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EPILOGUE

Almost from the beginning of the relocation centers people were leaving to resettle "outside" away from Government supervision. While this was happening, the camps continued to exist and to function as communities until they were actually depopulated. The outward movement is significant in the account of the centers only as the departure of the relocatees and the reports that came back from them affected the organization and attitudes of those who remained. When a person went through the gate for good, he was off the stage. This epilogue will follow the relocatees.

The Journey Continued

When the policy makers in WRA began to formulate the relocation program, they redefined the function of the centers. Instead of serving as "war duration homes", the camps were to be temporary stopping places. As soon as eligibility for release could be determined, WRA would urge those who were free to go to leave the centers and would assist them to resettle. The journey the evacuees had started on the West Coast when they were moved to assembly centers and then to relocation centers was to be continued until as many as possible were established in normal communities outside of the area of exclusion.

In administrative thinking, resettlement would bring many obvious benefits. Not the least of these was that it would disperse persons of Japanese ancestry throughout the country. It was

recognized that their concentration on the West Coast was back of the decision to evacuate them. If they could be widely scattered, they would become integrated with the American majority more rapidly and more fully. The prevailing national prejudice against Japanese-Americans as a collective abstraction would decline as Americans in many different communities saw them in the flesh and came to know them as persons. So the relocation program really had three objectives: To get the evacuees out of the centers, to disperse them, and to integrate them into the communities where they settled.

It may be hard for the peaceful citizens of Colorado, Ohio, New York, or other states to imagine themselves and their communities as the evacuees saw them in late 1942 and during 1943. Sitting in the relative safety of the camps, center residents re-lived evacuation, read the newspapers (mostly West Coast papers), and recounted the occasional unpleasant experiences of early relocatees. Innumerable conversations re-enforced the fears they felt and strengthened their impression that America was almost universally hostile toward them. It seemed to them that most of the public had interpreted evacuation as tantamount to a declaration by the Army that all Japanese-Americans were guilty of potential sabotage. While this was the prevailing tone of thinking and feeling in the centers, evacuees understood that many Americans were friendly or neutral toward them. This was comforting to know but not too reassuring to a would-be relocatee. He had no way of telling in advance what attitude a particular individual might take toward a person who had been ordered from his home and confined in a

camp "due to military necessity." Even if no outright hostility were encountered, there might be special difficulty in obtaining a suitable job or housing.

The journey out into America, therefore, was considered quite hazardous. The sense of uncertainty was increased by reason of the fact that the territory open for resettlement was strange. Few evacuees had ever visited the Middle West or East; fewer still had lived there. The intermountain region appeared a little more familiar. It was nearer the West Coast both in miles and in social-economic conditions. A fair number of the evacuees had resided or worked in the area at some point in their careers. Moreover, there were small Japanese communities in several of the cities and Japanese farmers in some rural districts, affected by the war in certain ways but not evacuated.

The earliest relocation tended to concentrate in the intermountain region. The Japanese communities in the cities--especially in Denver and Salt Lake--expanded greatly. Farmers and farm workers wrought out the rural sections where Japanese were already established. Denver and vicinity, for instance, had had about 800 persons of Japanese ancestry before the war. Between Pearl Harbor and the Army-directed evacuation, some 800 voluntary evacuees from the West Coast came in. Relocation from the centers added approximately 1,800 more within a few months. The influx stirred up so much local antagonism that by the summer of 1943 WRA was taking steps to curb the flow.

It may be noted in passing that the established Japanese residents shared the local antagonism toward the incoming evacuees to

some degree. They were afraid that the newcomers might upset the relatively good relations with their Caucasian neighbors that had continued in spite of the war. Then took people from the centers bid up the price of land and leases and increased competition in the lines of economic activity in which Japanese customarily engaged. It is true that many of the old-timers helped their friends in the camps to relocate, but they felt differently toward the strangers who were arriving from the centers.

While the majority of the early resettlers were limiting their attention to the intermountain states, the more venturesome were going farther from home. They survived and others took courage. The setting up of Relocation Field Offices helped to instill added confidence. By mid-1943 Chicago had surpassed all other cities, including Denver and Salt Lake, in the number of relocatees. Smaller contingents were to be found in dozens of communities in the Middle West and East.

With the lifting of the Exclusion Order in December, 1944, it became possible for relocatees to return to the area from which they had been evacuated. Instead of continuing their journey, they could retrace their steps. By that time more than 30,000--over a quarter of the total number of evacuees--had left the centers. The path of relocation to points outside the West Coast was quite well worn. There were friends the resettler could join. Public sentiment was known to be favorable and jobs were abundant. Housing was still a problem, but a practical and tangible problem now. Although cutting loose from a center remained something of an adventure, it was not a hazardous undertaking, at least for an able-bodied person with no or few dependents.

All this makes it understandable that many center residents did not return to the West Coast during the period the centers were being closed. About a third of those who left the camps in 1945 decided that resettlement elsewhere offered fewer difficulties than re-establishing themselves where they formerly lived.

The objective of WRA to disperse the Japanese has been partially realized. There are some in almost every state. But the dispersion is not as complete as this statement suggests. Chicago and vicinity has about 18,000 resettlers according to the estimates made by resettlers. There are lesser concentrations in a few other cities and, in the intermountain region, in some rural districts. Moreover, during the three years relocation was taking place, concentration tended to increase. It was common for a person to go first to Omaha or Milwaukee and then move on to Chicago after awhile.

