

EVACUATION & RESETTLEMENT STUDY University of California  
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A REPORT ON MADISON, WISCONSIN  
Evacuee Resettlement  
--as of mid-April, 1943:

*Copied*

Madison is the Capital of Wisconsin. It is also a "college town", site of the University of Wisconsin. It has a population now estimated around 80,000. It has a thriving business district, numerous churches, one of the nation's most progressive public school systems, and a share of wartime industries.

Pre-war Madison had less than a dozen residents of Japanese parentage. One family in particular was well established; the father, a non-citizen, was engaged (and still is) in prosperous truck farming; two daughters and a son were sent to the University of Wisconsin; one daughter received an appointment in the geography department of the University where she is employed today; the other got a job in the Madison public library as a stenographer. Shortly after Pearl Harbor, the son enlisted in the United States Army.

Wartime Madison appears to have been quite impressed by the example of this long-time resident Japanese family. The American Legion post in the city publicized the family, ceremoniously presented a Legion Service flag. "These people are not Japs; they are Americans" the Madison press said.

Voluntary evacuees from the west coast, in the days immediately preceding mass evacuation, raised Madison's "Japanese" population to nearly 20 in the spring of 1942.



(2) Madison, Wisconsin Tanaka

Resettlement under the War Relocation Authority's present program has increased that total today to 45. At this stage, first signs of opposition to relocation are appearing in Madison. Support of the program, however, is also increasing, contradictory as it may seem.

H o w   r e l o c a t i o n has been handled in Madison:

In February, 1943, through initiative of the American Baptist Home Mission Society working in conjunction with the Midwest Branch Office (Chicago) of the American Friends Service Committee, a committee of civic leaders was formed. This was known as the "Madison Committee on Relocation of American Citizens Of Japanese Ancestry."

Members of this committee: C. V. Hibbard, chairman; Benjamin H. Bull, an attorney and prominent American Legionnaire, vice-chairman; Rev. Alfred W. Swan, secretary; Rev. A. G. Adams, Professor Noble Clark, Frank Cockrell, Rev. George L. Collins, Miss Grace T. Crafts, R. M. Eickmeyer, Mrs. J. F. Elder, Judge Fred M. Evans, Joseph C. Ford, Mrs. Philip H. Gray, Jr., Paul A. Kayser, Miss Rachel Kelsey, Ref. Edwin O. Kennedy, Mayor James R. Law, Mrs. Vera Lecomte, Rev. L. B. Moseley, Professor Selif Perlman, Joe Rothschild, Father Leo Rummel, Miss Ethel Troy, John J. Walsh, Martin P. Walsh, Judge John D. Wickheim. Miss Isabelle M. Gates, Baptist Home Missionary, from the west coast, was assigned to devote her full time and energies in the relocation work.

In March, the War Relocation Authority assigned a field representative on relocation, John Putz, to open an



(3) Madison, Wisconsin Tanaka

office in Madison.

The Madison Committee's efforts were directed toward two objectives: (1) creating favorable community receptivity and understanding sentiment and (2) finding jobs for qualified evacuees submitted by Miss Gates.

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AFTER TWO MONTHS...

On Friday, April 2, members of the Advisory Committee met at the Madison Y.W.C.A. to take stock of their accomplishments and to review the situation.

Eleven evacuees had been placed in Madison during the preceding five weeks, directly as the result of the Committee's efforts. Additional evacuees, though without Committee sponsorship or contacts in advance, were also coming in to Madison. Jobs in industrial plants and factories, however, had not yet been opened.

Organized labor had taken a stand against permitting evacuees from camps into these jobs. It was reported to the Advisory Committee meeting that W.R.A. representative John Putz and Committee representative Isabelle Gates had attended a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Madison Federation of Labor, composed of both C.I.O. and A.F.L. men. Mr. Putz had presented an appeal for support of the War Relocation Authority's program on the basis of aid to democracy at home. Labor's leaders shot back questions: "Can we trust the Japs after what they did at Pearl Harbor?" "What about the sabotage in Hawaii?" "Weren't they dangerous on the West Coast? How do we know they're loyal now?" "There are so many other places



(4) Madison, Wisconsin Tanaka

WHERE they can be sent. Why bring them to Madison?" Discussion flowed back and forth. Sentiment among labor leaders indicated uneasiness: "We don't want any surplus Jap influx here; they have lower standards of living; they eat rice and can subsist on so little."

Upshot of the meeting was that organized labor would not be opposed to the War Relocation Authority in Madison if the government could guarantee:

- (1) All evacuees would get out of Madison six months after war ended
- (2) Relocated American Japanese evacuees would waive their unemployment compensation benefits
- (3) Evacuees would strictly keep out of industrial plants, wholesale and retail business establishments.

