

Japanese Resettlement in the Boise Valley and Snake River Valley

Three main areas of Japanese resettlement exist in Idaho today. Prior to the war, the greatest proportion of the 1100 Japanese in Idaho ~~were~~ located in the southeast section of the state around Idaho Falls in Bonneville County and around Pocatello in Bannock County. A small handful was scattered throughout the southern part of the state and a hundred or so lived in the Boise Valley region.

Resettlement of Japanese Americans from relocation centers during the war years particularly from ~~the~~ Minidoka Center, Heart Mountain and Tule Lake drastically changed the pattern of Japanese concentration. While several hundred resettlers moved into the southeast section of the state, thousands poured into Boise Valley and the neighboring Snake River Valley as seasonal laborers and as temporary and ~~permanent~~ resettlers. It is this region, the Boise and Snake River Valley areas, with which this survey is concerned.

Although these two areas are scarcely discernible from each other both in type of terrain and crops grown, they are usually considered as separate units. A few shadowy outlines of Japanese community organization based on these geographical areas also can be seen.

Boise Valley area:

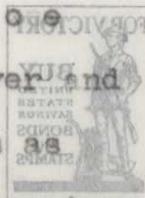
The Boise Valley area is shaped somewhat like an arrowhead. The point of this arrowhead is at Boise and the Base of the arrowhead rests 50 miles or so to the West on the Oregon



Idaho line. The top notch of the base starts around Parma in the North and runs south 40 or so miles. Most of this regions falls in Canyon County. The Boise River runs almost through the center of this region. The Snake River lies to the West and later to the south of the Boise Valley. (See Map. Appendix 1.) Such small towns as Caldwell, Star, Wilder, Emmett, Homedale, Marsing, Meridian, Middleton, Nampa and Parma fall in this Boise Valley area.

#### Snake River Valley area

Most of the Snake River Valley region consists of part of the eastern side of Malheur County in Oregon which is bounded by the Snake River. The Snake River at this point is the boundary line between Oregon and Idaho. Physical limits of this so-called Snake River Valley are vague. Rural areas on the Oregon side of the river are considered to be in the Snake River Valley. A few miles across the river other rural area in Idaho might be considered part of the Boise Valley. The main difference between these two areas appears to be in source of irrigation water. In rough outline the Snake River valley region can be said to consist of a 50-60 mile strip of Malheur County lying along the Snake River which acts as the state line in the southeast part of the state. On a map the Snake River valley might be delimited in the shape of a figure 8 with one half lying in Oregon in Malheur County along the Snake River and the other in Idaho. The Idaho section takes in such areas as Weiser and Payette and lies northwest of the Boise Valley region.





The Oregon Malheur County section has such towns as Ontario, Vale, Jamieson, and Nyssa. (See Map, Appendix 1.)

### Japanese in Idaho before the war

The 1940 census lists a total of 1,191 Japanese for the state of Idaho. Of these 765 or 64.2% were citizen and 426 or 35.8% were alien. Only 146 of the Nisei group were over 21 years of age. The Japanese population largely was composed of ~~xxx~~ Issei and young Nisei. The group was rural. 1,002 or approximately 85% of the total fell in the rural category.

The Japanese were listed as operating 149 farms. It can be assumed that these were mostly Issei operated for the Nisei were not old enough to have started new farms or taken over the family farms.

This farm operator group had remained stable over a ten year period for the figure of 149 is the same as that listed for the 1930 census. ~~xxx~~ A comparison with the 1930 and 1940 census indicates that the Japanese group was a shrinking unit in Idaho. The 1940 population of 1,191 was a decrease from 1,421 of 1930. The decrease was brought about by several factors. In 1930 there were 676 Issei in Idaho. By 1940 this Issei group had shrunk to 426. Part of this was caused by deaths in the group ~~but many~~ of the older single Issei farm workers also left the state. Older Nisei as they received specialized education also went westward to seek job opportunities. Of the 189 urban Japanese in 1940 only 104 were Nisei and of the Nisei group only 25 were over 21 years of age. In 1930 Nisei had numbered

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109 urban Nisei. It is in this group that an increase should be expected. The decrease can mean only that the ~~the~~ older Nisei were leaving the state.

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The majority of the Japanese population was concentrated in the southeast part of the state around Idaho Falls in Bonneville County and around Pocatello in Bannock County. A conservative estimate would place over 80% of the total pre-war Japanese population in this region.

Only a few dozen or so farm families at the most were located in the Boise and Snake River Valley region. In the Boise Valley the farm families were located in Canyon County near such small towns as Parma, Caldwell, Nampa, Homedale and Wilder. Before the war the number of these families could be counted on the fingers of two hands. Most of them had been in the region for 25-30 years. Three farm families had been situated outside of Caldwell for over 30 years. One Japanese farmer was widely known throughout the region for his seed farm. The pattern of settlement was the same throughout the region. Two possibly three farm families at the most were in any one given locality. In Washington County directly north of Canyon County in which is located Weiser there were only two non-white farm operators. Since there were two Japanese farmers here, it can be assumed that these nonwhite farmers referred to in the 1940 census were Japanese.

A few dozen Japanese farm laborers worked in the Boise area for the Japanese farmers and occasionally for Caucasian farmers. The small towns such as Caldwell, Nampa and Emmett had at the most one or two Japanese families. Boise, the capitol of the state,





which is located in this area had only two Japanese families.

The Japanese group in the Boise Valley was too small and scattered to operate as a social unit. Families knew each other but there was not much in the way of social activity to draw the group together. The Japanese group in Malheur County across the Snake River was much more of an integrated group and some of the Boise Valley Japanese participated in the social and religious activities of this group.

#### Type of farming:

Almost without exception the Japanese farms in the Boise Valley are of the crop-speciality type of farming. The main crops are onions, potatoes, sugar beets, peas, and such vegetable produce as lettuce and carrots. All farming is by irrigation. One or two farmers specialized in seed farms but the majority grew their crops for the immediate market. In the fruit region around Emmett, two or three Japanese operated orchards.

#### Snake River Valley

This region is very similar to the Boise Valley. Type of farming is identical in most respects. All farming is done by irrigation. The main difference appears to be in source of irrigation water. A few minor differences in farming exist.

In the Payette, Fruitland area orchard crops such as apples are the important crop.

