as the symbolic parentheses a community draws around its permissible behavior—vis-a-vis a hostile world, thereby insuring its cultural integrity.<sup>53</sup>

JACLers (i.e., aggressive pro-American Nisei) themselves employed rumors during this critical time, though for contrary purposes. Identifying with the larger American community, they guarded its cultural boundaries by exposing "deviants" in the ethnic community. At times they cast Issei in this role, but more commonly the deviants were Kibei, whom they distrusted as hot-tempered, pro-Japan enthusiasts who were "willing to do almost anything, even at the risk of their lives, for the emperor of Japan."<sup>54</sup> Rumors about the Kibei reflected and underscored this suspicion, as the following reactions illustrate:

I hear those god damn Kibei bastards botched up our chances in the Army. If those son of a bitches like Japan so much why did they come over here in the first place? I never did like those guys anyway. They came over here with their Japanesey ideas and try to change all America to suit themselves. They don't seem to realize that 130,000,000 people might be right.

I really don't blame the Army for booting the Kibei out. I wouldn't trust those guys either. Some of them are O.K., but a lot of them don't

belong in this country. You can't tell what they'd do. They might shoot the guns in the wrong way. But Jesus Christ, they didn't have to wreck everything for us Nisei by burning the [U.S. Army] barracks.

Those Kibei are the guys we have to watch. They're so damned hot-headed they will do anything. Then all the rest of us have to suffer just because they happened to be technically American citizens. It'll get so the *hakujin* (Caucasians) won't trust any Nisei.

I hear those Kibei ran wild after December 7. I'd like to castrate some of those bastards.<sup>55</sup>

Again, like rumors concerning the JACL, many of these were patently untrue. The important point, however, is that if the JACL rumors seemed logical from the community's perspective, these Kibei rumors seemed equally plausible from a JACL perspective.

Having examined the prewar community and charted the changes undergone as a result of the Pearl Harbor and evacuation crises, we now must focus upon the situation that unfolded at Manzanar. In keeping with our Ethnic perspective, we need to connect prewar and camp developments and determine their cumulative impact on the internee population. More specifically, we must ascertain the extent to which, in *cultural* terms, the Manzanar Revolt represented a logical, even a "necessary," outgrowth of these developments.

First, however, we will relate some basic facts about the Manzanar Center. Situated in the Owens Valley of East-central California, Manzanar was the first of the centers to be established. From March 21 to June 1, 1942, it was known as the Owens Valley Reception Center, controlled by the military Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA) and administered by a staff drawn predominantly from the Works Progress Administration.<sup>56</sup> After June 1, when it came under the jurisdiction of the WRA, its name was changed officially to the Manzanar War Relocation Center. Its population was chiefly urban in background. Out of an approximate total of 10,000 internees, eighty-eight percent originated from Los Angeles County, with seventy-two percent from the city of Los Angeles. Located between the small communities of Lone Pine and Independence, Manzanar's climatological conditions were oppressive and its physical accommodations substandard.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the administrative personnel were badly splintered, and between the time of the camp's opening and the Manzanar Revolt, the camp directorship changed four times.<sup>58</sup>

More pertinent to this study than any of these outward conditions was the internal struggle waged over control of the internee community. From the outset it was clear that the cultural division that emerged during the evacuation period had carried over into the camp. In line with their decision to accept relocation as their contribution to the war effort, JACLers readily volunteered to assist in the establishment of the camp. In this enterprise they were joined, actually precedes, by a cadre of left-wing Nisei—and some Kibei—intellectuals who, for ideological and strategic reasons, chose to



pursue a similar brand of superpatriotism. Because of their early arrival and their avowed pro-Americanism, the administration rewarded JACLers by granting them the white-collar, supervisory, and generally-favored jobs, according them what little power was available to internees and allowing them a voice in shaping policy. In addition, they were placed in control of the camp newspaper, the *Manzanar Free Press*, which afforded them an opportunity to influence public opinion.<sup>59</sup>

This administration-sponsored JACL hierarchy was deeply resented by Issei and Kibei who were relegated to subordinate and menial jobs. It was bad enough to witness the JACLers' usurpation of community authority, but worse to see the purposes for which that authority was used. One can imagine how galling it was for Issei and Kibei to read in the *Free Press* of April 11, 1942, the following "appreciation":

The citizens of Manzanar wish to express in public their sincere appreciation to General John L. DeWitt and his Chiefs of Staff, Tom C. Clark and Colonel Karl R. Bendetsen, for the expedient way in which they have handled the Manzanar situation.

The evacuees now located at Manzanar are greatly satisfied with the excellent comforts the general and his staff have provided for them. 'Can't be better,' is the general feeling of the Manzanar citizens. 'Thank you, General!' (Emphasis ours)<sup>60</sup>

Nor could the JACL's flaunted citizenship and unctuousness toward Caucasian authorities have pleased Nisei. The mass evacuation and confinement in concentration camps permitted Nisei to reflect upon "their past hostility towards the ways of their 'Japanesey' parents . . . the long years of hardships suffered [by Issei] in their behalf . . . [and] they became extremely respectful of the Issei, their judgment, their advice, and their ways."<sup>61</sup> Thus, a growing number of Japanized Nisei increasingly viewed the JACLers' behavior as "patricidal" and "treasonable."<sup>62</sup>

Notwithstanding the JACLers' ostensible authority, the Issei managed quietly to resume the leadership they had occupied within the prewar community. There was, for example, a gradual ascendancy of the Issei-dominated Block Leaders over the JACL-headed Information Center throughout March, April, May, and June. Initiated at the request of two JACL leaders, Roy Takeno and David Itami, the Information Center emerged in late March in order to answer perplexing questions and supply basic services for new arrivals. It developed branch offices and subsections, eventually numbering fifty-three persons on its roll. In early April, the system of Block Leaders came into existence, whereby each block selected three men, one of whom was appointed Block Leader by the Camp Manager. For the most part, those selected were Issei.<sup>63</sup> It soon became apparent that the internees preferred to query the Block Leaders rather than the Information Center, which by the end of

June had been displaced by the Block Leaders. Moreover, it was determined by the camp authorities that now the Block Leaders should be directly elected instead of being appointed by the Administration. At the grass-roots level, then, power was gravitating back into Issei hands.<sup>64</sup>

Just as the Issei were beginning to consolidate their power in the Block Leaders Council in late June, a disquieting directive arrived from Washington declaring that only citizens could elect and serve as block representatives. Naturally, the Issei saw this action as another attempt to undermine their leadership and subordinate them to Nisei. Fortunately, Project Director Roy Nash, recognizing the Issei's important role in Manzanar's government and fearing the consequences of stripping them of that role, obtained a stay on the ruling. Nonetheless, as Community Analyst Morris E. Opler pointed out, ". . . considerable damage had been done by the debate and the division which had followed the announcement of the ruling."<sup>65</sup>

The damage was compounded on July 4 by another policy decision from Washington. In a memorandum to Ted Akahoshi, Temporary Chairman of the Block Leaders, Assistant Project Director Roy Campbell made the following request:

Will you please get over to all Block Leaders that it is against the policy of the War Relocation Authority to allow meetings to be conducted in Japanese. We have no objection to having meetings held in English interpreted so that all can understand, but we feel that all meetings should be primarily conducted in English.<sup>66</sup>

Again the Issei, and many Kibei, interpreted this measure as a device to render them politically impotent. The following week, the Council registered its displeasure by passing a motion that "when a meeting is attended by more Issei than Japanese will be used and brief translation in English be made."<sup>67</sup>

More important, however, was the debate which preceded the motion, for it depicted vividly the evolving Issei-Kibei frame of mind. Chairman Akahoshi, an Issei graduate of Stanford University known for his cooperation with the administration, set the tone with his opening remarks:<sup>68</sup>

I think this letter [Campbell's memorandum] is very important, because majority of those who come to the meetings are Issei and they want to conduct the meetings in Japanese. When I saw this letter I told Mr. Campbell 'that the Japanese people are greatest nation in the world for sacrifice'—many of us are day laborers and in spite of low income are able to send our children to university. No nation sacrificed as hard as Japanese. We have, I think, no saboteurs among us, why restriction on Japanese speaking?<sup>69</sup>

Among the following speakers, only two—an Issei and Karl Yoneda, a Kibei Communist who aligned himself with the JACLers,



outdoing them in his advocacy of pro-Americanism—approved the policy.<sup>70</sup> The rest, all Issei and Kibei, dissented with emotion!

[An Issei] I am in favor to conduct meeting in Japanese, because we cannot express ourselves ably in English. (3 or 4 people clapped hands)

[A Kibei] I believe all block leaders are very responsible people and they should be trusted by the Administration. You know that once we, the Japanese, decide to carry certain duty, we do accomplish it, that is the nature of us Japanese. (Big applause)

[A Kibei] Mr. Yoneda said that he is an American citizen, but he have to give up that right. Same thing true to me too, I am American but I cannot use my citizenship, therefore we must depend on Issei for leadership and certainly I am in favor for Japanese meeting. (Big applause)

[An Issei] My son is in U.S. Army and when he obtained furlough and came home, he was arrested by the FBI in spite of fact that he is American. (Spoken with tears in his eyes) We are always discriminated against here and only one who protect Nisei is we the Issei. I can speak only Japanese and if it must be English, I must resign as block leader. Don't forget we are Japanese and we are the people who can unite to do anything. (Big applause)

[Chairman Akahoshi] I think we, the Issei, know what's bad and what's good. Some Nisei have stool-pigeoned on us—some Nisei is boasting that he turned in 175 of us Japanese to the FBI. Other is boasting that he turned in so many and they are boasting each other. I am quite sure that only 2 or 3 out of the 175 are guilty. Roosevelt spoke about national unity—these Nisei are the ones who disrupt national unity and they are the traitors to this country. (Big applause)

[An Issei] Those Nisei are lazy bunch and they are no good. We, the Issei, are doing everything. Look at those janitors. None of the Nisei are cleaning toilets. We Issei have to do all the work.<sup>71</sup>

Equally interesting is that this debate was recorded by Karl Yoneda and offered to the administration in a confidential report. The recommendations which Yoneda appended and his cautionary advice also deserve attention since they reflect an opposing JACL viewpoint:

... may I suggest the following: 1. All meetings in camp must be held in English. 2. Stenographic minutes be made of Block Leaders Council Meetings unless some one of the Administrators attends meeting. 3. Qualification for Block Leader should be that he must understand English and preferably Nisei. (Some Nisei are just as pro-axis as Issei but one can argue with them easier because of their knowledge of American institutions.) 4. The instruction that all meetings are to be conducted in English should be widely publicized.

If we allow another meeting such as was held this morning, the block leaders meetings will be turned into germinating nest for undesirable [sic] elements and pro-axis adherents. Crystallization of pro-Axis sentiment is getting stronger every day and if we don't guard against it, eventually there will be a clash between pro-axis and pro-America groups in camp

This issue was resolved temporarily by the administration's interpretation of the WRA policy as allowing Japanese to be spoken at meetings if followed by an English translation, but a legacy of acrimony and widened division between Issei-Kibei and JACLers resulted.