Organized labor has not taken any positive steps to prevent evacuee relocation as it is being carried out by the W.R.A., but it has successfully barred evacuee applicants from the major fields of employment in Madison.

At the April 2 meeting, Advisory Committee members were inclined to believe that "with a dozen or more evacuees, perhaps the saturation point has been reached." Scores of domestic and household jobs are open, but for such offers the relocation camps are producing hardly any takers.

A factor influencing the Madison situation was pointed out by Professor Selig Perlman, expert on labor economics, at the University of Wisconsin :

"There is a general slackening of employment in Madison. There's a labor surplus rather than a labor shortage. Machine tooling in



(5) Madison, Wisconsin Tanaka

the large plants here is now nearing completion; all this, of course, works against evacuee resettlement in this area."

Personality clashes in Madison's labor difficulties antedating relocation have been a factor in organized labor's stand. It is pointed out by union officials that the Advisory Committee has no labor representation on it. Furthermore, at least two of the Committee members are reputedly violently anti-labor, have records of bitter skirmishes with the unions.

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#### PRESENT OPENINGS...

Wisconsin dairy farms are in need of workers. The farm opportunities in the surrounding area are being analyzed by the W.R.A. Emphasis has shifted to farm prospects. The chief obstacle in this connection has been the fact that the majority of applicants in the relocation centers are truck farmers, with little or no experience in dairying.

Stenographers, clerks, bookkeepers, accountants in offices may still squeeze in an opening here and there.

Domestic workers, household aids, janitors, custodians are needed in almost "unlimited" number.

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#### E v a c u e e     R e s t r i c t i o n s :

The University of Wisconsin is not open to evacuee college students now applying for relocation. This is reported due largely to the fact that both the Navy and Army



(6) Madison, Wisconsin Tanaka

have extensive training facilities there. However, American Japanese students attending before war's outbreak have been undisturbed.

H o s p i t a l e m p l o y m e n t : Madison has four large hospitals-- Wisconsin General Hospital, St. Mary's Hospital, Methodist Hospital, Madison General Hospital. The Wisconsin General and the Methodist hospitals are closed to evacuee employment. The Madison General has six evacuees on the staff, including three registered nurses. St. Mary's also has five or six.

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EVACUEE "PROBLEMS"  
C a s e h i s t o r i e s

No. 1 James Takaaki Nomura

The Madison Advisory Committee and the W.R.A. fears adverse publicity may set back relocation almost more than any other factor.

On Friday, April 9, the following article appears on the front page of the "Capital Times":

"Jap Jailed in  
Conduct C a s e

"A Japanese who forced his attention upon a young woman at her room here Thursday night was committed to the county jail for 15 days when he failed to pay the \$25 fine assessed today by Judge Proctor for disorderly conduct.

"James T. Nomura, 25, city YMCA, who was removed from the executive offices in the capitol Jan. 2 when he insisted upon an interview with Acting Gov. Goodland, is the man arrested.

"Police found him at his room after



Miss Romaine Day, 515 N. Lake st., reported Nomura knocked on the door of her room Thursday night and threatened her if she refused to have a date with him.

"Nomura admitted the offense. He said he is an American citizen because he was born in the United States although he lived in Japan from the time he was a small boy until he returned to this country alone in 1936. His wife is being held in a west coast camp, he said. He claimed to have attended the University of California and to have made unsuccessful efforts to enter the University of Wisconsin and to enlist in the army."

The story appeared in the newspaper on Friday. The next day young Nomura was fired from his job with the Pure Oil parking service and station in Madison. By Sunday Nomura apparently had been disavowed by nearly all his friends, berated by his uncle and brother, served with his hotel bill notice to 'pay up', and forsaken by everyone except the Advisory Committee's acting Chairman Benjamin Bull and representative Isabelle Gates.

Bull, an attorney in the Gay Building facing the Capitol, had this to say about the case:

"Even if he had deliberately set out to hurt the relocation program, Jimmy couldn't have done anything more damaging. The newspaper account, of course, is not entirely accurate. But let me begin at the beginning.

"I've known James about a year. He came here as Takaki Nomura, age 25. He celebrated his birthday a few days ago, and now he's twenty-six. He came here with his brother



Tom and his uncle, Mr. H. Nomura, an issei, shortly before evacuation. Takaaki wasn't in good graces with the relatives; while brother Tom lives with the Uncle and his wife and four children, Takaaki moved to the YMCA hotel. We gave him the name James. They came from Oakland.

"James was born in the United States and was sent at an early age to Japan to be educated. He is a kibeï. He attended the University of California at Berkeley for about two and a half years; he was a fencing instructor there for a while. He was also a newspaperman with a San Francisco Japanese daily, he tells me. His uncle says that's where he picked up a lot of bad habits. He married a girl whom his uncle describes as 'no good'. Just where she is today James doesn't know; he also doesn't seem to know whether their marriage was legal; it seems they were married in Hawaii.