In Malheur County, Oregon, the terrain gives the appearance of being slightly more rugged than that of the Boise Valley. Onions,

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potatoes and sugar beets are the important crops here. Vegetable produce such as lettuce is also grown but not as much as in the Boise Valley.

(1940 census)  
The Japanese group in Malheur County, Oregon, prior to the war numbered 137 individuals. 100 of these were citizen and 37 Issei. This small group was almost all rural. The group consisted of about 25 farm families and several dozen Issei bachelor farm laborers.

While this group was very small, it had nonetheless developed with the few Japanese in the Weiser-Payette area a small amount of community life. A Japanese Community hall was owned by the group on the outskirts of Ontario. Christian church meetings were held here bi-monthly by a Japanese minister who came from Hood River. Dances, parties and occasional Japanese movies or plays were held in this community hall.

It might be said that the Japanese group in this Snake River valley was a little more prosperous than the Japanese farmers in the Boise Valley. This assumption is made on the fact that the Boise Valley group was shrinking and the farm operators had stayed stable over a 10 year period. In Malheur County, however, the Japanese group was definitely on the increase both in numbers of individuals and in number of farms being operated. The group was so small though that they did not pose much of an economic threat to the larger Caucasian farming group.



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Resettlement of evacuees during the war period.

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The evacuation of Japanese from the West Coast and the eventual relocation program of the WRA changed the scene in these two valleys. In three years time, 1943 to 1946, thousands of Japanese streamed into the region. It has been estimated that perhaps as many as 5,000 at one time might have been in the region. The great majority of these thousands were seasonal workers from the relocation centers who came to work as harvest hands during the sugar beet and potato harvest season. Thousands of men, women and children from the centers at one time or another worked in the sugar beet, onion, and potato fields of Idaho and Oregon. Most of these harvest workers came from nearby centers such as Minidoka, Heart Mountain and Tule Lake but large numbers also were brought up from the southern west centers. At Minidoka during the harvest season, it was <sup>n</sup>ot unusual to have several thousand evacuees out on seasonal or harvest leave during the harvest months. The high school, for example, had harvest furlough for this period so that the high school pupils could participate.

The majority of this group stayed in the area only for the harvest season and then returned to the relocation center. In the fall of 1943 the Idaho sugar beet and potato harvest was in danger of being ruined through lack of field labor. It is generally recognized that the efforts of the evacuees saved the harvest for that year.





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Soon some of these ~~xxxx~~ harvest hands began to stay on as year around laborers, others worked in the vegetable packing sheds. As the war progressed and the closing of the centers became more and more imminent farmers began to resettle in the area at first on a share crop or lease arrangement. A few began to buy land.

By the end of 1945 it is estimated that at least 2,000 if not more Japanese resettlers had moved into these two areas. For many of these resettlers, the area was a convenient resting stage before final return to the West Coast. It was expected that a large percentage of this group would leave the region as soon as the West Coast ban was lifted. The opening of the Coast, however, did not bring about a wholesale exodus from this area. Large numbers left and a small trickle back to the Northwest is going on continually but a sizeable group still remains in the region.

Today the overall Japanese population in the Boise Valley and Snake River Valley can be set somewhere ~~around~~ <sup>around</sup> 1500. This is still a sharp contrast to the ~~xxx~~ <sup>200</sup> or so that lived in these regions before the war. Roughly 40% of the resettlers have left the area either to return to the West Coast or to go to the Midwest or East.

Cities like Boise and Pocatello which drew fairly large numbers of Nisei semi-skilled, skilled, and white collar workers during the war years have lost the great majority of their resettler population. Resettler statistics for Boise, for example, have varied so much that an estimate is hard to reach. Boise was popular as first stage of resettlement for Nisei during the ~~xxx~~ early days of the resettlement

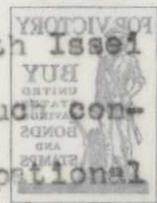


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areas. The Nisei group changed a great deal. This was evidenced at these YMCA dances where after 3 or 4 dances an entirely new Nisei crowd would have emerged. The only stable element of the Fellowship group was the pre-war Boise and nearby rural Nisei members.

After some prodding by the Church groups, the Boise YMCA opened its doors to Nisei. At first this aroused some protest on the part of certain local citizenry but this soon died down. About 20 Nisei boys lived in the Boise YMCA. All of this original Nisei YMCA group left to join the army. This fact quelled any remaining criticism.

The first and most numerous job offers for Japanese in Boise were in the domestic and service categories. Several score were placed in these occupations. Gradually a few other job opportunities opened up but never to the extent in type or number that were available in the Midwest and East cities. This was true particularly for white-collar and professional jobs. By 1946 several large dress shops employed three Nisei girls as alteration girls. Several Nisei girls were working as office secretaries. One of these was employed by a church organization. Restaurants, hotels and clubs had dozens of workers as cooks, cook's helpers, busboys, waitresses. One or two were employed several Nisei mechanics. In general, Japanese both and Nisei were employed in jobs where they did not have much contact with the public. Except for service jobs, the occupational





range for Nisei is very limited in Boise. It is for this reason the group has continually changed during the resettlement years and why the present group is gradually shrinking away. Very likely the group in Boise will decrease another 50% in a year.

To a lesser extent <sup>(by percentage)</sup> return to the West Coast has gone on in the rural areas. One element stands out also in this rural return. It is the young married Nisei with families and unmarried older Nisei both men and women who have gone back to the West Coast and who are now drifting back. <sup>to the Coast.</sup> A surprisingly large percentage of Issei parents with young Nisei children are electing to stay in the region at least for the present time. Two factors seem to be involved here. Housing for large family units are very scarce on the West Coast. Issei have heard or have seen for themselves that Northwest Coast jobs for Issei, men or women, are domestic and service type of jobs where income is not too great. In short for this Issei group their present status is better than they can anticipate back in their old home area.

#### Boise valley JAOL

A Boise Valley JAOL organization had been organized. The membership is small and very scattered. This organization struck the observer as being largely an inactive group. The officers are scattered and meetings are held rarely. Because of the nature of farming here, such organizations would be active in the winter period. Spring, summer and fall are months in which little outside activity can be carried on by ~~the~~ the farm group.