These feelings were exacerbated by the announcement on July 27 that a new Manzanar Citizens Federation would meet the following evening. The leaders in the meeting were Hiro Neeno, Joe Grant Masaoka, Karl Yoneda, and Togo Tanaka, all closely allied with JACL objectives, who spoke about "improving conditions in camp," "educating citizens for leadership," "participating in the war effort," and "preparing evacuees for postwar conditions."<sup>73</sup> As Project Director Ralph P. Merritt later observed, the meeting represented "an attempt to organize American citizens into a federation which would aid the administration and which probably would also help the Nisei get more power and political strength in opposition to the Issei."<sup>74</sup>

This strategy ultimately backfired. The meeting itself, packed with pro-American Nisei supporters of the JACL leadership, turned into a rally. Following the general meeting, an open forum took place in which Joe Kurihara, who would later figure prominently in the Manzanar Revolt, took the floor:

"I'm an American citizen," he cried. "I served under fire in France. Now I'm in this prison. You're all here, too, with me. I've proved my loyalty by fighting over there. Why doesn't the government trust me?" "If you please, Mr. Chairman," shouted back Tokie Slocum, a self-styled patriot and former Chairman of the JACL's Anti-Axis Committee, "I was a Sergeant-Major in the last war. That was the highest position any Japanese ever attained. Sergeant Alvin York served under me. I was in some of the hottest fighting that took place. For this loyalty the Government gave all of us veterans American citizenship. We're here because of military necessity. I've had three chances to go to other places." "Tokie," challenged Kurihara, "why are you in here? Isn't it because you couldn't go any place? Isn't it because you're a Jap? Isn't it because the government doesn't trust you?" Overriding the Chairman's vain attempts to restore order, Slocum hollered back at Kurihara: "I'll tell you why I'm here. I'm here because my commander-in-chief, the President, ordered me in here."<sup>75</sup>

Shortly thereafter the meeting was adjourned.

Although it is customarily emphasized that this meeting provoked Kurihara into accepting the Issei point of view, but its conversion of many other Nisei as well is more significant. Kurihara declared that "he was a Jap and not an American, and . . . [that] he wanted to go . . . to Japan where he belonged."<sup>76</sup> However, other Nisei, "who had had their patriotism dampened by evacuation . . . [grew] cynical over the Federation's petition for a second front and for the drafting of Japanese-Americans."<sup>77</sup> Increasingly, the Issei-Kibei point of view was expanding into an Issei-Kibei-Nisei point of view.<sup>78</sup>



From the beginning of August until the Revolt in December, the Kibei formed the spearhead of the opposition to the JACLers. Once again, a ruling from Washington galvanized underlying discontent into retaliatory action: Bulletin 22 was issued, which excluded all Kibei from participation in the leave program. This discriminatory measure further reduced the depreciated value of Kibei citizenship and robbed them of an important economic perquisite. When Kibei leader Ben Kishi announced that a meeting of Kibei would be held on August 8, the Nisei secretary of the Block Leaders voiced the fear that they might "try to find [a] scapegoat among Nisei Leaders and blame them for discriminating [sic] against Kibei and [that] this [would] . . . further aggravate sectional strife among Japanese."<sup>79</sup> In response to Kishi's idea that "if the government do not recognize the citizenship right of Kibei and continues to treat them as dangerous element it might as well revoke citizenship of Kibei," the secretary reasoned that "this line of thinking is very dangerous and goes to show that at least some Kibeis are more inclined to forfeit Citizenship and would rather be regarded as aliens."<sup>80</sup>

The proceedings of this famous Kibei meeting were recorded by Fred Tayama in another JACL "confidential" report directed to the administration. In Mess Hall 15 gathered approximately 400 of the camp's Kibei population of over 600, augmented by a large contingent of Issei and roughly seventy Nisei. Five speakers were scheduled. The first was Raymond Hirai, who outlined internee complaints concerning medical care, educational facilities, food, housing, wages, and self-government. We concern ourselves only with his remarks on the last two subjects:

Look, for example, [at] the rate of pay for Camouflage workers. Camouflage is a war production. They are using minors; many around the ages of 15 and 16. . . . I demanded many more things of Nash. And Nash told me, 'I am the Project Director here and I can do anything the way I want it to be done'. So I told Nash, 'You are like Hitler and Mussolini combined,' and Nash replied, 'I am.' So I demanded what he had said in writing and immediately Nash turned around and said that he had never said such a thing. That's the type of Director we have here. I got so mad that I told him that I'd get a rock and hit him right on his bald spot (his head). (Laughter and applause from the audience)

We must demand re-election of all Block Leaders. We have people now in control who are unable to say anything and are just taking orders from the Administration. *This is our Camp and the Japanese people should decide for themselves how this Camp should be governed; we should not listen to those prejudiced whites.* (great applause) [Emphasis ours]<sup>81</sup>

The next speaker, Kiyoshi Hashimoto, entitled his talk "Kibei Nisei no tachiba" (The Stand of the Kibei Nisei) but confessed that he was unsure of what he wanted to say. Several persons in the audience shouted "*wakatteoru*" (we understand). Then Joe Kurihara exclaimed: "I was born in Hawaii. I have never been in Japan but in my veins flows Japanese blood; a blood of *Yamato Damashii*

(Japanese Spirit). We citizens have been denied our citizenship; we are 100% Japanese" (a roaring applause and stamping of feet). The third speaker, Bill Kito, directed his commentary to the Manzanar Citizens Federation, charging that certain Nisei had completely disregarded the Issei—a remark which precipitated great applause and provoked someone in the audience to demand that those Nisei ought to be struck down. The fourth speaker, Karl Yoneda, was greeted by sustained booing and cries of "Sit down! Get out! Shut Up!" The last scheduled speaker, Masaji Tanaka, received more sympathy:

I am a Kibei Nisei, but the Kibei Nisei are not Americans; they are Japanese. (big applause) The Kibei are not loyal to the United States and they might as well know about it. (roaring applause) But the Kibei should use their citizenship rights for their own benefit. (everybody looking around the room; no applause) I cannot understand why there are a few Nisei who still talk about their citizenship rights; and about American democracy. I have heard that there are a few who even send reports outside. (boo and down with those rats) Those fools can holler all they want, but in the eyes of the American people they too are Japanese and nothing but Japanese.<sup>82</sup>

Following some extemporaneous speeches from the floor, Chairman Ben Kishi, declaring that he would assume personal responsibility for the meeting, adjourned the gathering by stating, "We may never be able to hold a meeting like this again, and Japanese soldiers will be here soon to liberate all of us."<sup>83</sup>

Several factors about this meeting command notice: the stress of nativistic themes, the aggressive criticism of the camp's administration, the intolerance of dissenting viewpoints, and the heightened determination to punish suspected informers. The circle around the community was drawing tighter.

August witnessed further ingroup solidarity. As a result of the Kibei Meeting, Director Nash issued an official bulletin reinstating the WRA ban on the use of Japanese in public meetings.<sup>84</sup> This decision revitalized earlier Issei grievances and further aroused the Kibei's anti-administration stand. This month also saw the "enforced" resignation of those Block Leaders deemed cooperative with administrative policy.<sup>85</sup>

The Issei-Kibei coalition had developed an effective organization. On August 21, when elections were held to select Block Leaders in those blocks whose incumbents previously had been appointed, JACLers were ousted and supplanted by Issei or Kibei. In Block 4, for example, Karl Yoneda was defeated by an Issei who amassed ninety-three percent of the votes cast. Yoneda correctly evaluated the reasons behind his defeat in a communication forwarded to the administration, explaining that the Issei-Kibei bloc had criticized him on the following grounds:

1) Circulated petition for Second Front and wanted to send all Japanese American soldiers on front line duty and let the enemy shoot them first.



2) For America's war effort and urged many citizens in the block to work on camouflage nets.

3) That he is a dangerous 'red.'

4) Married to white woman and does not follow Japanese customs. He washes son's clothes, while wife works on camouflage, let's [sic] wife go to meetings, etc.

5) Stooge for administration and also informer because he has been seen with [Tokie] Slocum on many occasions.

6) Spoke at Kibei meeting against them.

7) Spoke at Citizens Federation meeting for America.

8) Responsible for all meetings, in camp, to be conducted in English.<sup>86</sup>

Viewing himself as a scapegoat for pro-Japan elements, Yoneda believed this opposition to him *politically* significant. The overriding significance, however, is *cultural*; from the perspective of the internees in his block, Yoneda was a quintessential deviant, representative of all those characteristics the subculture abhorred. A cultural anti-hero, he symbolized for the evacuee population its need of social cohesion.<sup>87</sup>

This need grew urgent when on August 24 the WRA, through Administrative Instruction No. 34, began enforcing the ruling that only citizens could hold office (though aliens might vote and fill appointive posts). The full impact of this ruling occurred in September when the Block Leaders Council learned that it was to be supplanted by a Community Council structured along the above lines. Issei were incensed, arguing that "they had lived long in the United States and that denial of the right to naturalize was unjust [and] to prevent them now from holding office in their own evacuee community was simply to emphasize this injustice."<sup>88</sup> Moreover, they charged that JACLers had inspired the decree and had poisoned the Issei case with the WRA. That is, here was another attempt to diminish their influence.

As a result of evacuation they had lost heavily in property and in prestige. Their places in the old Japanese community were gone. Now they feared that they would be entirely at the mercy of the less sympathetic among the Nisei and of the American government.<sup>89</sup>

Their worst fears materialized, therefore, when the Project Director appointed a seventeen-man Self-Government Commission composed entirely of Nisei to draft a charter for the new government. Their tolerance disappeared completely on September 25 when the new Acting Project Director, Harvey Coverly, announced that at the end of the month the Block Leaders would become Block Managers, exchanging their legislative functions for administrative ones. A rash of resignations followed. Indeed, by mid-October the position of Block Manager had become so undesirable that the administration could hardly find substitutes for those who had resigned.<sup>90</sup>

Another threat that alarmed Issei was the formation of the Manzanar Work Corps. Designed to include a Representative

Assembly and a Fair Practices Committee, it aroused their suspicion because the same JACLers who had formed the detested Citizens Federation also were sponsoring the Corps. Thus, when the election of Representatives took place in late September, Issei registered little interest in the proceedings.

But it was the Kibei, smarting from their recent exclusion from the Charter Commission, who emerged as the Corps' most vociferous opponents. At the Assembly's first meeting Harry Ueno, a Kibei representing the kitchen workers of Mess Hall 22, clashed with Fred Tayama, the Corps' chairman. Upon questioning Tayama regarding the Corps' functions, Ueno became convinced that it represented an administrative tool which would not fully protect the interests of kitchen workers. Consequently, Ueno organized the Kitchen Workers Union to "wring concessions from the administration, rather than have the administration wring more work out of the evacuees, as they believed would happen under the Work Corps."<sup>91</sup> Since most Kibei were employed as mess workers and approximately 1,500 of the Manzanar work force of 4,000 were kitchen employees, the Kitchen Workers Union provided Kibei a powerful base for mobilizing community action.<sup>92</sup>

If the formation of the Kitchen Workers' Union represented one index of rising anti-JACL sentiment, another was the swelling opposition to the JACL-dominated Charter Commission headed by Togo Tanaka. One form of resistance was passive: few bothered to register for the Charter's ratification vote of November 9. When an "educational" meeting on the Charter was held, outraged speakers assailed its citizen-alien distinction and cast aspersions upon the Commission members. The same evening an ominous message appeared on mess hall bulletin boards:

Attention: We do not recognize any necessity for a self-government system. We should oppose anything like this as it is only drawing a rope around our necks. Let the Army take care of everything. Stop taking action which might bring trouble to our fellow residents.

