CONFERENCE WITH EVACUEES
TULE LAKE CENTER
11/1/43

X

The following took place while the committee was assembling for a meeting in Mr. Best's Office at 1:30 P.M. November 1.

Mr. Best received a telephone call reporting the incident at the hospital.

Mr. Best: What is going on at the hospital, George?

Kuratomi: I don't know.

Mr. Best: They have beaten up Dr. Pedicord, they are tearing down property. Dr. Pedicord is badly beaten up and they are going from one ward to another destroying property.

Kuratomi: We will stop it.

Mr. Best: They have beaten up Dr. Pedicord. That will have to be stopped right away.

Committee sent some men over to hospital.

Meeting in Mr. Best's Office at 1:30 PM November 1, 1943

Present:

Dillon S. Myer	ISamu Sugimoto	Herbert Hoshiko	Y. Kobayashi
R. B. Cozzens	George Kuratomi	Hijino Takada	Fred H. Mori
R. R. Best	Mits Kimura	Shizuo Kai	Ichiro Hayashi
C. E. Zimmer	Matsunaka Nakao	Kaichi Yamamoto	
S. Cahn	Satoshi Yoshiyama	Harry Nogawa	
Willard E. Schmidt	Senji Nodama	Isamu Ichida	
M. Lucas (Reporter)	Maso Hatano	T. Inouye	
Dr. P. A. Webber			

Kuratomi: I would like to ask about the notes of the meeting we held the other day. Is that ready?

Best: It will be ready. I have been away and Miss Lucas had a lot of work to do. Will get it as soon as it is prepared. Didn't you have a copy?

Kuratomi: Yes, but some questions were not answered and we are rather anxious to get it.

Best: I told you that as soon as I got back I intended to meet with you and discuss every point in question, and we would go to work on that, which I will do.

Kuratomi: It is very unfortunate that it has come to this point. However, there are some things being brought up. The residents have asked that these be transmitted to you. Here are some of the things. First of all we want you to know that we understand our position and status in here. We do not want to commit any riots or conduct oursleves in a disorderly manner. The people outside are here to express their dissatisfaction and anger about the Center administration.

Best: Just on the whole or do you charge on some specific thing?

Kuratomi: I do not know if you can call it a charge. I will explain those things later. We have been asked to bring up their grievances, requests and demands to you (I don't know whether you like the wrod "demand" but nevertheless that is the word that has been used to us personally) so that you may be able to get an over-all picture of how ill administered this Center is. This has been directed to Mr. Myer.

Best: I will appreciate it if you will direct everything to me. It is very unfortunate that Mr. Myer is visiting here during a time like this. I will appreciate it if you will direct everything to me and we will leave Mr. Myer out of it. I am here and I want you to put it all to me direct.

Kuratomi: I will be frank with you. I know how unfortunate it is that this had to happen when Mr. Myer was present. Why this came up today will be explained later. Among other things we want to ask you today that we be treated humanely from this Government, this Government of the United States. If the administration should continue to treat

us as it has been in the past, it is the feeling of the residents that we can report the whole affair to the Japanese Government through the Spanish Consel. These are not accusations or threats, they are facts to prove the things which we are bringing up now.

Best: You will make specific charges, I Presume.

Kuratomi: Yes, later. We believe the American democratic principles are at stake. The Congress of the United States should have an appropriation sufficient to gare for the welfare and well being of the center residents. However, they have been insufficient and there have been mismanagements permitted by Caucasian personnel to greatly jeopardize the true intentions of the United States Government towards Japanese evacuees in the Center. If such conditions are allowed to continue to exist the democratic quality of the United States will be greatly injured. The caucasian personnel at this Center, with few exceptions, are known to be hostile to Japanese evacuees. Mr. Best has failed to keep faith with us. He has failed us within two days after promising to cooperate with us for the improvement of the center living conditions. By his deed and acts he has lost complete faith with the center residents. What Mr. Best says today is not to be applied for tomorrow. His inhumane treatment can be best illustrated by one incident which occurred very recently as this Center. As all of us know, some 29 persons were injured in a recent auto mishap and the residents still feel that the WRA has been responsible for the accident. Mr. Best as ProjectDirector seemed very indifferent. He showed no concern over the accident apparently because not once has he expressed his regrets. When Mr. Kashima died, as a result of the accident, the Center residents decided to make his funeral a center-wide affair. Mr. Best refused to grant the residents the use of the outdoor stage or the auditorium, the reason being that Mrs. Kashima, widow of the deceased, did not wish such an affair. He refused to send a representative to the funeral for the same reason. When Mr. Ernst, project director at Topaz, can send a telegram of condolence, why couldn't Mr. Best do the same inasmuch as he is right here. If further verification is necessary we are prepared to call in Mrs. Kashima. Deplorable conditions at the hospital have caused the ire of the center residents. It is a wonder beyond our imagination how the residents of this center in the past let such conditions exist at the base hospital. The residents feel that the WRA should be held responsible for the ability and efficiency of the caucasian doctors and nurses sent to this Center.

