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REPORT OF THE
REPORTS DIVISION

Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

Compiled by:

Allan Markley
Reports Officer
Washington Office

Division Heads

John Bigelow, September 7, 1942 to July 1, 1943
Angus A. Acree, March 18, 1944 to October 2, 1944
Harry F. Tarvin, Acting, Detailed from Denver Office
John F. Graham, October 7, 1944 to August 18, 1945
Richard A. Niver, Acting, October 24, 1945 to January 31, 1946

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
HUNT, IDAHO

FINAL REPORT OF THE REPORTS DIVISION
MINIDOKA RELOCATION CENTER

Foreward:

This report is lacking in some detail because it is made up from project records by a member of the Reports Division staff from the Washington office, and not by a person who has served as Reports Officer at Minidoka. This office was held by three different men, all qualified Civil Service employees, with writing and newspaper experience. The first Reports Officer was John Bigelow, who served from the early days of the center, till about the first of March, 1944, when he left the project for a detail to the Washington office and later joined the United States Navy. The second Reports Officer was Angus A. Acree, veteran of the first World War whose health broke down during the summer of 1944 and he succumbed at the Veterans Hospital in Salt Lake City on October 2, 1944. The third Reports Officer was John F. Graham, who resigned August 18, 1945, after serving in the position from the latter part of October, 1944. At the time of Mr. Graham's resignation the project was in the stages of final liquidation and the functions of the office were carried on by persons detailed from other divisions and the appointed staff secretary assigned to the Reports Office. For a time during Mr. Acree's illness, Harry F. Tarvin served as Acting Reports Officer on detail from

the Denver office as did the Project Attorney, Frank Barrett.

THE OPENING OF THE CENTER

The records show that Harry L. Stafford, who later became the Project Director of the Minidoka Relocation Center, first visited the sagebrush site of the project on an inspection trip in July, 1942. He had been assigned by the San Francisco office to inspect certain sites and make recommendations as to the ones suitable for selection. After the center construction work was started under the supervision of the U.S. Army Engineers by private contract, Mr. Stafford came back here to give some assistance in the lay-out of the physical property.

It was not until nearly the first of September when the first projected movement of people was planned from the temporary quarters in the Assembly centers, and after the middle of September before the bulk of the people of Japanese ancestry arrived at Hunt. Individuals who had been assigned to this center kept drifting in until the end of the year, because many had volunteered for seasonal work--particularly the sugar beet harvest--from the Assembly Centers.

Early surveys of sentiment in Idaho had indicated that there was considerable opposition to the removal of the Japanese Americans from the West Coast to this state. The Governor had joined with other Western State governors at the Salt Lake City conference in issuing a positive statement in opposition to the voluntary exclusion which had resulted

in some 8,000 people migrating from California, Washington and Oregon into bordering mountain states. The great majority of the Idaho people felt that if the Japanese Americans were to be moved into Idaho by the government, they should be held behind barbed wire and under military guard.

However, there were economic factors at work especially the growing shortage of farm labor. This was to become an all important factor in the attitude of the people of the state and to greatly influence the course of the public relations problem faced by the War Relocation Authority. Throughout the period of time that the relocation center was in Idaho, there were indications that in the labor shortage seasons, the feeling toward the evacuees was better than at times when seasonal labor was not so badly needed.

The sugar beet organizations had already felt the pinch and had appealed to the Army authorities for help even before the people were moved from the Assembly centers to the relocation centers.

While the arrival of the people aroused some curiosity and some adverse comment on the part of residents of this section of the state, there was not the marked antagonism which was evident in some of the other communities adjacent to relocation centers. Ranches and others needing labor saw in the location of the project at Hunt, the likely reservoir of needed help, and were somewhat temperate in their criticism of the evacuees and of the War Relocation Authority. No. sooner had the people arrived here when large numbers began

work program gained momentum as desperate farmers turned to the center for relief. Some of these farmers actually faced the loss of valuable crops unless labor was available. They readily promised good wages and fair treatment. The center population fluctuated from 8311 to 7541 between October 1, 1942 to October 23 and with the return of the workers who had gone to the harvest fields either from the Assembly Center or from the Relocation Center, rose again to 9,091 on December 31.

Later it was demonstrated that there were definite areas of racial prejudice and considerable criticism of both the people of Minidoka and of the War Relocation Authority policies was to develop, but much of this came during the following calendar year.

The first days or weeks of the project were hectic times. The contractors building the barracks and facilities had not completed the work. The project site was covered at that time of the year with a tick dust, no roads had yet been improved, labor assignment had not yet been started to any degree, except in the mess halls, and the schools had not opened. It was not until November 17, that the high school finally opened and then in inadequate housing. The farm lands were undeveloped and overgrown with sagebrush.

One essential from the beginning was a carefully planned program of information so that the newly arrived population at least would have the bare facts regarding facilities, services and the WRA policies. It was decided very soon that the brief mimeographed handout sheets, which

were posted at various points in the center were inadequate to meet the needs. A project newspaper was planned in order to more adequately keep the people informed. The first issue by mimeograph process came out under the date of September 10, 1942, before all of the people had reached the center. The paper was started by John Bigelow, Reports Officer, and financed entirely from WRA funds. He immediately recruited a staff of evacuees to edit the paper and assist with other duties of the Reports Office, and records show that by the end of December his staff had expanded to a total of 25 persons, 15 males and 10 females.

While there was considerable resentment over the evacuation and losses sustained by the people as a result, there were no outbreaks of violence or demonstrations of any kind during these early months. There was a lot of under-current grumbling and complaining on the part of residents, particularly because of the lack of indoor toilet facilities, and because of the dust when they first arrived turned with a mire of mud when the fall rains set in in this area.

During the first three months there were an unusually large number of visitors to the center. People came in droves, as individuals prompted by curiosity, or in groups representing service clubs, civic organizations and churches. The records show that a total of 604 people from the "outside" toured the center during this period. They saw at first hand the evacuees at work and where they live, eat, go to church, to school and to play. This was of considerable value because criticism had already been heard from other sections of the

country about luxurious living and fine accommodations being provided by a benovelent government to these people of enemy racial strain. The very fact that these visitors came to Minidoka and were able to meet and refute such rumors where they cropped up had a great deal to do with the general public relations program.

The area immediately adjacent to the center was, of course, depopulated to a certain degree by inductions into the military forces and by families moving to the war plant centers where exceptionally high wages were being paid. The merchants in the stores of nearby towns welcomed the arrival of the evacuees not only those from the center who made limited purchases, but those who were on seasonal leave working on the farms at good wages and had ready money to spend. However, this changed in short order, as the shelves of the stores began to show depletion of many items. While this was a condition nationally and not peculiar to the area concerned, a lot of people were ready and willing to blame the evacuees and charge that they were being permitted to buy up scarce items. This became so pronounced that the Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce organized a "squellch the rumor" campaign to combat the adverse stories. Word was spread through the local newspapers, clerks in stores, churches and club organizations.