Blood Brothers Concerned About the People.<sup>93</sup>

The administration, responding to the cumulative pressure, rescheduled the ratification election for November 30. The postponement did not have the desired "cooling" effect, however, for the Charter had come to symbolize the deep cultural division between the para-administrative JACLers and, in effect, the rest of the camp population. Using their subsidized press, the Charter supporters attempted to mollify the internees' widespread fears and convince them of the advantages of a speedy ratification. To counter the influence of the *Free Press's* campaign, the oppositional forces established what Morris Opler has termed the "Manzanar Underground."<sup>94</sup> Soon the community was inundated with posters, bulletins, and other communiques, variously signed "Manzanar Black Dragon Society," "Southern California Blood Brothers Corps,"



"Southern California Justice Group," and "Patriotic Suicide Corps." Primary attention was given to undermining the self-government scheme by including intimidating letters to each member of the Charter Commission, but in time the Underground branched out to criticize every aspect of Manzanar life.

As the date of the ratification grew closer, it became apparent that the Charter was doomed to defeat. Seeking to rid the self-government plan of its JACL stigma, the administration disbanded the Commission and announced that "before the final charter was submitted to the people, a city-wide election was to take place on November 22, and two persons from each block were to be elected to a committee to study the Charter and make adjustments."<sup>95</sup> (At the same time, the administration called in two FBI agents to investigate the Manzanar Underground, thereby hoping to eliminate a major source of opposition to the Charter.) Once again, however, the administration was confronted by passive resistance, for on November 22 the turnout of voters was embarrassingly meager.

Nonetheless, on November 30 the new Project Director, Ralph P. Merritt, scheduled a meeting of the elected block representatives. This meeting proved even more embarrassing to the cause of the Charter. Indeed, only about half of the representatives attended. As a first item of business, the group decided to poll how many opposed the self-government plan. All but one—Togo Tanaka, the JACL head of the Commission—raised their hands. This lopsided division was mirrored by the subsequent discussion, which deserves our attention for its representation of the general mood of the camp population:

[Harry Ueno (who was in attendance as an interested visitor)] In my block we didn't even elect delegates; we see no necessity for such a joke of a thing, we should organize a strong Japanese Welfare Group in this camp. It will furnish the representation for us. I think it is a plot of the government to use those who can be used when they talk about self-government.

[Togo Tanaka] I do not feel that we have any body capable of speaking in support of 10,000 people. The self-government arrangement would fill that need.

[The Chairman, Genji Yamaguchi, an Issei Block Leader]<sup>96</sup> I wish to differ with Mr. Tanaka. We do have a body capable of speaking for the population and representing them. That is the Block Managers. We can do everything that any Council of Nisei can do. What have you to say to that?

[Tanaka] The Block Managers have their role to perform. They are important in the scheme of things. But their job is administrative. You do not represent the people so much as you do the Administration, *at least in theory*. The Managers have no power to legislate. That is the difference. (Emphasis ours.)

[Chairman Yamaguchi] There is one question that I would like to put before Mr. Tanaka, if he will be good enough to answer. I don't know

whether it's rumor or not, but I have heard that the reason why the W.R.A. decided on the policy of discriminating against the Issei in holding office in the proposed Council is because Mike Masaoka [Executive Secretary] of the National J.A.C.L. got together with Dillon Myer [WRA National Director] and had that discriminatory clause put in. What do you know about that?

[Tanaka] Now that you tell that to me, I've heard it too. Why don't you write to Washington, D.C. and Mr. Myer and ask him?

[Another Issei] I would like to ask Mr. Tanaka why it is that the nisei seem to want to control this camp? Why is it that they are out to persecute the issei?<sup>97</sup>

Another vote followed on the self-government question—this time with a unanimous negative response.<sup>98</sup> The circle around the community had all but closed.

Two interesting sidelights to this meeting are the role of "spokesman for the people" assumed by Harry Ueno and the attribution to JACL leaders of influence in shaping WRA policy. From the time of his formation of the Kitchen Workers Union two months earlier, Ueno had emerged as a cultural hero. In part, this development stemmed from his style of leadership. A fluent, persuasive, and straightforward speaker in Japanese who customarily spoke in a high-pitched and excitable voice, his actions personified the traditional Japanese cultural theme emphasizing group welfare over personal aggrandizement.<sup>99</sup>

Ueno was not interested in control merely as an end in itself; this he told to all, and his friends were convinced of his sincerity when he said that 'everything which I do, I am doing for the sake of the people of Manzanar. I have no selfish motives, and this unselfishness on my part will be recognized by the people.'<sup>100</sup>

While his opposition to the Work Corps and the Charter Commission enhanced his reputation in the community, what catapulted Ueno into public stature was his charge that two administrators—Assistant Project Director Ned Campbell and Chief Steward Joe Winchester—were misappropriating and selling internee sugar supplies for personal gain. This charge had led to a full-scale investigation by the Block Managers. Although insufficient evidence was uncovered to implicate the two, the investigation did expose the fact that the internees were being shortchanged in their sugar allotment.<sup>101</sup> This finding alone guaranteed Ueno's popularity, for it confirmed the internees' deep-seated conviction that the administrators were capable of the most unscrupulous behavior.

JACL-WRA collusion rumors had been commonplace, but their credibility became intensified by a recent development. While the meeting on self-government was in progress, Fred Tayama and another JACL leader, Kiyoshi Higashi (evacuee police chief), were serving as Manzanar's delegates to the JACL National Convention in



Salt Lake City. Tayama's departure for that city in mid-November had outraged the internees, for he, even more than Karl Yoneda, Tokie Slocum, and Togo Tanaka, typified the antithesis of the "Japanese spirit." From the standpoint of the community, "no more unrepresentative person could be chosen to present the views of Manzanar at the convention."<sup>102</sup> Antipathy toward Tayama stretched back to pre-evacuation days. As the President of the Los Angeles JACL chapter and Chairman of the Southern District Council of JACL, "it was almost axiomatic that [he should have been] the most-criticised Nisei in Los Angeles."<sup>103</sup> But the community's animosity for Tayama was seasoned by other factors as well. At a time when the economic and social fortunes of Japanese Americans were at a low ebb, he was conspicuously prosperous. The proprietor of a chain of restaurants employing thirty-five to fifty workers, Tayama owned a large home, drove around the community in a late model Buick sedan, "played golf with the Japanese Consul (Tomokazu Hori), and was frequently asked by Nisei clubs to serve, with his wife, as patron and patroness at numerous social functions."<sup>104</sup> Whereas his JACL circle of associates regarded him "as a 'regular guy' who played a stiff hand at poker, traded gusty jokes with the best of 'em and won more than his share of golf trophies," in the pages of *Doho*, a leftist Nisei newspaper, he was accused of "operating [his cafes] under 'sweat shop conditions', underpaying his help, and of obstructing the unionization of his employees."<sup>105</sup> Nor did his penchant for self-assertiveness and aggressive opportunism endear him to the community. For example, he reputedly announced to his classmates in a public speaking class: "You know, I have been raised to always do my very best and to rise to the very top. I firmly believe that one should always strive to be top. Even if I were to be a bandit, I would expect to be the Chief Bandit."<sup>106</sup>

Tayama's activities during the evacuation period further compounded his unpopularity. It was rumored—and generally believed—that in his capacity as a JACL official and as co-owner of the Pacific Service Bureau he exploited Issei, "making exorbitant profits from high charges for services [filing alien travel permits required by the Department of Justice, transferring business licenses, and the like] which could be obtained free" through Federal channels.<sup>107</sup> Another damaging rumor circulated to the effect that Tayama had mishandled a relief fund collected for beleaguered Terminal Island fishermen.<sup>108</sup>

Over and beyond these personal endeavors, Tayama was villified for his "witch hunting" efforts in behalf of the JACL. A vigorous proponent of Americanization and undivided loyalty, Tayama had, in March 1941, been instrumental in the formation of the Southern District's Coordinating Committee for Southern California Defense (CCSCD), whose animating purpose of "making patriotism vital" entailed gathering information on subversive activities (which was

turned over directly to Naval Intelligence.)<sup>109</sup> After Pearl Harbor, Tayama organized the Anti-Axis Committee to enlarge upon and to step up the work of the CCSCD. His subsequent appointment of Tokie Slocum, a frenetic chauvinist who reportedly accompanied F.B.I. agents on their post-Pearl Harbor sweep of "potentially dangerous" Issei in Los Angeles's Little Tokyo, darkened Tayama's reputation still further. And indignation toward him reached a fever pitch when, following a meeting with Army officials and JACL leaders in San Francisco, Tayama broke the news of total evacuation to Southern Californians at a mass meeting at the Maryknoll Catholic Church auditorium, located just outside the heart of Little Tokyo.<sup>110</sup> His actions at Manzanar did nothing to mitigate the community's detestation for him:

Indeed, if anything, he fell into even greater displeasure. At Manzanar his most unpopular antics were those concerned with his demonstration of his Americanism. As one observer put it, 'Tayama was not content to be a 100% American; he was a 350% American.' Specifically, Tayama was very loose in his talk about disloyal Americans, openly informing the Administration about manifestations of disloyalty on the part of particular individuals at Manzanar. Tayama is said to have worked off his personal prejudices by accusing those he disliked of being pro-Japanese. He is also said to have informed on the basis of completely inadequate evidence. Tayama did his informing with some secrecy, but the Japanese grapevine kept the community informed of his activity.<sup>111</sup>

Tayama seemed to be accorded special privileges by the camp staff: "Rumors circulated freely about the sugar, canned foods and fine furniture with which his home was filled, and . . . it was assumed that the sugar said to be in his home was a portion of the amount the kitchen workers claimed had mysteriously disappeared."<sup>112</sup> Nor did his role as a leading spirit in both the Citizens Federation and the Work Corps win him anything but more intense hatred. And now he had the audacity to name himself, through political manipulation, Manzanar's "representative" at the Salt Lake City meeting where WRA national leaders would gather and policy decisions would be made. Indeed, word had filtered back to Manzanar that Tayama, in addition to repeating his loose accusations of unamerican activities in camp and proposing measures for their elimination, had, along with other JACL delegates, "in the name of the Japanese people in and out of the Centers, asked that Nisei be inducted into combat units of the U.S. Army."<sup>113</sup> The mere mention of his name evoked profound disgust. If anyone endangered the group's existence and threatened its solidarity, it was Fred Tayama.<sup>114</sup>

It will be recollected that Tayama was beaten upon his return to the center, thereby setting in motion the Manzanar "Riot." What must be emphasized is that there is strong reason to believe that the overwhelming majority of internees fully endorsed this beating.