Best: They haven't stopped over at the hospital. Dr. Pedicord has been beaten very severely and is asking for military police. What would you boys do in a case like that.

Kuratomi: I don't know.

Best: What would you think about it?

Kuratomi: Maybe if I read some more you can see some of the reasons.

Myer: I think we need to know about this now.

Kuratomi: Some of the reasons?

Myer: Not the reasons. We need to know who is going to be responsible for stopping this situation at the hospital right now.

Kuratomi: Some of the boys have gone over to stop it now. They came of their own accord. We didn't know they were going to do that. I think they will stop everything if we shall continue to talk this over.

Myer: No question of talking it over now. We can't sit here and let property be destoryed and Dr. Pedicord's wife be jeopardized.

Best: Something has got to be done right now.

Kuratomi: Shall we wait?

Best: Yes, we will wait till it is stopped over there. That has got to stop.

Kuratomi: Will send some more boys over.

(waited for report from hospital)

Kuratomi: Here are some questions I would like to ask that were not answered in the last conference, namely; What would be the status of these Center residents by the American Government and by the Japanese Government from the interpretation of International Law? Then, there is a demand from the Center residents that this Center should be designated for all those persons who have intention of going back to Japan when the opportunity presents itself. Can you answer me those questions, Mr. Best?

Best: Will you read those questions again, George?

Kuratomi: (Reread questions)

Best: If you mean are you considered as prisoners of war, I can answer that. You are not prisoners of war.

Kuratomi: We are called "segregants" Is there any other name applicable to the status of the center residents other than the word "segregant"?

Best: If there is I don't know it.

Kuratomi: Mr. Myer?

Myer: Evacuees. We simply called this Center the Tule Lake Center because it is not a relocation center. It is, as you know, for those people who want to return to Japan and other people who will not indicate full loyalty to the American Government. It is not an internment camp, such as the Department of Justice has jurisdiction over. It is not a prisoner of war camp. We expect, if it is agreeable to you people, to carry on a peaceable operation at this center and carry out the same policies, insofar as they can apply, as in other relocation centers.

Myer: That is our intention if it is feasible. The events today indicate that we may have some difficulty in doing that.

Kuratomi: In regard to the second question. The residents would have this Center designated for all those who have intention of going back to Japan sooner or later. Would there be some solution to that?

Myer: Can't give you a final answer to that. It will have to be worked out on the basis of what is feasible from the standpoint of what is available in the way of a physical program to work that out. This is something that you and we, the WRA, have to work out. If it is not satisfactory we will look into it. I cannot make any commitment until the problem is studied more carefully.

Kuratomi: It is a possibility?

Myer: There is a possibility to anything that lies within the scope of my domain to decide. Nothing more than that.

Kuratomi: You wouldn't stay there is a possibility?

Myer: No. Because I don't want to imply any promises that I can't carry out. I want to be very careful to have the policies understood. I don't commit myself if I can't produce. I don't want to do that until we can study the problem. We have to know how many people are involved--who should stay here and who can go somewhere else and a lot of other things have to be considered.

Kuratomi: Have you taken into note the friction between the people who have expressed their desire to go back to Japan and those who are still loyal to this country. There are still quite a lot in this Center at the present time.

Myer: Certainly. Those who are considered loyal to this country will still have an opportunity to be considered for movement elsewhere. No question about that.

Kuratomi: How soon do you think the process of segregation can be completed?

Myer: I don't think it possible to estimate. Things are in a state of flux. We will have to get a program in order. I haven't been here long enough to know what the situation is. You people haven't given me an opportunity to talk to the people who have the records.

Kuratomi: Can you give us an answer before you leave?