What kind of people resettled away from their former homes? Before the closing period, relocation was a highly selective migration. Until the end of 1944, 31% of the relocatees were 20-24 years old and 61% fell in the age group 15-29. Most were single. Married persons were usually men who left their wives and children in the centers or young couples with no or very few offspring. In view of the age distribution, it is obvious that Nisei constituted the great majority.

The selective character of the migration went beyond these demographic matters. Individuals who relocated while relocation was voluntary had motives for doing so. Most adolescent and adult Nisei were not satisfied in the centers. They had grown up on the periphery of the West Coast Japanese communities, dividing their participation

between the life of the minority community and the life of the larger society. When they arrived in the centers, the minority community was there. True, it had been disrupted in transit, but Nisei associates and familiar Issei faces were present. In the centers, Issei proceeded to develop communities resting on their past common experiences, that provided them with a rather full and pleasant day-by-day existence. Nisei could not build a corresponding Nisei society. Too much had been left behind at evacuation. They were too dependent on the larger community.

Relocation offered them a way out. They could leave the centers and participate again in the life of the American majority. But this raised another problem. They had to give up the Nisei-Issei world which had furnished a part of their social and emotional "home" since birth.

The adjustment to the "new outside" was least difficult for a very few people who had lived largely or completely independent of the Japanese community before. Such persons generally left the centers as soon as they could since the center communities offered them almost nothing. Except for the possibility that they might meet some anti-Japanese prejudice, relocation meant little more than it means to a member of the American majority to move into a strange town. A young man who went from Heart Mountain to Atlanta soon had a good job and a circle of friends. He liked the city. The fact that he did not see another Nisei for months on end disturbed him not at all.

His case is unusual. Most Nisei missed the association of Japanese-Americans. Even one who resettled in the intermountain region

had his troubles. The Japanese he met, both the established residents and other relocatees, were strangers. In the getting-acquainted process he did not have the social and moral support of his family. What his life experience had really fitted him for was participation in a particular West Coast community--a familiar system of relations in which he had status in a family, in friendship groupings, in a minority society, and in a more inclusive society.

Nevertheless, the adjustments in Denver or Salt Lake were easy compared to the adjustments faced by those who went out early to the Middle West and East. Most of them felt actually lonely, out of place, and self conscious. They tended to contact the Relocation Office quite frequently during the first few weeks. It was one known item in their strange new environment. They obtained such solace as they could from companionship with other Nisei. The convention of formal introductions was generally ignored. Two relocatees who had never seen each other would exchange greetings. Soon would come the questions, "What center are you from?" and then "Where did you live before that?". Thereafter, there was a reciprocal search for common acquaintances. "So you're from Gila. I knew a few people who went there. Did you happen to meet-----." Or, "San Jose. I was there a couple of weeks once, visiting my uncle. You probably know some of the fellows I met-----." They were trying to establish quickly some common ground so that they could relax with each other and reminisce together about the old days before evacuation.

Even after Nisei had formed some friends, they could not do things the way they used to on the West Coast. There were a few places they could go where just Nisei would be present; where they could be "natural" and have a good time. Always other kinds of people were around, making them feel conspicuous and at least a little uncomfortable. They were inclined to feel this way even if other people paid no attention to them. If they attempted to gain reassurance by seeking entertainment in fairly large groups, then they were conspicuous.

Nisei were helped and their troubles were increased by their friends and well wishers. WRA, local resettlement committees, religious groups, and other organizations welcomed them, aided them to find housing and jobs, and attempted to integrate them into the life of the community. Nisei appreciated these efforts. At the same time they found it hard to behave the way they were supposed to or were expected to. At the time when public relations were still delicate and adverse reaction easily aroused, the word was passed around in some cities that no more than three Nisei should walk along the street together and that no more than five should be together in a restaurant. Now was the time for the Japanese to integrate with the larger society and get away from the sub-society in which they had lived.

Nisei responded in different ways to these suggestions and efforts. Those who relocated early generally tried to conform. They deliberately denied themselves Nisei company they longed for. They attended mixed-race parties at which they were inwardly ill-at-ease. Some of them became quite well adjusted to this sort of participation after awhile so that they continued it from choice. Others grew discouraged and turned again to other Nisei for social satisfactions or found some compromise acceptable to them. Quite a few never made any

serious attempts to integrate. They simply ignored the program and associated with non-Nisei or Nisei as practical expediency or their personal inclinations dictated. Usually this meant work relations were with the former, leisure-time relations with the latter.

It sometimes happened that integration became an issue. The word acquired emotional connotations and was even used as a label for classifying Nisei. One girl said:

For awhile in Cleveland it was really funny. Integration was the subject of no end of arguments. One girl would say of another, "Oh yes, I know her. But I don't have much to do with her. She's not integrated, you know." Or, it might be the other way. One group of girls seemed to be the pride and joy of some Cleveland people who wanted us to integrate. These girls got along all right with each other but they avoided the rest of us. They always went around with Caucasians.

For a great many early resettlers, the first weeks or months were an uncomfortable period. Their lack of adjustment was expressed in numerous ways. They didn't like their jobs. A large percentage had had little or no work experience. Even those who had worked for some years usually found themselves in jobs different from any they had held. But their criticisms of their employment went beyond what would have been evoked by the employment itself. Their reactions in that field were a part of their total reactions to the difficulties of adjustment. It was the same with other aspects. Housing was terrible. The climate was awful. The city was noisy and dirty. The local people were quite nice, many of them, but they didn't understand. Conversations among Nisei tended to be "gripe sessions." Many longed to return to the center. Few went except for visits. They knew it would not satisfy them either. Some, especially boys, flitted from

job to job, even from city to city, trying to locate a better situation. Other Nisei heard that this behavior was giving the Nisei a reputation for instability and affecting employers' attitudes adversely. So they determined to stick to their jobs tenaciously and work diligently, partly to establish a good record for themselves and partly to improve the reputation of the Nisei group. There were those who sought to make themselves feel better by earning and saving all they could. Others spent all of their wages in expensive and exciting entertainment and sent "home" to the center for more funds.