Historians writing from the WRA-JACL perspective may see the attack on Tayama as the unwarranted work of a few pro-Axis Kibei troublemakers, but such an analysis construes the action too restrictively. Even if one concedes pro-Japan terrorism as the basis for the assault and accepts the idea that only a small band of hooligans participated in it, one still has to account for the thousands who protested the arrest of Harry Ueno and who were willing to defy the administration to have him released from jail. Nor did they simply believe him innocent of involvement in Tayama's beating. Indeed, one might say that Ueno was lionized *because* of his alleged connection with the attack.<sup>115</sup> For the internees—Issei, Kibei, and Nisei—the time had come when something had to be done to prevent the corrosive effects of the JACLers. Seen through the ethnic perspective, the beating of Tayama was both necessary and good.

Similarly, what transpired on December 6, 1942, must not be seen in isolation or ascribed solely to ideological motivations. When viewed within the ethnic (i.e., community) perspective, all of the occurrences of that day—the massive crowds, the membership of the Committee of Five, the composition of the death-lists and blacklists, the demands for the dismissal of specified members of the appointed staff, and the character of the internees' evening demonstration at the jail—assume a definite cultural logic.

While WRA-JACL sources attribute the huge assemblages to the fact that most present were merely curious onlookers, this interpretation stems from narrow wish-fulfillment.<sup>116</sup> It appears to us that a more satisfactory explanation is that the mounting discontent of the internee population, which heretofore found sporadic expression through grumbling about camp conditions, work slowdowns, strikes against war-related industries and profit-oriented camp enterprises, and pervasive gang activity and "inu" beatings, became crystallized into concerted resistance action through the symbolic juxtaposition of Harry Ueno and Fred Tayama.<sup>117</sup> As Morton Grodzins has perceptively observed:

The situation was made to order for a popular anti-administration demonstration. The issue cut through political and cultural lines. The question could be put as one involving administrative integrity and fairness to the evacuees. Loyalty to America had nothing to do with it. . . . The demonstrations that followed, though in part engineered by the genuine pro-Japanese elements in the camp, were not pro-Japanese demonstrations. Rather, they were simply demonstrations against an administrative policy that according to the trend of thought in the camp, jailed on flimsy evidence one of the community's benefactors.<sup>118</sup>

The cultural significance of the Committee of Five is also noteworthy. In consonance with the Japanese cultural theme mandating that community status be ascribed by factors of sex, age, and generation, the Committee was composed largely of mature male

Issei. Moreover, all of the members embodied the cultural theme positing the paramount importance of the community's welfare. Four of them were aligned with the Kitchen Workers Union, while the remaining one, Joe Kurihara, was primarily identified by internees for his attacks on the Citizens Federation and his championship of an alternative organization, the Manzanar Welfare Association.<sup>119</sup>

Likewise, there is a cultural logic informing the death-lists and blacklists read off to the crowds by the Committee. While the precise membership and order of priority of these lists is somewhat vague, it seems clear that the primary targets were Fred Tayama, Tokie Slocum, Karl Yoneda, Koji Ariyoshi, James Oda, Togo Tanaka, and Joe Masaoka.<sup>120</sup> In addition, the lists included internees prominently associated with the *Free Press* and the camp internal security force, particularly its special investigative branch.<sup>121</sup> Significantly, all of these individuals were identified with JACL-sponsored organizations and objectives and/or anti-subversive activities.

The choice of the particular three members of the administration whose removal was called for by the crowd also made cultural sense. The individual most frequently named, Assistant Project Director Ned Campbell, not only didn't understand the Japanese psychology, but epitomized the *keto* (white man, hairy beast) to the internees.<sup>122</sup> Loud, stubborn, overbearing, and given to making physical threats against those who disagreed with him, Campbell in his very demeanor evoked the racism undergirding the entire evacuation program.<sup>123</sup> Chief Steward, Joe Winchester, whom Ueno had accused of being in collusion with Campbell in shorting internees of their rightful supplies, compounded his culpability in the community's eyes by his penchant for making snap judgments and for treating evacuees in accordance with simplistic, pejorative stereotypes. For Winchester, internees were either "good Japs" or "troublemakers." The remaining staff member whose ouster was demanded was Hervey Brown, chief engineer in charge of public works. Like Campbell and Winchester, Brown projected a high-handed manner and appeared to transfer or fire internee employees for what seemed to them very arbitrary reasons.<sup>124</sup>

Finally, the behavior of the crowd at the evening gathering before the camp jail prior to the shooting—heckling at the military police, speaking almost exclusively in Japanese, and singing the Japanese national anthem and other Japanese songs—is culturally revealing.<sup>125</sup> For the internees, the jailing of Ueno became a rallying point for their willingness to resist those (like the WRA, the JACL, and the military police) who appeared to threaten their cultural heritage and identity. Thus, in response to their endangered ethnicity, they exhibited heightened ethnic consciousness and behavior.

This was also true with the entire Manzanar Revolt. The events of December 6 were but a logical culmination of developments originating with the administration's decision to bypass the community's na-



tural Issei leadership to deal with its own artificially erected JACL hierarchy and to embark on a program of Americanization at the expense of Japanese ethnicity. When the WRA moved the JACLers out of the camp after the Revolt, the Issei took a step toward restoring the dominance they had enjoyed before the evacuation, and the entire community served notice that their self-determination and ethnic identity would not be relinquished without a struggle. Through the operation of continuing resistance activity, Manzanar would eventually be transformed into a Little Tokyo of the desert where, as in prewar days, the most salient community characteristics were group solidarity and the predominance of elements of Japanese culture.<sup>126</sup>

## FOOTNOTES

1. An earlier version of this essay appears in Arthur A. Hansen and Betty E. Mitson, eds., *Voices Long Silent: An Oral Inquiry into the Japanese American Evacuation* (Fullerton, Calif.: Calif. State Univ. at Fullerton Oral History Program, 1974), pp. 41-79.

2. (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey, 1973), p. vii.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 34 Unlike Wise, who derives his inspiration for perspectivist history from the novelistic technique and from recent conceptual breakthroughs in a multiplicity of scientific and humanistic disciplines, we have been led to adopt the perspectivist approach in this study chiefly through our involvement in oral history. This tool of inquiry, with its emphasis on the taped interview, has confirmed our suspicion of "objective" history and directed us to seek answers to the very questions which Wise depicts as central to the perspectivist model of historical explanation.

4. Our account of the Manzanar Riot is drawn from primary materials in the U.S. War Relocation Archive, *Relocation Center, Manzanar, California*, Special Collections, UCLA Research Library, Collection 122, Boxes 16, 17, and the Japanese Evacuation and Relocation Study project, Bancroft Library, U.C. Berkeley, Folders E2.332, O7.00, O7.50, O8.10, O10.00, O10.04, O10.12, O10.14, O11.00, R30.00, R30.10, S1.10, and S1.20 A, B, C *passim*. Collection 122 consists of the files collected and maintained by Mr. Ralph Palmer Merritt, Project Director of the Manzanar War Relocation Center. Hereafter cited as WRAA, Coll. 122. The Berkeley archives have been prepared and indexed by Edward N. Barnhart. Future reference to this material will be cited as JERS, Barnhart.

We have purposely avoided controversial points of detail in our overview of the events surrounding the riot. On such issues as whether Ueno was one of Tayama's assailants or why the military police fired upon the evacuee crowd, there is a plethora of documentation to support conflicting, even contradictory, interpretations. Instead of expending our energy in historical sleuth work, we have contented ourselves with arriving at a consensual summary of the Manzanar Riot that could serve as a springboard for perspectivist analysis.

5. The primary accounts are contained in WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16, *passim* and JERS, Barnhart, Folder O7.00 *passim*. See also *Pacific Citizen*, Dec. 10, 1942. Secondary treatment of the Manzanar Riot from this perspective includes: Allan R. Bosworth, *America's Concentration Camps* (New York: Bantam, 1968), pp. 152-6; Audrie Girdner and Anne Loftis, *The Great Betrayal* (London:

Macmillan, 1969), pp. 263-6; Bill Hosokawa, *Nisei: The Quiet Americans* (New York: Morrow, 1969), pp. 361-2; Norman Richard Jackman, *Collective Protest in Relocation Centers*, unpubl. Ph.D. diss., U.C. Berkeley, 1955, pp. 170-83, 211-19; Dillon S. Myer, *Uprooted Americans* (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 1971), pp. 63-6; and Thomas Brewer Rice, *The Manzanar War Relocation Center*, unpubl. M.A. thesis, U.C. Berkeley, 1947.

6. Girdner and Loftis, *Betrayal*, p. 263.

7. One primary account of the riot written from the WRA-JACL perspective which reflects an awareness of the event's cultural significance is WRA (written by Janet Goldberg under the supervision of Robert L. Brown, Reports Officer, Manzanar War Relocation Center), "The Manzanar Incident", December 5, to December 19," WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16, and JERS, Barnhart, Folder O7.00. Still, while this account concludes that one of the two main contributing factors to the uprising was "the inherent conflict between those culturally Japanese and those culturally Americans," nowhere in this thirty-one page report is there evidence presented that would warrant such a conclusion.

8. For convenience, throughout the discussion of the WRA-JACL perspective, this term will be employed without quotation marks, though the sense should be understood.

9. Rice, *Manzanar Center*, p. 69.

10. Jackman, *Collective Protest*, p. 183. If anything, the year 1943 was even stormier than the preceding one. Manzanar was the only center, for instance, where over fifty percent of the adult male citizens answered "No" to the question on loyalty, qualified their response, refused to answer, or refused to register at all (by contrast, at Minidoka Center these groups constituted only eight percent of the male citizen population). See Morton Grodzins, "Making Un-Americans," *American Journal of Sociology*, 60 (May 1955), 577. Moreover, this period saw widespread resistance to the imposition of the draft for Nisei and a mounting number of applications for repatriation and expatriation. See WRAA, Coll. 122, Boxes 15, 26, especially the reports prepared by Morris E. Opler, the WRA community analyst at Manzanar. On the general unrest and internee resistance during this time, see WRAA, Coll. 122, Boxes 10, 11, and 31-9, which contain the Block Managers' reports.

11. By contrast, Gary Y. Okihiro, in "Japanese Resistance in America's Concentration Camps: A Re-evaluation," *Amerasia Journal*, II (Fall 1973), 20-34, posits a Manzanar Model of Resistance as an explanatory tool for correlating forms of resistance—work slowdowns, struggles for internee self-determination, non-cooperation with Americanization programs and war-related industries—which operated within many of the camps.

12. Dec. 7, 1942. Similar newspaper accounts appearing in various West Coast newspapers, along with official WRA press releases, can be found in WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 17.