The newspapers in the area were completely fair in their treatment from the very start and for the most part refrained from printing rumors and antagonistic letters which probably did a great deal to head off a public controversey

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over the presence of the evacuees and the policies of the War Relocation Authority. The Reports Officer organized a factual press release service, which he immediately started sending on a "on news value" basis to a list of newspapers. Most of the papers made full use of this service and ran the text of the releases without change.

The following is the list of newspapers:

THE HERALD, Oakley, Idaho; NEWS TRIBUNE, Tacoma, Wash.;
DESERET NEWS, Salt Lake City, Utah; THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE,
Salt Lake City, Utah; PACIFIC CITIZEN, English language
paper published by the Japanese American Citizens League,
Salt Lake City, Utah; POST INTELLIGENCER, Seattle, Wash;
THE HERALD, Buhl, Idaho; THE CAMAS COUNTY COURIER, Fairfield,
Idaho; POST REGISTER, Idaho Falls, Idaho; THE LEADER, Gooding,
Idaho; MINIDOKA COUNTY NEWS, Rupert, Idaho; THE TELEGRAM,
Twin Falls, Idaho; NORTHSIDE NEWS, Jerome, Idaho; CAPITOL
NEWS, Boise, Idaho; TIMES AND NEWS, Twin Falls, Idaho;
IDAHO STATESMAN, Boise, Idaho; NEWS TRIBUNE, Caldwell, Idaho;
IDAHO STATE JOURNAL AND TRIBUNE; Pocatello, Idaho; LINCOLN
COUNTY JOURNAL, Shoshone, Idaho; THE BULLETIN, Burley, Idaho;
THE HERALD, Burley, Idaho; THE FREE PRESS, Nampa, Idaho;

The wire services were also covered by the news release mailing.

During this period, too, some outside speaking engagements were developed and filled by key members of the appointed personnel. Many of these invitations came after visits to the center by interested persons or groups. The records show

that 22 persons from the project made talks at some place in the area during the first three months of the project operation, many of them filling several engagements. These appearances did a great deal to help in the general understanding of the program of the WRA and in checking the criticism which was being raised.

INTERNAL STRIFE DEVELOPED IN 1943

It was in the first part of 1943 when internal strife began to develop to any pronounced degree within the center. The kick-off came with the announcement from the office of the Secretary of War, that the Japanese American Combat team would be organized on a volunteer basis, with men from Hawaii and the mainland. Again the memories of humiliating experiences and deep seated bitterness over the evacuation and past discriminations came to the surface to create a turmoil of emotions. There was definite opposition on the part of some of the residents, while some of the more enthusiastic Nisei welcomed the announcement as being a partial restoration of their civil rights.

The actual registration and volunteering came in February, 1943, with WRA taking advantage of the situation to secure the registration of persons for leave clearance at the same time. This fact, of course, was not fully apparent to the residents at the time. The administration realized that cooperation of evacuee leaders would be necessary to complete the job ahead, and took steps to enlist members of the community government planning commission and other evacuee leaders. There ensued considerable questioning and

arguments but in the end these leaders took an active part on the side of the administration.

The volunteering started slowly and at first it was decided to keep the names of those who did volunteer secret. Later it appeared that this was a mistake and finally arm bands were provided for those who had volunteered. As soon as this was done, these young men were placed in an elevated position above the other residents of the center, and it became an honor in the sight of a majority of the residents, though there still remained a small minority which was opposed to the service of the Nisei. These people were for the most part those who had asked for repatriation or had considered doing so. There were in addition some people who felt that because of the evacuation, the government was asking too much of the young men.

When the regular period of volunteering had ended there were 175 volunteers. The project management was convinced that there were a number still undecided and that the success of relocation depended largely on the success of the volunteering. Accordingly it was decided to hold a series of meetings in different parts of the center and invitations were sent to all citizens over the age of 16. These meetings were well attended and there were talks by the Project Director and his assistants and by Nisei who had already volunteered. As a result there were at the end of this campaign 270 volunteers, plus 11 aliens, and 14 conditional volunteers, the latter being men who offered

to serve provided they were given commissions. The aliens, of course, were not accepted by the War Department, because the policy of accepting aliens had not yet been laid down. Subsequent volunteers pushed the final total up to 304.

This figure of 304 was larger than the number of volunteers from any of the ten relocation centers. In addition there was one family from Minidoka with four sons in the volunteer group.

The volunteers immediately became the heroes of the hour and were entertained extensively in the blocks and at formal dinners, private parties and other programs. They were given special privileges enabling them to go to Twin Falls and have family photographs made and in other ways to prepare for induction. A great deal of this recognition given these men proved to be premature, however, and for more than two months they waited around the center for their orders to report for service.

While the registration and volunteering program caused considerable internal turmoil and strife, it had a beneficial effect on the public relations on the outside, both in this area and over the nation. The fact that Minidoka led all other relocation centers, with 19 percent of its eligible citizen males of military age, offering their services, was immediately pointed to with pride by many Idaho people. The results of the volunteering were much better than the public in this area had anticipated. The wide publicity given helped to instill in the minds of the people hereabouts that there were loyal citizens at Hunt

center. As a result too, the Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce, the editor of the Twin Falls daily newspaper, the general manager of the largest department store, the president of the ministerial association and a number of other leading citizens took up the cause of the evacuees and the public attitude toward them reached a high peak. The volunteers and members of their families were given passes from the center and large numbers of them visited Twin Falls. Contacts between the center residents and people on the outside were numerous at this time. The Minidoka Mass Choir sang three concerts to a total of 3,500 people in Jerome, Twin Falls and Rupert. Smaller musical groups and school groups also made trips to the outside. The number of visitors to the center fell off sharply, indicating that as a general rule the people were no longer curious and that for the most part they were accepting the evacuees. Another contributing factor toward this general era of good-will was the working record which many of the evacuees had established on seasonal leave. Their contribution to the food program was widely publicized.

THE CO-OP TAKES OVER THE NEWSPAPER

The Consumers Co-operative Enterprises of Minidoka decided to take advantage of the regulations of the WRA which provide that ownership of the project newspaper may be vested in the Co-op organization. These regulations provide also that the evacuees who work on the newspaper staff will be paid by the WRA the same as other evacuees,

and that the paper will publish essential information regarding WRA policies and administrative regulations for the information of the residents. Otherwise the complete editorial management and business operation would be assumed by the Co-op. The Board of the Co-op wanted to have a printed newspaper and felt that even though it might actually cost more to produce than the revenue received, it would be worthwhile as a media for the publication of information essential to the operations of the Co-op. Accordingly an agreement for printing was drawn up with the partners operating the business of the Northside News at the town of Jerome, these printers being Berwyn and Ronald Burke. Publication was first started on a tabloid size 11 by 15 inches on the 27th day of February 1943. Later the size of the paper was changed to the regulation full size newspaper, but the tabloid was used until October 2, 1943. The newspaper was in continuous operation under the management of the Co-op and this original printing agreement until July 28, 1945 when it suspended publication as the Co-op. was in the process of liquidation.