Most of these responses seem to have been symptoms of the big thing they missed in the new environment. They missed the old Japanese-American community--their families, Issei support and direction, Nisei groups with established organization and ways. To a degree they even missed the discrimination they had lived with and under on the West Coast. Now, they were free to do many things they couldn't do before, but they did not know what they could and couldn't do. The limits and restrictions in the new situation seemed ill-defined and not very consistent. They felt uncertain.

The process of adjustment was probably made more difficult by the sense of temporariness most relocatees felt. The West Coast was home; they intended to return someday. There was no use going to too much bother to make life more satisfactory. The "outside" was just a little better, or a less bad, place than the centers in which to put in time until they could go home.

During 1944 conditions changed a good deal. Relocatees became quite numerous in New York, Cleveland, and Minneapolis. Chicago was a mecca. The early relocatees grew accustomed to the places they lived. They not only had objectively better jobs and housing, but their jobs and housing seemed better. There were Nisei clubs and meeting places where they could be by themselves. The natives got used to seeing them, even in fairly large groups. Among some Nisei and local people, there was still talk of the need for integration. But the program was no longer pressed with the urgency it had been.

As Nisei societies emerged, less assimilated Nisei left the center and were able to get along. A few Issei parents joined their children. They wrote back to their Issei friends and one now and again decided to come out. In 1945 this movement continued with increased volume. At first it was mostly more adolescent and adult Nisei. Then, as the closing dates of the centers drew nearer, wives and children, parents, and whole families swelled the migration.

Now, the spring of 1946, in the points of concentration in the Middle Western and Eastern cities there is no lack of Japanese-American associates. Even Issei can find friends with whom they can relax. It is not as easy to get together as it used to be on the West Coast. That is, although there has been a tendency for Japanese to congregate in certain sections of cities they are not compact settlements of the sort characteristic of pre-evacuation California. In spite of the presence of a fair percentage of Issei, such organization as local Japanese populations have developed reflects the Nisei rather than the

Issei. Clubs abound. For the most part their membership expresses sorting on the bases of income, occupation, sophistication, degree of assimilation, and so forth. Relocation center background is manifested weakly in social participation. Whether ones pre-evacuation home was California or the Northwest makes more difference, but this factor appears to be of declining importance. There is no formal over-all organization of the minority. JACL, where there is a chapter, speaks for the minority and is allowed to do so. But its membership is small and many Nisei are not very well posted on its program.

In economic matters, in matters of survival, the Japanese are a relatively undifferentiated segment of the population of the cities in which they have settled. True, there are some Japanese stores, restaurants, and professionals that cater to the Japanese. But the income that supports these services to consumers is derived from diversified kinds of activity carried on in many different lines. There is nothing comparable to the well-knit complex of growing, wholesaling, and retailing produce, that the Japanese had built up on the West Coast. Probably the lack of common interests in income-getting activities is a factor in absence of formal over-all organization.

There is an over-all collective sentiment. Japanese-Americans feel they are a different kind of people, and they recognize that members of the larger society think of them as a category. The public behavior of any Japanese is of concern to all Japanese. They are interested in protecting and improving their status as a category. Not many persons are interested enough, however, to devote much time and effort to an organized program to that end. Those who are very interested compose JACL.

Formal organizations, except for JAOL, exist for recreational and religious purposes. They divide the minority along many different lines.

Japanese-American communities in the Middle West and East have a fairly settled air about them. Nisei are not changing jobs rapidly; Issei and Nisei are buying property. Adjustment is still going on and there is much adjusting left to do. There remain some vital unanswered questions. One of the biggest is what will happen when and if depression comes. Will they meet discrimination and find themselves in a more vulnerable position than when they had a strong minority social organization? There is much looking toward the West Coast. Issei talk about it more, but many Nisei think they may go back someday. Individuals and families are leaving all the time and others are working on plans. More commonly, they are disposed to wait and see how those who are there get along. If the reports are favorable, maybe then they will return. But perhaps by then many of the relocated Californians and Northwesterners will have become Middle Westerners and Easterners--no more likely to migrate to the Pacific Coast than their non-evacuated neighbors.

The Journey Back

"When the West Coast is open to us again" was a frequently repeated condition to relocation. The people who said it composed the core of the center communities. What they had in mind primarily was the possibility of going back to their old localities and reconstituting

their former communities. When the Exclusion Order was rescinded and the closing of the centers was announced, they were deeply disturbed. At first it seemed that West Coast hostility might continue to keep them out. After the hostility began to subside, another problem became uppermost. They often spoke of it in terms of survival. They just couldn't live. But most persons were not really afraid of failing to survive. They figured they could be domestics, work on the railroad, be farm hands, or resort to casual labor. They could manage to eat all right. What troubled them most was how they could re-establish the broken economic systems on which their old communities rested. The systems and the communities would not have to be exactly as they used to be. Everybody knew that was out of the question. But Issei especially felt that the main features would have to be restored before they could have anywhere near adequate economic security and a satisfying way of life. To a much greater degree than the Nisei who resettled eastward, their sense of belonging, of fitting in somewhere, depended on being able to participate in a Japanese community. Moreover, a good many knew that their standard of living would be definitely lower if they could not operate in a Japanese economic system as well. Produce wholesalers had both bought from and sold to Japanese. They and some other business men and professionals saw no substitute for their previous economic roles that would not involve a sharp decline in their economic status or, at best, expose any savings they had to great risk. They had "know-how" within the old framework; outside of it they were less sure of themselves.