13. Girdner and Loftis, *Betrayal*, p. 263. One account of the riot which shares some of the features of the WRA-JACL perspective, Togo Tanaka's "An Analysis of the Manzanar Incident and Its Aftermath," WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16, deflates the ideological interpretation: "The impression given in most newspaper accounts of the Manzanar disturbance, that the instigators were all 'pro-Japan' or 'pro-Axis' . . . and that the intended victims of violence were 'pro-American'—all of them—is not necessarily an accurate picture. . . . Undoubtedly, differences in ideology and position on the war played an important part; but these were . . . incidental to the riot itself."



14. The inordinate attention paid Kurihara's role is reflected in the Berkeley collection. See JERS, Barnhart, Folders O8.10, R30.00, and R30.10. This preoccupation with Kurihara has been extended further by such secondary accounts as Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau's *To Serve the Devil: Colonialism and Sojourners* (New York: Vintage, 1971), pp. 166-270. *passim*.

15. *Concentration Camps USA* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 105. Attitude, of course, is extremely difficult to evaluate, but the documentation—both written and oral—pertinent to the Manzanar staff suggests that perhaps "contempt" is too strong a word to label their outlook. The staff member most frequently cited by internees for his contemptuous attitude toward them is Ned Campbell, the Assistant Project Director. For instance, after the Manzanar Riot, Harry Ueno is quoted, in "Harry Yoshiwo Ueno," Board of Review report, Dec.-Jan., 1942-3, WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16, as remarking that "Every time Ned Campbell speaks he thinks he talks to a slave." When an interviewer asked another internee, Togo Tanaka, whether he thought Ueno's appraisal of Campbell an accurate one, he replied, "Maybe that was the way he [Ueno] reacted. I just thought he [Campbell] was a loud, obnoxious someone who, you know, in another setting I wouldn't hire, period. But he was a bigshot." (Arthur A. Hansen, interviewer; Oral History 1271b, Japanese American Oral History Project, California State University, Fullerton, August 30, 1973, pp. 28-9. Hereafter all interviews from this collection will be cited as CSUF O.H.) Perhaps Campbell himself provides the clearest insight into why his manner may have been construed as contemptuous. The following exchange is drawn from an interview with him:

*Had you known Japanese Americans prior to taking this job? "If so, maybe one or two in my lifetime." You have been criticized by former internees for not having understood the Japanese psychology. Would you care to comment on that estimate? "Well, that is one hundred percent valid. . . . I went out there a real babe, believe me, a real babe. I went out there with the idea that there here was a job to be done. I shall never forget how distressed I was when, because of being the Assistant Project Director here, I was assigned a big Chrysler—which I liked; everybody likes a big car to drive around. And I felt happy about it. But then to have a boy, a young man, come up one day and say, 'You know, you're driving my car.' He just wanted to look at it and touch it again. It was the first time I realized just how hard we were stepping on these people's toes. Not only stepping on their toes but rubbing it in their faces. And I think probably that was my first realization that I was dealing with human beings, and this was just not a job to be done with so many bodies out there. Certainly I was very guilty of the fact of going out first with the notion that we have so many people—so many bodies, if you will—and we have a job to do: we've got to feed so many mouths, and we have so many people we have to get into the hospital, and we've got this and that and the other. But they were just numbers to me. And I think probably that instance was the beginning of my realization that I did have a human quotient to deal with." (Arthur A. Hansen, interviewer, CSUF O.H. 1329, August 15, 1974.)*

For an uncharacteristically favorable impression of Campbell by an internee, see Tad Uyeno, *Point of No Return* (Los Angeles: *Rafu Shimpo*, 1973), p. 12. Uyeno's story, which focuses upon the post-Manzanar Riot experiences of those "pro-American" evacuees sent to the Cow Creek Civilian Conservation Corps camp in Death Valley, was originally serialized in fifty installments in the *Rafu Shimpo* between August 22 and October 20, 1973.

16. Alexander H. Leighton, *Governing of Men* (New York: Octagon, 1964). Leighton's comments pertain specifically to the Poston staff, though they certainly have general applicability for all of the camps' staffs.

17. Recounting an occasion when he had sided with the internees against the WRA in a labor dispute, Ned Campbell has confessed that his action "might have been a mistake, a basic mistake in organization. If the boss tells you to do something, you either quit or go ahead and do what the boss tells you to do." (CSUF O.H. 1329.) That Campbell did not make many such "basic mistakes" is attested to by one internee, Koji Ariyoshi, in "Memories of Manzanar," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, 9 April 1971.

18. Douglas Nelson, *Heart Mountain: The History of an American Concentration Camp*, unpubl. M.A. thesis, Univ. of Wyoming, 1970, pp. 103-4.

19. For a more detailed explanation of how this "progressive" idea has manifested itself within American historiography, see Wise, *American Historical Explanations*, pp. 86-9, 97-100.

20. Cf. Okihiro, "Japanese Resistance." Okihiro's article is central to systematic inquiry into the phenomenon of resistance movements in the camps.

21. Such an interpretation occasions even less surprise when one considers the Manzanar administration's relative unfamiliarity with all internee groups except for the JACLers. Robert L. Brown, who as Reports Officer supervised the heavily JACLer-staffed *Manzanar Free Press*, provides a case in point:

*"I might have been isolated by the kids I had working on the newspaper, and the people that were around me. The girls in the office, the Block Leaders, the guy we finally made 'mayor' . . . an old Issei."*

*You felt, then that you might have been isolated maybe from what was going on in the population at large, so you couldn't account for, say, the people who were in the Kitchen Workers Union; they wouldn't have been people you were in contact with in the camp?*

*"No, I wasn't in contact with that group; I didn't know a damned thing about them." (Arthur A. Hansen, interviewer, CSUF O.H. 1375, December 13, 1973, p. 53.)*

And Ned Campbell recalls that "the young fellows around the newspaper officer were the ones I was more frequently in contact with, and I think they became more friendly to me, and therefore came to me with, not tattletaling, but forewarning." (CSUF O.H. 1329.) The experience of Brown and Campbell is especially significant since the latter also explains that, "The camp was a two or three man operation. I mean, two or three personalities or philosophies [ran the camp]: the police chief, Bob Brown, and me." (*Ibid.*)

22. Okihiro, "Japanese Resistance," pp. 20-1.

23. Three of these works have already been cited: Daniels, *Concentration Camps USA*; Nelson, *Heart Mountain*; and Okihiro, "Japanese Resistance." Three others are unpublished studies: two older doctoral dissertations—James Minoru Sakoda, *Minidoka: An Analysis of Changing Patterns of Social Interaction*, U.C. Berkeley, 1949, and Toshio Yatsushiro, *Political and Socio-Cultural Issues at Manzanar Relocation Centers: A Thematic Analysis*, Cornell, 1953—and a more recent M.A. thesis—Matthew Richard Speier, *Japanese-American Relocation Camp Colonization and Resistance to Resettlement: A Study in the Social Psychology of Ethnic Identity under Stress*, U.C. Berkeley, 1965. A final work is Jerome Charyn's *American Scrapbook* (New York:



Viking, 1969), a fictional account of the events encompasses in this paper which has deepened our appreciation for Gene Wise's insight that historians could profit by adopting the novelist's multifaceted view of experience.

24. In their study of the social psychology of the Manzanar Riot's membership "Riot and Rioters," *Western Political Quarterly*, 10 (Dec. 1957), 864, George Wada and James C. Davies provide a definition from which ours is extrapolated.

25. This dynamic conception of collective behavior stems from Speier, *Japanese-American Camp Colonization*, pp. 7-8.

26. As cited above in f. 23.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 209-95 *passim*.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

32. "Social distance" means the degree of sympathetic understanding that operates between any two persons. See Robert Howard Ross, *Social Distance as It Exists between the First and Second Generation Japanese in the City of Los Angeles and Vicinity*, unpubl. M.A. thesis, Univ. of So. Calif., 1939.

33. The result for many Nisei was confusion. Sue Kunitomi Embry recalls that during her youth in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo, the bilingual instructor in her Japanese Language School told her that "he thought that my direction in life was going different from the others, that he didn't think I would be too happy within the Japanese community." Arthur A. Hansen and David A. Hacker, interviewers, CSUF O.H. 1366a, November 30, 1973, p. 10.

34. Ross, *Social Distance*, pp. 113-14. Tamotsu Shibutani, in *Rumors in a Crisis Situation*, unpubl. M.A. thesis, Univ. of Chicago, 1944, p. 36, while emphasizing the cultural schism between Issei and Nisei, still acknowledges that as "the Nisei came of age in large numbers, they did not go out into the American community. Rather they developed a society of their own." Togo Tanaka, in "How to Survive Racism in America's Free Society," *Voices Long Silent*, p. 89, encapsulates the Nisei's prewar plight: "From 1936 [upon graduating *summa cum laude* from UCLA] to 1942, I immersed myself behind the walls of Little Tokyo, venturing forth into the wider community only as an advocate of equal rights or civil liberty and of the proposition that, although we may look Japanese, look harder and you'll find a good American."

35. WRA, Community Analysis Section, "Community Analysis Report No. 8, January 28, 1944: Japanese Americans Educated in Japan," p. 2, WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16, Folder 1.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

37. One Nisei, recalling her prewar attitude toward Kibei, offered the following response in an interview. *Were Kibei frowned upon by most of the Nisei?* "They were considered odd, and I guess it was mostly because of their language problem. And they really didn't make an adjustment into the community." CSUF O.H. 1366a. On the other hand, another Nisei interviewee maintains that "Kibei more or less looked down on us because they enjoyed the privileges of American citizenship plus they were fluent in the Japanese language; so they could wear both hats and be comfortable in both societies, where many of us were just Americans, period." George Fukasawa, interview.

38. WRA, "Japanese Americans Educated in Japan," p. 7. Although the data is drawn from this source, we have placed an entirely different construction upon it than that intended. To our knowledge, there exists no "sympathetic" study of Kibei; in fact, there seem to be very few Kibei studies of whatever persuasion.

39. John H. Burma, "Current Leadership Problems among Japanese Americans," *Sociology and Social Research*, XXXVII (Jan., 1953), p. 158.

40. Speier, *Japanese-American Camp Colonization*, pp. 4, 43. An Hawaiian Nisei, Koji Ariyoshi, explains that Nisei in Hawaii "disapproved of Mainland Niseis' obsession, particularly among middle-class and college-educated ones, to be like a middle or upper-class Caucasian." "They wanted," writes Ariyoshi, "to crash the white community and be accepted. Failing this, they were frustrated." See "Memories of Manzanar."

41. For an amplification of the prewar JACL and its relationship to the larger Japanese American community, see Togo Tanaka, "JACL," JERS, Barnhart, Folder O10.16.

42. See, for example, the case study of one family during the period prior to their evacuation to Manzanar in Leonard Broom and John I. Kitsuse, *The Managed Casualty: The Japanese-American Family in World War II* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1974), p. 64.

