

Copley, J. Box 1:13 J

[Notes on occurrences, Dec. 1-6, 1942]

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December:1: The date set for the new pay rates at the Camouflage factory was p st. Other promises, too, might be forgotten.

Bl 30 inquired:

"The new setup of the camouflage project was to take effect Monday, but we have not heard anything since the very first meeting they had, at which time the administrative staff asked for our co-operation. We are very anxious to know about any progress made. Any information will be much appreciated."

Bl 22 inquired:

"Whatever became of the camouflage proposition in which so much ballyhoo was played up? When Mr. Stohl was here, he stated this work had to be in operation by Monday of this week or else. Here it is Wednesday and still no effort is being made to canvass people's opinion. In fact, there is not even any talk in regard to this. Was this just another trial balloon to get the people around?"

December 2: Bl 24 held a meeting. A Christmas party for the children under 12 was arranged; and everyone in the block "agreed to be against the self-government."

" 2: Dep arture of 16 young men who had qualified for the U S army Language School. (still more depleting the Americanized members of M)

December 3: Block 5 residents meeting:

"First in ~~line~~ the line of discussion was the proposal of a possible continuance of the Manzanar Charter. Rules and regulations, plans and purposes, were discussed pro and con. U.K. the alternate Block Manager, elaborated on the above, encouraging the group ~~at~~ to express individual opinions. The sentiments of the group evidently favored the negative., for the dismissal of such a Charter was unanimously approved."

" 3 The new Project Director met with the reps of the blocks to see what could be done about the Charter. He was told it would be rejected of ~~put~~ to vote immediately. The Director saw three possibilities:

1. Charter could be ratified as it stood.
2. Could be revised within limitations of WRA Rulings
3. Would not be acceptable even with revisions and would not be put to a popular vote. In that event, it would be up to the Pro Dir to state the terms on which the people could live together. He hoped the evacuees would not wish edicts handed down to them. He asked them to reconsider the Charter again and to meet with him once more on December 10. (never to take place)

December 4: Regular meeting of Block Mgrs Assembly.

Chairman of the Mess Hall committee announced: "no progress had been made" in its attempt to bring the Work Corps and the representatives of the Kitchen Workers Union into harmony.

Senior Administrative officer was introduced to meeting;

Dec 4 meeting contd. He explained the methods used in ordering food supplies in Manzanar finances. emphasizing the length of time requisitions must be submitted in advance and calling attention to the fact that the Qmstr corps takes final responsibility for the order Also told how payment was made. After his statements, a prominent Bl Mgr ~~said~~ suggested: "in order to avoid rumors, it would clarify matters if the WRA financial statement could be seen. We do not know where the money is going to."

Attention turned to cracker situation in Coop Ent. Rumor that Center's goods were being sold thru Coop. This had happened only once when crackers had been delivered by mistake to Coop. When discovered, error corrected, Coop paid for goods and matter was cleared up. Most of the mgrs seemed to accept this explanation, but it was just one more straw at a time when affairs of the coop were in upheaval.

Chman and exec sec sent in their resignations.

Dec. Block 2: "The residents are frequently hearing that we will be scattered or removed out of this center sooner or later. If this rumor becomes true, we will protect ourselves against this outrageous act."

Dec. 4: The delegates to JACL at Salt Lake City returned to center

At night, Federal agents took into custody and removed from center Block 14's representative to the Coop.

The above two events were linked together in minds of people. The arrest reminded them of the days that followed Pearl Harbor: "Koreans, stooges, dogs, flagweavers, informers and JACL traitors" whom they accused of cooperating with the authorities for a price to their undoing.

Animus directed to one of the SLC delegates who had been an officer and the most prominent figure in the LA Chapter of the JACL. He had become spokesman for the nisei group which was constantly called into consultation with govt officials on Jap problems. He had helped form a corporation which had purchased a large issei business concern. Was suspected of trying to aid the enterprising nisei supplant the issei in economy of Jap communities. He had urged that Japs accept evacuation as their contribution to the winning of the war. Was charged with having sold them out. with having picked out the chocky dusty center of Manzanar, (He had been brought to see it to quiet the fears in re Manzanar which circulated in L A) He was accused of taking advantage of the issei panic by filling necessary forms at a high price which govt agencies were handling for nothing. That to be a tool of the admin at Manzanar and an informer. Had special privileges and favors leave from center, sugar, canned foods, fine furniture, etc.

He was a politician in LA and connected with Work Corps at Manzanar

His association with Cit Fed was one of the reasons why it was proclaimed a disguise for the discredited JACL Residents were furious that he had named himself their representative to the S L C conference. They believed that Cit Fed were responsible for the issei-nisei distinctions required in the Charter. It was claimed that the delegates in conference assembled had asked for nisei to be inducted into combat units of the U S Army. Anger against any one who would "give away other people's sons." Threats and what not on hand to greet him on his return.

