

☆ E2.58:3

3 of 5

Friseno

67/14
C

109.9

FRESNO COUNTY SYNOPSIS

(Interviewing, Jan. 24, 25, 26, 1945)

Katharine Luomala, Community Analysis Section)

No simple, snap judgment can be made about Fresno County attitudes toward the return or how they can be expected to develop. In this large county, which formerly had a heavy concentration of Japanese both in the city and the county, attitudes are too various, complex, and shifting to be summed up neatly. It is a county in which anyone working for the evacuees can never complacently assume that things have quieted down and the tide has turned for the better if only positively friendly actions and no negative ones occur for a couple of days.

Unlike small counties which formerly had relatively few evacuees, Fresno County probably could not be controlled by a few key civic leaders operating from the county seat and business center. Each village seems to operate as a tight, little independent nation, with one eye on its neighbor. Each has its own peculiar conditions and does not seem to depend on the city of Fresno, county seat, for guidance and examples.

The interviewer was more aware of rumor-mongering in Fresno and Tulare Counties than in San Joaquin, Merced, and Stanislaus Counties. In the latter counties people talked about the Doi, garbling what they had read in the newspapers, but they had little to say in the way of rumors about their own county. In Fresno and Tulare Counties, on the contrary, each village tells exaggerated rumors about the other with regard to the treatment of evacuees and their property.

Mr. Hudson, Fresno Co. Farm Agent, told some typical rumors he had heard. One was that at Selma every piece of Japanese property has been burned. Another was that around Sanger 200 Japanese homes have been burned in the last year. A Sanger or Selma storekeeper is rumored to have told an evacuee who wanted to buy a pump, "Cash to you." Other storekeepers are rumored to be saying they will sell Japanese nothing or will demand cash on the spot.

Besides the past history of anti-Japanese feeling in the county, the disturbed condition evinced by rumor-mongering is due to the fact that several evacuees have returned to the county, people know about their return, and negative incidents have already occurred.

Almost every village on the Selma-Kingsburg-and-Fowler axis and the Sanger-Reedley-Parlier-Orosi-Dinuba axis, both south of Fresno, has a record of concrete negative action like threats, arson, or rock-throwing, side by side with a record of concrete positive action. One cannot assume that as a cancellation. Both extremes seem just as active, but so far the tide has not turned so that the friendly extreme predominates.

Reedley is an example of this jockeying. A Caucasian, Floyd Barsoom, has requested an evacuee neighbor and friend, S. Miyamoto, to recruit six families at Poston to work for him and occupy the family units he is building. On the negative side, Reedley has had nation wide adverse publicity because of refusing to hire a teacher with an adopted Japanese child. A resident of one of the villages wrote indignantly to the Fresno Bee to ask since when Americans, especially American school boards, made war on little girls, even those of Japanese descent. Reedley feels slightly embarrassed and chastened now. Also it is beginning to feel the Japanese might be preferable to the many Mennonites in their midst whose pacifism gets their boys draft deferments to farm profitably while non-Mennonite Reedley farm boys are drafted. It is not clear that they intend to play the two groups against each other. The Reedley newspaper is said to be unfriendly.

At Orosi (Tulare County but on one of the above geographical axes) and Sanger, WRA has also had requests for evacuee labor with promises of housing and sometimes of aid in community acceptance. Yet Orosi is where 30 business men including the local banker "counselled" two evacuees to leave before January 30. As far as is known to the interviewer, Orosi has no positive, vocal group through which friendly residents can speak. The seriousness of this lack is shown by the behavior of the business men. In many other villages, businessmen have been reluctant to see Japanese return but in the interests of their community and constitutional principles have counselled Caucasians to respect not defy the Army decision.

Who is favorable and who is unfavorable follows no particular occupation. The Orosi banker joined the intimidating group; the Parlier banker's praise (Mr. Higginbotham) of Japanese as good business risks in paying bills hints of a friendly attitude from a leader in a town which was almost entirely Japanese before evacuation. The Selma editor is friendly, but the Reedley, Dinuba and Orosi editors are unfriendly. Individual farmers in Orosi, Sanger, and Reedley request evacuee labor but the farmer on the County War Board and AAA have already hedged on payments and aid to evacuees.

The Farm Security Administration, under the local supervision of Mr. Robert Pontius, has already one evacuee request for aid on file. The evacuee has been refused financial support everywhere else. Fair treatment of evacuees can be expected from the FSA in this district.

Kingsburg has either begun to reconcile itself to the return of evacuees or its relative air of quiet may reflect that opposition has gone underground. Evacuee property was destroyed here, and a Swedish-born Legionnaire circulated a negative resolution which someone in the community nipped in the bud by saying he would sign if the resolution would include all foreign-born of nations not definitely on the Allied side. As there was much talk just then of Swedish ball bearings going to Germany, the Legionnaire quietly left and no more was heard of the petition. On January 29, a Kingsburg reader wrote to the Bee demanding Japanese be kept in relocation centers so that they will not become public charges.

Mr. Fischer, District WRA Relocation Officer, who has visited throughout the county unlike the interviewer, states that feeling is divided 50-50, with 50% of the people being very friendly, while of the remaining 50%, 40% are lukewarm but persuadable. He knows of no organized opposition groups.

In Fresno itself, evacuees have prominent friends among ministers and college people who have worked for them through the Committee on American Principles and Fair Play. Some of these friends are handicapped, however, by their frequent association with other unpopular causes. Dr. Geo. Rundquist has been organizing an executive steering committee made up of leading city officials, business and professional men. A sub-committee in West Fresno, where most evacuees lived might be helpful to this executive committee. A large meeting friendly to the evacuees was being planned when the interviewer was in Fresno. It was to be held at the Armenian-Congregational Church.

Fresno has minority group problems which may affect returning evacuees for good or bad. The large Armenian population, especially that in the Congregational Church, is concerned about the Japanese as they are a minority group themselves. Orientals, Negroes, Armenians, and others from the Near East have been discriminated against for many years through restrictive deed covenants. Now two suits over violation of these covenants by Armenian home purchases are stirring up the Armenian people. Letters pro and con appear in the Fresno Bee.

Sympathy with evacuees through identification also exists in the Russian-German group from the Ukraine. Fresno is said to have few Filipinos except in crop season. Recently, Mexican zoot-suit gangs from L. A., "pachukos," have been coming to Fresno and making trouble. West Fresno school teachers think Japanese might

have cause to fear them, because their lawlessness may extend to include any unpopular group.

Friendly as some West Fresno teachers at Edison H. S. and Lincoln Grammar School were to Japanese students and their families, they are reluctant to have them back, mostly because of the greatly increased Negro enrollment since the war which has burdened the school with unsolved problems. Most trouble is among Negroes not between Negroes and other races. Returning Japanese seem to the teachers just one more burden on a back-breaking load. Though sure other teachers will like themselves do what they can to reintegrate the Japanese students, the teachers interviewed thought the children might suffer slights from those with relatives in the Pacific and from those newcomers who have never known Japanese.

Respondents severely criticize the negative influence of the Fresno Bee.