Myer: I don't know if I can give an answer before I leave. It may take quite some time to study the situation. When you are dealing with thousands of people, in order not to do an injustice to the people it takes time to work out a procedure.

Kuratomi: Here is a question I would like to ask. It was announced the day after our conference with Mr. Best that all the farmers were terminated as of October 16, or 19, I am not sure about the date. (19th confirmed) and consequently the farmers are very furious over the fact that they were more or less terminated without previous warning so to speak, because there has been a statement that has Mr. Kallam's signature to the effect that these farmers did not go on strike. They merely stopped work until negotiations were completed. When we made the announcement over the result of our conference with Mr. Best, the farmers naturally felt they would be permitted to go back to work. However, just before they started back to work a notice was already published that they were terminated as of October 19 so the farm committee came to see Mr. Zimmer and tried to talk with him so that misunderstandings would be clarified. However, unfortunately for everyone concerned, the farmers request to return to work was refused by Mr. Zimmer because, he stated, an Administrative Instruction No. 29, was that it, Mr. Zimmer?

Zimmer: 27

Kuratomi cannot be altered. That was the statement wasn't it, Mr. Zimmer?

Zimmer: Right.

Kuratomi: The people who worked in the packing sheds were terminated because there was no work for them. That statement is natural, however, they were given termination without at least a week's advance warning. Consequently, they are very much dissatisfied and if my memory is correct Mr. Best promised during our conference, that he would talk things over with the farm committee which would be chosen from the people to talk and plan for the future farm at this Center.

Best: For next year, why don't you add.

Kuratomi: Now the question is what was the reason for terminating the entire farm workers without advance notice?

Best: You want that answered now?

Kuratomi: Sure

Best: You were given every notice that if you did not go to work we would have to dispose of the crop. Your committee sitting in this room stated that you were not interested in harvesting this crop. Isn't that right?

Kuratomi: That is true.

Best: When you represented all the farmers?

Kuratomi: That is right.

Best: There isn't any farm now and there wasn't any farm from that time on.

Kuratomi: But that isn't the way we were terminated at Topaz. If a person

Cahn: We don't have to give a week's notice for termination. On this project it has been the custom to give a week's notice if the administration terminated a person because there wasn't enough work to do or if the evacuee was terminating. Either way. It is sort of a gentlemen's agreement but is not a regulation. When people are away from work without an excused absence he can be terminated without notice. A penalty of an additional day for each day of unexcused absence can be imposed. However, this additional penalty was not imposed. It could have been. They were terminated for refusal to work.

Kuratomi: Mr. Kallam's statement mentioned the fact that this stoppage of work was not to be considered a strike.

Cahn: It wasn't considered a strike. If it had been a strike there would have been a conclusion to be reached between the evacuees and the administration and they would have been carried on the payroll until the issue was settled. This was not a strike. There was no issue at stake. They just did not go to work. No one came to see anyone to say why they weren't at work. If you refuse to work you can be terminated and penalized an additional day for each day you don't show up. Of course there are many factors that can keep a person from working--illness, or other emergencies at home and there is the possibility that there would not be an opportunity to report the absence. We will wait five days for notice. We waited the five days. In this case did not penalize for special reasons. These people were terminated as of the date Mr. Best indicated there would be no harvesting of the farm.

Kuratomi: Of course there is this point too. That in the past Mr. Best repeatedly stated he would not recognize any representatives of any committee or any organization.

Best: What! I never said that.

Kuratomi: That has been said. Best? A statement was published in the Tulean Dispatch that I would and wanted to meet with a representative committee, but they never came.

Kuratomi: After the statement was published the committee realized that you do entertain or receive representatives of any committee. Therefore they came to get assurance that the statement was correct and reported to the Center representatives. Until that time no one came to see you for the reason just mentioned. I have enough people here to verify the fact that you wouldn't see a committee before that.

Best: George, are you still referring to our first conversation?

Kuratomi: One of them.

Best: Are you referring to the statement I made to you the first time you were in here?

Kuratomi: Yes. Would you like to repat it? Do you remember what you said?

Best: Now I understand. That is where they got it. I definitely told you the very first time that you arrived that I would make no public statement at that time. You are the only ones I told it to. You know why I said it.

Kuratomi: Don't know what your intentions were behind saying that.