How even the main features could be rebuilt appeared to be an insoluble problem. In the centers there was much discussion and many expressions of discouragement. As time passed and the Agency reiterated its intention to close the camps, an increasing number of people concluded they would have to relocate, accept what they could get, and work toward the conditions of existence they wanted.

Characteristically, those who left the centers for the West Coast early in 1945 were persons who felt they could get along without other Japanese. They were not like the assimilated Nisei who fled from the centers to the Middle West and East as soon as they were allowed to leave. These 1945 resettlers who were going back home were emotionally tied to the Japanese community. But they could live without it. They had farms or businesses that could function as part of the general West Coast economy. Their sense of responsibility to the group seemed to be weak. They were concerned primarily with themselves and their own futures. Other Japanese would have to take care of themselves. An Issei stated before he left Heart Mountain for his orchard in Hood River, Oregon, that he did not intend to employ Japanese on his place. Their presence might damage his relations with the Caucasian community, already stirred up against the return of evacuees. A similar assertion was made by an older Nisei who was going back, with his Issei parents, to his farm in Santa Clara Valley. The Nisei went on to add that he hoped no returning evacuees would settle on his side of the river. There had been none there before evacuation and he thought his own situation would be easier if none came.

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This individualistic thinking which abandoned the idea of the Japanese community and economy, though common at first, was not universal. In March, Hollywood evacuees held meetings in one center. Two successful contract gardeners offered to go back to see if they could get started again themselves and to develop opportunities for others. In the months that followed they "called out" many of their friends who in turn helped their friends.

During the mass exodus of the summer and fall collective sentiments were reaffirmed and cooperation became marked. The journey back, as thousands joined the movement, created what amounted to a protracted crisis. People with nowhere else to go jammed temporarily into hostels--churches, former Japanese language schools, and similar buildings filled with row on row of cots. For a short period in one hostel, 300 men, women, and children were fed out of a single kitchen and depended on two small bath rooms. Housing was tight, the search for it frantic. Jobs were needed too, and in a hurry since subsistence was no longer furnished by the Government except in cases where eligibility for welfare assistance could be established. WRA did what it could, other Federal and local agencies generally cooperated, and interested private groups and organizations lent their aid. But perhaps most of all, the returning evacuees helped each other.

This crisis, like others in the past, served to call attention to the common problems of the Japanese. But unlike evacuation or registration, the concrete and specific problems posed by resettlement were extremely diversified. Different people in different places

faced a wide variety of situations. There was a general spirit of mutual sympathy and mutual helpfulness, but active and sustained cooperation tended to be limited to groups living in the same locality who had a particular set of practical and immediate needs. The whole locality group was too disorganized to function very effectively.

What happened was that people who owned houses or were able to get housing shared their space with later comers while they hunted for a place to live. Japanese did give employment to other Japanese. This was true of the Hood River orchardist and the Nisei farmer in Santa Clara Valley. Of course, they needed labor and labor was scarce. But that was not the whole story. When the pinch came as people poured back to the West Coast, they were "all Japanese together." Some individuals who were well-fixed themselves devoted much time to finding opportunities for resettlers. In March, 1946, a prosperous man in Palo Alto said jokingly:

I'm still working for WRA helping relocation. I've been doing it all along since I came back last June. The only difference is that when I was in the center WRA paid me \$19 a month for my work. Here I get nothing.

Nothing, that is, except the gratitude of his fellow Japanese.

Not all of the assistance resettlers gave and are giving each other is motivated by good will and the cooperative spirit. Everyone feels a sense of urgency to get started again, to obtain some income, to build up a reserve. Strategically placed individuals are under strong temptation to seek economic security for themselves by exploiting

the often desperate needs of others. Among the resettlers bitter complaints can be heard against certain Japanese who have made a lucrative business out of "helping" their fellows.

The adjustments imposed by the journey back are too diverse and complicated to be described very well in general terms. Most Hood River Valley Japanese owned their farms. Their chief problem was opposition to their return on the part of some of the inhabitants of the Valley. A vigorous campaign to scare them away was launched as soon as the West Coast was opened. Even their friends in Hood River feared for their safety should they come back. The pioneers, three Nisei who returned to widely separated farms in January, 1946, recall their sense of isolation, their feeling of being in hostile territory. A strange sort of homecoming! One Nisei tells of the long quiet evenings, too long and too quiet, as he lived alone in the house where he grew up. It helped when a stray dog joined him. He named the dog "Friend." It also helped when the man representing WRA in the Valley called to give him encouragement and assure him that the Agency was doing what it could to improve public sentiment. Some of the neighbors he had known all his life treated him all right. But they seemed a little self-conscious, as if they wondered what other neighbors would think of them if they behaved cordially toward a Nisei. After awhile the scare campaign subsided. More neighbors seemed to accept him. He notified the rest of the family to come on out of the center. Other scouts reported and other families arrived. Almost all who were evacuated are back, plus a few more who are there as farm workers. According to one man speaking in February, 1946:

We are getting along. Some of the orchards are not in very good shape. They weren't taken care of right. Everybody is working hard trying to get them fixed up again. As long as prices stay the way they are, we'll be able to make money. We have trouble getting equipment, but so do all the farmers I guess. It isn't the way it used to be though. The people of the Valley don't treat us the same as before evacuation. But it's a lot better than it was a year ago and is getting better all the time.