43. Shibutani, *Rumors*, p. 114.

44. Daniels, *Concentration Camps USA*, p. 26.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 27; Patricia Courteau, "Rafu Shimpō: A Look at Japanese-American Press Reaction, 1941-2," Calif. State Univ., Fullerton, seminar paper, Jan. 11, 1973. Daniels' assertion is not, however, clearly documented. In an effort to clarify this point, the authors, in a telephone conversation with Tanaka on August 29, 1974, queried him about the reputed talk. His response was he had possibly said something of this sort, but he very much doubted it and would like to be confronted with evidence to allay his doubt. As to another action attributed to him by Daniels, in *Concentration Camps USA*, p. 41, that "On the very evening of Pearl Harbor, editor Togo Tanaka went on station KHTR [sic], Los Angeles, and told his fellow Nisei: 'As Americans we now function as counter-espionage. Any act or word prejudicial to the United States committed by any Japanese must be warned and reported to the F.B.I., Naval Intelligence, Sheriff's Office, and local police,'" Tanaka absolutely denies its truth, if for no other reason than the fact that he has never been on radio. On the other hand, Daniels has firm evidential grounds here for his attribution. A perusal of the minutes of the Japanese American Citizens League Anti-Axis Committee for December 8, 1941 reveals that on December 7, 1941 at 11 p.m. Tanaka did broadcast such a message over KMTR (although the statement was released in behalf of Joe Masaoka, Chairman of the Coordinating Committee for National Defense of the Southern District JACL Council). See John Anson Ford Mss., Box 64, Huntington Library.

Courteau's evaluation of Tanaka's editorial policy is also open to some question, especially since she mentions that on December 31, 1941, the *Rafu* ran an article entitled "What Of Our Issei?" which covered half the width and the entire length of a page and was printed in capital letters. In her own words, this article "disclaimed the American feeling that legally those people [Issei] were 'enemy aliens' and . . . spoke out for them as true Americans . . . [and argued that] the great tragedy was in assuming all were enemies."

46. Hosokawa, *Nisei*, pp. 223-41. For Tanaka's arrest, see Tanaka, "How to Survive Racism," p. 93.



47. On December 13, 1941, Chairman Fred Tayama of the Anti-Axis Committee issued the following statement: "The United States is at war with the Axis. We shall do all in our power to help wipe out vicious totalitarian enemies. Every man is either friend or foe. We shall investigate and turn over to authorities all who by word or act consort with the enemies." (Anti-Axis Committee circular given to the authors by Karl Yoneda.)

Tokie Slocum's anti-subversive activities were pursued with such vigor that even his JACL allies were offended. See Togo Tanaka, interviewee; Betty E. Mitson and David A. Hacker, interviewers; CSUF O.H. 1271a, May 19, 1973, pp. 46-7 and CSUF O.H. 1271b, pp. 2-7.

One interviewee, who served simultaneously as the Vice-President of the Santa Monica JACL chapter and with the Santa Monica auxiliary police during the pre-evacuation period, maintains that the two roles of assisting the community and aiding the FBI and the military intelligence agencies were not mutually exclusive but compatible. Indeed, in the latter role he avers that he was able to exonerate many Issei from flagrantly irresponsible charges and spare them from being apprehended and sent to detention centers. (CSUF O.H. 1336.)

48. *Nichibei Times*, 15, 20 Feb. 1942; Shibutani, *Rumors*, pp. 109-10. For information about Kibei chapters of the JACL and their policy differences relative to the pre-evacuation and evacuation period, see CSUF O.H. 1336; and Karl Yoneda, interviewee; Ronald C. Larson and Arthur A. Hansen, interviewers, CSUF O.H. 1376b, March 3, 1974.

49. Shibutani, *Rumors*, pp. 114-15.

50. WRA, "The Manzanar 'Incident'," p. 2. Both the unrepresentativeness and the unpopularity of the JACL in Los Angeles is apparent in the following remarks of one Nisei: "The record of the Los Angeles Citizen's League is such that your stomach would turn when looking into it. To say it represented the Nisei would be silly; out of thousands of eligible citizens the L.A. branch could number about one hundred members. . . . Among the Nisei in Los Angeles the League was considered a malignant cancer; if the evacuation had not taken place it should surely have been cut out and a truly representative group would have taken its place. To most Nisei the L.A. league is as distasteful as the pro-axis label." Letter dated Dec. 20, 1942, to Ralph P. Merritt, Project Director, Manzanar War Relocation Center, from Sachio Saito, Block 33-4-5, Manzanar, California. For an analysis and overview of anti-JACL sentiment in prewar Los Angeles, see Togo Tanaka, "A Report on the Manzanar Riot of Sunday, December 6, 1942," JERS, Barnhart, Folder O10.12, pp. 13-15; "Addenda," pp. 40-9.

51. All of the rumors derive from Shibutani, *Rumors*, pp. 115-16.

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 162-6.

53. *Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance* (New York: Wiley, 1966), pp. 3-29, *passim*.

54. Shibutani, *Rumors*, p. 66. The collective indictment of the Kibei and the reasons behind it are implicit in the following remark by one JACL official; "We had most of our opposition [to the JACL strategy of cooperating with government officials in the evacuation] from a group who called themselves Kibei, that were educated in Japan and who, of course, were indoctrinated in Japanese propaganda and culture through their formative years over there." (CSUF O.H. 1336.)

55. The preceding four rumors are drawn from Shibutani, *Rumors*, pp. 66-7. Shibutani does not attribute these rumors specifically to JACLer sources, though internal evidence strongly suggests that the rumors did indeed originate there. Our imputation here, therefore, represents merely historical inference, not factual information.

56. Morton Grodzins, in "Making Un-Americans," p. 577, describes Manzanar's WCCA leadership as "a generally unfriendly staff." For a sharply contrasting estimate, see Robert L. Brown's observations in CSUF O.H. 1375. Brown's recollection is confirmed by his diary entries during the WCCA tenure at Manzanar. This diary is presently being prepared for publication by Arthur A. Hansen.

57. The residents of these two communities expressed considerable hostility toward the evacuees, thereby compounding the problem of camp administration and internee morale. David J. Bertagnoli and Arthur A. Hansen have interviewed extensively among residents of the Owens Valley communities and attempted to assess their reaction to the camp and its internee population. See CSUF O.H. 1343, 1344, 1345, 1346, 1347, 1378, 1379, 1384, 1385, 1393, 1394, 1395, 1396, 1398, 1399, 1401 (which is reproduced in its entirety in Hansen and Mitson, *Voices Long Silent*, pp. 143-60), and 1402. In addition, a local businessman and politician, Rudie Henderson, in *Final Report: Manzanar Relocation Center*, I, (Feb. 1946), unpubl. mans., appendix 26, pp. 217-18, describes the reaction of his fellow Owens Valley residents as one of "almost unanimous . . . resentment and open hostility." Henderson also describes a vituperative petition, signed by 500 local merchants and citizens, designed to prevent internees from shopping in nearby Lone Pine.

58. Rice, *Manzanar Center*, pp. 25-8; Yatsushiro, *Thermal Analysis*, pp. 342-3; Ariyoshi, "Memories of Manzanar," and Kiyotoshi Iwamoto, *Economic Aspects of the Japanese Relocation Centers in the United States*, unpubl. M.A. thesis, Stanford Univ., 1946, p. 13.

\*59. Broom and Kitsuse, *Managed Casualty*, p. 40, is explicit on the favored role accorded JACLers in all of the camps: "One of the first administrative policies was to assign preferential status to the Nisei. The Administration systematically encouraged the emancipation of the Nisei from Issei control. Special recognition was accorded to the leadership of the JACL, which was committed to cooperation with the Administration. The preferential treatment toward the Nisei extended into all aspects of center life: community organization, employment, leisure, and relocation."

Whereas a few scholars, such as Daniels, *Concentration Camps USA*, p. 79, have alluded to the role of the Japanese American Left within the evacuation experience, this subject has yet to be pursued in a systematic or comprehensive way. A recent publication, John Modell, ed., *The Kikuchi Diary: Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp* (Urbana, Ill.: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1973), provides a starting point for such an inquiry. Additional understanding of this topic can be gleaned from an examination of the newspaper *Doho*, Japanese American Research Project (JARP), Special Collections, UCLA Research Library, and two unpublished studies focusing upon the policies and personalities of this Los Angeles-based "progressive" journal: Tanaka, "Report on the Manzanar Riot," JERS, Barnhart, "Addenda," pp. 8-18, and Ronald C. Larson, "Doho: The Communist Japanese-American Press, 1938-1942," Calif. State Univ., Fullerton seminar paper, Dec. 17, 1973.

While, for the purpose of convenient analysis, this study treats the JACL leadership and the left-wing intellectuals at Manzanar under the generic label of



"JACLers," it should be noted that there were marked differences in overall background and philosophy between these two groups. Indeed, the contrast, in spite of their shared views on evacuation, camp objectives, and the war, was so extreme that Togo Tanaka, in "An Analysis of the Manzanar Incident" and CSUF O.H. 1271b, pp. 14-20, designates leftists like Karl Yoneda, Koji Ariyoshi, Chiye Mori, James Oda, Joe Blamey, and Tom Yamazaki as the "Anti-JACL" group. "It should be recalled," writes Tanaka in "An Analysis of the Manzanar Incident," "that members of Group II [left-wingers] arrived at Manzanar as evacuees before Group I [JACL]. This was true almost without exception. Group II members established themselves at the relocation center first. When Group I members arrived a month or so later, they generally discovered that Group II 'had laid the mines and torpedoes in advance of our coming; they prepared the Administration—and volunteer evacuees for a hostile reception for us; they kept up the vicious rumors to perpetuate themselves in their petty little jobs, continuing jealousies and frictions of pre-war and pre-evacuation days.'" Group II's influence was particularly notable both in the English and Japanese editions of the *Manzanar Free Press*, which was heavily staffed by its members.

Unlike the JACL, who supported the evacuation program primarily for patriotic reasons—to uphold American principles and to safeguard citizenship rights—leftist support stemmed from their internationalist convictions: "We were," reflects Karl Yoneda, in "Manzanar: Another View," *Rafu Shimpō*, Supplement (19 Dec. 1973), "at war with the most vicious, brutal racists—Hitler's fascist butchers, Mussolini's musclemen, and the Japanese imperial rapists of Nanking. We had no choice but to accept the U.S. as it was at that time, and fight on the side of the Allies. Although we were guilty in not speaking out against the Evacuation Order and acquiesced fully, we have NO GUILT OR SHAME regarding our efforts to defeat the fascist Axis. We were sure there would be ovens in Manzanar and other camps if the Mein Kampers won the war and that all of us, including all non-white and white anti-fascists would end up in those ovens." A similar outlook is expressed by Koji Ariyoshi in "Memories of Manzanar."

60. Robert L. Brown, in CSUF O.H. 1375, pp. 19-20, says that this editorial was a gambit designed to circumvent possible resistance by DeWitt to a camp newspaper. According to Brown, "Larry Benedict [a public relations man employed by the WCCA] said [to Brown], 'I don't want to ask, because I know that the old general won't let us do a newspaper, so why don't you just print a newspaper anyway? And on the front page, in a little editorial, why don't you put a little thing thanking the general for allowing you to do it, and he won't remember whether he allowed you to do it or not, and that will make him feel good.' So we did that. We put a little box and thanked General DeWitt for permission to print the paper, because it was such a necessary item. And I remember the old general was tickled to death. He said, 'That's fine. That's fine. That's what they need to do over there; they have to have communication.'" While this anecdote explains the origin of the item, it must nonetheless have rankled the Issei and Kibei—and no doubt many Nisei—who read it.