The housing situation does not seem as severe as in many other counties. West Fresno teachers told of their being able to pick and choose and hold out for a better house. They said some owners might prefer Japanese to Negroes because of their being cleaner and more reliable in paying bills.

F R I E N D L Y

1. WRA has a long list of friendly names. Some are mentioned here if they were interviewed or if the interviewer has heard judgments of how helpful they might be in influencing public opinion. Most are Fresno names. Paul Fischer would have rural names.

2. Dr. Hubert Phillips, Fresno State College, Chairman of Fair Play Committee; value lessened in public mind by having come out for Russia a while back.

3. Miss Mary Baker, Dean of Women, Fresno State College, very enthusiastic but is thought to be a friendly extremist.

4. Mitchell Briggs, Dean of Men, Fresno State College.

5. President Thomas, Fresno State College, fair but cautious, might be pushed out in front.

6. Rev. Gregg, First Congregational Church, has lively public forum that draws non-members. Galen Fisher once spoke there.

7. Bishop Sumner Walters, San Joaquin Protestant Episcopal Diocese and Fair Play Committee, will lend name to executive steering committee.

8. Dean James Mallock, Episcopal, St. James Cathedral.

9. Marie Watkins, International Institute Secretary, a newcomer and therefore limited.

10. Rev. Theodore Palmquist, First Methodist Church, former Superintendent Methodist Church Conference of Northern California, will serve on steering committee.

11. Neal McGowan, First Christian Church.

12. Rev. Glen Harmon, Chairman on Committee of Race Relations, had breakfast of Y Men's Club, ages 25-40, at which Fischer and Rundquist talked.

13. U. S. Commissioner, Frank Larrego, conservative, won't stick neck out, advises evacuees to return slowly later.

14. Walter Stammers, attorney, will help if there is any trouble.

15. Gilbert Jertberg, attorney, Sunmaid Raisin Association, Board Stanford and Fresno State and State, will serve on central committee.

16. Marcel Lohse, Secretary Chamber of Commerce, thinks it a mistake for evacuees to return now but recognizes constitutional rights.

17. Rev. Chakmakjian, Armenian-Congregational Church, where large community meeting will be held to plan for return. Jertberg is church attorney.

18. Mrs. Thos. F. Lopez, wife of attorney, is of friendly extremist type.

19. Robert A. Pontius, Jr., FSA District Supervisor, was interviewed.

20. Mr. Ball. Lincoln Grammar School principal, friendly but timid. Interviewed.

21. Mr. Trombetta, Miss Irwin, and Miss Ayer of Edison Technical High School were interviewed. Miss Irwin looks as if she would be very helpful if got alone.

22. Mr. Hudson, Fresno County Farm Agent, was interviewed. Might be friendlier if talked to. See interview. Quoted friendly remark of H. B. Higginbotham, President of Parlier First National Bank.

23. Leonard Bros., Sanger, are hiring evacuees.

24. E. J. Giovannetti, Half Moon Trust and Produce Co., wants to hire evacuees.

25. Floyd Barsoom, Reedley, ditto.

26. J. F. Carter, Selma rancher, has evacuee girl on ranch.

U N F R I E N D L Y

1. Detective. Sgt. A. B. McCreary, Fresno. Advised Mr. Kubota, returned evacuee to wait 5 - 6 mo. before returning.

2. Mr. Roulard and secretary, County Agricultural Commission, are believed unfriendly.

3. County War Board and AAA.

4. Paul Fischer undoubtedly has names of other people.

Interview with Paul Fischer,
District Relocation Officer, WRA
Fresno, California,
January 24, 1945

K. Luomala
Community Analysis

Thumbnail

Paul Fischer, District Relocation Officer of WRA, Fresno, has the district from Bakersfield to central Merced County. He arranged appointments for me with George Rundquist who was interviewed at the WRA office and I. Kabata formerly of Poston who had just returned to Fresno to relocate. I left with Mr. Fischer a copy of Walter McKain's article, "When the Japanese Return to California" and showed him the other background material I had with me. This material included U.S. census data, Adon Poli's article, and that by Lloyd Fisher on Japanese agriculture, and area summaries prepared by the Community Analysis Section in Washington. Mr. Fischer remarked on his experience with the value of Community Analysis in the Centers and stated that he would like to see a Community Analyst attached to each of the three western offices.

Summary of Interview

Opinion in this area is divided about 50-50. Fifty percent are very friendly. Forty percent who could be persuaded to be friendly are lukewarm now. The majority, 75-80 % can be persuaded to take a favorable point of view.

Requests for evacuee labor:

At Orosi when F. went down to investigate the visitation of 25-30 to evacuees, a man stopped him on the street to ask about evacuee labor. E. J. Giovannetti of the Half Moon Fruit and Produce Co, Receivers, Distributors and Jobbers, wants 20-25 families.

Mr. Edward H. Leonard will go to Manzanar, Poston, and Gila River to contact evacuees interested in permanent employment. Leonard Bros, Sanger, California, owns and operates 1400 A. of vineyards. They want 100-150 evacuees, family units or singles or doubles (man and wife). They have satisfactory housing and transportation to and from work. They employed Japanese in the past. "Dutch" (Hubert) Leonard, the brother of Edward, was a baseball

Fischer
Fresno

-2-

Luomala

player some thirty years ago. The Leonard Bros. will give evacuees support and aid in regard to community acceptance.

Floyd Barsoom, Rt. 3, Bx.130, Reedley, who wants 25-30 laborers, owns 350 A. grapes and fruit trees three miles from Reedley. He has three tracts of land located about one mile apart. He plans to build six family units, modern in every respect and has lumber and material on hand. S. Miyamoto of Poston who owns two farms nearby is arranging with Mr. Barsoom to get six families. He returned to Poston a few days ago to recruit them.

Returned Evacuees:

At Fowler, Fischer visited two families who returned two weeks ago. The children are in school. The families are Hiyama and James Morishigi, both from Gila River. They are owners. People who move right on farms after arrangements with tenants have no trouble.

At Selma, a Poston girl, Mabel Miyasaki, returned to the J. F. Carter ranch (cattle feeders) where she was born and raised. She works as a domestic for the Carters and has been going to the local church. She has had no adverse experience and is going to bring her parents back there. They used to live there too.

At Selma, seven Japanese boys have been staying with George Takaguchi who has a business property in town and lives in the rear. The boys have been inspecting property they own before relocating on it. After they had been with Takaguchi a few days, a group of H.S. boys went by and threw stones at the building and nearly hit the evacuees inside. Fischer who was called reported it to the police, the D. A. and the S. F. WRA, and later went to Selma. The police had sent the sheriff out. Evacuees thought the rocks were thrown by H.S. boys who had gone past in an old car about 10-11 P.M. after the movies. This happened two nights in succession but not since then. Three days later when Fischer was in Selma, the Police Department confirmed the evacuees' belief the rocks were thrown by H.S. boys. The police talked to them and they promised no more disturbances. The Chief of Police thought the boys may have been prompted by parents who didn't want Japanese to return.