Development of Japanese community life in Boise Valley:

Japanese community life in such an area as this must of necessity be different than that of the Northwest Coast rural areas. There the community life of the rural Japanese revolved around the big city or town 'Little Tokyo' social structure. This was especially true for the Portland and Seattle areas where the majority of the Japanese farmers were located. In this region there is no city group or even a co concentrated rural group to serve as a nucleus. As a result Japanese community life in the Boise Valley has never existed to any degree. A slight amount of community relationship with each other is now being built up, but this is still very slight.

In 1940 a Caucasian ex-missionary from Japan was assigned to work in the Boise Valley by the Methodist Church Mission Board. This minister opened a Japanese Methodist Church in Caldwell Idaho. There were only a handful of Japanese Methodists in the Boise Valley and the minister had to depend on conversions to build up his congregation. His parish takes in most of Boise Valley region. With the resettlers in this region, the congregation of the Japanese M.E. church now stands around 100. The congregation is so scattered that little activity outside of church services is carried on.

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If there is little social contact with one another there is even less with the Caucasian communities. Only in Emmett, Idaho does there seem to be any social contact to any degree. Emmett had three pre-war Japanese families who were very well liked. The score or so resettlers now there have been rather warmly

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received by the Caucasians. But this pattern is very unusual and does not exist anyplace else in the area.

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Attitude of larger communities to Japanese resettlers;

The Boise Valley region except for Emmett is not regarded as x very friendly towards Japanese. Cities like Nampa and Caldwell became known as anti-Japanese in the war years and most of the resettlers regard these places as still being anti-Japanese.

In general the Snake River Valley region is regarded as much friendlier to resettlers. This was true all during the war and resettlers still claim this is so. Partly for this reason the Snake River Valley has drawn more resettlers than has the Boise Valley. The Snake River Valley resettlers xxx appear to be buying more land than are the Boise Valley resettlers. Caldwell, Idaho is one such place that is regarded as anti-Japanese. During the war, there were always several hundred Japanese seasonal workers living outside of Caldwell in the Caldwell Labor Camp. On Saturday night many of these Japanese would go to Caldwell. As far as can be checked no incidents ever developed for the Japanese avoided cafes and shops which indicated they did not want Japanese trade. At this time, 1944, there was only one barbershop in town that would cater to Japanese. Today the situation has changed. The end of the war wiped out most of the anti-Japanese feeling. Every cafe in town will now serve Japanese. The barber has withdrawn the anti-Japanese sign. The Caldwell Labor camp Japanese population is of little different type now being family groups rather than





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the large numbers of single Issei and Nisei men of the war years. Actually at present there is little overt prejudice shown by the larger Caucasian community towards the Japanese resettlers. Yet the feeling still persists amongst the resettlers that Caldwell is 'bad' and certain places there should be avoided. Resettlers going through the city to visit elsewhere will often go without eating in Caldwell for fear some cafe might refuse them service. The same holds true for other nearby towns such as Nampa.

This brings up a question of differentiating between the ~~xxxx~~ attitude of the large Caucasian community towards the Japanese ~~xxxx~~ as it actually exists and as it exists in the minds of the resettlers. This is strikingly demonstrated in this part of the country. The larger community is very <sup>much</sup> the same throughout the region in its habits, interests, prejudices and manners. Yet these little towns 30 to 40 miles apart are regarded in different lights by the resettlers. Some like Ontario in Malheur County are considered friendly. As a result the resettlers for many miles around flock to these towns for shopping and entertainment and pass up the nearby towns which have gained reputations of being 'tough'.

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Caldwell Farm Labor Camp 1.

About two miles ~~west~~<sup>east</sup> of Caldwell is located the Caldwell Labor Camp operated by the War Food Administration. This labor camp sheltered hundred of Japanese seasonal laborers during the war years and since the close of the relocation centers has played an important part in the life of several hundred more Japanese.

The camp was built in 1938 ~~to be used~~ to care for migrant workers who came into this region for harvest work. At this time most of the migrant workers were Caucasians from the Arkansas Okalahoma areas. The war shut off this supply of migrant labor and large numbers of Jamaicans were imported for harvest labor. The evacuation of the Japanese from the West Coast and the opening of the relocation centers provided a much better supply of harvest labor from 1943 and fewer Jamaicans were brought into the area.

The dwindling away of the Japanese labor supply in turn brought Mexican nationals into area as the main harvest labor. However, the Japanese all through the war and even now remained the largest group in the Caldwell camp.

The camp originally was built as a combination of permanent and temporary center. To house the temporary 'harvest' hands unlined barracks called 'shelters' were built. These shelters

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1. Elmer Smith, Comk Analyst at Minidoka prepared a short report on the Caldwell Camp in July 1944. (not sure of date) Comparison should be made to see what changes have taken place since 1944).



are divided into 5 or 6 rooms. Some rooms are bigger than others. The shelters are unlined and are not suitable for winter occupancy and are usually shut down during the winter months. A few have been in operation though the past years and a few have been lined for winter use. The rooms are equipped with a stove and cooking can be done. There is no running water or sewage disposal units and all water must be carried in and out. The floors are of concrete. The rooms are furnished with beds, table, chairs, shelves in addition to a stove.

A mess hall is operated for those individuals who do not wish to cook in their rooms. At the present time only the Japanese are allowed to cook in the shelter and the Mexican nationals have to eat in separate mess hall.

A community shower and ~~xxxx~~ laundry room is situated in the middle of the shelters. The lavatories and showers are now in very poor sanitary condition.

These shelters are regarded as the 'temporary' section of the camp and in the past were used to house the harvest workers who came into the camp for a few weeks or a few months.

The permanent section of the camp is of much better quality and consists of small family cottages of rather good construction. These family cottages while very small have two bedrooms, a bath, living room and a small kitchen. Each house has a little patch of lawn ~~xxxx~~, garage space and a plot of ground for garden use.

The Caucasian staff live in the camp and occupy the same type of family cottages as the workers. The staff houses are a little better furnished than are the worker cottages.

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These family cottages are partially furnished with stoves, beds, tables, chairs, divan, etc.

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At present there are about 260 Japanese living in the Caldwell center. Of this number 163 are workers who go out of camp every day to work. The total number of inhabitants of the camp is about 550 and the Japanese make up almost half of the total. The total of 550 is rather large for September is the busy Harvest season and most of the workers (excluding Japanese) are Mexican nationals. There are about 15 or so Negroes in the camp and a small handful of Caucasian workers.