(short discussion in Japanese)

Kuratomi: The members of the farm committee said that the first time they found out that you accept representatives of any group was known to them on the 21st of October. Therefore, he feels that if the crews are to be terminated on the 19th they were, in a sense, terminated prior to the time they found out that you do recognize representative committees. They couldn't negotiate with you because of the statement they already had and didn't feel they could come unless some official announcement could be made from you that you do accept representative committees. They didn't come because they didn't want to be penalized for something they did not intend. That is the answer for not coming to see you before that date.

Best: Get along to the rest of the questions. I can't do anything about it because they didn't come in. We tried to have people come out in the open about it. Couldn't get anyone to come in. I asked them to, but nobody came up here. At the time you came up here they didn't want any farm. Get on to the next question.

Kuratomi: I think that everybody agrees that the Caucasian staff does not understand the Japanese. All these representatives here would agree to the statement right now that this whole incident started from the fact that the Administrative personnel, as a whole, do not know the psychology of Japanese people, that is you mention these things more or less from the standpoint of laws, rules and regulations of the WRA or any other agency. We desire to transmit your interpretations or your answers to the people and I am sure that the people will not be satisfied with your answers because that is something a little different as far as psychology is concerned. I for one know that if we are to make such a report as this to the people outside, we as a committee, cannot very well guarantee what the reaction might be of the people waiting outside. I want you to give me an answer to this question in regard to the farm situation that I can transmit to the people outside.

Myer: I want to say this about the farm question. I have been in constant touch with Mr. Best on this problem. He had crops to be harvested. I authorized him to wait a few days, which he did, to see whether or not folks would go to work. We took the chance of having the crops frozen. No one came to discuss the situation or to negotiate with him for several days as I understand it. When you folks said you didn't want the crops I had Mr. Best make arrangements for getting it harvested. Such arrangements were made only as far as this particular crop is concerned. Mr. Best has indicated he is ready to talk about future crops next year. He had to look ahead. He did that on the authority of the natioanl director, I want you to know that. From the standpoint of public relations and from the standpoint of future needs we had to go ahead and get it done. That is all there is to say on it.

Kuratomi: At any rate, we here as a representative committee, feel that since this was brought up it has become a problem not only among the farmers but it has become a problem for the concern of every single individual on the Center. Therefore, as soon as this conference with you gentlemen is completed we will make a report to the public to that effect. However, are you prepared to meet the representatives from the packing shed and from the farm crew at a later date to discuss minor problems with them.

Best: We will meet with any group, George, at any time and discuss any problems. I have assured you of that before.

(Kuratomi to Kai in Japanese)(Others in Japanese)

Kuratomi: It is the unanimous opinion of the representatives that if you are willing and prepared to make such an agreement or such arrangements with the farm group or packing shed crews at a later date to discuss minor problems with them that this will be worked out.

Best: We discussed this with you the other day. I thought you understood it.

Myer: May I make another statement?

Best: Surely, go ahead.

Myer: It is my understanding and I think I do understand the situation, George, that your committee discussed this with Mr. Best before and indicated that you did not want the crops harvested, that you did not want to raise vegetables to be shipped out and did not want anything shipped in. There is a food shortage and there are people dependent upon that crop. Mr. Best understood me and I understand Mr. Best. We took action to have the crop harvested. I want that made clear on the record.

Kuratomi: The people in the Center felt that they would harvest the crops necessary for this Center.

Best: You said you didn't want the crop. You said no. Definitely no.

Kuratomi: If you will look back on the record you will find that we said this: The people of this Center are willing to harvest and raise a crop for this Center.

Best: I said we would work with you to get a good agricultural committee to start working this winter so we would know what plans to make for next year. This is exactly what I said.

Kuratomi: Will you meet with the farm crew with the status that they are designated?

Best: We will meet them regardless of their status. Status doesn't mean anything to me. I will discuss any problem at any time with your group or any other group.

Kuratomi: Then the people here--I want you to get this straight, Mr. Best--the people here in this Center were notified of the conference we had with you and an announcement came out the very following day. The people want that statement retracted. It is not so much from the standpoint of money but the principle involved of having an announcement made the day following after we had such an agreeable conference with you. If the statement is retracted we could make a report to the people. If we make a report as it is now the people will not be satisfied. I don't expect you can understand that from a Japanese psychological standpoint. I assure you that I am trying to make you understand what I am talking about because it carries very heavy weight.