Fischer
Fresno

-3-

Luomala

At Oroshi, thirty farmers, business men and the local banker met in the back room of the bank, organized and went out about 6 P.M. in four or five cars to see returned evacuees on the ranch rented by Ray Martin, a Caucasian, from Japanese owners. Eight Japanese boys were staying there to look after property. All owned land. One had a brother in the U.S. army; another has a cousin. The boys were arranging with tenants to take back farms. The party of **thirty** committed no violence but asked the boys to get out by January 30, saying that the Government had taken the Japanese out and they (the party) did not want them back. The boys telephoned Fischer who went out the next A.M. and talked to the leaders of the gang of thirty. He warned them that the boys were citizens, that the Army had raised the restrictions and given them the perfect right to be where they were. He told them that if there were any further disturbance, their names would be linked with it. They didn't argue but agreed the boys had the right to return and promised no further trouble. Fischer reported to the Tulare County D. A. who said he would refer it to the sheriff. S. F. WRA took it up with Gov. Warren who sent Mr. Griffin of the State District Attorney's office to investigate. "We anticipate no further trouble there," Mr. Fischer said. The boys asked him if they should leave. He said no because if they did it would be the same thing over again. He will be around January 30 to aid. Even before the war, Oroshi resented the Japanese though they had a good record and were land owners. They work longer hours, have a low standard of living, and therefore, cheaper costs of production. This is resented.

Reedley realizes it made an error over not hiring the schoolteacher from Utah who had adopted the little Japanese girl. This is a Mennonite section full of conscientious objectors. Reedley hates the Germans, and hates them more than the Japanese who would be more welcome. The Mennonites are on farms and their boys get draft deferments while other Reedley boys are out fighting.

At Kingsburg, the church and parsonage and the Ando farm home were burned. A Mexican lived in Ando's house. The Andos are back from Gila River and have had no trouble. The burning was thought to be by Arkies, Okies, or Filipinos and not by substantial people. However, sentiment has improved since then. Fischer talked to a half dozen farmers last week who said they don't want the Japanese back but if the Army says so, they'll have to make the best

Fischer
Fresno

-4-

Luomala

of it. Around Kingsburg and Fowler, Mr. Fischer continued, you have pretty liberal, broadminded farmers who will accept them. Evacuees wouldn't meet with much difficulty. Mr. F. expects in the next thirty days to break down even more feeling in the county. In order to forestall trouble, more help is needed to contact groups and individuals wherever there is antagonism.

Newspapers in the Dinuba-Reedley-Orosi area are antagonistic. Mr. Fischer has contacted the editor of the Selma paper which is friendly. The Parker-Dinuba-Reedley-Orosi area was heavily populated with Japanese. The feeling is worse in here and the most work is needed.

Mr. Fischer does not know of any organizations set up to oppose the return here. If there are any they have not been publicized. The Fresno County Soil Conservation people, who come under the State Board, are the most antagonistic and have resisted making payments to the Japanese farmers.

In Fresno in the Chinatown-Japtown area, Negroes, Filipinos, and Chinese have leased Japanese places. Kubota, "Mayor" of Poston (Chm. Com-Council) is here now. He owns a little hotel, the Andes, and is very influential. The hotel is at 1341 Kern Street, right in Chinatown. Kubota is returning on January 30 to report to Poston. He is leery but has been treated all right. He doesn't know what to tell them at Poston. Fischer told him to tell them to come if they can get possession of their property.

In Bakersfield, Charles Castro, Rt. 3, Bx.276, is informed on Filipinos. He has worked with them for 50 years. WRA would like to know Filipino attitude toward Japanese and they held a convention last week. Fischer called on Castro three weeks ago. His name can be used in contacting Castro.

As to rumors, the incidents always take place in some other area than the one from which it was reported. 80% of the rumors are unfounded.

Interview with George Rundquist
Federal Council of Churches
at Fresno, California
January 24, 1945

Katherine Luomala
Community Analysis Section

Thumbnail

Mr. George Rundquist, who was in Fresno to interest community leaders in preparing for the return of evacuees and to organize an executive steering committee came to the office of Paul Fischer, district relocation officer, where he told me about sentiment in Fresno as expressed by the leaders he had seen during the previous day or two.

Summary of Interview

Fresno has a Fair Play Committee with Dr. Hubert Phillips as chairman. Dr. Philipps' value in the present matter is lessened by publicity he got from coming out for Russia a while back. Others from Fresno State College besides Dr. Phillips on the Committee are Miss Mary Baker, Dean of Women, and Mitchell Briggs, Dean of Men. Quite a few of the staff are actively interested in the committee. At a meeting on Tuesday, there was some discussion of how to prepare the community to accept evacuees and to influence public officials who seem delinquent. There were letters to 250-300 people for a meeting at the Pilgrim-Armenian Congregational Church, of which Rev. H. A. Chakmakjian is the head. President Thomas of the College is fair in attitude but cautious; he might be pushed out in front. The opinion of the college people is that they anticipate no trouble in the city. The college has accepted a couple of Nisei girls for the fall semester. They will live with families who have always had student help and are interested in Nisei.

Rev. Gregg has a Public Forum in the First Congregational Church which is quite alive and draws the outside public. Dr. Galen Fisher was down a while ago to talk.

Bishop Sumner Walters of the San Joaquin Protestant Episcopal Diocese and the Fair Play Committee will lend his name.

Dean James Malloch, St. James Cathedral, (Episcopal) Fresno, is a right person.

Rundquist
Fresno, California

-2-

Luomala

Marie Watkins, Ex-Secretary of The International Institute, is very interested. Mr. Rundquist is to speak and a WRA film will be shown on Monday (?) Miss Watkins, who comes from Duluth, has been here only about a year or so and therefore as a newcomer is limited in what she can do.

Theodore Palmquist, First Methodist Church, former Superintendent Methodist Church Conference of Northern California, has been here 1½ years. A liberal who carries people, he has said he would serve on an executive steering committee which can speak to the Mayor and other civic officials when a statement about evacuees is desirable.

Neal McGowan, First Christian Church, (Church of the Disciples and F. O. R. -- Rev. Hunter's church) has expressed willingness to serve also and to give his name and active support. Sugomoto works for their mission board to cultivate the clergy and was at Fowler and Selma a day or two ago.

Rev. Glen Harmon (Chairman Committee on Race Relations), Boys Work secretary, had a breakfast of the Y's Men Club, 25-40 age group, this week. (It was attended by both Mr. R. and Mr. Fischer, KL). The Club discusses Community Matters. A WRA film was shown and the Club asked friendly questions. It represents a cross-section of younger business men and clerks and would help though it does not have much community weight. They asked about the rate of return, work to do, church's position, who to get in touch with in case of trouble. These men know Nisei personally and feel quite favorably toward them.

The U. S. Commissioner, a lawyer who is a kind of Justice of Peace in Federal matters is Frank Larrego, a conservative and well off, who wouldn't stick his neck out. He had a letter from a Nisei at Ft. Snelling asking about the situation. He advised him that the Japanese should not return now, at least not in large numbers.

Walter Stammers, attorney, Brix Building, is on many committees and agencies. He would not be a member of the ex. committee but in event of trouble would join any group in existence to help.