The majority of the 260 Japanese ~~xxx~~ are composed of family units and live in the family cottages. Single, unattached individuals and couples are not eligible for these cottages and must live in the shelters. Most of the unattached individuals are Nisei and Issei bachelors and several live together in the shelter rooms. A few Japanese families are on the waiting list for cottages and in the meantime live in the shelters.

Somewhat of a change has taken place in the camp. A new management has taken charge and hopes to turn the center into a ~~semi~~-permanent camp and do away with the temporary shelters. There are other 'temporary' labor camps in the vicinity.

As far as the Japanese go, the group is ~~xxx~~ made up largely of family groups. This is in contrast to the war years when the Japanese workers were all single individuals or individuals who had left their families in the centers.

The camp in one respect has become a ~~xxxxxxx~~ permanent relocation center. The only differences that appear are that the Japanese





(at least the majority) have better living quarters and go outside to work at the prevailing wage rate of the area.

The physical appearance of the camp is much like that of a relocation center especially the shelters. A large community recreation hall provides recreation facilities for camp residents. Movies are held here once a week and grade school for some 40 grade school pupils ~~xxx~~ is operated during the day in part of the recreation hall. This grade school is supported by the proceeds of the camp store. There are two Caucasian teachers. The enrollment is cosmopolitan; Japanese, Caucasian, Negro and occasionally Mexican. The Japanese children make up the greatest proportion of the students. High school age students go outside to high school. The grade school was set up when the camp opened for the neighboring town of Caldwell at that time disclaimed any responsibility for educating the children of the migrant labors. The present camp administration is attempting to have the Caldwell Labor camp school recognized as a Federal school district but as yet has not succeeded.

A small camp store ~~ix~~ supplies meat, milk and groceries to the camp residents. This store is operated at present by a Japanese man who was prominent in one of the relocation center co-ops. He operates the store on a salary and commission basis and is regarded as far as expenses go as part of the administration. He pays the administration rates for rent (\$20.00 a month) for a family size cottage instead of the worker rates.

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This camp store while small, supplies most of the stable groceries for the entire camp and does a large business. ~~xxxxxxx~~ Profit from the store pays the expenses of maintaining a grade school and pays the salary of the teachers.

The camp has ~~twazgz~~ a government nurse at present, a staff doctor and up until a few weeks ago a Japanese staff dentist. At one time during the camp operation when another government agency was operating the camp, such staff workers as home economic advisors, etc, were government employed. Today, however, except for nurse, doctor and dentist, the other government employees are administration and maintenance officials.

Expenses in the camp are very low. Rent for a shelter room is only ~~5x~~ 35 cents a week. This includes electricity and heat. The shelter rent used to be 50 cents a week but was recently reduced.

The family cottages rent for \$2.25 a week with an extra charge of 25 cents if an electric refrigerator is supplied. Since all the cottages have refrigerators the ~~xxxx~~ monthly rent is around \$10.00. This includes all utilities and furnishings.

Camp meals can be eaten at the community mess hall but almost all the Japanese cook ~~xxxxxx~~ either in the cottages or in their shelter rooms.

The camp has a council with representatives from each shelter and from groups of cottages. This council meets with the administration officials ~~xxxxxxx~~ and works out programs for camp management and camp recreation.

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Income of Japanese in Labor camp

The income of the Japanese workers in this Labor camp is quite high and since expenses are so low it would seem that almost every family is saving some money.

Most of the workers work steadily throughout the year in the surrounding country. Summer and fall are the big harvest seasons and a good worker can average around \$12-15 a day during the harvest months. On a piece work basis certain workers packing lettuce, sacking potatoes, etc, can make up to \$25 a day. (This is a 10 or 11 hour day though.) Since almost every family has several workers, the family income of the Japanese is quite large and varies according to size of family. Then, too, high school children work only during the summer and fall harvest season. But there are usually two or three year around workers in the average Japanese family living in the Caldwell camp today. One Japanese family of eight members now in the camp has 7 workers in the fields. This family has been averaging \$1,000 a week since the beginning of June of this year and will continue at this rate until the end of the harvest in early November.

The Japanese store operator estimates that the average income of the Japanese group in the Caldwell camp this year -from January through September is between \$3,500 and \$4,000. One worker in a family if he works steadily throughout the year can average between \$3,000 and \$3,500.

The Japanese workers are highly regarded in the vicinity as good workers and there is a high demand for them. In Spring and

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early summer they are in demand for planting and weeding work.

All this work is done on a hour basis and the average wage here is between 80 and 85 cents an hour. The work day usually is 10 hours and workers can work 6 days a week if they like.

During the winter months there is demand for Japanese as farm labor for odd jobs and for semi-skilled workers in seed factories or for picking turkey feathers on one of the nearby town turkey ranches. Again the hour wage is between 80 and 85 cents a hour. The income is highest during the summer and fall harvest where piece work shoots the daily wage often over \$20 a day.

Living expenses in the camp except for food ~~is~~<sup>are</sup> very low. Yet the amount of money that is saved is not as high as would be expected. This is true particularly for the unattached group who work hard all summer and fall and then spend their earnings in the slack winter months. Family groups though on the whole are putting money aside.

Since life in the camp is rather drab, whenever any activity does occur an unusual amount of money is spent. <sup>Some of</sup> the Nisei boys spend large amounts on weekends in the nearby towns drinking and gambling ~~or~~.

The camp has frequent dances in the Camp recreational hall. These dances which draw only a few dozen couples are elaborate affairs. Girls dress in formal gowns and the Nisei boys spend on <sup>an</sup> average of \$10 a dance for corsage alone. Corsages usually are orchids. It is considered cheap to give a girl an inexpensive gardenia <sup>corsage</sup>.

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Most of the Japanese work in crews of from 8-10 men with a crew boss. These crew bosses contract with the neighboring farmers for work either on an hour or a piece work basis. Piece work basis is preferred since more money can be made this way. This is of various kinds. Lettuce for example, is paid by the ~~row~~<sup>row</sup> potatoes by the sack, other items by the row, etc. Piece work though is had mostly in the harvest season.

Most of the crews are composed of Issei and Nisei and are mixed in sex. Several crews are composed entirely of old Issei bachelors and there are two or three small crews of Kibei young men some of whom are ex-GIs.