Best: Can we speak frankly?

Kuratomi: Of course, Mr. Best. I am speaking frankly.

Best: To use terms that I can understand, if I do not retract the statement you will lose face; if I do retract it, ~~you~~ I will lose face. Is that it?

Kuratomi: I was not thinking about that necessarily. When we represent any body, we talk for the people we represent. We have to work for the benefit and feeling of the people and we are thinking about them. What I want you to understand is that if you should agree to this about retracting this statement which came out the day you were not here then the people's feeling would calm down. I want you to understand that feeling.

Best: Wasn't that a true statement I put in the paper? That is what you are talking about isn't it?

Kuratomi: The statement to the effect that farm workers were terminated as of October 19.

Best: I didn't publish anything like that.

Kuratomi: It had your signature on it but it came out the day you were not here.

Cahn: He is talking about the statement regarding the badges.

Best: Oh, I thought he was talking about something different.

Cahn: As a result of termination we asked them to turn in their badges by a certain date or pay 50¢ if they didn't turn them in.

Myer: May I ask a question? I am a little confused. It is not quite clear what statement it is that Mr. Best made that you would like to have retracted.

Kuratomi: The statement that came out about badges.

Best: About badges? I don't know what you are talking about. I will have to see that.

Myer: May I make a suggestion? I certainly don't see any objection to holding that up until you have had a chance for negotiation.

Best: That never came to me evidently. It probably was sent out by the payroll section or the employment office.

Cahn: The statement probably was not interpreted correctly. It has been the policy of the placement office since the beginning of this project to turn in the badges upon termination or pay 50¢. We were running close to the end of the payroll period and the termination slips had to be prepared and processed so we asked that the badges be turned in by a certain date or the 50¢ be paid.

Kuratomi: I think Mr. Myer has the right idea.

Myer: I want to make it clear. It doesn't make any change in policy if the badges are held until you have had a chance to meet with the farm committee.

Kuratomi: If you had talked with the committee and then put the notice out that would make sense. I don't know if you get my feeling. I am trying to explain it the best I can. The fact that the notice came out before the farm committee had a chance to talk with you angered the people. I am not talking for myself, I am talking for the people.

Myer: May I make another comment. I am sure Mr. Best understands and I understand that you felt you were representing the whole group, including the farm group.

Kuratomi: The farm workers felt that the problem was alittle bit too big for them to decide so naturally they brought the problem to the center committee which was chosen from one person from each block. After the center committee discussed this with the residents they decided that they didn't want to harvest a crop beyond center consumption. Therefore we made that statement when we came over here. However, after the conference we had with you, Mr. Best, it was decided to turn the farm problem back to the sub-committee which represented the farm people to talk and discuss with you the minor problems as they came up. If they had talked with you before the notice came out it would have been no problem. If you could retract that statement until after the farm group talks with you there will be no problem.

Best: We are not going to delay the payroll.

Kuratomi: That is the point I am trying to emphasize. I am trying to tell you what the Japanese psychology viewpoint it. Some minor things seem important to you. It is not the standpoint of money that they want the statement retracted but from the standpoint of principle.

Best: I certainly have no objection to leaving the point on badges until after we talk the whole matter over.

Kuratomi: Termination date and badges?

Myer: The termination date is a very definite thing. I am sorry we can't do anything about that but we can hold off on the badges until the matter is talked over further.

Kuratomi: Here is the thing I want you to understand. We are not so much concerned about the pay. If the workers had been terminated on the 19th or 20th it would make no difference if the workers had talked with Mr. Best first and knew what the date was. The farm workers would have had knowledge of the procedure after the meeting so that they would not have felt so bad. That the announcement came before the farm committee talked to Mr. Best caused this problem from the farm crew. That is the point I am trying to emphasize; I am not telling you to change the date. It would be the 19th, 23rd, or 25th or anything for that matter.

Myer: Let me make this clear. We cannot put the people back on the payroll when there isn't any work to do at the moment. We can wait on the matter of badges until we have a chance to look at the problem together but I can't under our government procedure put people back on the payroll when they are not on the job.

Kuratomi: You don't understand. They don't want to be put back on the payroll when they aren't on the job. As long as they were terminated on the 19th that would be all right if they had known it before they were terminated. They don't care what date it was if they had known before.