Rundquist
Fresno, California

-3-

Luomala

Gilbert Jertberg, attorney, Sunmaid Raisin Ass'n, Board Fresno State College and Stanford, and State Board, is very much interested and will serve on the central committee of business men and clergy. The whole problem of race relations is his interest.

Marcel Lohse, Secretary Chamber of Commerce, recognizes constitutional rights but is concerned about problems of farmers and economic competition in regard to evacuee return. He thinks it a mistake for them to come back now.

We need a few more key people in the community.

There will be no trouble in Fresno, especially if the people return a few at a time. There will be a little outside. According to Rev. Chakmakjian, the Armenians, as a minority, would be understanding and generally friendly because of the discrimination against themselves here. They have raised \$20,000 to lick restricted deed covenants against Armenians here. Jertberg is their attorney. Chakmakjian's church has a membership of 1200. The Orthodox Church (the other Armenian church) suffers from internal conflict and wouldn't take a position on public matters.

There are few Filipinos here except in crop season. Ricardo Campos, Bataan Restaurant, 1509 Kern Street, is someone who knows local Filipino problems.

According to Miss Watkins of the Int. Institute, the Russian-Germans from the Ukraine are more understanding of the Japanese than most groups she works with.

YWCA is one agency in the country that you can always put a finger on to help, but the one here is cautious. The director of the Community Chest is quite conservative and will be inclined to oppose social agencies aiding the Japanese. The San Francisco and Seattle Community Chests, however, will provide funds. Fifty percent of the Manzanar and Poston people are indigent. Evacuees claim they will be dependent for three to six months after return. If they have a job and shelter, they will be O. K., but if they are forced to leave they will need public aid.

Rundquist
Fresno, California

-4-

Luomala

Trouble will come from unattached groups in the community and the returned soldier.

Mrs. Carlos McClatchy whose name is on the WRA list is all right. She is a prominent Fresno clubwoman. Mr. R. had not contacted her.

Miss Mary Baker is on the extreme side in favoring the Japanese. Mr. R. was referring to a condition which I have also observed, namely that those who wholeheartedly are working for the return of Japanese get in the hair of the less wholehearted and are of less value, in influencing public opinion, than the more temperately-speaking citizens. They are, nonetheless, important as prods to the middle group.

Another in the extreme group is Mrs. Thos. F. Lopez, wife of a Fresno attorney, in the Helm Building. They reside at 1523 Webster. According to Margaret Lantis, one of their Japanese correspondents is Thomas Kofu, former writer of a Japanese farm paper and former manager of the Jerome Center farm. Mr. Fischer agreed with Mr. R. about these two women. Mr. R. thought Rev. Gregg might be the best for an all around objective account. Neither Mr. Rundquist nor Mr. Fischer had contacted Paul Stanford, Fresno attorney on the WRA mailing list.

Interview with Robert Pontius, Jr.
F.S. A. Fresno, California
January 24, 1945

Katherine Luomala
Community Analysis

Thumbnail

Mr. Robert Pontius, Jr. is supervisor of the FSA in the Fresno district. His home is in Visalia, Tulare County, where he used to be president of the Chamber of Commerce. A veteran of the last World War and member of Veterans of Foreign Wars, he got quite a bit of publicity after Munich by returning his Croix de Guerre. On the Soldier Roll of the First Presbyterian Church, Visalia, the name of Pontius occurs twice. I assume the two boys are his sons. Mr. Pontius had only about ten minutes to talk to me in his office in the Post Office Building in Fresno as he was on his way to a state meeting of FSA people. His name had been suggested to me by Walter Goldschmidt and others in BAE of USDA in Berkeley. Mr. Pontius was very cordial and when I told him WRA had a district relocation officer in Fresno he said he wanted to get in touch with Mr. Fischer as soon as he could.

Summary of Interview

FSA has on hand one application from a Japanese-American who is going into the Army in June and will leave the farm in the care of his brother and sister-in-law. He has been refused credit elsewhere. FSA gives loans only to citizens and only after they have been denied credit everywhere else. We will check through the refusals to learn the reason for them. FSA, of course, does not discriminate in regard to races or nationality. (Mr. Pontius then went on to discuss the FSA program in general. His main point, however, was that any Nisei who fulfilled FSA requirements would receive aid. I asked if adverse public sentiment might prevent a farmer from making good.) Public sentiment will not stop a good farmer. We have Negro members. We advise them to enter into community activities if they possibly can. If they try and aren't accepted, they work just that much harder on their farms to get recognition.

(I mentioned that I was going to Visalia next.) I'm from Visalia. I used to be president of their Chamber of Commerce. There is much anti-Japanese feeling in Lindsay, Exeter, and Oroquieta. It

Mr. Robert Pontius, Jr.
Fresno, California

-2-

Luomala

goes back a long time. I wish I had time to go into it now but I'll talk to your Mr. Fischer when we get together. It is complicated by anti-New Deal feeling that includes the Japanese. Once when I was in Visalia and wore a Roosevelt button, I was accused of being a Communist.

I know a Japanese from there I'd like to welcome back. I wonder what's become of him? He was an alien, his wife was a citizen. He helped me in the 1930 census. His name is Suivahara (?); I don't know his first name. (I suggested he ask Mr. Fischer to investigate for him and added that Mr. S. would undoubtedly be happy to hear of Mr. Pontius' interest. I later mentioned this matter to Mr. Fischer who said he would make a note of it in talking to Mr. Pontius. I asked Mr. Pontius about organized opposition to the return in the area. He did not know of any but said the area was generally adverse. I asked about veterans' organizations.)

I belong to the Veterans of the Foreign Wars. When you get back to San Francisco, talk to Mr. McFall, the State Commander, in the Veteran's Memorial Building in Civic Center. I think the state leaders should take a stand so that their influence will pass down to the membership. They should invite Japanese-American soldiers to join and to tell about their experiences so that they hear another side of the story and can judge for themselves. (I asked about anti-Japanese stickers credited to VFW in northern Valley cities.) If there are any in Tulare County, I'd expect it probably would be veterans. I don't know about the other places. The VFW are not "divided", but all veterans don't believe the same. I didn't belong to any veterans' organization for some time but finally decided to join one.

There are economic interests involved in all this opposition. Its' the same way with the Central Valley Project. Robertson, a Merced attorney, and VFW has been stirring up the Portuguese against the C.V. Project giving them misinformation.

Interview with Mr. Hudson,
Fresno Co. Farm Agent,
P. O. Building
Fresno, California

K. Luomala
Community Analysis Section

-1-
Thumbnail

Mr. Hudson, County Agent of Fresno Co., was not in when I first called but his secretary pleasantly asked me to come the next morning. When I gave her my name and told her my business, she asked, "Oh, is Luomala a Japanese name?" and then caught herself and looked at me and said, "no, I guess not." The next morning Mr. Hudson had an unexpected out-of-state visitor but had left word that he wanted to see me and that I should wait if possible.