61. Yatsushiro, *Thematic Analysis*, pp. 310; 356.

62. The growing Japanization of Manzanar's Nisei population occasioned particular concern among JACLers, who communicated this development to the administration. See Tom Yamazaki's personal and confidential report dated August 1942, WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 9, *passim*, and Togo Tanaka and Joe Masaoka, "Historical Documentation: Project Report No. 35," dated Aug. 12,

1942 and "Project Report No. 76," dated Dec. 1, 1942, in WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 9. The steady evolution of this trend is best grasped through reading the complete collection of project reports submitted by Tanaka and Masaoka between June and December 1942. See JERS, Barnhart, Folders O10.06 and O10.08.

63. See Yamazaki, "Report: Aug. 1, 1942," p. 10.

64. Morris E. Opler, "A History of Internal Government at Manzanar, March 1942 to December 6, 1942," WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 12, Folder 1, pp. 4-30. Although this report issued from a WRA source, it was consistently critical of the WRA-JACL perspective and adopted a line of analysis closely conforming to what we have termed an ethnic perspective. This situation did not endear Opler to the Manzanar administration. When a copy of this report was forwarded to the head of the Community Management Division in Washington by the Manzanar representative of this division, she felt obliged to append the following message:

"Mr. Merritt [the Project Director] has read it and has some question in his mind about the material. He feels that the presentation is one-sided in that it criticizes but does not attempt to explain WRA policies and the action of WRA personnel, while, at all points, it attempts to vindicate evacuee attitudes and actions. He feels that some of the events are capable of interpretations which are not suggested by Dr. Opler. . . . I don't have the same questions . . . but I realize, after talking with Mr. Merritt, that the impression given to an outsider might be very one-sided. Mr. Merritt has asked Mr. [Dillon] Myer [WRA Director] to look over the material and let us know whether he thinks it is desirable to continue with this type of interpretive, historical study." (Letter dated July 26, 1944, to Dr. John Provine, from Lucy Adams [for Ralph P. Merritt])

65. "Internal Government," p. 30.

66. Memorandum dated July 4, 1942, to Ted Akahoshi from Ned Campbell, Asst. Project Director; subject: meetings conducted in the Manzanar Relocation Area, WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 9.

67. Letter dated July 10, 1942, to Roy Nash, Project Director, and Ned Campbell, Asst. Project Director, Manzanar Relocation Center, Manzanar, Calif., from Karl G. Yoneda, Block 4 Leader, 4-2-2, Manzanar, Calif., WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 9.

68. For confirmation of Akahoshi's cooperative stance, see "Board of Review Reports, Dec.-Jan. 1942-3: Ted Ichiji Akahoshi," WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16, and J. Y. Kurihara, "Murder in Manzanar," JERS, Barnhart, Folder O8.10, p. 12.

69. All of the subsequent statements relative to the Block Leaders' debate over the Japanese language ban are drawn from the July 10, 1942 letter from Yoneda to Nash and Campbell, as cited above in f. 63.

70. In an earlier version of this paper, in Hansen and Mitson, *Voices Long Silent*, pp. 66-7, the phrase ". . . Karl Yoneda, a Kibei Communist who aligned himself with the JACLers, outdoing them in his chauvinism" was used. In a letter, dated Oct. 1974, to Arthur A. Hansen, Yoneda objected that: "This characterization as a blind patriot hardly jibes with my activities, in Japan as a youth, and [in the] U.S. since 1926 to date. My life has been an open struggle against imperialism, exploitation, fascism, racism and for decent working



conditions and peace in the world." Our intention was certainly not to discount or to depreciate Yoneda's acknowledged lifelong achievements as a champion of human rights and dignity. Perhaps "chauvinism" was an unhappy term for us to have used in this connection, but it was intended to convey that in the context of the camp Yoneda assumed a higher profile than JACL leaders (with the exception of Tokie Slocum) in regard to American patriotism. We believe this was the case for two reasons: (1) JACL leaders were so stigmatized that they had to muffle their patriotism during the early months at Manzanar; and (2) Yoneda's ideological strategy encompassed the use of aggressive pro-Americanism as a tactical weapon to mobilize sentiment and manpower against the Axis forces. Possibly a third reason is suggested by Yoneda's fellow leftist, Tom Yamazaki, in "Report: Aug., 1942," p. 10, when he asserts that "Karl Yoneda and myself are only ones [in the Block Leaders Council] who hold pro-democratic convictions and are working . . . to support the government war efforts." No doubt Yoneda's patriotism was shrilly pitched in part because of his involvement in a body where pro-Japan attitudes were particularly evident and dominant.

71. Yoneda letter to Nash and Campbell, July 10, 1942.

72. *Ibid.*

73. Tanaka and Masaoka, "Project Report No. 36," dated July 29, 1942, WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 9.

74. Letter dated Jan. 7, 1946, to M. M. Tozier, Chief, Reports Division, WRA, Barr Bldg., Wash., D.C., from Ralph P. Merritt, Project Director, Manzanar War Relocation Center, Manzanar, Calif., WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16, Folder 8. Since the JACLers were not "electable" as block leaders because of their general unpopularity among the evacuees, the Citizens Federation was conceived as a counter-organization to mobilize support for their objectives. For a comprehensive analysis of this group's aims and organizational development, see Tanaka, "Report on the Manzanar Riot," JERS, Barnhart, "Adenda," pp. 19-27.

75. Tanaka and Masaoka, "Project Report No. 36." For a description of this meeting by a principal participant, Karl Yoneda, see CSUF O.H. 1376b. Another account is offered by George Fukasawa in CSUF O.H. 1336. Fukasawa, second-ranking member of the evacuee police force, attended the meeting to provide internal security. Because Tokie Slocum was "targeted for elimination," Fukasawa accompanied him to his quarters after the gathering. Fukasawa describes Slocum, a special officer in the internee intelligence agency, as "a super-patriot type of person. . . . He was very vocal . . . he'd get up at these meetings and he was quite an orator. I think, he was the type of person that would engender a lot of hatred from anybody who would be opposed to his views."

76. Merritt letter to Tozier, Jan. 7, 1946.

77. Opler, "Internal Government," p. 40. The following excerpts from an interview with Karl Yoneda shed light both on the purpose of the Manzanar Citizens Federation and the petition drive for a second front and also suggest that the real moving force in both was the leftist faction in the pro-American coalition, not the JACL leaders.

*You mean the [JACL] didn't have much input into the Block Leaders Council and so they really set up an alternative organization [the Citizens Federation] that would be able to have some policy statements voiced at*

*the camp? "That's the way, I guess, they started, but when we came in—Jimmy Oda and myself—we turned it around and made it into an entirely different organization altogether, which they didn't like. As soon as we got in, we took over the leadership—Koji Ariyoshi, Jimmy Oda, and myself. Togo Tanaka, Joe Grant Masaoka [who was the brother of JACL executive secretary Mike Masaoka and, along with Tanaka, the Manzanar documentary historian for the WRA], Kiyoshi Higashi [the evacuee police chief], and Fred Tayama, they didn't say 'boo'." What were the differences in philosophy with respect to the Citizens Federation? How did the JACL look at its purpose? And how did the people in your group look at its purpose differently? "Our purpose . . . one of the purposes was to push this petition drive [to open a second front]. This was not done in the name of the Federation. But through the Federation we saw that we could muster more support among the evacuees. . . . [We wanted] to open a second front and utilize manpower of the Japanese Americans in the camps. We obtained 218 signatures, among them Fred Tayama, Togo Tanaka, Joe Grant Masaoka and some 40 women." And what was the JACL's philosophy? How did that differ? What do you think they wanted out of the organization? "Well, the JACL people . . . you know, actually, they didn't know what to do. Many times they asked us, 'what do you think?' Because we became the driving force within the Manzanar Citizens Federation. While opening the second front was a Communist Party campaign, it was also our thinking and that of the bulk of the American peoples' contention (see newspapers of the day), because the U.S. and British governments refused to open such a front (it was finally opened in 1944). This would be a way to help the Russian front, which was being beaten by the Nazis and the Russian people [were] retreating. If opened, then Hitler would have to divert more of his troops toward Europe, and the Soviet Union could recoup." So you in a sense maneuvered the JACL into certain policies through the Citizens Federation. They really didn't know what they were doing at this point. "Yes. Circulating the petition was a good idea, said Tanaka and Masaoka. (And I still think so.) Further, they (JACL leaders) were in the same quandary, but we had a better understanding of the true nature of World War II. Of course, one of the driving forces was Koji Ariyoshi (the President of the Citizens Federation), who had been approached by JACLers to head the MCF because of his non-JACL status."*

For a copy of the second front petition alluded to by Yoneda, see JARP, Box 152, Folder 4, which also includes other important documents bearing on Yoneda's activities at Manzanar. Ariyoshi's role in and attitude toward the Citizens Federation is discussed in "Memories of Manzanar."

78. Tanaka and Masaoka, "Project Report No. 35," dated Aug. 11, 1942, includes the following cautionary note: "A large proportion of the English-speaking, American-educated population, composed largely of younger persons, appear to be confused, bewildered, in many cases bitter; they listen readily to pro-Japan elders and Japan-educated & indoctrinated citizens."

79. WRA, "Information Regarding Kibeis taken from Block Reports, Activities of Town Hall, and Special Meetings, Aug. 4-8, 1942," WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16, Folder 8.

80. *Ibid.*

81. Fred Tayama, "Brief Report of the Kibei Meeting held at Mess Hall 15, Manzanar Relocation Center, August 8, 1942," WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 17,



Folder 1. A copy of this report, which was sent to the FBI, was apparently given to Joe Kurihara. Since it recounted his part in the meeting, Kurihara was determined to kill Tayama. See Emily Brown, "Story of Joe Kurihara," JERS, Barnhart, Folder E2.332, p. 30 and Merritt letter to Tozier, Jan. 7, 1942. Ironically, Tayama's report seems to have been passed along to Kurihara by Tokie Slocum, who aimed to distract attention away from his own reputed "stool-pigeoning" activities and concentrate all the blame on Tayama. See Brown, "Joe Kurihara," pp. 29-30.

82. *Ibid.*

83. *Ibid.* Karl Yoneda has provided a graphic profile of Ben Kishi:

*Who was Ben Kishi exactly?* "I describe him as a Meiji samurai type . . . he says something very exciting that the people go for. For instance, when he opened the Kibei meeting, he didn't say, 'Men are dying in Asia,' but 'Men are dying, let's stand up and have a one minute silence.' He put it in such a way that everybody, even myself, wondered, 'My god, what the hell's this guy trying to prove?' Later I figure out, my gosh, this guy is really pulling this pro-Japan stunt." *Did you think of him as pretty intelligent?* "No, he isn't; he's one of those 'ghetto-boss' type guys. Oh yeah, he knows how to maneuver: 'You follow me. You listen to me. I'll take care of you.'" *Did you see him as the major leader of any pro-japan sentiment within the camp? Did you think that Kishi was the leader?* "Oh yes, definitely, the leading 'open' spokesman from the start."