Incidentally, the dog named "Friend" is still with the family whose relocation he aided. He is a tiny facotr in the readjustment of the Japanese in Hood River.

In no other place was ownership as general as in Hood River.

In Santa Clara Valley very few owned their farms. Mostly they leased on a cash basis, but some share-cropped. A few of the Japanese were pretty big operators. More of them worked on a smaller scale and there were a lot of little places. The important thing to remember is that, big or little, almost everybody had a farm which he operated on his own account. I would say no more than five per-cent worked for somebody else as farm workers. Maybe not even that many.

Except for those who owned their places, now we are all farm laborers, working for somebody else for wages. A few have been able to buy land or get leases. But the prices are high. And if you sold your equipment at evacuation the way I did, you're stuck. So here I am. The wages I get are good and the people I work for treat me well. But I don't like it. I would sooner be on my own. But what else can I do? I have a family and we have to live.

The speaker was an older Nisei, a block manager in one of the centers. Another Nisei of about the same age expressed many of the same attitudes and gave some of his views of the future:

I am doing the kind of work I hadn't done for 15 to 20 years before evacuation. I used to hire other men to do it for me. But I'm not proud. I'll do anything that comes along. The only thing is that I want to be paid for it. I want all I can get. The whole family went out into the orchards and fields when we first came back. For five months starting in July, we averaged a thousand dollars a month. Of course, we couldn't keep on doing that well. That was the fruit picking season. The girls kicked at doing farm work. I guess I spoiled them before evacuation. The relocation camp spoiled them too. They got ideas there about white-collar jobs. A girl can make more picking fruit and there is no question about her being hired even if she does have slant eyes.

Right now there is no chance of getting back into farming on my own. The way I figure is that there won't be a chance until we begin to get a depression. Until then, those who have land will hang on to it or boost the price sky high. As soon as the selling price of fruit and vegetables slips a little, you'll see. The way some people farm these days--just a little fall and they'll start to lose. Then they'll be glad to sell or lease. That's why I want to get as much money as I can now. I want to have a little capital for when the chance comes.

In Santa Clara Valley public sentiment toward the returning evacuees has been consistently better than in many areas. There are more Japanese than there were before evacuation. Their predominant economic adjustment has been to become farm laborers. The adjustment has been accepted by them as a temporary expedient.

In several other rural sections where evacuees used to operate as tenant farmers, only a small percentage have returned. Local hostility during the main exodus from the centers or the kind of agriculture carried on limited their opportunities even as farm workers. They have had to look elsewhere. Some have gone to places like Santa Clara Valley; others to cities; still others to the railroads, where they work chiefly in section crews or extra gangs.

In the cities, the first and biggest problem was housing. Returning evacuees had to have somewhere to live before they could begin to adjust in other ways. Most of them, through diligent search and much mutual aid, have found living quarters of some sort in districts where the Japanese are allowed to live. Their distribution is similar to the pre-evacuation pattern, though they are somewhat more scattered. Many who were unable to locate a place have solved the difficulty by taking jobs where housing is furnished--jobs as domestics and gardeners who live in. Sometimes this means the dispersion of families. A couple lives and works at one place, their daughter at another, and their son has a room downtown near the shop that employs him. The pay is good and expenses are low. But Thursday family reunions are a poor substitute for having a home where the family can be by itself. Even when there is no family split, there is the matter of isolation. Domestics work mostly in the "better" sections where Japanese cannot have homes. On Thursdays Japanese restaurants are crowded with people visiting with their friends and, perhaps, eating their first Japanese food since the previous Thursday. Living in as domestics and gardeners is as much a temporary expedient to many urban people as farm labor is to rural people.

Another solution to the housing problem was provided by WRA in cooperation with FPMA. A number of temporary housing projects were made available to returning evacuees. "Resettlement camps" they might be called. WRA considered them to be an emergency solution; they would afford living quarters until resettlers could find something else. It

proved difficult to carry through with this conception. The camps, though definitely makeshift in most cases, were places to stay. Faced with the difficulty of finding anything else, people tended to settle down. Since the projects were generally situated at some distance from the main areas of employment this often meant that they took inferior jobs nearby or were unemployed. That is, the emergency solution as regards housing frequently interfered with adjustment in other fields. By the spring of 1946, practically all of the projects were closed and the remaining ones were fixed up so as to be less makeshift. For the occupants of the camps, this was the final "pushing around" they suffered at the hands of WRA.

The re-emergence of Japanese communities and the economic adjustment in cities can best be seen in Los Angeles. The former Japanese business district was taken over by wartime Negro in-migrants. Little Tokyo became Bronzeville. The central part of it is rapidly becoming Little Tokyo again. Resettlers themselves have been astonished by the speed of the transformation. An Issei said in April, 1946:

When I came back in January last year, it was solid Negroes around here. I wondered if this would ever be Japanese town again. Nothing much happened for quite awhile. Even during the summer, there were just a few places opened by Japanese. I figured it would be at least three or four years before we could take over. Then during the late summer and fall, they really started to come back. Soon there were more Japanese than Negroes, and Japanese businesses all up and down the streets. I was surprised.

He told this in one of the several Japanese restaurants that are now operating. If he desired to do so, he could obtain from other Japanese most of the goods and services he would ever need within three blocks of the intersection of East First and San Pedro Streets. Resettlers also point out that the district is far from being what it used to be. But it does contain much that is familiar and gives people a sense of being home. In other areas of the city where less compact settlements of Japanese existed the same process is going on. The war-time occupants are being displaced and some of the former businesses are being established.