If Mr. Hudson could be backed up and talked to a little, I believe he would take a stronger stand. He is friendly to the return and to his former Japanese tenants but obviously feels a little nervous about the security of his job if he were to lean over to the other side of the fence more than he has. Like many others in contact with Japanese friends, he is afraid to stick his neck out and say "Come back to your old home. Even if the neighbors object, I'll tell them off." Instead he recommends that "for their happiness" they should wait awhile. He isn't fooling himself as to his real reason, for he gave that slightly shamefaced. His friendly and frank attitude toward me, the pleasant reception from his office staff, and his remarks in the interview made me feel as if he would like to take a little more positive stand toward the return if someone with authority would talk to him. He showed no hesitation at all when I started taking notes and he did not talk as if he were giving a statement.

Summary of Interview

You hear all kinds of rumors. (I said I always liked to hear them for the record's sake). They are just rumors but this is what they are. They say that at Selma every Japanese property has been burned and that at Sanger, 200 Japanese houses were burned in the last year. Sanger and Selma store people are said to refuse to trade with evacuees. One told an evacuee who came in to buy a pump, "Cash to you." He will sell only for cash to Japanese.

On the other hand, I think the Japanese are more apt to pay their bills than most. That's the opinion too of H. B. Higginbotham, President of the Parlier First National Bank. Of course, there are a few bad ones, usually among the young ones; the old ones are better.

The fires are said to be mostly by Okies. The violence will come only from irresponsible people.

The majority of the farmers say they should stay away until after the war. But that's not universal.

People with sons in the Pacific talk of violence. They don't distinguish between the enemy and our own boys. Then there are rumors about the danger of sabotage. It is said that the Japanese communicated with the Japanese military forces before, and that they will again and that it is hard to watch them all.

I think about it from the effect on their happiness. I wrote to my Japanese friends not to come back yet, that there was no danger but a lot of talk about discrimination and newspaper talk. The Fresno Bee isn't a good influence for tolerance. I believe they should stay away till this nationalistic spirit dies down. They were my tenants. The kids left the camp inside of two months. The boy has been in the armed forces since Pearl Harbor. The kids are as American as anyone in everything except color. The old man has been in this country for 47 years. He came over here by way of Hawaii.

The most vocal people are on the anti-Japanese side. The others have nothing to say particularly. If you go to Visalia, talk to W. E. Gilfillan in the P. O. Bldg. He has the same job there as I do here. On the Mexicans and the farm labor situation, a good person here to see is Juan Mercado, 1411 Kern St., Farm Labor Office. He's American born of Mexican parentage. He knows West Fresno. He's head of that Kern St. Office. The other Farm Labor Office is at 732 Fulton.

There are two general types of leases on the Japanese properties. (1) The duration- emergency leases and (2) the duration - war leases. At Fowler, tenant with the second type of lease refused to leave. (I asked what the first one meant). They'll need a legal definition of "duration-emergency"--it might be taken to mean for the duration of the evacuation period and the Army ban.

Many sold their property. Owners and people trying to buy will have difficulty in getting back because of the State being more interested in the Alien Land Laws. The question of dual citizenship will be raised. Whether it will stick, I don't know. Over on the west side of the Firebaugh Irrigation District the State Farming Co. had to relinquish land. The D. A. could tell you about that. There always were subterfuges.

The United Packing Co. bought a Japanese place across the road from me. They bought most of the farms, Japanese or otherwise, being sold in 1943-1944. The Bear (Barr?) Packing Co. as well as individuals also have bought land.

There will be a lot of discrimination and some violence but I really don't know about the latter. If the Bee would get behind the Governor's statement! (Mr. Hudson felt very strongly about the Bee's anti-return attitude and credited it with much of the bad feeling).

(I asked about the attitude of the farm agencies in helping Japanese get started).

The War Board will give them trouble on priority things but that wouldn't be so bad because you don't need a permit any more to get machinery. Some of the Board members are anti. They've been holding up AAA payments over the dual citizenship issue.

However, there were few Japanese in AAA and FSA and never will be many probably. They will have to go to the War Board for lumber, building materials and electric power extensions. Also shot gun shells. (Mr. H. Laughed).

There is one county agricultural man who is very anti but the others will be cooperative. (I did not ask this man's name. I assume it is the County Agricultural Commissioner, Roulard, who has been in office about 35 years, his secretary for 16. If the latter reflects her employer's attitude, a Japanese would have a bad time. Both the secretary and the Commissioner did their best to avoid seeing me and the Commissioner succeeded).

The Bee played up all the camp disturbances and now says WRA hasn't sifted the Japanese to separate loyal and disloyal but just took their word for it.

I don't know why there is all this prejudice; the Anglo-Saxons are the most prejudiced people in the world. I'm an Anglo-Saxon. (This statement came out in talking about his former Japanese tenants and what fine people they are.)

A County Agent can't get into a mess by leasing land to a Japanese. The family is at Rivers.

Interview with Mr. I. Kubota,
Fresno, California
January 24, 1945

K. Luomala
Community Analysis Section

-1-

Thumbnail and Summary of Interview

Mr. Paul Fischer of WRA made an appointment with Mr. Kubota for 10 o'clock in the morning. Mr. K. misunderstood and came to the hotel that evening at 10. As he left after 12 I felt somewhat concerned about his safety. He telephoned after he had got home, however, to tell me that he did not want to be quoted as "Mayor of Poston" (he was Chairman of the Community Council) but as a private individual. He said there were many differing opinions and kinds of people at Poston and he would not think of speaking for all of them. He reiterated at this time some of the statements made earlier and added some new things.

Mr. Kubota carries with him pictures of his family and their friends, the Council at Poston and groups of evacuees and AP among whom he appears, programs of Memorial Services which list his name and position and part in the program, a tattered copy of "Nisei in Uniform", letters of reference from Appointed personnel, and scraps of paper with farewell greetings and expressions of friendship from Appointed personnel. He also has an English translation of a patriotic speech he made in Japanese at a Poston memorial service. He brought out all these things near the end of the interview saying to me, "These will tell you who I am." I assured him that he did not need to produce such evidence for me and made suitable congratulatory remarks about his position at Poston, etc. However, I looked them over carefully as he obviously wished with justifiable pride to show them off and boost his own morale.

This little public relations device of his may seem rather naive but the next day I had proof of its effectiveness, for when I interviewed Mr. Ball of the Lincoln Grammar School he asked me if I knew Mr. Kubota and added that Mr. K. had been to see him and had showed him all the things mentioned above. Mr. Ball said that though he doubted whether Mr. K. really had a child who was going to enter Lincoln and used the statement only for entree, he (Mr. Ball) did not mind and had liked Mr. Kubota.