Myer: That stands. I have already indicated that I think it perfectly all right to hold the badges and let this be the last of that phase of the story until we get a chance to talk to the farm committee.

Kuratomi: Then the statement will be retracted until after we have had a chance to talk it over.

Cozzens: It means that the badges will be held up but they will still be removed from the payroll as of the 19th.

Myer: It means just that, and they can't be put back.

Kuratomi: I am not talking about when they were terminated. My point is, as I said time and time again we are objecting from a Japanese psychological standpoint. If this announcement to the effect that they were to be terminated on the 19th were to be held up we don't care if they were terminated on the 20th or any other date. The only thing was that if the farm committee which was working on this case had a chance to talk with you and you named the date and then the notice came out after they met with you there would be no problem. I don't know if you get what I mean.

Best: You can't do that on any employment. It is the practice to terminate people when they stop working in any business. You might not get to talk to a person for a long time after he quit working. It is a mechanical detail of employment. If a man never came to talk to you then they would be on the payroll forever. It just can't be done that way.

Kuratomi: Are you planning to continue such a practice in the future.

Best: I am probably all mixed up on the point you are trying to make. But I will tell you this--we have a very established employment procedure, however, we are going--as I told you the other day--to have a better employment procedure. Mr. Cahn is very much interested in that and is working on that now. If there is anything in our present employment practices that doesn't meet with your approval, suggestions will be considered.

Kuratomi: That is not what I am talking about. It is the principle of it that is involved not the terminating procedure. I am talking about the principle.

Myer: When you are talking about the future is it as to whether the people will have an opportunity to talk to Mr. Best in the future before terminating.

Kuratomi: That is still another point. If the farm committee had met with Mr. Best and had understood that these workers were being terminated on the 19th there would be no problem. Instead of that when it came out these people didn't know anything about it. That is what I am trying to get at. I don't think you quite understand my point.

Zimmer: Here is what George means. If this statement were retracted till the farm committee were to meet then you don't care what kind of a statement comes out, but to have it come out before the meeting they think advantage was taken of the committee. Is that the idea George?

Kuratomi: That is the point, yes. It is a very important point too.

Best: There isn't anything very difficult about solving that problem in the future.

Zimmer: Nothing difficult about solving it now. It stands whether it is retracted or not, but if that statement could be retracted until this committee met with Mr. Best and then came out it would be okay?

Kuratomi: That is the right idea.

Best: No reason why it can't be done that way.

Myer: I want you to understand they will not be put back on the payroll.

Kuratomi: That is clear now.

Webber: Couldn't you put it to the effect that it was a misunderstanding.

Cahn: That is not so. It was not a misunderstanding. The regulations provide that persons are automatically terminated 5 days after they do not report for work. An additional day of penalty can be added for each day over that. The penalty was not given. The Project Director has the right to remove the prejudice if sufficient reason is given for not having worked.

Myer: Just say for the record that you will withhold the statement until after Mr. Best has had a conference with the committee.

Cahn: I just want it understood that it was not a misunderstanding.

(received report from hospital at this point)

Best: They are still having trouble at the hospital. What are you going to do about it?

Myer: Let us stop this discussion until that sort of thing is stopped. We can't go on under that kind of a situation.

(Mr. Schmidt and an evacuee go to check up on hospital situation)(Reported under control)

Kuratomi: We are sorry about the interruptions.

Best: How much longer are they going to carry on the demonstration outside.

Kuratomi: It is not a demonstration.

Best: What would you call it?

Kuratomi: There has been no trouble at all. They are waiting for the answers to these questions.

(returned with report from hospital that situation under control)

Myer: Couldn't we move right along. My time is limited and we are going to have a lot of business to take care of.

Kuratomi: Are any Japanese persons, that is loyal Japanese persons, coming to harvest the crop here?

Myer: May I answer that? We are going to take care of the harvesting of the crop outside and I have no comment to make now. You folks did not want to do it so we arranged to have it done outside and I cannot make any comment. In view of the decision we will have to keep that as a separate issue. I am sorry.

Kuratomi: The last two nights there has been merchandise taken out of the warehouse from this Center. Do you know the reason?

Best: We might take merchandise out any time. We are accountable for it and we can ship it out or we can ship it in any time we want to.

Kuratomi: We are interested in the merchandise taken out because of the fact that one mess hall couldn't receive their share of the goods that were to be distributed.