The Co-op. set up an editorial board which controlled the policies of the paper and appointed a business manager who collected advertisements from several of the nearby towns but largely from Twin Falls. From the very start of the printed newspaper in English the staff took a great interest in the work and produced a very good looking newspaper from a printing standpoint, although there were numerous times when the content was not too favorable to

the administration. This attitude took the form of printing all of the critical material available from other newspapers on the outside. A number of engravings were bought and the paper was illustrated very well, the Co-op not limiting the expenditures in this respect.

The staff of the newspaper was constantly changing, particularly that part of the staff which worked on the English language edition. This was, of course, due to the relocation of many of the people rather than any dissatisfaction which developed with their project work. In the latter stages of its life the newspaper was largely edited and managed by a group of High School people.

One distinctive advantage of the Minidoka Irrigator over some of the other project newspapers operated at relocation centers was the facilities available at Minidoka to print the Japanese language section of the paper. This was arranged through the Co-op. by the leasing of a small job press and cases of Japanese type characters from an evacuee who had been evacuated to the Tule Lake center. He had previously operated a small printing establishment and had the materials in storage. The Japanese section was throughout the whole period of publication a tabloid size, because of the limitations of the job press on which it was printed.

An evacuee at Minidoka who had previously been employed on a Japanese language newspaper was named as editor of the Japanese section. He recruited a staff of

type-setters who were residents of the center and directed the operation of the crew.

The newspaper office was established in the area in Minidoka commonly called the "Civic Center", where a number of other administrative offices were located in Block 22. The type-setting for the Japanese language section was also done at this location. The Reports Office was located in the main administration building adjoining that of the Project Director.

This plan of having a completely printed newspaper both for the English language and the Japanese language sections was unique, and to have the actual printing operation done on the project as far as the Japanese section was concerned was unusual, in view of the strict rules of the Congressional Committee on printing. However, since the printing was done by a private corporation duly organized under existing state laws, it was not an enterprise which could be questioned by the Congressional committee or the General Accounts Office of the Federal government.

Under the regulations of the WRA it was the duty of the Reports Officer at all times to make sure that the content of the newspaper was not detrimental to the interests and policies of the WRA. These regulations also gave the project director the power to suspend a single issue or to suspend the newspaper for flagrant violation. This placed the Reports Officer in the rather awkward position of being a sort of official censor of the editorial

content. All three of the Reports Officers who served in the position took a broad view of this task and endeavored at all times to allow every possible exercise of the right of free expression on the part of the editors of the paper. It did become necessary at several times, however, to ask the editor to remove certain articles and often editorials which were of a character considered to be detrimental to the interests of the War Relocation Authority. Once during the time Mr. Acree was Reports Officer and again while John Graham was Reports Officer it was necessary to prevent the distribution of the papers when they came to the gate until it was determined whether the offensive material had been eliminated. These situations, of course, made for a delicate relationship between the Reports Officer and the staff of the IRRIGATOR. Sometimes, the enforcement of the censorship of a certain item by the Reports Officer would result in either resignations from the staff of the paper or threats of resignations. At times there were discussions by the editorial board on the questions raised, and members of the Co-op board would be involved. On the whole it can be said that while there was friction many times, the seriousness did not seem to reach the stage of impairing the usefulness of the media.

Since many of the prominent leaders of the Co-op. organization were Issei, it naturally followed that many of them were not enthusiastic about the WRA relocation program. In the beginning the people who usually left on

relocation were the younger people, although older members of the family groups would often go out on seasonal or short term leave. The question of the use of material in the newspaper which would aid relocation was always a delicate one and for the most part the editors of the English language section opposed use of such materials. This fact was a factor in the dissemination of relocation information and made it necessary for the Reports Officer to devise other means of informing the residents of relocation opportunities and conditions on the outside. Since the editors also appeared to delight in the idea of reproducing from outside newspapers information concerning incidents and instances of discrimination, the latter stages of the program at Minidoka was a constant battle between the forces opposed to relocation and the administration attempting to promote it.

The editor of the Japanese section of the IRRIGATOR for a considerable time was more lenient in the use of material favorable to relocation. However, he later alligned himself with the opposition. This opposition on his part took the same means of expression as that of the English language staff--the use of all of the types of news tending to show opposition by outside groups and publicizing the so called incidents. No attempt was made either by the English or Japanese sections to openly oppose relocation in editorials. The opposition was more subtle and so planned that it could not be charged by the Reports Officer as obstructive and this prevent the Project Director

from imposing his right to suspend publication.

The operation of the IRRIGATOR was an expensive proposition for the Co-op organization, although there was a fair volume of advertising particularly from Twin Falls, because this was the city most often visited by the evacuees for shopping. From the time the printed paper was started it was put on a subscription basis and this added to the revenue and of course, lessened the deficit paid by the Co-op. As more and more people left the center there were more subscriptions from these people who wanted to keep in touch with the news from Minidoka. While this number of subscriptions was small in the beginning, it naturally grew with the increased relocation until September 1944, it passed the 1,000 mark.

SOME NOTABLE EDITIONS

Several special editions of the IRRIGATOR were most valuable to the WRA program. One was an issue under the direction of Mr. Acree printed at the time of the visit of Sergeant Ben Kuroki. This was an excellent paper, with a make-up and general content worthy of the best type of American weekly journalism, illustrated with numerous engravings.

In September 1944 the anniversary edition of the IRRIGATOR was published containing a complete roster of the names of former residents of Minidoka or members of their families serving in the U.S. Armed forces and in the Cadet Nurse Corps. This was a very elaborate edition and

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well edited. The WRA purchased 2,000 copies of this edition for outside circulation through the cooperating committees in various parts of the country. The Business Enterprises also purchased a photostat edition in miniature with 3,000 copies. These were sold to residents by the Co-op for mailing to their friends. Another notable special edition was issued to honor the Minidoka volunteers.

ANTI-JAPANESE LANGUAGE RESOLUTION

During the early part of 1943 the news of the volunteering at the Minidoka Center helped considerably in the matter of public relations, the project management was soon to learn that this era of good feeling was only temporary. The large crowd of some 3,500 people who saw the first group of volunteers off to Ft. Douglas, Utah, on April 30, had no more than returned to their blocks, when there were evidences of prejudice showing outside. Those who were opposing the evacuees and the WRA, apparently purely from the racial prejudice, were at work. Appearances of the Issei Choir outside during April brought these aliens for the first time in close contact with outside people. They persisted in speaking in the Japanese language and this resulted in adverse comment.

The Twin Falls Kiwanis Club on May 27, adopted a resolution condemning the use of foreign languages on the streets and in the stores. Although the Japanese evacuees were not mentioned in the resolution by name there was no doubt at whom the resolution was aimed, especially since the original copy of the resolution was sent by the club secretary to the Project Director.

The administration had long been aware that bad public relations were the result of the speaking of the Japanese language in public places and the action of the Kiwanis club merely served to prompt greater efforts toward correcting the situation. An educational campaign was organized at Minidoka and group meetings were held, entailing a certain amount of special work for the Reports Officer.