Mr. Kubota told me that in preparation for his talk with me, he had written down several points and made a diagram. I asked permission to copy it and told him I was sending it to the Washington office. He said he felt discouraged by the sentiment in California and seemed to feel WRA and the Government in general was doing almost nothing to help create a more receptive atmosphere. He had with him many clippings from the Fresno Bee,

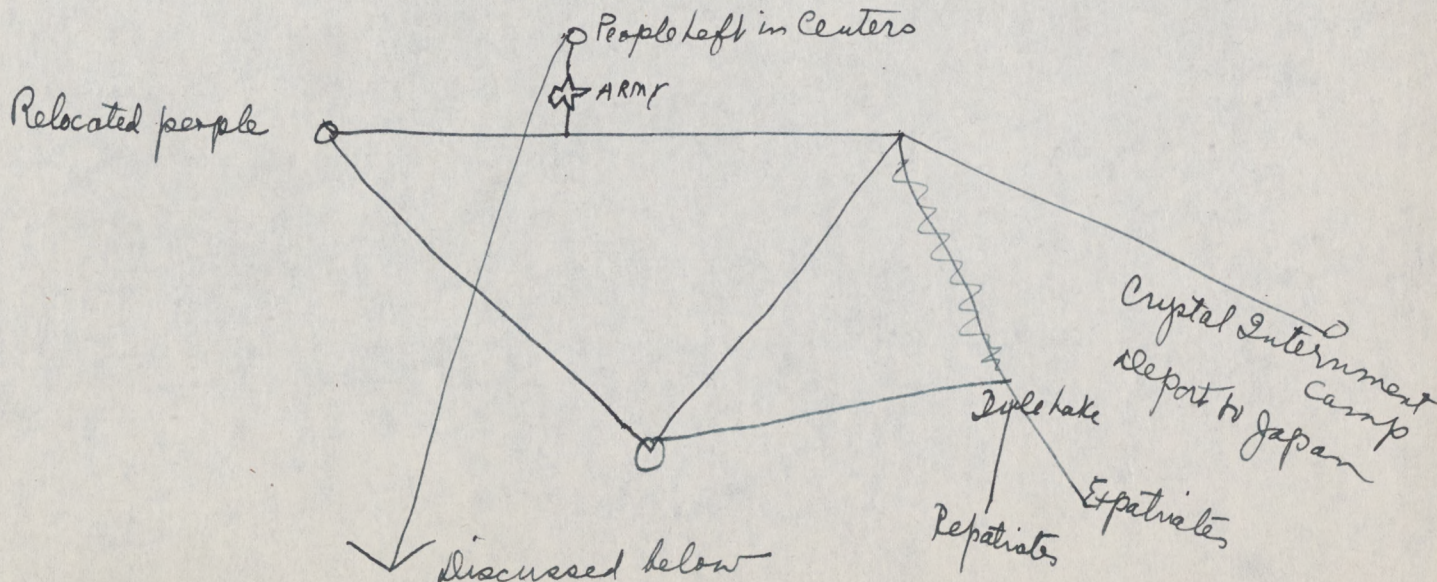
particularly the columns of "Letters from the Public", which to him constituted evidence that the Government was doing little or nothing to change newspaper attitudes. He remarked also on the absence of stories about the Nisei soldiers. Educated people, he said probably were different but the common people, he reiterated, must be taught about the Japanese Americans and their contributions and what life in a relocation center is like. I was interested in his asking a rhetorical leading questions which I myself had sometimes asked in one form or another of respondents, "Don't people realize that the old people whom they are rejecting are the parents of the Nisei soldiers they say they will take back?" When Mr. K. asked this, I answered, as all my respondents had done, "No, they don't."

Mr. K. had left Poston and taken a five year lease on his hotel. He thought life outside, hard as it might be would be easier than the problems of relocating other people that he, as Chairman of the Council, would have to deal with in the center. I gathered that he had run into hostility in the center for relocating, but he did not say so. He expected in a day or two to go back to visit and report.

Over the telephone he said that by March and April, those with property will go out--mostly eastward. Next will go those who are waiting for sentiment to become favorable. Next after them are those who are waiting for promises of WRA or Government aid.

He said again, "Don't they know we are their (Nisei soldiers) parents?" We trained them to be good Americans. I used to tease my boys (he has 5) that Japan will win but they say, "Oh, no, we have the mechanized forces to beat Japan." Educated people understand, but the common people must be educated."

Diagram Prepared by Mr. Kubota
for his Notes.



Kubota

Luomala

Mr. Kubota said Detective Sgt. A. B. McCreary had called on him and told him that Fresno feeling toward Japanese is bad and that "I'd wait five or six months before coming back." When Mr. Kubota differed with him and said, "You should give us protection," the detective sergeant replied, "We can't watch all the hoodlums." The detective sergeant seems to have been trying to intimidate Mr. Kubota. The latter reported the incident to Mr. Fischer of WRA.

"The People Left in the Centers"

1. Old parents. Have no ambition to farm and their sons gone to Army.
2. Have own farm land but no implements.
3. Have own farm and implements but hesitate to go back to California minding local sentiment.
4. Have property in town but hesitate open up the business, fearing no business to cover the expenses.
5. No property but able to work though they rather think safer in camp. (These people will try to stay in camp until last).
6. Some others will prepare to relocate eastern states before closing of camps.
 - (1) If guaranteed sufficient financial help they will be able to relocate.
 - (2) When found out that public sentiment are not bad, they will start to move outside to their own places.
 - (3) Will decide when time comes.

To Remedy Anti-Japanese Sentiment
(Those of loyal Japanese)

Positive Ways.

1. To let public know that those WRA releasing Japanese are all loyal Japanese that cleared by FBI and WRA records.
2. Local WRA offices should make closer relation with local important newspapers and let them cooperate with our U. S. Government policy, and let them help to clear the common people's misinterpretation toward those loyal Japanese who are coming back from the centers.
3. Publish book that show how and what scene Japanese in camps are doing when sending off of soldiers and when memorial services are performing and mail out these books to outside (mostly to California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona) prominent clubs, social organizations churches, colleges.

4. Write to grammar school, high school, colleges where they attended whenever killed in action or had received honorable medal citation; better write in local newspapers too in such cases.
5. It will be more effective to make common people understand us take movie pictures on special occasions like send off and memorial services in camps.
6. After to smooth up public opinion against Japanese, it depends that how to smoothen up public relations. Therefore, our WRA public relations committee and the agents must work very actively if wanted our policy (relocation) succeed better result.
7. Local Agent have very important job to do, so, better have man of influence and personality who can convince people diplomatic capability.

Negative Ways.

1. Just wait until gradually understand."

Interview with Mr. Ball,
principal of Lincoln Grammar School
Fresno, California
January 25, 1945

K. Luomala
Community Analysis

I called on Mr. Ball at the suggestion of Mr. I. Kubota, evacuee returned from Poston, who said parents were much concerned about the reception children would get in the schools. Mr. Ball told me that Mr. Kubota himself had been to see him and had used for entree the statement that he had a child who would be entering the grammar school. Mr. Ball doubted that he actually has such a child but added that he had trouble understanding Mr. Kubota's accent. I replied that I knew he had five boys, one of whom I had heard from other people was disabled and another who is at the U. of Missouri studying law. I could not recall any other details about the children.

Mr. Ball said it did not matter, for he was glad to talk to him. He added that he had liked Mr. Kubota. His request to me for information seemed designed primarily to confirm his judgment, and the favorable impression Mr. Kubota had made. Mr. Kubota's snapshots, "Nisei in Uniform", programs, clippings, and letters had helped. Mr. Ball mentioned them with a slight smile but I believe they had aided the formation of the favorable impression.