(CSUF O.H. 1376b.) This portrait of Kishi needs to be set alongside another one offered by John Sonoda, also identified with the JACler group at Manzanar. Explaining a beating delivered to him in June 1942 by Kishi and five other Kibei for allegedly discriminating against Kibei in his capacity with the Personnel and Employment division, Sonoda relates that "Ben Kishi was very emotional about it all. When he was telling me about my wrong attitude towards a lot of things, tears were streaming down his face. He said we were all Japanese and we all owed our allegiance to the Emperor of Japan, and all that." (As quoted in Tanaka, "Report on the Manzanar Riot," p. 19.)

84. Official Bulletin, dated Aug. 10, 1942, from Roy Nash, Project Director, War Relocation Authority, Manzanar, California, WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16, Folder 1.

85. In addition, this month saw the wholesale resignation from foremanship jobs and the refusal of administrative cooperationists to accept any positions of responsibility whatsoever. "With the growth of disillusionment over relocation camp conditions, and the rise of the Issei to dominant positions within the Japanese community," explains Morton Grodzins in "The Manzanar Shooting," JERS, Barnhart, Folder O10.04, p. 9, "a prestige job became a marked liability rather than an asset. It subjected its holder to threats of violence or to violence itself." See also Opler, "Internal Government," pp. 51-2.

86. Report dated Aug. 24, 1942, to Roy Nash, Project Director, Manzanar, from Karl G. Yoneda, 4-2-2, Manzanar; subject: Block Leader's Election in Block 4, WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 9, Folder 3.

87. The point here is not to contradict Yoneda's assertion, in CSUF O.H. 1376b, that while in Manzanar he had "the future of Japanese in America always at heart." Rather, it is merely to suggest that most internees, at least by the summer of 1942, were inclined to believe the very opposite.

88. Opler, "Internal Government," pp. 56-7.

89. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

90. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-2.

91. Robert Throckmorton [Project Attorney], "Biographies of Riot Participants in the Lone Pine Jail: Harry Ueno," [Jan. 1943 (?)], WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 17; Opler, "Internal Government," pp. 72-3; Rice, *Manzanar Center*, pp. 36-7. Karl Yoneda's recollections on Ueno and the Kitchen Workers Union deserve careful attention. "He [Ueno] is such an unknown figure. He talks about organizing Kitchen Workers Union. To me, through my experience of organizing, he just had a handful [of followers] in his kitchen and among the strong pro-Japan kitchen crew in my block, Block 4. . . . Actually, they don't have an organization such as the Kitchen Workers Union; they merely name themselves." *You mean few kitchen workers really identified in any strong sense with the Kitchen Workers Union?* "I don't think so, because I was there. If they had such a force, I am sure not only I, but others would have detected it right away." (CSUF O.H. 1376b.) On the other hand, Kazuo Suzukawa, a member of the Union, claimed that between the time of its Organization in September to the time of the Manzanar Revolt its membership grew to consist of the chef and two representatives from each of the thirty-six kitchens. See Throckmorton, "Biographies of Riot Participants in the Lone Pine Jail: Kazuo Suzukawa."

92. Iwamoto, *Economic Aspects*, p. 28. According to Togo Tanaka, in "Report on the Manzanar Riot," p. 22, Ueno is alleged to have maintained that "the person who controls the mess halls of Manzanar controls the whole relocation center."

93. Quoted in Opler, "Internal Government," pp. 74-5.

94. Apparently neither the camp internal security nor the FBI, who frequently came into camp for investigations, were able to penetrate the organizational structure of this group. See CSUF O.H. 1336. The clearest insight into the membership of the Manzanar Underground emerges from Karl Yoneda's "Manzanar: Another View." Herein he explains that the membership "consisted of between 25 and 30 members who constantly disrupted things by spreading false rumors and threatening the lives of evacuees, thus keeping the camp in constant turmoil." Most of the group, in Yoneda's opinion, were "kamikaze-type supporters of fascist-militarism," not "truly 'genuine protesters' against evacuation." In his diary entries quoted in this article, there is mention of their pressure-tactics as early as June 16, 1942: "Scavenger truck with Kibei crew, bearing Black Dragon flags (skull painted white on black cloth), appears in front of Block Leaders Council and Camouflage Net Garnishing Project telling everyone not to work on nets." An entry of July 22 indicates that pressure had given way to terrorism: "Very hot, 114 degrees. While Tokie Slocum (WWI vet) and I were talking in front of Block 4 office, a Black Dragon truck suddenly charged us at full speed. We managed to jump onto top step. Truck busts lower step and speeds away." Yoneda's diary is due to be published under the title of *Manzanar Diary*.

95. Rice, *Manzanar Center*, p. 53.

96. Yamaguchi later served on the Negotiating Committee of Five during the day of the Manzanar Revolt.

97. Tanaka and Masaoka, "Project Report No. 76," provides the documentary source for all of the quoted commentary at this meeting.



98. Prefiguring the action that followed a few days later, the documentary historians, in the report cited above in f. 97, noted that small group discussions transpired after the meeting: "Typical comment: 'Why don't the Nisei who think they are Americans get out of the camp. They are disturbing element. If they are willing to throw away their citizenship and become true Japanese, then that's different. We certainly don't need self-government.' It is also suggestive that this meeting was held entirely in Japanese."

99. See p. 18 of this study.

100. Tanaka, "Report on the Manzanar Riot," p. 23.

101. Throckmorton, "Ueno," pp. 3-10.

102. Grodzins, "Manzanar Shooting," p. 4.

103. Tanaka, "Report on the Manzanar Riot," p. 3.

104. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

105. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4. For *Doho's* attacks on Tayama, see the issues of Mar. 1, 1939, July 15, 1941, and Aug. 15, 1941. Prefiguring the later alliance between *Doho* staffers like Karl Yoneda and James Oda and JACL leaders like Fred Tayama and Tokio Slocum at Manzanar, one should note that Tayama, as Chairman of the Anti-Axis Committee, appointed *Doho* editor, Shuji Fujii, to its subcommittee on publicity. For political reasons, Tayama reluctantly suspended Fujii, though when Slocum succeeded Tayama he reactivated Fujii and expanded his activities to encompass the subcommittee on press control as well. See *Doho*, Jan. 2, 1942 and Feb. 6, 1942.

106. Quoted in Tanaka, "Report on the Manzanar Riot," p. 5.

107. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

108. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13; Grodzins, "Manzanar Shooting," pp. 2-3.

109. Tanaka, "Report on the Manzanar Riot," p. 8. See also the documentary attachments, pp. 8a and 8b.

110. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

111. Grodzins, "Manzanar Shooting," pp. 3-4.

112. Opler, "Internal Government," p. 124.

113. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

114. Even WRA official sources confirm this fact: "Not one person interviewed in camp following the riots had a good word to say for Tayama. One young Nisei, 24 years old, who holds a most responsible position in camp and knew Tayama prior to evacuation had this to say following December 5: 'Group hatred of Tayama was the general touch off as far as the population was concerned.'" (WRA, "The Manzanar Incident," p. 1.)

115. In the words of Morton Grodzins, in "Manzanar Shooting," p. 12, "It can be said without doubt that the majority of the people at Manzanar did not believe anyone, guilty or not, should be punished for beating Fred Tayama. Tayama was a public nuisance. His assailants were to be praised, not punished." Grodzins cites the following internee reactions as typical: " 'It was hard to find a single person at Manzanar who expressed sympathy for Tayama.' 'Even the highly Americanized and cooperative Nisei were of the opinion that though the approach was unorthodox, Tayama deserved the beating. Since there was no other way of his getting punished, the beating fit the situation perfectly.' " (*Ibid.*) Grodzin's report is the best account of the social psychology

of the Manzanar camp at the time of the Revolt. Written immediately after the disturbance, it makes no attempt to judge ideology or morality but merely tries to reflect public opinion. In so doing, it too is written from an ethnic (i.e., community) perspective.

116. See, for example, Lucy Adams, "Notes on Manzanar Disturbances," JERS, Bancroft, Folder O10.00, p. 6.

117. See Tanaka and Masaoka, "Project Reports, June to Dec., 1942," *passim*.

118. "Manzanar Shooting," p. 13.

119. The names of the Committee members, with their generation and age, are as follows: (1) Genji Yamaguchi, Issei, forty; (2) Sakichi Hashimoto, Issei, forty-two; (3) Kazuo Suzukawa, Issei/Kibei, thirty-eight; (4) Shigetoshi Tateishi, Kibei, thirty-five; and (5) Joe Kurihara, Nisei, forty-seven. Although their average age of slightly over forty years is some ten years younger than the average for the Issei generation in camp, nonetheless they were certainly not young men. It is also significant that the two college educated members of the Committee, Yamaguchi and Kurihara, took the leading roles in the negotiation proceedings. See Board of Review reports for Yamaguchi, Hashimoto, Tateishi, Suzukawa, and Kurihara, dated Dec.-Jan., 1942-3, WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16. On Kurihara's counterorganization, alternatively called the Manzanar Center Federation, see WRA, *Final Report: Manzanar*, I. p. 27, and Brown, "Story of Joe Kurihara," pp. 24-5.

120. Tanaka, "Report on the Riot," pp. 88-9, 102.

121. Uyeno, *Point of No Return*, p. 20.

122. See f. 14.

123. See Ariyoshi, "Memories of Manzanar," Yoneda, "Manzanar: Another View," and Kurihara, "Murder in Manzanar," p. 25.

124. A good insight into the administrative style of Winchester and Brown can be ascertained from reading their comments in the Board of Review reports, as cited above in f. 119. The reports suggest that Brown was later dismissed from his position when it was discovered that he had falsified his educational record on his employment application. See letter dated July 14, 1943, to Charles Carr, United States District Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice, 312 No. Spring St., Los Angeles, Calif., from Ralph P. Merritt, Project Director, Manzanar War Relocation Center, Manzanar, Calif., WRAA, Coll. 122, Box 16.

125. Tanaka, in "Report on the Riot," p. 105, cites the eyewitness testimony of one internee: "The mob was raising hell outside [the jail]; they first sang 'Kimigayo' (the Japanese National Anthem); they followed it up with 'Aikoku Koshin Kyoku' (A Japanese patriotic march), then with 'Kaigun March' (Navy marching hymn). They even started dancing the ondo. They would get close to the soldiers and taunt them."

126. The restoration of Issei dominance and community ethnicity is a theme taken up in a number of studies dealing with America's concentration camps. The most notable examples include: Yatsushiro, *Thermal Analysis*; Sakoda, *Minidoka*; and Speier, *Japanese-American Camp Colonization*. The first has special relevance for the Poston center, the second for the Minidoka center, and the third for all of the camps. The present authors are applying this same theme to the Manzanar center in a study tentatively titled *Manzanar: A Perspectivist History*.

For a discussion of the patterns of resistance utilized by the evacuee populations in the various centers, see Okihiro, "Japanese Resistance."