THE RANGE FIRE WORK

Despite this outcropping of criticism of the evacuees as evidences by the Kiwanis Club resolution, a very favorable impression was created at about the same time, by the organization of special crews at Minidoka to assist in fighting range fires. With the cooperation of the United States Grazing Service and the United States Forestry Service, volunteers were organized at the center and trained for this work. The absence of the CCC crews which had formerly aided materially in controlling range fires, made this contribution on the part of the evacuees to the public interest of considerable value. Wide publicity was given to the effort. Actually the evacuees were only called upon to aid in fighting fires on three occasions that summer, but the fact that they were ready and willing to do, was important.

THE DIES COMMITTEE

The hearings and reports of the Dies Committee on Un-American Activities had its repercussions in this area, although the representatives of the committee spent only a few hours at Minidoka

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on May 27, 1943. In the project library these committee representatives found a book which contained an essay on Carl Marx. They also interviewed a number of the staff members and some of the Buddhist priests at the center.

It was not so much a matter of any revelations of the committee regarding Minidoka that caused trouble here in public relations, as the lengthy stories which appeared in the press on the testimony taken at other centers and on the West Coast. The newspapers in this area, of course, used much of this material. About the same time there was a broadcast from San Francisco by Larry Smith over NBC. These events had a bad effect on evacuee morale as well as a bad effect generally in the area outside. It slowed up considerably the relocation movement.

The American Legion in Idaho took a decided stand against the WRA about this time. The state commander toured the southern part of the state criticizing the WRA and urging that the relocation centers be brought under Army control. The commander of the American Legion Post at Boise, criticized the WRA for lack of supervision over relocated evacuees. The Jerome Chamber of Commerce then charged that WRA had failed to keep promises of repair of the Milner-Gooding irrigation canal, to subjugate sagebrush lands, and also joined the opposition forces charging lack of supervision over relocated evacuees.

About this time the Kimberly Grange adopted a resolution opposing ownership of land by anyone of Japanese ancestry. Several other farm groups took similar action. Later the State Grange in

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Idaho was instrumental in the movement to attempt to forestall the return of evacuees to the West Coast area after the mass exclusion orders had been lifted by the Army authorities.

By the middle of the summer of 1943 the public relations had reached a low ebb here in contrast to the era of good feeling which existed in the winter.

The situation was rapidly growing worse inside the center as well as out. These various attacks on WRA and the attitude of the Legion, the Grange, and the so-called revelations of the Dies Committee, kept the people at an emotional pitch and uncertain of their future on the outside. To add to the internal difficulties a bad rumor gained circulation in the project to the effect that the relocation centers would be closed at an early date. The rumor was caused by the misinterpretation of a statement by Dillon S. Myer on the ultimate goal of the relocation program.

THE OWI NEWSPAPER TOUR

The last half of 1943 brought a marked improvement in the outside public relations and in the internal feeling on the part of the evacuees. Probably the most important factors were (a) the visit of a special writer from the Portland Oregonian, and (b) the conducted newspaper tour which was arranged by the Reports Officer through the OWI regional office at Salt Lake City.

The Oregonian's special writer was very helpful. He came to the project and spent considerable time in writing a series of articles, not only on the general operation of the Project, but on

the individual families who had previously lived in Portland and other Oregon communities. This resulted in an indirect way in some favorable stories appearing in the Seattle Times and in the Post Intelligencer. These papers did not do as thorough a job, but depended mainly on information furnished by the Reports Officer.

The conducted tour of newspaper writers was very successful. It was similar in many respects to a conducted tour which had previously been arranged by the West Coast office to the Tule Lake Relocation Center. This was in July, 1943, and termed an 'open house'. The writers were allowed the 'freedom of the city' to go anywhere they wanted to go, eat in any of the mess halls, take pictures at will, interview anyone they wanted to interview, alien or citizen. No attempt was made to show them any particular activities or 'sell' them on anything. The general results were very good. The papers large and small ran columns of material, most of which was beneficial. The list of representatives of the press present is as follows: Harold Osborne, Associated Press; John Harvey, Idaho Statesman; Bernard Mainwaring, Idaho Free Press, Nampa; Nichols Ifft, Pocatello Tribune; William McKnight, Preston Citizen; Berwyn Burke, Northside News, Jerome; F. B. Patterson, Salt Lake Tribune; Marvin Shoemaker, Times-News, Twin Falls; Victor Goertzen, Times-News, Twin Falls; Mrs. F. M. Gardner, Radio Station KTFI, Twin Falls, with some other representatives of the same radio station. In addition there were a number of civic leaders and Chamber of Commerce officials who accompanied the writers.

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THE FARM MACHINERY PROBLEM

The general shortage of farm machinery throughout the country which had developed as a result of the War Production Board order cutting back manufacture to 25 percent of the pre-war production rate, also resulted in some headaches for the project management. Since the farm at Minidoka was operated by the Government and its produce was used for the feeding of the evacuees, there were stories circulated to the effect that there were large numbers of needed tractors, plows, harrows, and other equipment on the project not actually being used. Finally, a two man committee representing the Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce, an oil distributor and a banker, made a call at the project. By thorough checking they determined that the stories were greatly exaggerated, but were still concerned about the possibility of obtaining some of the equipment at the project for use on nearby farms. It was necessary to state to these gentlemen that if it did develop that there was any equipment whatsoever which was surplus to the needs for project operation, that it would either be transferred to other relocation centers where it was needed, or be declared surplus and sold through the U. S. Treasury Department. While the visit of these men helped to curb some of the rumors, it did not, of course, satisfy the hungry farmers who wanted to locate machinery with which to work their own land.

THE SEGREGATION MOVEMENT

By August, 1943, the segregation program of WRA was ready to put into effect and required special methods for internal information.

The pamphlets which had been prepared in Denver and sent to the project for distribution were found to contain several errors and one in Japanese was printed wrong end to. These factors seriously impaired the usefulness of the printed matter provided from the outside. Accordingly, a segregation information committee was appointed and the Reports Officer worked with this committee and special translators to get out the necessary information. Actually the segregation program was not as disrupting at Minidoka as at many of the other relocation centers, probably because there was not as many people to be segregated as at some of the other centers.

There were other factors at the same time which made the internal situation delicate. The fact that the Gripsholm sailing was scheduled in September, and a number of repatriate applicants were trying every possible means to get their names on the lists, complicated the situation. Between 700 and 800 letters were sent out by evacuees to the Spanish government representatives, the U. S. State Department, and other officials by those seeking to get their names on the lists. The repatriates generally at the center preferred to get on the Gripsholm to going to Tule Lake.

The efforts to recruit WAC volunteers were carried on at this time also, which added a burden in handling internal information.

The Spanish Consul visited the center during September, and after his visit two 'open letters' were circulated in an unauthorized manner. One of these letters charged that the WRA administration had not given proper notice to the people of the visit of the representa-

tive of the protecting power, and hand-picking those who were to see him. The letters were well distributed and copies were posted at nights in the mess halls and toilet rooms in practically every block on the center.

It was not until October 2, 1943, that the last of the segregees were sent to Tule Lake.

After the removal of the people to Tule Lake the general feeling in the center returned to more of a normal state and during the balance of that year there was no special periods of tension. There were several internal disturbances, which caused considerable comment. One of these was the discovering of the manufacture of alcoholic beverages on the center, some labor trouble with the coal crew, and some labor trouble also at the sewage disposal plant.