When I arrived at the Lincoln Grammar School which is a few blocks from Edison Technical High School and situated like it in the mixed neighborhood where the Japanese lived before evacuation, Mr. Ball was busy with two little girls about nine years old, one Negro and one white, counting money obtained in a March of Dimes drive in the school. When Mr. Ball came to talk to me he mentioned with quiet pride the amount the school had raised for the Infantile Paralysis Fund and added, "It's pretty good for a poor school."

Mr. Ball is of the "Mr. Chips" type, gentle, slow, kindly and with a quiet air of authority that is not obvious until one has been with him for a few minutes. Although he is elderly and both his hands and voice have a noticeable quaver, he is still tall and straight. At first he seemed a little aloof and defensive. This may have been due partly to the public unpopularity of the subject of Japanese and partly to the fact that first Mr. Kubota came to see him and soon after a WRA person (myself). Had I known of Mr. Kubota's visit I would not have called on Mr. Ball, for I have

Ball
Fresno

-2-

Luomala

avoided seeing people whom I knew to have been in recent contact with WRA representatives. If Mr. K. told me he had been to see Mr. Ball, I missed it due to not understanding his accent all the time.

Mr. Ball felt the Japanese children had nothing to fear either in slights or violence from grammar school children because at grammar school age there is less of that type of thing. There would be some at Edison, he thought, because of the age of the students. He mentioned Edison as having had trouble with Negro students.

He was a little bothered at the way the Japanese people turned in on themselves at evacuation. It was evident, he said, that the children had been told at home not to talk at school, for when they were asked very ordinary questions in class they would answer, "I don't know". This type of behavior made a bad impression among those Caucasians who had been prepared to trust their Japanese friends and neighbors. It seemed to indicate that the Japanese had something to hide after all.

While Mr. Ball thought the grammar school children would get along all right and knew the teachers would do all they could to help, he said it would be better if the Japanese waited a while before returning until sentiment was less antagonistic than now.

I had to leave to catch the Greyhound bus and Mr. Ball who was going through town offered me a ride. He remarked as we were leaving that he liked the Japanese children and would rather have them than the many Negro children. He said, "You know how it is. When one or ten come, then hundreds follow."

He took Mr. Fischer's name and address. When he said he would be glad to cooperate with WRA in any way he could I told him WRA had an office in Fresno.

He told me of a group of his wife's friends who went to school together and now meet occasionally for lunch. At the last lunch everyone had been very anti-Japanese. Though his wife is sympathetic toward the evacuees, she felt she could not say anything in their defense. At evening meetings with their friends, the

Ball
Fresno

-3-

Luomala

same situation occurs. Neither of the Balls feel they can say what they think. They wish that sentiment could be changed enough by WRA so that friendly people could speak out. Mr. Ball reiterated that both he and his wife are "plain people."

My total impression of Mr. Ball is that he is genuinely sympathetic toward evacuees and wants to help returned evacuees, but he finds public opinion too adverse for such a mild-mannered person as he to buck. Some of his initial slight defensiveness originated from habitual cautiousness in discussing the question. Except about the grammar school children, he voiced the usual conventional remarks about it being best for evacuees to wait a while before returning. He asked me as we were leaving what I thought, mostly as a feeler as to how far he could commit himself. I said in my work I tried to be objective and not to over-identify myself with the evacuees but this was getting harder all the time because of the very negative people I met. It was then he told me about the way his and his wife's friends talked and how he differed from them.

People like Mr. Ball would probably speak out only behind the shield of some authority both he and his listeners respect. If it is an authority fairly near at hand and high in the speaker's own occupation, so much the better. The timid speaker can say, "In my work we will have to go by what Mr. So-and-so says, and he says that regardless of our personal feelings, the returning Japanese have certain rights, etc." If the authority's words appeared in the newspaper or in the form of a letter to his subordinates, the favorable effect is increased. In the latter case the listener thinks he is getting inside dope; in the former, he has some satisfaction in recognizing the statement.

Interview with Mr. J. C. Trombetta,
Miss Ayer and Miss Irwin of Edison
Technical High School. Fresno, Calif.
January 25, 1945

Katherine Luomala
Community Analysis

-1-
Thumbnail

Mr. J. C. Trombetta is principal of the Edison Technical High School located in the district in which Japanese were concentrated before evacuation. Miss Ayer, assistant principal, teaches social studies, while Miss Irwin is dean of girls. I did not think this interview got down very deeply though there was much talking, mostly by Miss Ayer, a rather dominating type of person. Mr. Trombetta said almost nothing. His most informative contribution were the slight glances and other less evident means by which he would let Miss Ayer know she was putting her foot in. Whatever Miss Irwin, a quiet and sympathetic but not sentimental older woman, had to say was to the point. She seemed to me the best one of the three for a future interview. I felt she was full of things she would have said if the two of us had been alone.

Summary of the Interview

Before evacuation the school had about 72 Japanese. The enrollment has dropped since 1942 because of out-migration of families to larger defense industry areas. In 1944, there were 1050 students; now enrollment has risen to 1100 which still is below the 1942 figure. At present there are between 60-70 Chinese students, about 300 Mexicans and 300 Negroes. About one third of the Negroes are in-migrants from the south. 3% of the students are southern whites from Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana. Two students (one a girl) are Filipino. Of nationalities of the Caucasian race, children of German-Russian descent are numerous. Their parents came mostly from the Black Sea and Volga River area.

Since evacuation, this cosmopolitan mixture of students has changed so that "American whites" and Negroes have increased. (When I asked how many Negro students, Miss Ayer said, "Too many," but at a look from Mr. Trombetta she hastily went on to say something else. K.L.)

Once the school had no children whose parents spoke no English but that never happened again. The school is located in a poor section of town occupied by a cross section of the nationalities and races of Fresno. The region is called either "Chinatown" or "Japtown".

The establishment of ten or twelve Federal housing projects makes the area look less poor than before the war. The housing situation is easier. A faculty member has looked over three houses

available for rent but was dissatisfied and is waiting for a better place to show up. Another person also is known to have looked at several places but found something wrong with each one. Fresno is seeking more Federal aid in housing. The Negro housing situation is bad. Scarcely any have a house to themselves; several families crowd into one place. (I asked about discrimination in renting to Japanese). Some people might prefer renting to Japanese than to negroes because the Japanese are cleaner and are sure pay.

Japanese businessmen who return would perhaps find trade slow. However, except for the fish markets which everyone patronized, most Japanese-owned businesses catered to other Japanese. The restaurant business was a little different too. Mr. Fujimura catered to "American" people, or to working people of all groups. As long as a restaurant serves good, cheap food, it will be patronized no matter who runs it.

Different nationalities have taken over business places formerly operated by Japanese. For example, Toshinko's drug store and gift shop, "The West Fresno Drug Store" is now a Mexican Imported Gift Shop. The teachers asked if I knew of any returned evacuees. I named Mr. Kubota and said he had been Chairman of the Community Council and a leader at Poston. They know him or of him, but were surprised to hear of his high position in Poston for he had not been prominent, they said, as a leader in the Fresno Japanese community. (I did not make note of the many other examples besides the case of the drug store which the three cited nor the family histories they mentioned).