#### Return to the Northwest Coast.

At the present time very few of the families now living in the Caldwell labor camp are talking about going back to their old homes. Most of them do not have anything to go back to, for the few that may have had property long ago disposed of it.

The families that live in the family type cottage in the camp have fairly comfortable homes. ~~xxxx~~ Most of this group is better off than they ever were before the war on the Northwest coast. The family as a unit is making more money and most of them are setting aside a small stake. It is true that the work is hard and gruelling especially during the harvest season. The returns so far have outweighed such factors.

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A few have gone back to the Northwest areas and have returned. In one of the Kibei crews out of 8 members, 5 have been back to Seattle and have returned and are now working in the fields again. They report that the only jobs open in Seattle are either in dishwashing or other unskilled service jobs where the pay is fairly low. The only good jobs in sense of wages are heavy foundry jobs and this type of work is proves too strenuous for most Issei and Nisei. A few Issei also have made a trip back and have ~~xxxx~~ returned with disco raging reports on housing and types of jobs available for Issei. Families then which now have two to four members working realize that they will have a much harder time on the West Coast than they have now. Few anticipate leaving at least for the next few years.

Young, unattached Nisei boys such as the Kibei group mentioned above are drifting back for the harvest season when they can ~~xxxxxxx~~ make \$20-\$25 a day. Several Nisei girls who left this region have returned. One Nisei girl who divorced a pro-Japan Kibei husband in Tule Lake and resettled by herself returned to Seattle where she could only get a job as a domestic. She worked for a few months and then returned to ~~in~~ Idaho ~~xxx~~ where for the past few months she has been making around \$24 day in the fields (She's an exceptional worker)

General impressions of Caldwell Labor camp:

The Japanese group in the Caldwell camp on the whole is making money. Most of them are better off financially than ever before. For the time being there is every indication that the majority





of the group will stay in the camp for next few years. A certain amount of shifting has been going on. Several families are planning on leaving the camp to return to farming in the northwest. These are families who have four and five workers and who have been saving money for the past two years for this move. But as Japanese families move out of Caldwell, other Japanese families are waiting to move in. The two families who are leaving this month for the Coast will be replaced by two families who have been sharecropping in the Weiser district and who have not been very successful. As family units, they feel they will be able to make more money by working out of the Caldwell camp.

If the present administration plans for making Caldwell camp into a permanent labor camp go through, there is good possibility that for the next decade or so several hundred Japanese will remain under these camp conditions and be used as a labor supply for the surrounding countryside. There does not seem to be much likelihood of the Japanese being replaced by so-called ~~xxxxxx~~'Okie' labor again for the farmers in this area have all expressed feeling that they prefer Japanese as laborers.

The present administration, the WFA, has budget <sup>money</sup> for the Caldwell camp only for a limited time. The need for outside labor in this area would seem to indicate that the camp will continue operation for sometime to come even though it might be under a different ~~tx~~ management.

Several ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ <sup>INTERESTING</sup> ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ <sup>ASIDE</sup> ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ <sup>LIGHTS</sup> on the present management of the center are ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ <sup>rather</sup> ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ <sup>significant</sup> ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ <sup>in terms</sup> of Japanese resettlement.

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The Japanese group in Caldwell Labor Camp during most of the year make up the majority group. The present management of the camp speak very highly of the Japanese as good workers and being good camp citizens. Recently two incidents occurred that bear directly on problems of resettlement.

Use of Japanese language:

With the increase in <sup>Issei</sup> family groups in the camp, many of which have come from Tule Lake, has come an increase in the use of Japanese. This was noticeable particularly in the store as soon as the Japanese operator took over. Issei women who up to this time had been speaking halting and perhaps broken English in the store now lapsed back into Japanese. Since the Japanese the majority in the camp, the atmosphere of the store and other meeting places was that of 'Little Tokyo'. The Caucasian and Negro customers were more or less pushed to one side. The camp management quickly asked the Japanese store operator to insist on English being spoken in the store if at all possible. The camp director expressed himself to the effect, that the camp represented a portion of America and that the camp residents should try at least to use the language of their adopted country.

Prejudice against the Tule Lake Segregants who have relocated:

A fair proportion of the present Caldwell Japanese are Tule Lake segregants who relocated after the other relocation centers were closed. The camp management while accepting these Tule Lake segregants as members of the Caldwell center have adopted



it is reported

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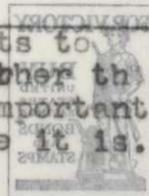
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somewhat of a policy of discrimination against them.

Several Tule Lake families (segregant families) with small children are living ~~in~~<sup>at</sup> the shelters under very unsatisfactory conditions. These families made application for a cottage when it would be available. One Tule Lake segregant family was told that a house would be ready for them ~~xxxx~~ and then were suddenly informed that their application for a house had been cancelled. This family asked their shelter representative to the camp council to find out the reasons for the cancellation. When the matter was brought up to the administration the Japanese council member was told that the administration felt that 'loyal' Japanese those that had not gone to Tule Lake as segregants and who had relocated early should have first choice with respect to houses in the camp. ~~The~~ According to one of the recognized Japanese leaders in the camp, Tule Lake segregant families, are not considered for houses. Other resettler families who may come later in time but who are segregants have been assigned houses while the Tulean segregants remain in the flimsy shelters. The Japanese council members have accepted this ~~argument~~ ~~and~~ and say they are sorry for the Tulean segregants who will have to live in the shelters this winter; ~~but~~ but at the same time feel there is no argument to the loyalty factor.

1. The camp manager was away during the observer's two visits to the camp and this point could not be checked with him. Whether this policy is actually in force is not definite, but what is important is that both Tulean segregants and other resettlers believe it is.



Resettlers throughout the Idaho area have heard reports that back on the West Coast both in California and in the North West Coast the repatriate group from Tule Lake is having a much harder time in all respects. There seems to be some indication that the large Japanese group is beginning to show resentment against the Tulean segregants.

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Snake River Valley Region

Ontario, Oregon is the focal point for Japanese resettlement in the Snake River Valley area. Even before the arrival of the resettlers, Ontario was the center of Japanese community life of this region. A small Japanese restaurant operated here. A Japanese community hall on the outskirts of the town was used for bi-monthly Christian religious services and for other Japanese activities.