HOLIDAY LIQUOR AND TOYS

As the Christmas holiday approached there were two developments of interest, one having considerable bearing on the outside public relations. The State Liquor Board Superintendent called at the project to report that he had received complaints from Twin Falls to the effect that evacuees were crowding the liquor stores and taking a large share of the available liquor supply before Twin Falls residents and ranchers in the valley were able to visit the stores. The official indicated that he proposed to limit the sale of liquor to the evacuees by denying them permits for the next quarter beginning January 1, 1944. The permits were normally issued on showing of the person's ration book, but since the evacuees do not have ration books, the board had previously recognized this fact and issued the

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permits without the books being shown. Apparently Japanese-Americans on the outside were taking advantage of this situation and getting permits as residents of Hunt, and not nearly all of the liquor store buying could be charged to residents of the center. At that time of the year, there were hundreds of workers of Japanese ancestry from this center and other centers working in Idaho. While the project management did not want any steps taken which would deprive the evacuees of the rights to which they were entitled, it was difficult to explain the situation to the people on the outside. Finally, it was decided to place the whole matter in the hands of two Twin Falls men, Claude Detweiler, President of the Chamber of Commerce, and Kenneth Beach, President of the Idaho Department Store. This proved to be a wise decision because the matter was adjusted without difficulty.

A large sum of money was sent by a former evacuee, now re-located, to the center for the purchase of Christmas toys for the children of Minidoka.

THE GRANGE STATE MEETING

On December 22, 1943, the Idaho State Grange in a meeting held at Weiser, Idaho, adopted a drastic resolution aimed again at preventing land ownership by persons of Japanese ancestry. The resolution contained the following statement: "We recommend that no part of parcel of land in the United States be sold or leased to any Japanese by the owner or agent thereof or by the United States Government". It was immediately attacked as an un-American attitude by

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the most influential daily newspaper of the State, the 'Idaho Statesman', which came out with a scathing editorial. This editorial pointed out that the purpose back of the resolution was to curb land ownership not only by alien Japanese, but also by American-born citizens of the United States, and went on to point to the contribution the Nisei were making to the war effort. One section of the editorial said:

"It's bad enough to find lunatics and barbarians going off their nut in time of war****but to find the State Grange doing it merely confirms an old conviction of ours, that most likely this war too, in spite of its noble hokum, will at last reach the stage where brigands fight over the spoils."

NEWS OF THE SELECTIVE SERVICE CHANGE

It was in January, 1944, when the announcement was made that the Japanese-American boys would be restored to regular selective service classifications. The announcement was 'big news' at the center. The immediate reaction seemed to be two-fold: (a) some of the younger men who had been lingering in the center possibly under the impression that they would not be drafted from the center, started going out on leave to make a little money before they were called, and (b) a few young men wanted to volunteer immediately, probably with the idea that they would be in a better position to select the branch of service to which they would be assigned.

The announcement had a decided good effect on the public relations in Idaho. The fact that Nisei were to be drafted was

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interpreted as meaning that less Idaho fathers would be called for the service.

The effect of the Selective Service action came during February when nearly 100 boys from the center received induction notices, or rather notices to report for physical examinations. They were taken to Jerome where they boarded a bus for Boise. In the meantime, there was an increase in the number of military age men who applied for expatriation, in the apparent belief that this would disqualify them for service in the Army. Two men who had received notices to appear for physical examinations failed to do so, and in the early part of March they were arrested by the FBI and arraigned before the United States Commissioner at Twin Falls. Bail was fixed at \$2,000.00 each, and they were then taken to the Ada County jail at Boise, to await trial. After this first examination of inductees at Boise, arrangements were made for medical officers to come to the project and future examinations were given at the center hospital.

THE LABOR SITUATION

On the orders of the Washington office labor assignment had been fixed at a ceiling which required the lay-off of a number of evacuee workers. This caused considerable discussion and dissention on the Project. It was decided to appoint an Evacuee Labor Commission to which many of the matters regarding employment were referred by the project management. The commission, however, usually found a way to

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dodge making an unpleasant decision and to throw the responsibility back on the administration where the action would not be to the general interest of the people. Several minor strikes occurred but none of them were of any very serious character. Probably the most unique of these strikes did not come until the spring of 1945 when the cooks in the mess halls decided not to serve meals at any specified or regular hours. This maneuver threw the whole center into a turmoil because people could not report to work on time, the school children could not be in their class rooms on time, and in general it disrupted the whole organization. The strike was soon broken, however, when it became known that the payroll department was deducting all non-worked time from the paychecks, and that school work which was not being done, was being charged to each pupil, thus endangering the final certification. The mess hall cooks finally decided to return to regular meal times and a few days afterwards one of their number approached the Relocation Officer, V. V. McLaughlin, and indicated he was spokesman for a group of 12 who wanted to relocate immediately.

During one of these minor labor disputes during 1944, it was decided to have a Fact Finding Committee appointed to adjust certain difficulties. The evacuee members were selected by the Community Council and the administration named the Project Attorney, the Reports Officer, the Personnel Officer, and the Project Director to serve. This was one of the several instances in which the Reports Officer was assigned extra administrative duties in connection with

his employment, which were not strictly a part of his regular work. Another instance which took a considerable amount of time was to serve on the panel to hold leave clearance hearings, in the final clean-up of the border-line cases in the segregation program.

THE CANAL FIRE INCIDENT

A situation which might have had widespread effect on the public attitude toward the evacuees developed in May, 1944. On the morning of May 15, the officials of the Twin Falls-North Side Canal Company of Jerome, reported to Mr. Stafford that some 1800 feet of the riprap along the bank of the canal three miles below the center had been burned out on Sunday night. They reported also that a ditch rider had come upon four Japanese setting fire to it. The riprap consists of sagebrush set into the ground of the canal bank, which at this point is in the nature of a levee, to prevent washing. The canal company officials stated that this destruction was particularly serious owing to the fact that the water of the canal was rising at this time which was the beginning of the irrigation season. They asked that the damage be repaired within a week to prevent loss of water.

The Project Director, together with representatives of the Community Council, visited the canal site where the fire occurred and found that there were five separate burned stretches, leading to the conclusion that the fire had been set. The riprap damage was complete in the damaged places to the water line. The Council agreed to accept responsibility for the repair, in order to prevent the with-

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drawal of privileges for the evacuees to fish and swim in the canal and called for a volunteer crew of workers. There was a good response to the call and the repair work was efficiently done in a day and a half.

THE "MINIDOKA MATINEE" PROGRAM

One of the major activities in the interest of public relations which was undertaken by John F. Graham while he served as Reports Officer at Minidoka was to conduct a series of radio programs. These were produced over Station KTFI at Twin Falls and began in January, 1945, lasting until April. The programs consisted largely of music with short talks telling of the contributions of the Minidoka residents to the war effort. The talent was recruited and trained at the project and the programs were produced at the studio as 'live shows'. They were of value in promoting better understanding of the evacuees both in the center and those who had relocated in Idaho. The Seattle Area office of the WRA was sufficiently interested in these productions that arrangements were made to reproduce by transcription some of the music and other material to be used over stations in Washington and Oregon, to help prepare the way for the returning evacuees to the Northwest Area.