Sentiment toward returning Japanese students.

When the rescinding of the ban was announced, Miss Ayer said, they expected a rush of Japanese back and thought, "Hold back the school door. Here they come." But so far none has returned to school. One student whose family owns a Clovis ranch wrote to ask the sentiment. The teachers say they will do all they can to keep the students. They are sympathetic to them as to all other races and nationalities represented in the school.. If they were not, they would not, and should not, be teaching at Edison. They could teach in schools which did not have students of poor families and a variety of races. However, the Japanese students must be prepared for slights. The feeling around the school is "tamer" than a few months ago but the Japanese should still co carefully.

There is no difficulty between southern whites and negroes, no inter-racial trouble. What trouble there is occurs within the races. There are friendships but usually students of the same race or nationality stick together. The teachers regard this

as natural and expectable. The Japanese students always kept together, partly because language school took them away after regular school. Boys who went in for athletics naturally associated with other than Japanese. One boy was student Vice President, another was President, and still another was Student Commissioner of athletics. Only the scholarship and mathematics clubs were mixed. Usually the Chinese had their own clubs, the Japanese has theirs, etc., but the two clubs named brought all races together. The Japanese students were fond of mathematics and did well in it. Of course, they were high in scholarship. The Chinese maybe won't be so glad to see the Japanese return because for the first time their group has led the school in scholarship. One of the Chinese students remarked on this when the lifting of the ban was announced.

More serious opposition to their return will probably come from the Anglo-Americans, the newcomers from outside the state, who have never known any Japanese, are antagonistic because of the war and their fear of them. Though the teachers could give no example, they conjectured that some of the slights to Japanese students would come from students whose friends or relatives have died in the Pacific. In general, the feeling against Japanese is stronger among those who didn't know them personally. There is a possibility of trouble from Mexican "pachukos", zoot-suiters who are organized in L. A. and have been coming in to Fresno recently. They are young bloods of the laboring class. They have already been involved in trouble in Fresno. (The paper that day had a story about a fight within a Fresno "pachuko" gang.)

(I asked if the Japanese students had language handicaps). No more than other students. The school had before the war a bilingual class made up of old students of many nationalities--Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Mexicans, Armenians, etc. who came to learn their A B C's. It was a day class that stopped with the war. The students were usually in their early 20s. The reason for the discontinuance of the class, besides the greater opportunities for jobs now, is that immigration has stopped, no new groups are coming in. Among the Japanese students were many who had been sent to their grandparents in Japan and on return to the U. S. wanted to improve their English.

(I asked what they thought life in the relocation center might have done to their former students.) Some, the teachers thought, might have been embittered. The fact that "Fresno was a pretty white spot in California with the local JACL the last to be closed" might, however, have made Fresno Japanese people feel less bitter. They were, the teachers thought, considered more trustworthy by the Government. Miss Ayer thought that a change in the children toward more aggressiveness would be an improvement. They "lacked personality" before, she said, because they

were so defensive, so eager to make the correct move, and always sensitive. Miss Irwin thought family bonds must be even closer now and that language had deteriorated. At first the students wrote back often to the teachers but now few write.

Perry Neal, an Edison faculty member, wrote an M. A. thesis on the adjustment of the Japanese children in the community and in the high school. The teachers suggested borrowing it from Mr. Neal to fill in knowledge of the sociological background of the Edison students.

The Japanese students constituted two social groups at Edison before evacuation. One, the "Snake Road Group" was made up of children of the gardeners living along this road. (Apparently it is not "nice" to refer to this group as the "Snake Road" children, for Miss Ayer popped the term into the discussion like a naughty word. There was a sort of stewing atmosphere, though nothing was said for a second after, and she thereafter spoke of them as the gardeners.) The gardeners are on the southwest side of town. There was a social distinction between the town Japanese and the gardeners. "The gardeners were not inclined to transfer their children to the other high school." The town Japanese tended to transfer from Edison High to Fresno High School. They wanted to belong to a "better social group." (This reflection of Edison High School piques Miss Ayer who referred once to the transferred students as the "400" group. I guess she put her foot in that time too.)

In general, the teachers felt returning students would not run into violence at school but they might have to suffer slights despite what the teachers will do to prevent them. Though some individual teachers may not be genuinely pleased to have Japanese students, the official attitude of the school is tolerance toward all races. However, the subject of race relations seems little discussed and even soft pedalled in the class room, partly because it is felt the school itself is an object lesson in race relations. The influx of large numbers of Negro students has created difficulties which the teachers avoided talking about except to say they were mostly between Negroes rather than between races. They seem to feel that it would be best for the Japanese families to return slowly. Miss Ayer said that just because the Army is letting them come back they should not take "advantage" of it, at least for some time. Perhaps this bold and ugly statement and the significant use of the word "advantage" represents her own personal point of view but it struck me that the school people were jittery. It was as if they had more unsolved problems of race or even intraracial relations than they could handle right now and were wearily resisting the reality of the Japanese return which will add one more burden to their mountain of burdens.

There was no evidence of hostility to the Japanese as a group; there was friendliness shown toward individuals, and even in discussing prominent Fresno Japanese who have been interned or gone to Tule Lake there was no malice. They said there'd be a fuss raised if Dr. Hashuba came back. He is at Tule Take and was famed for his remarkable skill in brain operations.

In trying to get them to face reality, I asked if it would be better for the Japanese students to return at mid-year or at the start of the fall semester. Mr. Trombetta and Miss Ayer did not think it would make much difference. Miss Irwin thought there might be an advantage in starting out in the fall when everyone is more or less new. The fall session starts September 15; the spring session started February 5.

Miss Ayer asked for suggestions for integrating the Japanese students into high school life again and said the teachers would like WRA to make such suggestions. I mentioned Mr. Fischer's name and position and duties but no one wrote his name down. If the education section of WRA could prepare some kind of descriptive statement about school children in center life, problems peculiar to them resulting therefrom and what behavior problems center teachers and parents expect may develop in returning to a normal community (if a wartime community can be called that), teachers would appreciate it. Background information about evacuation, the lifting of the ban, Constitutional rights and American principles would not be amiss either. I think the teachers were the most genuinely sympathetic toward Japanese students and their parents of any groups I have met. They seem also the most receptive toward any positive suggestions of how to help both the community and the Japanese in regard to resettlement.

Like other school people, these three gave innumerable Japanese names and family histories. In every city I was impressed by the intimate knowledge school people had not only of their Japanese students but of the entire family, its socio-economic way of life, and everyday happenings as well as life crises. School people were not only the best informed on the past and present of the evacuees but were about the only people I met who were aware in the slightest that evacuation and relocation center life might have left a deep mark on both the finances and psychology of the Japanese. This awareness originates not only from past acquaintance with the families but from the efforts, mostly, however, on the part of Japanese students and parents, to keep the teachers informed of their experiences. Some teachers have faithfully answered letters and maintained warm contacts; those who received letters though they did not answer them read them and it has made a difference.