The Snake River Valley was very popular with resettlers and it is estimated that a thousand or more settled in this region. Of this group approximately one-third has left the area leaving about 700 resettlers still in the valley. With the pre-war Japanese the total Japanese population for the Snake River Valley stands between 900-1000

The great majority of the resettlers are farmers or farm laborers. In Ontario, however, a small group of business and professional people, skilled and sem-skilled factory workers have settled. Ontario now has two fairly large Japanese restaurants, two Japanese food and fish stores, a doctor, and two churches, one Japanese Methodist, the other Buddhist.

This is a very conservative estimate on observer's part. Church workers estimate that 1200-1400 came in to region and that at least 1000 resettlers still remain in Snake R. valley. Observer stands though on his estimate as being holding in another month or so.





A tofu manufacturing plant has been set up outside of town.

With the exception of the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Japanese M.E. church and one Japanese restaurant all the other businesses and establishments are located on the outskirts of town. This was partly deliberate. The business men were advised by church workers and other friendly Caucasians that this would prevent Caucasian business men in the business section from becoming concerned over possible economic threat. Actually the location of the cafes, the fish markets and food provision stores on the outskirts of town is ideal from a commercial standpoint. The great mass of the Japanese are rural and all have cars. For many it is more convenient to have such establishments on the edge of town. Even the Japanese doctor who has recently opened an office is situated outside of town.

Two of the Japanese business men have built new buildings to house their establishments. ~~xxxxxx~~ On one edge of town a square semi-modernistic cement building houses a fish and food store ~~xxxxxxx~~ and a cafe on the other side. This cafe specializes in Chinese food and is a popular hangout for the younger Nisei crowd in the area. There are booths, tables, soft neon lights, and a juke box. The cafe is also popular with the Caucasians and on Saturday and Sunday nights, the clientele is about 1/3 Caucasian.

On the other side of town another new cement building has been erected. One half of this houses a fish market and the other the Japanese doctor's office and living quarters.

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The Ontario vegetable packing sheds employ several dozen Nisei boys during the packing season. Other Nisei and Issei are employed in a toy factory in Ontario. One of the big garages had three or four Japanese mechanics all during the war and still has two or so left. One mechanic recently purchased a filling station and small repair shop and has gone into business for himself.

Very early in the war years the Ontario Chamber of Commerce went on record as opposing any anti-Japanese propaganda in the business section. This was, no doubt partly brought about by the fact that the Japanese were spending a great deal of money in Ontario. Farmers drove then and still do 30 to 40 miles to Ontario to do their shopping and for entertainment. This meant that thousands of extra dollars were pouring into the Ontario merchants' cash registers.

A Chinese cafe in town was the only business establishment which was not patronized by the Japanese. Apparently the Chinese operator had expressed himself strongly on the Japanese at the start of the war and no one wanted to test his convictions. With the end of the war, a few Japanese began going to this Chinese cafe. With two Japanese restaurants now serving ~~xxx~~ Chinese and Japanese food there is not many Japanese who desire to go to the Chinese cafe.

If the Chamber of Commerce took a public relations stand against anti-Japanese propaganda, ~~xxx~~ it is rumored that they also informally agreed not to employ any Japanese Americans in stores, offices or cafes. Japanese are employed off Main street away from



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public eye.

In the past three years Ontario has gained the reputation of being the friendliest city in the Snake River Valley and Boise region. This report alone brought many resettlers to the Snake River valley.

The type of farming was described earlier. The number of Japanese operated farms have increased some observers estimate by five or six times. There were approximately 25 Japanese operated farms in Malheur County before the war. If the above estimate is right there should now be between 125-130 ~~farms~~ <sup>Japanese</sup> operating farms.

In the area immediately bordering Ontario there were about 8 Japanese operated farms before the war. There are now about 50 in the same area. Most of the Japanese farmers started out on a share crop or lease basis at least for the first year of operation. About half of the farms in this area are still on either a share crop or lease arrangement. ~~fixxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ <sup>About half of the</sup> farm resettlers have bought land. A few <sup>resettler</sup> farm families near Ontario who held onto holdings in the Northwest have recently sold these holdings and are buying farms near Ontario. Three such transactions took place recently. Up to this year farm crops have been good and farmers made money. This year's crop is not very good. It is still too early to see what effect the poor market will have on buying of land by Japanese still share-cropping or leasing.

The average size of the farm in the Snake River Valley is about 50 acres. A few farms run to 100 or 125 acres. Potatoes, onions, sugar beets and lettuce are the main crops. The farming



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is by irrigation and was ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ a <sup>New</sup> experience for most of the resettler farmers. The soil was different, <sup>method</sup> of tending crop was different, and the crops were different. For these reasons many of the farmers preferred to share-crop or work as farm laborers for a year or so before starting out on their own. To them this type of farming was a new experience and as such somewhat of a gamble.

It is hard to gage ~~the~~ either the success or failure of the <sup>average</sup> Japanese resettler farmer. Some have ~~been~~ scraped through the last two years. Many ~~are~~ anticipate on losing money this year. A few others have cashed in heavily during the war years and have acquired additional holdings. One outstanding success in the region is that of two Japanese who farmed on a partnership basis and made over \$50,000 profit on their first crop of onions. This was during the war. This year (1946) the onion crop is a bumper crop but the market price is so low that many of the local farmers are not even bothering to sell them at present. Those who can afford to do so are storing the onion crop until later in the year when prices may be better. This fall in onion market has caught the Japanese farmers who put most of their acreage into onions this year. For the farmers who are working on a small margin, much of the crop will have to be sold at a very low margin of profit and for some even at a loss.

Potato ~~crop~~ has not been too good this year. It is generally conceded out this way that the Japanese farmers have not yet acquired the knack of irrigating potatoes properly. In any event the potato crops of the Japanese farmers tend to be consistently





inferior to the Caucasian crops. In vegetable produce such as lettuce the Japanese farmers have been raising good crops. The only money making crop of 1946 appears to be the sugar beet crop. This (Sept.) crop is just about ready for the harvest and the price so far is very good. Japanese farmers who have good sugar beet crops should again come out ahead this year.