THE LIFTING OF THE EXCLUSION ORDER

The lifting of the mass exclusion order of the Western Defense Command by proclamation of Maj. General Pratt, which was issued on December 17, 1944, to be effective on January 2, 1945, completely changed the character of the work at the center. Instead of reloca-

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tion being now a part of the work the staff had to perform while continuing the operation of the center, it became the essential activity. Steps were to be taken immediately to subordinate all other activities to that of relocation.

The increased need for relocation information for the people naturally increased the work of the project Reports officer within the center, while it curbed the outside or public relations activities. The National Director made a tour of the centers immediately after the announcement was made to meet with groups of evacuee leaders and address meetings. He was in Minidoka early in February and held several meetings including one so called 'mass meeting', at which time he outlined in detail the WRA plans and policies for closing all relocation centers by the end of the calendar year. Complete stenographic notes were taken at these meetings and the address of the Director was reproduced in mimeograph form and distributed to all of the apartments in the center. The text of this speech actually marked the beginning of a stepped up program of increased internal information.

At the time the aid of the Irrigator was most needed to carry more of the relocation information to the people, the staff appeared to have been dominated largely by persons who were opposed to doing anything which would aid in the movement out of the center. They reflected, in the main, the attitude of a group of people who held to the belief that the centers were established, and the people moved here against

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their will and that they were entitled to remain here until the end of the war if they chose to do so. Very little space was given to the relocation news, despite the fact that it was fast becoming the more important news for the subscribers. The co-op Board members, however, always mindful of their obligation to liquidate the assets without too great a loss to the membership, took steps early in the spring to discontinue taking cash subscriptions for more than six months.

THE RELOCATION BULLETIN

The need for an added medium to disseminate information not only at Minidoka but at all of the relocation centers had been anticipated by the Washington office and instructions were issued for the establishment and production of a Relocation Bulletin once a week. The editing of this bulletin and the distribution was to be handled through the Reports Office, although the Reports Officer was directed in the instructions to consult constantly with the Relocation Program Officer regarding the content. While it was intended that this bulletin be produced in both English and Japanese, it appears that no English edition was produced until July 25. The Japanese language edition, however, was started with the first issue on April 9. The production of the bulletin was handicapped to some degree by duplicating problems and it was not issued on a regular weekly basis at first.

ROTATING PICTURE DISPLAYS

Early in the year after the lifting of the mass exclusion orders from the West Coast, it was decided that the display of pictures of relocated people, and particularly those taken on the West Coast would greatly aid in the relocation information program. As

soon as prints of some of these pictures were available from the Denver Photo Laboratory, a rotating display program for showing the pictures in the mess halls at Minidoka was set up by the Reports Officer. Large display boards were secured and delivered to the mess halls and the pictures were changed from one hall to another by a crew of workers assigned to the Reports Office. Captions were provided in both English and Japanese. These pictures attracted considerable attention and the effect was considered well worth while.

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC DEPARTMENT

During the early part of the program very few project pictures were taken by the Reports Officer. There were a number of pictures made, however, by the members of the photographic staff working out of the Denver office making periodic visits to each of the relocation centers. These pictures were largely of the documentary type as contrasted to the news-value or action pictures. After the Co-op had arranged for the printing of the Minidoka Irrigator, however, there was need for the news type of pictures and a considerable number were taken. Most of the pictures taken for the use of the newspaper were available to WRA, the film being purchased on government order, and the time of the photographer paid as a member of the Irrigator staff. Thus, it naturally follows that there is a larger supply of pictures of project activities and persons from Minidoka than from most of the other relocation centers. During the month of July, 1945, a complete cataloging of the pictures was done. This showed that there were approximately 1,100 in all.

Another attempt to aid relocation by the visual method was a project for some of the artists in the center who produced two large

murals for display -- depicting the contrast between center life and life on the outside. A poster was also produced to show the various steps in relocation.

DECLINE IN REPORTS OFFICE EMPLOYMENT

Authority for the employment of an appointed staff secretary for the Reports Officer was given by the Washington office in the late fall of 1944, and a secretary was added to the staff at the Minidoka Project in December. Evacuee employment on the newspaper, and in the various activities, including the photographic department, the delivery of printed matter to the homes, the moving of the picture displays in the mess halls, and for other activities continued at a high peak until the time the Irrigator suspended publication. The last issue of the English section was on July 28, but the Japanese edition continued until August 25. At that time the evacuee employment had dropped from a peak of 38 to 7 persons. In addition there were some translators working in the relocation office who assisted with the work of translating the material for the Japanese language section of the weekly relocation bulletin.

SPECIAL BULLETINS ISSUED

When there were important announcements regarding policies of the WRA or announcements by the War Department affecting the status of the evacuees, special bulletins were issued and distributed to the people. Some of these instances were the issuance of the administrative order for the handling of dependency cases and the scheduling of their relocation; the Administrative Notice No. 289, which set up the quota system for the final liquidation of the center and required scheduling

of departures of regular weekly quotas; the announcement of the War Department of the rescinding of the individual exclusion notices previously served by the Western Defense Command and the withdrawal of the military from the center. This latter came on September 5, 1945, and was effective as of midnight that night.

In carrying out the provisions of Administrative Notice No. 289 the Project Director determined on a series of educational meetings, which needed wide publicizing because by that time there was no center newspaper to carry such information.

DOCUMENTATION ACTIVITIES AT CENTER

From the very beginning of the work attention was given by the Reports Office to the collection and forwarding to the Washington Office of all pertinent exhibit material which it was considered would be of value in the historical record. During the period of time from the center opening until July, 1943, the Reports Officer prepared quarterly reports covering all phases of project activities, as a contribution to the permanent record and also for the information needed to prepare in the Washington office the quarterly report for the President and the Congress of the United States required of the War Relocation Authority.

Beginning with July, 1943, the method of reporting was changed and a statistical report was required from each division and section head at the project. The Reports Officer was responsible for the collection of these reports and the preparation of a monthly summary of them to be submitted to the National office. These documents present an important part of the permanent record of the total

operation of the project.

In addition to the statistical reports, the Reports Officer was responsible for the preparation of certain special reports covering different subjects and administrative policies at the center. There were no great number of these from Minidoka.

The Project Director's weekly narrative report was prepared by the Reports Officer. In this letter to the National Director the important matters of the week were discussed and often questions of policy or interpretation were raised. This report was prepared by the Reports Officer after consultation with the Division Chiefs and the Project Director. Often there were items appended to these letters by the Project Director, which originated with him and not with the Reports Officer.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS AT THE CENTER

While the project newspaper served as the mainstay of news for the people in the center, there were numerous other publications to serve various purposes. Notable among them was the issuance of a Japanese language sheet for the information of the Issei members of the Minidoka Consumers Co-op. There were several church publications which were issued on a monthly or irregular basis. Among these were: The Minidoka Churchman issued by the Episcopal church and for a time issued weekly; "The Brotherhood" by the Shinshu Buddhist; the New Herald issued by the United Buddhist church. There were also a number of school papers issued at the center during the school sessions. Among them were: The Huntville Sage, the Stafford Press, and the Hunt Hi-Lights, the first two by elementary schools and the latter by the High School. A

Recreation Bulletin was published by the Community Activities at different times but did not run continually during the period the center was in operation. The High School issued annual books.