"When he came here about a year ago, I made his acquaintance. I am convinced that James is loyal to the United States, even though he does not have full grasp of the English language and sometimes misunderstands our way of doing things; he's seen enough of Japan and had enough of the taste of the American way. He is sincere, I believe, when he says he wants to enlist in the United States Army and fight for this country.

"When he first came here with his uncle, employment was secured for him at the Celon Company. They manufacture a liquid chemical to seal the tops of bottles. I understand it was work as a chemist. Well, it seems he got into some



trouble there and was fired. Then this job was secured for him at Pure Oil Company. He has told just about everybody who came there that he was going to join the Army soon. His draft board in California hasn't taken any action to accept him, and I think he's thought he'd lost face or something.

"Before this girl trouble came up, James had about reached the point where he considered himself quite a fellow. I am inclined to think that it was just as much the girl's fault as James'. It seems that Miss Day began seeing James in an altruistic spirit, she tells me. Here was a fellow who needed help in readjusting himself to the community; she is a journalism student at the University of Wisconsin. So she, along with a friend, another girl chum, had been taking James to luncheons at the University and been having dinner with him.

"I can remember one night when James and I were going to a Chinese cafe for a chop suey dinner when he received a telephone call from Miss Day; she practically invited herself and her girl friend into our party. I am married and so withdrew. I think that Miss Day was quite forward and if a situation such as the newspaper reported arose was unfortunate, responsibility rests equally with her. I have talked to her since, and she agrees with me that she probably should not have called the police. It could all have been ironed out without doing so.

"On Tuesday of the week he was arrested, James had appeared before the Business Men's club of Madison at



the Loraine Hotel. His topic was "Shintoism." He told them how Japan was leading herself to destruction. He was a success and must have felt he was quite the fellow.

"On the next day it seems he had dinner with Miss Day. What had started out to be an objective sort of thing was beginning to turn subjective. James seems to have tried to date her up for the next night. She seemed to feel the thing was getting out hand. She refused. Her girl friend agreed with her. He seems to have used profane language in their presence and allegedly threatened them.

"Miss Day then called the police. A detective e went up to the room of James and, without a warrant, told him to 'come along.' He went. I didn't learn of it until several hours later when I went to get him out. He had been improperly arrested, no warrant, no nothing.

"He was fired from his job again. Now we've found another job for him as a gardener starting today (Monday April 19). James couldn't have hurt us more if he had tried. It's a shame that this thing had to happen because it could have ugly repercussions.

"As a matter of fact, I am surprised that James was not mobbed after the story appeared in the newspapers. There are enough soldiers and sailors around here for such a thing to happen. This case has all the elements in it that incite mobs to form.

"James has been down at the heels and reeling terrible about this thing, of course. He said he would commit suicide and a few things like that. He says he'll even go to a camp if I tell him to. He appreciates the fact



(11) Madison, Wisconsin Tanaka

I've not deserted him like everyone else, he says. But I'm afraid it wouldn't be wise not to anticipate further trouble from him. I've a feeling this city with its some 80,000 people isn't really big enough to hold a James Nomura case a second time. I am trying, with his approval, to get him into the army. That would be the solution.

"James is a rather stubborn sort of individual. He has that streak in him. Physically he is small, but of good build; he was a fencing instructor, you know. His uncle and brother also want to see him in the army."

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#### FAVORABLE COMMUNITY RELATIONS

In contrast to the adverse publicity created by the Nomura case, an evacuee couple from the west coast, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sasaki and their four-year-old daughter, have been welcomed warmly in the Madison community in which they reside.

Sasaki is an American-born, U.S.-educated (Nisei) citizen in his early thirties. His wife is also a typical American-Japanese. According to Isabelle Gates, who has been close to the Madison situation for the past two months:

"The Art Sasakis have been one of the biggest assets favoring relocation up here. They came here in November of 1942 with their daughter. Art was formerly a Seattle wholesale produce merchant. He's a hard worker and well liked. His wife also has won quite a warm place among their new friends.

"Art secured a job at the Whittwer Wholesale



(12) Madison, Wisconsin

Tanaka

Grocery company, starting at \$35 a week, plus overtime. The first week, he worked so much that he earned \$75. His work has been satisfactory and at the end of three weeks he was given an advancement.

"He's been doing a swell job of public relations too. He's won community understanding. He's made 26 or 27 speeches before groups, service clubs--the Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, before schools here and at Dodgeville and Portage as well.

"He's got his application before the union for membership. I think it is required in his line. I'm hopeful he'll come through all right. He's far above average, and I'm afraid it's requiring that type to make a place under conditions as they are developing here now."

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ISSEI EVACUEES (Non-citizens)

Despite language handicap and difficulties attendant upon readjustment into an all-English-speaking world, an alien (issei) Japanese couple <sup>have</sup> ~~has~~ found ~~its~~ their way into a Madison home in the relocation program.