A general statement can be made to the effect that almost all of the Japanese farmers made money in this region during the war years. However, quite a number of resettler farmers have just started out on their own this past year. It is held throughout the area that most of these new farmers will be lucky to break even this year. Early reports from the West Coast indicate that crops there have not been very good. If this turns out to be the case, many of the new farmers who are losing money or at least not making money this year will feel much better.

In addition to the Japanese farmers who have been farming land either on share-crop, lease or own land basis, there have been hundreds of Japanese working in the region as farm laborers. This farm labor has been of various types. Issei bachelors have worked as farm hands for other Japanese or for Caucasian farmers. Couples and family groups have worked for other farmers on a monthly wage basis. This type of arrangement has been very popular for it included ~~fixix fixx~~ housing and part subsistence for family groups. A large family group could thus afford to work for a smaller wage when housing and part of food was given along with the job. Probably several hundred Japanese in family



groups have worked in this region on this arrangement. Another popular arrangement is that of working for large companies either on an hour wage basis or on a piece time rate. The famous Simplot Company which dehydrates potatoes and other products and also maintains huge ~~xxxxx~~ packing sheds has hired hundreds of Japanese workers. In this Snake River Valley region Simplot has several big outlets which consist of farms, packing sheds, warehouses and various ~~xxxxxx~~ mechanical plants. Around Ontario during the war out of some 700 Simplot farm workers about 500 were Japanese. The rest were ~~xxxxxx~~ mainly Mexican.

The Simplot setup at Jamieson, Oregon is fairly typical of of this big company arrangement. Jamieson is a little hamlet of some 250 people all of whom except for postmaster and storekeeper work for the Simplot Company. Jamieson consists of a filling station, a postoffice and a grocery store. There is a huge Simplot warehouse and processing plant and a small cluster of shacks in which the Simplot farm workers live. Out of this group of 250 workers about 65% during the war were Japanese. At present there are still about 100 Japanese workers still at Jamieson but the group is slowly dwindling away.

In contrast to the situation in the Caldwell Labor camp the Japanese workers in Jamieson have a much inferior setup. Most of the farm labor work is done on an hourly basis. The wage rate here ~~ranges from~~ 75 to 80 cents. During harvest piece time rates are used and workers are able to make \$12-15 dollars a day.

The Japanese farm laborers for these big companies work for the company ~~and during the planting, weeding and harvest~~

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season they are sent in crews to work on the company farms or to the farms which have contracted to supply the company with produce. During the slack season these company workers do odd jobs in the warehouses and packing sheds. There is the advantage of being on the company payroll all year around whereas the free-lance farm workers such as at Caldwell take a chance on getting work during the slack season.

In Jamieson, for example, houses are furnished by the company. These are little more than shacks and at best are not much better than the relocation center quarters. ~~xxxxxxkxkxxxx~~ The average shack has two small rooms, a bedroom and a kitchen-living room. Cooking and heating is done by a coal range. There is no hot water although a cold water pipe runs to the sink. These shacks have no baths and outside privies. There is no rent charged but occupants must furnish their own coal in the winter time. At Jamieson these shacks are painted white and are clustered together at one side of a dusty road. There is no play space for children except in the road and in the weeds around the houses.

~~xxxxxx~~ There is very little future for the Japanese laborers in this type of arrangement and the numbers who work under this setup are going down fast. The ~~xxxx~~ few <sup>nature</sup> ~~young~~ Nisei who took these jobs have long since gone elsewhere. Today the group that remains at Jamieson is composed of older Issei with small Nisei children and a few Nisei families from Tule Lake segregation group. It is this Tule Lake segregation group ~~xxxx~~ which will probably stay on in this type arrangement for the present.

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The Jamieson group of <sup>WASHINGTON</sup> Japanese is isolated. While Jamieson is only 43 miles from Ontario, there is no transportation there except for a train that runs three times a week on very irregular schedules. Most of the Jamieson group ~~do not~~ have cars (an ~~other~~ contrast to the Caldwell group where a car is almost a necessity for free-lance farm work) The Japanese workers there have little no contact with the outside community either Japanese or Caucasian. Many of the workers there go to nearby town of Vale or Ontario once in six months. There is little social activity among the Japanese group itself. The non-segregant group does not see eye to eye with the segregant group and differences have loomed large in this isolated area. For example, <sup>certain</sup> families who live next door to each other are not on speaking terms because of slight differences that have been magnified by the peculiar life of the settlement.

While the wage rate is not as high here as in the Caldwell area, there is even less opportunity to spend money except on food. One average family consisting of a husband, wife and two children estimated that they spent about 1/3 of the monthly wage on food for the family. The other expenses were negligible. If more than one member of a family can work, it is possible to save ~~xxxxxxx~~ a fair amount on a proportional basis. Even one wage earner with a family can save a small amount by being cautious in expenditures.

There is general dissatisfaction among the group at such company settlements. The mature Nisei and young Issei with families can see no future and are eager to get out. Almost all of this group has gone and the few dozen that still remain at



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Jamieson will be gone by the end of winter. Even older Issei especially those with growing Nisei children are becoming discontent. The school in the area is not very good. There is no medical ~~facility~~ facilities except at Vale 18 miles away or at Ontario 43 miles away. Transportation is irregular. If a company car or truck is not available, emergency medical cases must be hauled to the nearby doctors in a taxi which in turn must be summoned from the nearest town. There is no recreational facilities either for the children or for the adults.

Except for a few Issei bachelors and a few Issei couples and families, it is safe ~~to~~ to assume that another year or so will see this small Japanese settlement at Jamieson down to several dozen.

Church organization in Snake River Valley

Prior to the war the only church organization in the Snake River Valley was that of the Japanese Methodist church mission group which sponsored bi-monthly Sunday services in the Japanese Community hall in Ontario. A Japanese minister from Hood River came down to conduct sermons and to baptize and perform other ministerial functions.

~~With~~ In 1940 Rev. Shaver, an ex-Korean missionary, was assigned to do mission work in the Caldwell-Boise Valley area and he occasionally came up to Ontario to preach. With the outbreak of war and the start of the resettlement program, the Methodist Mission group assigned a full time Caucasian church worker to the Snake River Valley and later assigned a Japanese



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minister to the area. During the first year of the war no special Japanese church meetings were held. The ~~xxxx~~ Ontario police had served warning that they would not be responsible for property protection if churches allowed Japanese to hold meetings. It was this point that the local Japanese signed over their Ontario community hall to the city of Ontario for safety purposes. (The city used part of the hall during the war for high school teacher apartments but is now turning it back to the Japanese group).