"THE MINIDOKA INTERLUDE"

An ambitious publication and one which will be cherished by many of the residents was that known as the "Minidoka Interlude". It was printed on glossy paper with numerous hand drawn illustrations and other pictures and leather bound. The main portion of the book was devoted to the English language while the back pages were printed in Japanese with a rather condensed type. The advertising which was sold for the publication also was reproduced in both English and Japanese.

The book was published with three different organizations participating, the Community Activities section of the administration, the Minidoka Irrigator, and the Minidoka Consumers Co-op. Actually, of course, the business was managed and directed and costs paid by the Co-op, because the Irrigator was owned by the Co-op, and the administration could only participate in the way of aiding in its publication and with the furnishing of text matter. It provided the one more or less permanent souvenir of the project life, which was intended to cover the entire activities and to trace the development of the center and reflect center living.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE
REPORTS DIVISION

Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

Compiled by:
Richard A. Niver, Acting Reports Officer

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE
REPORTS DIVISION

From the middle of August, 1945, until after the last evacuee had relocated, October 27, the Project was without a Reports Officer. The functions of the Division were carried on, however, by two representatives of the Washington Reports Office, Mr. Allan Markley and Miss Emily Brown, who visited Minidoka in September and October respectively, and by the writer of this report, who was at that time detailed to the Relocation Division. Mr. Markley wrote the statistical-functional report of the Reports Office, and Miss Brown sent out the stories on final closure of the center to the Washington Office, the wire services, and newspapers in the vicinity of Minidoka. Both aided in the preparation of the information bulletin which was delivered to all residents of the center until October 21.

The information bulletin, which originally had been published only once a week and sometimes once every two or three weeks, was disseminated to the residents with greater frequency during September and October. No regular schedule was maintained, except that at least one and often

three or four bulletins were distributed every week. Information published concerned employment opportunities, housing, hostels, transportation facilities, relocation procedure, welfare assistance, public acceptance, experiences of relocated evacuees, WRA policy, and center closing operations.

The bulletin was especially valuable in describing closing procedure as outlined in Administrative Notice #289 and elaborated by center officials. At the request of the Project Director, Mr. H. L. Stafford, the administration "laid all its cards on the table" by means of the bulletin. Residents were informed of the necessity for center closure according to schedule. The thinking behind closure plans was explained. The actual scheduling of departures based on the residents' own relocation plans was described. Proceedings at the three series of camp-wide informational meetings were reported. And the bulletin constantly dinned the closing date -- October 23 -- into the minds of the residents.

In collecting material for publication to the residents much emphasis was placed upon the regular news letters from the field offices. All information on former Minidokans was published, as well as stories about relocatees from other centers provided they had some special

interest or meaning for the evacuees of this project. It would have been of great benefit to Minidoka resettlement had the news letters been adopted much earlier than they were. Another source, and one almost always credited by the evacuees, was the statements of prominent Minidokans who had left the center on short term or indefinite leave. When a "short-termmer" returned to the project he was contacted at once, and his story of the "outside" was included in the bulletin. Invariably these reports were favorable to resettlement, and the evacuees who made them were often besieged by others for further news of the strange land beyond the fence. Center leaders who had resettled were requested by letter to write up descriptions of conditions they had encountered since relocation. Many responded and provided the bulletin with some of its best resettlement information. In order to collect all possible material bearing on Minidoka relocation policy and trends, it became the habit of this writer to contact the Project Director, the Relocation Program Officer, the Head Counselor, the Evacuee Property Officer, and the Project Attorney at regular intervals. They were all very helpful in giving out stories for publication. Other sources utilized were, of course, the administrative instructions from the Washington Office and statements on policy by members of the Washington staff.

The problem of disseminating information to center residents became quite acute as evacuee employees of the Reports Office resettled. To meet this difficulty the Project Director on several occasions gathered together a force of fifteen to twenty-five appointed personnel and had them deliver the bulletin. This was, however, an expedient which could not be employed often during the period when most personnel were overwhelmed with the volume of work, so the last issues of the bulletin were mailed to family heads via the regular postal system. The mail service provided far the best means for distribution of the bulletin, and it seems unfortunate that it was abandoned in favor of messenger delivery after the first two issues in June, 1945.

Since the bulletin appeared in Japanese, as well as in English, the problem of translation was at times severe, or, at least, so it seemed. A solution was found in August, 1945, when Mr. C. Katayama, a former adult education teacher of Japanese writing, was employed by the Relocation Office. Mr. Katayama continued to translate until only one day before his departure on October 21. His writing was extremely clear, and he was expert at cutting stencils. Check-ups with several bilingual evacuees revealed that his translations were expert in reproducing the original English copy and that

they were not too "classical", unlike those of his predecessors. Mr. Katayama worked overtime on many occasions -- including Sundays -- when it was necessary to get out "rush jobs". His work cannot be praised too highly.

The bulletin was widely read and discussed by the residents, as witnessed by the fact that many of them brought significant stories to their relocation and welfare interviewers for further discussion. Even the "anti-relocation" elements did not disdain the bulletin. An interesting example of this concerns the article called, "Project Director Congratulates Residents", which was published just after Mr. William E. Rawlings replaced Mr. Stafford. In the story Mr. Rawlings praised the residents for their cooperation in putting up with center life, in making a success of the Army enlistment and seasonal leaves programs, and in keeping Minidoka at the head of the relocation race. Later, when the Project Attorney and Internal Security Officers, went to serve a three-day eviction notice on one of the "antis", he cited this story as proof that a person so well-wishing toward the residents as Mr. Rawlings would not permit such proceedings to take place, and that they were acting without the proper authority.

On October 24, one day after Minidoka ceased to be a relocation center, Miss Emily Brown released the story on final closure. Besides sketching the general history of the Project, it made quite a point of evacuee contribution to the war effort -- Army service of the Nisei, food production by seasonal agricultural workers, and industrial employment of seasonal and permanent relocatees. The story was well received in this area, and was published in toto by at least one local newspaper.

After the departure of the last evacuees, public relations of the center were inconsequential, for the interest of surrounding communities had always been in the Japanese-American residents rather than in Minidoka as a government project. From that time on only four Minidoka stories were given to the newspapers.

One of them concerned the last of the three actual evictions from the center. On October 23, an Issei couple, parents of three small children, refused to leave the project as scheduled or to go voluntarily to the hospital, where temporary living arrangements had been made for several evacuees waiting on Pullman accommodations. The family could not be left in their apartment, because the dining hall in the block was closed and they had no facilities for feeding themselves. Neither could the wife be taken to the hospital for she was in a hysterical condition and would disturb the other evacuees, some of whom were ill.