Best: Let's get along. I will set down for the records that we will meet with any mess hall committee on those things. We haven't any records here and can't discuss those things at this time. If you want to get into details it takes time, George.

Kuratomi: We can't make such a report. They want a definite report and I doubt if that answer will do.

Best: It is our property and we are accountable for that property. We can do what we want to with it.

Kuratomi: Because of the fact that some merchandise was taken out of this Center some mess halls suffered a shortage.

Best: I would want to get into that thoroughly. I would want to find out exactly what was supposed to be delivered and was not and what mess halls were short. I want to know that.

Kuratomi: When you do find out what happened will you take proper action?

Best: What would be proper action. Maybe I don't know what the proper action is. I certainly will see that all staple commodities as far as the Quartermaster can supply will be kept here. I will see that the mess department keeps those things in here and supplies them to the mess halls.

Kuratomi: I am not satisfied with your answer as yet. We have to make a definite statement as to why this food was taken out and why the mess halls suffered.

Myer: Mr. Best gave you his answer. I am sorry but there will be no report why the food was taken out. I don't feel that it is necessary to report every movement made. If you request an investigation regarding such a case and if it is proven that they were short, proper action will be taken. We will have to wait and see the results of an investigation. I am sorry to say we cannot be in position to report to the community on every movement of trucks. The residents are supposed to have food and if they don't get any investigations will be made. We don't have time to go into all those details now. Proper action will be taken as far as we can do that, George.

Kuratomi: There are incidents in the hospital too. Dr. Pedicord made two appendicitis patients wait until it was almost too late and this has happened in the last week's time. One person is suffering from meningitis. This man took some of the children out on a picnic some place and one of the children struck his eye with a stick. He couldn't bear the pain, consequently he went to the hospital and the caucasian doctor over there said it was nothing serious and no need for him to worry and for him to go on home. It pained so he insisted on being examined. It was of no avail. He had to pick one of the evacuee doctors over there to examine him but these doctors, as you know, are

subordinate to the caucasian doctors and have very little authority, almost no authority in fact, and they have to get every little detail from the caucasians. The chief doctor tried to see if any case of meningitis was apparent but before he got to it they told him to stop such an examination so he went back and he still couldn't bear the pain. Then he came back to the hospital again, and the doctors do not know whether this man will survive. Another case here in the hospital. One mother went over there because she had a baby and the doctor, without taking proper precautions, gave her a couple of morphine injections. As a result the baby came out dead. It was a stillborn baby. There are many cases such as that to prove the inefficiency and indifference of caucasian doctors in this hospital. It was decided by the evacuee doctors in this center that if such doctors are to stay in this Center and more or less see people die from day to day they cannot stand to see such a thing exist. So it was decided last night to ask the resignation of each and every caucasian doctor and each and every caucasian nurse who feel so superior that some of them believe they know more about medicine that the Japanese doctors who have had big practices and lots of responsibility. It has been said that some of the caucasian doctors employed here don't even have licenses to practice medicine. Dr. Pedicord allows only one ambulance to be in operation on Sunday for 18,000 people. He takes the keys to the other ambulances and has forbidden the ambulances to be driven. You must be aware of the complications which might arise from such an instance. We feel that the request and demands from the hospital evacuee staff to remove the caucasian doctors and nurses from the hospital should be done as soon as possible for the well being of the people in this Center.

Myer: Are you through?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Myer: In the very first place we are willing to have any suggestions that you folks have. You can sit down and talk it over with Mr. Best. As I told you before we can't operate on the basis of demands. We are willing to take criticisms from your group and check and investigate them and take action accordingly. We are always willing to have criticisms and suggestions but not demands.

Kuratomi: These are the criticisms by the evacuee nurses and doctors.

Myer: We will be very glad to check into it. In view of what has happened over at the hospital today it will have to be checked very thoroughly and will take some time. It will have to be checked and investigated.

Kuratomi: Whatever might have taken place over there and to Dr. Pedicord in particular might be justified, and some of the boys couldn't wait until the conference was over.

Myer: We are not going to argue about that now.

Kuratomi: We have a man here who can tell you what happened in his family.