But it is not in stores and restaurants that the main business come-back is being staged. Japanese who have some capital to invest seem most interested in small hotels and apartment houses. This was an important economic activity before evacuation. Now the preoccupation with the field is intense. Quite a number of men make their living lining up deals for others. Hotels and apartment houses are being acquired not only in and near the old Japanese district but all over the deteriorated area of the city.

Two factors account for this extraordinary interest. This is one way to obtain both housing and income and no insurmountable legal or customary obstacles are encountered.

The usual method of getting hold of hotels and other business property is to buy up leases. The prices that have to be paid are high. In the case of hotels and apartment houses competitive bidding by

Japanese themselves has doubled or tripled the prices during the past year. Resettlers explain that this is another chapter in the losses that evacuation caused them. A number of small hotels were thrown on the market all at once when they had to leave in 1942. Now they are all in the market again trying to buy them back. Men who sold the furnishings and lease of a hotel for \$1,000 to \$1,500 have to pay about ten times that much now to get control of the same business.

Even at such inflated prices, hotel and apartment men are making money. They admit it is a risk. Unless Los Angeles maintains its present level of prosperity for two more years, they stand to lose. But they feel they have to do something to try to get started again and that they must take the chance. The faith they share with other Los Angelenses in the bright future of the city helps buoy their spirits.

Hotel men and other downtown businessmen call attention to the difference in their customers before evacuation and now. Before, the customers of restaurants and stores were chiefly other Japanese--city people or farmers from the outlying districts. This was less true of hotels. They were patronized by Caucasian transients and pensioners, mostly single men, as well as Japanese. Now customers are predominantly Negroes. After some initial hesitation, Japanese businessmen have concluded that Negroes are good customers. Some of the resettlers are talking of a new economic role for the Japanese. Maybe, they say, providing goods and certain kinds of services to Negroes in a new field that should be developed.

So far, the really big pre-evacuation business-vegetable marketing--has not been mentioned. For many months after the opening of the West Coast, the interests that controlled vegetable marketing maintained a solid front against returning evacuees. It was the original intention to exclude them entirely. Not only would they be kept out as dealers, but they would not be bought from, sold to, or employed. This extreme position has broken down. Resettlers are working in the market. Farmers have no trouble selling their crops and retailers can buy produce. But they have not gone far in the field that interests them most--wholesaling, shipping, and working as buyers and salesmen on commission.

Re-entering the produce market, of course, is more than a problem of overcoming the organized opposition to Japanese by those who control it. There are few Japanese farmers and few Japanese retailers. The whole complex of relation that used to exist is gone. Even if there were no opposition, this fact would be an effective obstacle. As Japanese succeed in being admitted to the more lucrative aspects of market operations, they will have to do business within a new framework.

The circumstance that the returned evacuees are still largely outside of the produce market has had repercussions on many phases of their economic adjustment. It is partly responsible for the concentration on hotels and apartment houses. The interest in providing goods and services for the Negro community reflects a search for substitute business opportunities in another direction. Contract gardening was a profitable occupation before evacuation; now it is even better. The

field is not crowded yet, but only the limitations of skill, housing, and equipment keep it from being over-crowded. The situation with reference to the produce market re-enforces the housing shortage as a factor in inducing people to accept jobs as domestics. With reference to the Nisei, many who would formerly have been working for and with other Japanese, processing or selling vegetables, have sought and found employment here and there in factories, shops and offices that did not hire Nisei before the war. A few have obtained white-collar positions of a kind that were definitely closed to them before evacuation.

There is a Japanese Community in Los Angeles again. Only a few of the early resettlers had the experience of living isolated from other Japanese. But the community is not the same as it used to be. Nisei complained during much of the period of moving back that there weren't enough Nisei. Too many had relocated to places outside of the West Coast and were staying there. The complaint is heard less now. This is partly because a considerable number of Nisei have returned from the east. A more important factor is that the Nisei who were back in Los Angeles all along have become acquainted or re-acquainted, developed some organization, and found places to go and things to do. They do not feel life is as it should be yet. Too many girls are domestics who live in. Their hours and scattered location interfere with their contacts with other Nisei. Many boys are so preoccupied with their jobs and with helping their families that they have little time to mix with their friends. And there is something rarely known before evacuation--quite a few Nisei do not like Los Angeles. Some came back at the urging of their families to find that they had to take employment that is

inferior to the jobs they had in Chicago or Cleveland. They are pleased to be reunited with their families, but they miss the Nisei world they had been living in.

When Issei have time, they can go to a Japanese restaurant to eat and talk with their friends. They can also visit each other at home--providing the home to be visited is not too crowded. Ordinary casual social satisfactions with other Issei are there to be had. There is even an occasional dinner arranged for some special purpose. At least two utai groups are functioning and there is talk of trying to get up a kabuki. But life is too busy and too confused to do much that requires time, money, or organization. In the course of visiting, the kind of organization that should be worked toward is considered. There are differences of opinion. Some hold that something comparable to the old Japanese Chamber of Commerce--predominantly or wholly Issei--will be needed. Others are afraid of its possible adverse influence on public relations. Such persons advocate staying in the background and letting Nisei do the organizing. The distrust of Nisei leadership and especially of JACL comes up. But the question is discussed more calmly than it was in the centers. In spite of the inadequacies of Nisei leadership, maybe it has to be depended on. Maybe JACL should be supported more. Almost everybody agrees on one point, "We should wait and see how things turn out before we do anything." Then someone usually adds in one way or another, "We are too busy and our resources too limited to do anything now anyway. Now what we have to do is to plan and work and try to rebuild our economic foundation."