Therefore she was removed to the Jerome County jail for lodging until the family could be put on the train the following day, and the husband and children were taken to the hospital. That evening the husband created such a scene -- threatening, among other things, to commit suicide -- that he too was transported to the Jerome jail. Meanwhile by her ravings his wife had so incensed the Jerome County Sheriff that he broke the story to the newspapers. It was carried in the Twin Falls Times-News, the Salt Lake Tribune, and other papers. Later reporters called the project to make inquiry into the situation. Both the Project Director and the Acting Reports Officer explained the situation in the light of center closure and assured them that the family had arrived safely in Seattle, where they were being cared for by WRA officers. The slight flurry of excitement subsided, and no further repercussions were heard.

A few days after the last evacuees had left Minidoka, the Project Director received a "tip" that the Twin Falls Times-News was about to publish an editorial criticizing the project for not disposing more rapidly of the cats and dogs abandoned by evacuee owners or for the methods of extermination employed. To counteract this move the Acting Reports Officer called the Editor of the

Times-News and explained to him that liquidation of the pets was proceeding speedily by the most humane methods. It was suggested to the Editor that publication of this information would quiet the fears of farmers near the center that the hungry pets would overrun their properties. The story was never published, but neither was the critical editorial.

With the departure of the last evacuees, some people living in the Minidoka region came to view the center as a hunting ground for lumber, kindling, furniture, and other equipment. Although gate control was maintained a number of these persons succeeded in entering the project by means of the trails which wind through the desert to the center. In addition to this problem, administrative officers were overwhelmed daily by a horde of visitors who wanted to purchase the property remaining on the center. Naturally necessary clean-up work suffered from these interruptions. To combat looting and vandalism and to diminish the stream of inquiries from potential purchasers, a story was released to the Twin Falls newspapers. It stated that Minidoka was still a closed area which no one could enter except on legitimate business and pointed out that the War Relocation Authority was not empowered to sell government property on the project. Buyers were referred to the regular disposal agencies.

The last Minidoka news story, which was released to twelve local newspapers on December 17, announced the sale of scrap lumber and kindling during a four-day period and the procedure necessary to make purchases. As a result of this publicity, several hundred vehicles entered the project and removed 587 loads of scrap.

At the time relocation was completed little work had been done on the final reports for Minidoka. Only those on fire protection, community government, and public relations were finished, although reports were in progress on welfare, education, health, community activities, engineering, agriculture, and legal work.

During Miss Emily Brown's visit to the center a strong effort was made to get more reports started and to speed up reporting already begun. Separate meetings were held with each of the division heads and the people in each division who were to do the writing or compiling of information. The type of reporting desired and many techniques and aids for accomplishing the work were outlined. Moreover, Miss Brown wrote two memoranda of instructions and suggestions for which were presented to all writers. (See attached copies.)

Attitudes of the staff toward the reporting job varied considerably. Some section heads, such as the

Superintendent of Education, believed the recording of project history was just as important as any other task and insisted upon doing a thorough and meticulous piece of work. The former Community Activities Supervisor, who was detailed to the Property Section, was so conscientious that he spent his evenings digging into records and writing until his reports were finished. Many Minidokans were willing to take suggestions and to make corrections and amplifications in their reports after discussing them with the Acting Reports Officer. Some of the people in the Operations Division were especially cooperative in this respect. The Project Attorney was so helpful that he worked day and night, including Saturdays and Sundays, to complete his reports before he was transferred to the San Francisco WRA Office. After his transfer he wrote the report on Community Enterprises and mailed it back to the project.

Yet there were persons who invented every sort of excuse to avoid reporting or to do it with the least possible effort. Some section heads whose programs continued at top speed even after relocation was accomplished felt -- with some justification -- that they could not do any writing until the major portion of their tasks was completed. Certain members of the Administrative Management

staff asserted they should have at least two months to write reports after all other business was concluded. A few people, like the Personnel Officer, maintained that compiling the history of the project was "just a lot of nonsense" and made little attempt to develop satisfactory reports. Some, like this same individual, either through negligence or design had all their records sent to Washington or Berkeley before they began to write. There were at least two section heads who assigned the entire reporting task to subordinates, although they, themselves, were not very pressed for time. An excuse given for poor jobs by some writers was that Washington representatives of their sections had informed them they need not exert themselves to cover all the points in the outlines for their reports. Whether or not such statements were made cannot be determined here, but, true or false, they were used to justify the weakness of such reports as that of the Internal Security Section. In general the division and section heads of the Legal, Relocation, Operations, and Community Management Divisions were most cooperative in working out their reports.

One of the problems in compiling final reports sprang from the rapid turn-over in WRA personnel. Often a person responsible for the history of a section had been on

the project for only a year or even less. Where this situation prevailed, as, for example, in the Motor Maintenance Section, individuals in related sections who had some of the necessary information were consulted. Letters were sometimes written to former staff members soliciting their assistance in the preparation of the reports. This was true, for instance, of the Community Management Division where considerable help was received from a former Community Management Chief now in the Seattle WRA Office. For some sections there were records sufficient to fill in gaps in personal experience.

Adequate records were not available, however, to all sections for all periods. Documentary material was generally sparse for the first year of the project's history. When statistics were called for by the outline but could not be resurrected from the records, writers were encouraged to give samples, averages, or estimates, in the hope these would prove of some value. When a hiatus could not be avoided, ^{writers} were asked to explain in the report why it occurred and to suggest where in the Washington records the information could be found.

The actual writing of reports constituted an obstacle for a few people. Some of Minidoka's personnel had never been called upon to construct a history of an activity, and the magnitude of the task gave them a bad case of

"stage fright." In such cases some qualified person in the section or the Acting Reports Officer gave them help. It was found that by talking with such persons and taking notes on what they said more vital information could be gathered than they, themselves, could record.

A few members left the project without submitting personal narrative reports. Some of them resigned during the period when there was no Reports Officer. In a few instances a division head assured the Acting Reports Officer that persons in his division had given him personal narratives, but after they left it was discovered that these were only portions of section reports. This experience led to closer supervision by the Reports Office, so very few personal narratives required from Minidoka should be lacking.

As section reports were completed they were first submitted to the appropriate division head for his approval. After any changes he suggested had been made, the reports were turned over to the Acting Reports Officer. Here they were checked for clarity and accuracy. If further changes seemed advisable, they were always made in cooperation with the division head and the original writer. The aim of this procedure was not to improve the total style of the reports, but to make them sufficiently clear

and accurate so they could be used successfully by the historians in the Washington Office. No revising whatsoever was done on personal narrative reports. The Project Director also read a number of reports and made many helpful suggestions.

After all the checking and reworking was finished, reports were indexed and sent to Washington. At the suggestion of M. M. Tozier, Washington Chief of the Reports Division, a keyed system of indexing was adopted so reports could be transmitted to Washington as soon as possible. The last shipment will leave the project on February 9, 1946.

It is hoped sincerely that Minidoka's reporting will prove of some value to the historians of the Washington Office who write the history of the War Relocation Authority.