Dec 5: Jud Committee recommended jail sentences of 6 months for each of the three men who had been found guilty of tossing rocks through the windows of the policeman's home in November. Sentence accompanied a strong denunciation of maliciousness and a threat of severity for others interfering with the orderly processes of law in Manzanar.

Dec 5: Free Press announced that the official delegates of Manzanar to S L C conference were back on their jobs in the center. That same night 6 men broke into the home of the most disliked of the delegates, and beat him up so that he had to be sent to hospital.

Dec 6: Morning: People learned of this; also that Mr. U, the head of the Kitchen Workers' union, and the prominent investigator of the sugar situation, was taken in custody in connection with the assault along with the two other men.

Mr. U. too popular, too active in political events to be incarcerated without challenge. Friends rallied. Felt that his arrest was retaliation of the Administration against a man who knew too much about the sugar situation and about the dubious practices of some individuals on the Caucasian staff. Kitchen Workers sure that his arrest was to intimidate and dynamite their organization

Sceptics about food situation were positive this was a move against one who had been their protector. Anti-charter forces read into it a ~~move~~ means to remove a determined foe to self-govt. Kibei thought it was because Mr. U. had stood with them against the Cit Fed when leave clearance had been denied them. "Blood Brothers" resolved to make capital of it and the strife and discontent it brought.

Block 22 morning meeting of all the factions represented above. Fiery speeches delivered, and a Comm of Five appointed to demand that the Admin release the jailed man.

Early afternoon: A group of supporters and a large group of curious on-lookers went towards Admin Bldg to negotiate with the Pro Director. As crowd became threatening, Military police asked to enter and patrol the area. Pro Dir. talked calmly with the Comm and walked about in the crowd without hindrance. Finally an agreement was reached which seemed to satisfy both sides: Mr U would be brought back to Manzanar, if the crowd would disband and if the Comm would agree to disband and if to discourage further violence or disorder. BY "bringing Mr. U back to Manzanar, " the Admin did not mean to infer that he would be released or that charges against him would be dropped. Comm took it to mean that Admin was capitulating and that Mr. U was being unconditionally released.

Spokesmen for Comm told crowd in Japanese that Admin had complied with their demands

Dec 6 evening: Comm learned that Mr. U had been returned to the center but was placed in jail. This news a signal or still larger mad meeting Crowd gathered around the water tower. P A system threw the angry words o speakers far and wide. Comm felt betrayed; speeches were violently anti-administration. Fury against the "dogs" and "stooges" allegedly working with the Administration against the evacuees. As names od "dogs" were read, cries of "Let's get him" were heard. Crowd became a mob.

A contingent moved to ard jail to free Mr. U.

A second group started for the hos ital with intent to further punish, perhaps kill ~~Mr. U~~. the returned delegate in the hospital. Other groups went to the apts of the "dogs" a nd Admin favorites. Exp edition to the hospital failed of its objective because ~~Mr. U~~. the delegate had been well hidden or spirited away. Other intended victims, warned, were in hiding or under military protection. Group advancing toward jail became center of attention.

Soldiers barred the wa y to the jail. Taunts and insults hurled A truck was starte rolling towards the soldiers. It struck and crushed a corner of the police station barrack. Pressure from behind moved the crowd forward. Ordered back, those in front could not obey. The slow advance continued. Counteraction imminent.

They threw tear gas bombs and the crowd scattered. Sharp report of bursting gas bombs, or over-nervousness of soldier, caused him to think an order to fire had been given. A military policeman opened fire. 3 blasts were fired by one soldier, which struck 18 persons in the scurrying crowd, killing two of them.

While martial law was still in force, a Bl@ck Mgr wrote his view of the disaster:

"The basic ground of this incident seems to date from the very beginning of our evacuation here. Among the causes as I see them are:

1. The non-payment of the WCCA of the clothing allowance for the period between March 21 to May 24. Other WCCA centers all received their allowance with one exception. There are many rumors to the effect that due to Mr. N and Mr C's lack of interest in the evacuees, they never did go to the trouble of getting them to us.
2. The making of a false promise by the Army at the time of evacuation to the effect that volunteer evacuees would be paid the \$54. to \$90 wage scale
3. The C mouflage project which differentiated between citizens and non-citizens, yet the pay allowance was the same.
4. The co stant work of the stool pigeons even at the Center
- 5 The ever-changing personnel of WRA
6. The overbearing attitude of Mr. C. (the tactless Assist Pro Dir) towards certain residents.
7. The creation of self-government in the center, limiting the elective office to citizens only.

To my belief, there ill always be a feeling of dissatisfaction among the residents."