More than 50,000 evacuees have made the journey back. They have relocated from the centers, but they can hardly be said to have resettled. Both their spatial and their occupational distribution has been profoundly altered. They are still largely outside of their two major pre-evacuation economic pursuits--farming on their own account and the marketing of vegetables. It follows that relatively few have arrived at what they would be willing to consider a permanent or fairly permanent adjustment. Not many, on the other hand, are still floundering around as far from an adjustment as when they left the center. Most people have accepted some expedient which provides them a living and often permits them to save. They view the expedient as a temporary base from which they can work toward the economic position and the kind of life they want.

The most common of these expedient adjustments is employment as farm laborers, railroad laborers, and domestics. The direction the farm laborers want to move and how they intend to do it is quite clear. They have come to the unhappy conclusion that most of them will have to work for someone else as long as profits in agriculture are high. When a depression approaches, they will be able to get back into agriculture on their own account. In the case of the Issei, there is a chance that they may not be able to do this. Laws against leasing land to Japanese aliens are being more vigilantly enforced than before evacuation.

What will happen to the domestics and the railroad workers as they try to leave their temporary bases is not so plain. Both of these expedients are chiefly the result of a pervasive factor in the situation--the housing shortage. The people in these groups have rather diversified

backgrounds and probably equally diversified goals.

The returned evacuees have not proceeded very far in rebuilding their economic system. There are businessmen and professionals who make their living dealing with other Japanese. But most income-getting activities on the West Coast, as elsewhere, go on with reference to the larger economy. The hope of recreating something along the line of the former produce marketing complex has not been given up and persistent efforts will probably be made in the future. The immediate economic objective is to accumulate as much as possible in any way that presents itself. People feel that while they were in the camps they missed a good opportunity to improve their fortunes and that now they must get all they can before a postwar depression sets in.

There are Japanese communities in cities and towns all up and down the Pacific Coast. As yet they have not taken on much organization. The relations between Issei and Nisei, the kind of formal organizations that should exist, and the sort of orientation that should be maintained toward the rest of society are subjects for discussion. Action, it is generally felt, should wait.

In every way things are in a state of flux. Few people are satisfied with their own situation; nobody is satisfied with the condition of the group. Many changes can be expected in the next few years. Some are much discouraged about the future. Others see possibilities of hope for something better than used to be. Meanwhile, almost everybody plans and works.

Discontinuities and Continuities

As they sat in the centers and looked at the past, Issei reviewed evacuation in the perspective of their history in America. Their interpretation reflected their biases to some degree. "After a half century of discrimination and persecution, this came," they often said. That is, evacuation was just the last and most drastic thing that had been done to them. They found it all very hard to understand. Their labors had helped develop the West. They had tried to be good residents--to obey the laws, to be self supporting, to take care of their own economic failures, to keep all members of the group in line. Especially after they got American children, it seemed to them that they had gone out of their way to do what they should. Issei organizations always had as a part of their program the promotion of friendship and understanding with the American public.

Still, year after year, some of the newspapers spoke of them as a menace. The land laws made their life difficult. They were considered unworthy to become citizens. Politicians occasionally "shook them down" as a price for not increasing the pressure. Worst of all, they saw the attitudes toward them being extended to their children. For all they could do to shield them, they noticed that many of the Nisei were growing up to feel inferior because their parents were Japanese.

When the war started, Issei found themselves viewed as being really dangerous, or at least potentially dangerous. And under the simple

formula, "Once, a Jap, always a Jap", their children and grandchildren were included with them. This, too, was hard to understand. Said an Issei earnestly,

We aren't dangerous. Really we aren't I know. As for the Nisei--if it wasn't so tragic, it would be funny. Couldn't the Government find out how we were before they did this to us?

There is a feeling here that the Occidental mind is a little inscrutable.

In the centers, the war was followed with intense interest. Maybe it would make a difference in the life of the Japanese in America. If the United States could not win, if a stalemate and a negotiated peace was the outcome, perhaps Japan as a clearly recognized first-rate power could intercede regarding the land laws and the denial of citizenship. Even ordinary Americans might have more respect for persons of Japanese ancestry. Issei had not wanted the war. The growing possibility that it would come had filled them with dread. But now that it was here, they hoped that it might improve their status and make the future of Issei and Nisei in this country less difficult.

It was not to be. Japan was defeated. Back on the West Coast they have to face the same land laws and the same anti-Japanese prejudice. There are even some new things. Oregon has a more stringent land law. The mechanisms of evasion that had been developed to permit leasing and ownership are under official scrutiny. California is carrying on a campaign to escheat land already held. The city of Portland will not issue business licenses to Japanese aliens. And until a new

trade treaty with Japan is negotiated, Issei feel that their business operations are vulnerable to attack at any time. Moreover, they take up the struggle with depleted resources and without the economic strength they used to derive from their well-organized system for growing and distributing produce.

Most of the core of the Japanese community accepted this prospect. America and the West Coast was home to them and they would make the best of it. Some Issei and many Nisei, at first perforce and later by choice, settled away from the West Coast, encountering some new problems and avoiding some old ones.

A very few evacuees sought escape into unreality. They could not resume the struggle under the conditions that exist. There are persons --a few hundred, with rare exceptions Issei--who persist in believing that Japan was not defeated. They have resettled and live on in a dream world, waiting for the truth about how the war ended to be made known. A large proportion of those who requested repatriation from Tule Lake had similar ideas at the time they left. This is the obvious human wreckage that the war and evacuation produced among the evacuees. To be added to the account is a small percentage of resettlers who are oriented in reality but who are so overcome by the difficulties of the struggle to get started again that they are floundering about ineffectually or putting forth only feeble effort.