According to Isabelle Gates: "Mr. and Mrs. Hiwatashi are in their forties. They're issei from California also, friends of the Nomuras. They came here to do truck farming but couldn't make a go of it. Now they're working as domestics in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ford. He is a member of the Advisory Committee. Mrs. Ford tells me that Mrs. Hiwatashi is working out very well.



(14) Madison, Wisconsin Tanaka

Mr. Hiwatashi is not doing quite so happily; however, it may be just a matter of time. Mr. Ford is paying them \$100 a month plus board and room. He is head of the Celon Company and on quite good terms with organized labor.

"Nevertheless, when the matter about the Executive Committee came up, the secretary of the union called him up and wanted to know what the idea about relocation was. Mr. Ford told him about the Hiwatashis. Then the man accused Mr. Ford of 'coddling the Japs.' He is said to have said: 'What do you mean? They were working on the truck farm and making about \$40 a month, and now you're paying them \$100!'" In spite of it, however, Mr. Ford is keeping them on, and he keeps on good relations with the union."

A L S O I S S E I are Mr. and Mrs. H. Nomura . According to Miss Gates: "The Nomuras, although they are isseis, they don't want to go back to California. They are very happy here. Their four children are well treated and having a wonderful time at the public school; they have a good home in a very nice neighborhood. Mr. Nomura is planning to buy it. Mr. Nomura was engaged in the produce business in Oakland before evacuation. He came out here before the mass evacuation.

"At first, Mr. Nomura told me, none of his neighbors would speak to him or his wife. They seemed a little unfriendly. But recently, one of his neighbors brought them a roasted pheasant. Mrs. Nomura baked a lemon cream



pie and returned the plate. There were tears in Mr. Nomura's eyes as he related how most of his neighbors have come to accept the family. There is still some coolness with one of them, but now he's much more confident and quite sure that hostility will break down.

"Mr. Nomura is working for \$20 a week in the shipping department of Barron's department store. The Nomuras are well off enough not to have to worry about starving if he doesn't earn enough to support the whole family. Nephew Tom Nomura is also working as a cook at the Belmont Hotel and doing quite well. Their chief worry is errant brother and nephew James."

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'UNSETTLED, RESTLESS EVACUEE'

Like other relocation areas, Madison has its share of the 'unsettled evacuee' whom flits about from one job prospect to another, lands briefly, then begins restlessly wandering to another, occasionally lured by a slightly higher pay scale, but never taking root, and along the way creating unfavorable employer attitudes toward evacuees.

One young man, in his early twenties, came to Madison from one of the relocation centers in March. He was placed in a janitor's job through the Methodist Church, was earning \$60 monthly plus maintenance. With a friend, also an evacuee and of the same age, he left Madison a fortnight ago for Milwaukee, quitting his job. He had heard he could earn .75 an hour in Milwaukee. With his friends, he applied at the United States Employ-



(16) Madison, Wisconsin Tanaka

ment Service office in Milwaukee. The "job freezing" order had just gone into effect; he was required to produce a "statement of availability" from his previous employer, which he was unable to do. The two young men then went to the Schroeder hotel in answer to a want-ad in one of the newspapers.

They were told: "We don't want any Japs. You fellows are all right, though." The two are today posing as Indians. They are working as elevator boys, earning \$20 a week.

Neither is too happy; both admit they're 'homesick' for Madison and their friends there.

One of the youths commented to Miss Gates: "For two cents I'd chuck it all and enlist in the Army. At least I'd have on a uniform that would make me feel I was wanted."

Both are seeking placement in shipping in the great lakes region. They want to get into the merchant marine, they say.

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#### "MADISON IS WONDERFUL"

One of the most enthusiastic responses to inquiries on "how are you making out?" is given by Miss Yaeko Munemori, formerly of Santa Ana, California, a registered nurse who last week arrived in Madison from the Manzanar Relocation Center. Miss Munemori is one of three evacuee registered nurses earning \$85 monthly plus room and board and laundry at the Madison General Hospital. Jobs are



(17) Madison, Wisconsin Tanaka

permanent; after the first year, the pay will be raised to \$90 monthly, after the second year, to \$95 monthly. "I'm so happy to be out of camp; Madison is wonderful!" is Miss Munemori's comment.

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#### OCCUPATIONAL MALADJUSTMENTS

A recent arrival from a relocation center in Arkansas is now employed on a dairy farm just outside of Madison. He is an auto mechanic by trade but came out with a definite job offer on the farm.

He is not too happy in his present work; the hours are long, the grind grueling. He wants to find a job as a mechanic; yet he has been told that he is now "frozen to his job."

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A d m d e n d a :

The American Legion on the whole has been a most wholesome influence in relocation in Madison.