The ~~xxxx~~ Caucasian Methodist church <sup>board</sup> in Ontario voted in 1942 not to hold special meetings for the Methodist Japanese. The town high-school principal was ~~xxxx~~ one of the strongest foes of the Japanese at this period. Finally the Baptist church allowed the Japanese Methodist group to hold special service. When no trouble developed, other churches followed the Baptist lead and a policy of rotation was suggested. However, the Baptist church was so arranged that both English and Japanese services could be held at the same time and the Japanese M.E. group continued to use the Baptist church later; paying rent for the church use.

The M.E. Japanese group under the leadership of Rev. Goto became a very active group in the war years. Young People's groups were organized and the church became a center for social activity for both Issei and Nisei. Then Rev. Goto was transferred to Spokane and Rev. Inouye formerly of Hood River and who had ministered to this region before the war on a part time basis was assigned to the Snake River as a permanent post. Under his





direction and guidance plans for a new Japanese M.E. church

were laid out. A \$20,000 brick and stone church has been designed, bids accepted, and work is to be started almost immediately. The M.E. Japanese groups hopes the church will be completed in time for Christmas religious services.

The fact that a small group of Japanese Christians can raise enough money to built a permanent church in this town is indicative of the type of resettlement that has gone on in the rural areas. The former Japanese residents are taking the lead in sponsoring this church but today the congregation is largely made up of resettlers. ~~xxxxxx~~ Good support for this church has been secured. Several Japanese farmers ~~xxxxxx~~ who are not wealthy ~~xxxxxx~~ have pledged \$1,000 for the new church. One Japanese farmer who has ~~made~~ money during the war has already given ~~xxx~~ \$2,000. Other amounts that are being pledged by the local Japanese farmers run into the hundreds of dollars.

(As an interesting sidelight it might be noted that the local Caucasian Methodist group is also trying to raise money for a new ~~xxxxxx~~ church. To date the largest Caucasian contribution from the Methodist business men has been about \$200.)

The end of the war brought about a cessation of most of the Young People's activities in the M.E. church for practically all of the Nisei leaders left the area. A new group of younger leaders from the remaining population is now taking the place of these older Nisei leaders.

A Buddhist minister has settled in Ontario and has been holding Buddhist services for the Buddhist families in the Snake River Valley. At present the Buddhist minister hopes to obtain

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the use of the old Japanese community hall as a meeting place  
for the Buddhists.

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JACL organization in Snake River Valley

The JACL organization in the Snake River Valley is a much  
more active group than its counterpart in the Boise Valley.  
The officers are young and aggressive. In August of this year  
a meeting was held to plump for Nisei voting. Plans for a  
well rounded recreational program have been set up and some  
already implemented. The leaders in this group tend to be  
local ~~xxxx~~ Nisei residents rather than the resettler Nisei ~~xxxx~~  
on the whole ~~xxxxxxx~~ <sup>resettler Nisei left</sup> ~~they~~ are now too young ~~xx~~ as yet to step  
into such leadership positions.

The Snake River JACL ~~xxxxxx~~ also has taken the lead in  
encourging the formation of other JA EL chapters in the  
nearby regions. This group proposed at ~~xxx~~ one time to  
~~xx~~  
organize a Snake River JACL league and Spokane JACL unit  
was invited to join. Nothing came of this invitation for the  
Spokane unit felt that the two areas were too far apart for  
effective cooperation.

Veteran organization

There are several hundred Nisei ex-GI's in the Boise  
Valley and Snake River Valley regions. The group as a whole  
has shown scarcely any interest in forming a veteran organization  
of their own or in joining the larger community veteran organization.  
Because of the prevailing feeling that most of the Idaho and  
Oregon towns are still hostile to Japanese, veteran participation  
will be slower in these regions than elsewhere.



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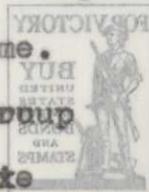
General impressions and conclusions:

Regardless of whether there are 1500 or 2000 resettlers left in the Boise and Snake River Valley, the Japanese group has increased tremendously over the pre-war population.

It is estimated that already about 1/3 of all the resettlers who came into these regions have gone back to either to their former homes or relocated elsewhere. There is continual movement out of these regions at present and this will continue for the next few years. Possibly 1/3 more will eventually drift out of the area. At the same time there is a small movement back into the region. Some of this is seasonal such as harvest hands coming back to work for the harvest season. A small handful of former resettlers who have tried the West Coast are also returning. Even a few new comers are arriving from the Midwest and East to join friends or relatives in this region.

Within two or three years the group in this region except for the farm labor group at Caldwell should be pretty well shaken down. Right now there seems to be a fair amount of movement within the area. Malheur County and the Snake River Valley region around Weiser and Payette should continue to become increasingly important as farming area for Japanese farmers.

It is evident that <sup>Japanese</sup> farm labor for large companies like Simplot is on its way out. This was a temporary wartime arrangement that strikes the observer as having already lived out its time. On the other hand the Caldwell free-lance Japanese labor group is growing in size and may well develop into a un'quite



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Labor unit that will last for many years to come.

A pattern of community life is developing in the Snake River Valley for the rural Japanese. This has its roots in the Christian and Buddhist church organizations. The Snake River JACL would seem to be the vitalizing influence in the Nisei group in this region.

In contrast to the Snake River Valley group, the Boise rural group has not developed the same degree of community organization. There is some indication that the Boise group may eventually be absorbed as far as community life with Japanese group goes into the Snake River Valley group.

The great majority of the farmers who have invested money in land and those who are leasing and share-cropping will stay for some time to come. A few bad seasons might change this picture. This present year is anticipated as poor but the past few years were exceptionally good and there is a great deal of incentive for future years.

Young mature Nisei other than those that go into farming will continue to drift out of the region. The great mass of Japanese in these regions will continue to be rural dwellers. A saturation point would seem to have been reached for restaurants, fish markets and Japanese produce stores.

Ontario, Oregon, has developed into the focal point of the Japanese community of the Snake River Valley region and to a lesser extent for the Boise Valley region. All indications are that it will continue to be the community center for this general region.