Most of the evacuees have come through the experience with remarkably undamaged personalities. Issei especially seem to be the same

kind of persons they used to be. In a sense, they had had some preparation for evacuation. It was expected that something might be done to them, not because they were dangerous but just because such things are likely to be done during a war. Then, the communities they developed in the centers helped them. They were able to maintain a certain degree of self determination and to fill their time with satisfying activities. Through their social solidarity they gave each other support and strength. Evacuation, life in the centers, and resettlement were shared experiences. This does not mean that there are not some persistent inward hurts and some bitterness. It is their children, and Nisei in general, that affect the Issei most. Said an Issei woman:

We worked hard all our lives so that we could leave the Nisei a good foundation for their future. Now it is mostly gone. No matter how hard we work, we can't rebuild it. There just isn't time in the years we have left to live.

An Issei man expressed a more fundamental worry:

We Issei used to talk among ourselves and say that if the war ever came with Japan, the Government might do something to us. But we didn't think our children would be touched. My two sons were bitter when they heard they had to go. One of them refused. He said the Government could put him in prison or shoot him. Almost all night I plead with him. The next day I went to see his teacher in college that he liked and respected most and asked the teacher to talk with him. They were together for several hours. After that he said he would go. That was all he said. The look on his face made me afraid. He behaved strangely in the assembly center and in the relocation center. The other boy was not himself either.

I sent both boys out to college as soon as possible. They have been outside for three years now. The older one, the one who refused to be evacuated, is in medical school. They are better, but it seems to me there is still a little warping in them. Maybe they will get over it sometime.

The Nisei were definitely more vulnerable than the Issei, but the effects which persist are hard to measure. There are instances of marked cynicism regarding civic and social obligations which seem to date from evacuation. There are also some over-aggressive tendencies and some tendencies to withdraw readily from any situation where expressions of prejudice are encountered or may be encountered. For the most part, though, Nisei as well as Issei live and work and approach problems generally like normal people. Of course, the results of evacuation are not all in yet. Getting started again may take its toll. Experiences in this phase are not shared as fully as were the experiences in the camps. The situations different families and individuals face vary a good deal.

Nobody recalls the actual evacuation--the moving out of homes--with pleasure. Memories of the relocation centers evoke a considerable range of emotional responses. Many Nisei and a few Issei speak of them as places of confinement. A resettler in Arizona who visited Los Angeles reported that she had seen "many former inmates of my camp." The majority of Issei, on the other hand, remember some of the favorable things and show signs of nostalgia. In either case, the memories are of an interruption to the rest of life.

There has been almost no carry-over of the community organization. Liaison men--Block Managers and Councilmen--are just some more returned evacuees working hard to get on their feet again. A few who have attempted to turn such prestige as they gained in the centers into leadership on the outside have been received with indifference. All

that persists are some friendships and a vague bond of sentiment among those who were in the same camp. When people have more time, there may be some Ponton or Heart Mountain picnics or parties; or there may not be.

Resettled Issei manifest a new orientation toward Japan. In the centers they tended to think of how Japan might be able to help them after the war. Now they are considering how they can help Japan --by relief shipments as soon as that becomes possible and by trying to promote better understanding between the United States and Japan in the years to come.

Issei also have a new orientation toward the United States. For a time in the centers, the value that was Japan, their stake in this country, and the security and neutrality of the centers were balanced against each other. Even before the war was over, their stake in this country---represented by their children, their property, and their long experience here---had emerged as dominant. This dominance is now complete, so complete in fact that it is a change from the pre-war situation. Before the war, Issei weighed continued residence in the United States against eventual return to Japan. Anti-Japanese campaigns periodically made them wonder if they might be forced to go back. So the question was kept open.

Today the question appears to be settled once and for all. The great majority of Issei have concluded that they are here to stay. From Seattle to Los Angeles, one can hear such statements as:

Things are different now. People have made up their minds. They may think of taking a trip to Japan sometime to visit their relatives and to see how conditions are. But this is where they are going to live. They are more settled on this than they have ever been.

This settling makes a difference in the way they approach the problems of readjustment. Before, many preferred to keep such assets as they acquired in easily transferable form. Now they would like to buy fixed property. Before, it was common for them to plan their economic lives in terms of a number of years. Now their planning is for an indefinite future.

The settling modifies views in other directions. Said an Issei:

Maybe we made a mistake before the war trying to make too much money. We should have taken some of the time we spent working to visit our neighbors. I hope that we have learned and that we do this in the future. That is the best kind of public relations.

In the centers the legal action Issei appeared to want most from the United States was provision for compensation for their losses at evacuation. They still hope something along this line will be done. But this is unimportant compared to another legal reform they desire. They want to be declared eligible for citizenship. This would do more than anything else to help them settle down in this country the way they wish to. At one stroke it would destroy all of the West Coast legal disabilities that rest on ineligibility to citizenship.

They are not very confident that the United States will extend the privilege of naturalization to them. Still they hope. They wonder if they have not suffered enough to satisfy the most anti-Japanese. Maybe too, they think, their generally cooperative behavior under the

stress of evacuation and the service of almost 26,000 Nisei soldiers will convince Americans that they too are worthy to become Americans.

The Issei have followed their children. For a brief period after evacuation, some of them pulled the other way. Now the war is over, they have joined their children in America.