Fukahara: I am Block Manager of Block 16. Sunday night at 7:00 o'clock I had a report from my sister-in-law requesting an ambulance because her child was burned with hot water. I rushed to the phone which is only 35 or 40 feet away and an ambulance came and he was taken directly to the hospital and given some kind of a treatment on the outside and bandaged and put in a room and left there until morning without being seen by another doctor and when questioned by the nurses about his welfare was told by a caucasian doctor, Dr. Marks, that it wasn't anything serious. A Japanese doctor was called in and there were four looking on when they injected plasma, or whatever it is called. They could find only one container of it, which is not sufficient to save a child. They worked desparately but he died this morning at 2:00 o'clock. If the burn was as serious as that why didn't the caucasian doctor take care of him between 7:15 at night until early in the morning when the Japanese doctors took over.

Myer: I am certainly sorry about the baby.

Fukahara: It should be the responsibility of the WRA or Dr. Pedicord to take full blame for what happened as far as I can see.

Committee: That's right.

Myer: We will go into the matter thoroughly. This case and any other case you may have will be investigated thoroughly. We can't do it in the face of demands. I think you folks are interested in have a peaceful center. The WRA is interested in giving it to you. But we can't operate on the basis of demands and scenes of the type we have here today. We just can't operate like that. Generally speaking, the record has been pretty good on medical service. We will go into that matter, however, just as soon as we can get to it. We can't go into it today. I am no judge of that particular type of thing. I will be glad to have all the facts and I am not going to make any commitment until I get them. A judge never makes a decision until he gets both sides.

Kuratomi: This is not a complaint. We don't get anywhere with complaints. Consequently, it is turning into demands. The people want the immediate removal of all the caucasian doctors and nurses and we want a definite answer today.

Myer: That is impossible because I have been on the project only 6 or 7 hours and haven't even had a chance to look around.

Kuratomi: Let me say this much. This has been a request from the evacuee doctors and nurses that you arrange to have all the caucasian doctors and nurses removed from this hospital for the reason that they don't want them and the people have the same feeling. Let me say this, Mr. Myer, I don't want to see any violence, however, unless you don't remove these people I have mentioned from the hospital until such a time as an investigation has been held I cannot guarantee the actions of the people. This is not

a threat. I cannot stop these people from swarming over to the hospital and getting after the doctors. I don't want to see any violence take place but I cannot guarantee what the people will do if we have to give them this answer.

Myer: I have never taken any action under threat or duress.

Kuratomi: It is not a threat, it is a fact. I am just explaining the actual tension.

Myer: I realize what exists. Someone is responsible for that. The people are pretty well whipped up. I am sure the tension would be much greater if I made concessions without going into the facts. I cannot make concessions without going into the facts of the matter. I am very sorry that is the situation. In view of what has happened at the hospital today I cannot take action until we investigate the matter. That is final.

Kuratomi: Do you want us to make the statement just as you said it.

Myer: You may state it as you wish. I hope you will give them the facts. Tell the people that I am here. I hope to go quietly about my work looking into the problems of the Center with the evacuees and the administrative staff. This is my first trip since the segregation movements started. The movements are not yet complete. We hope to get a completely representative group of the Tule Lake Center to come up here to discuss their problems. You folks are serving in a temporary capacity until a truly representative committee has been chosen. On matters of immediate concern we will go into the matter. I am sorry but I will not make any commitments that require action of removal of any personnel without seeing the other side.

Fukahara: I don't belong on this committee. I am so grieved at the loss of my nephew that I wanted to speak to you so you can look into the matter. However, I am not being a party to any demands. I worked under Mr. Shirrell and Mr. Coverley and I don't want to make any trouble. I just wanted you to know the facts. I will be glad to be excused. I feel out of place here.

Kuratomi: Remember what I said. This is not my personal feeling or personal opinion. We are here to represent the people and so speak for the people and you might see this thing actually take place, I cannot say.

Myer: I don't think you or any member of this committee have any ulterior intentions and I certainly don't think you want anyone here asking me to make a commitment on ten minutes notice on a matter as grave as you have presented. I just couldn't do it.

Kuratomi: How soon can you make it.

Myer: I will give you an answer just as soon as I can. First I have to get the facts together. If I can find time while I am here I will, but I can't promise you that I can get all the facts together in that time.

Kuratomi: Let me ask then that these caucasian nurses and doctors refrain from coming into the hospital for the time being. This is not a demand but a reasonable request. I don't think it is going to hurt anybody. We are asking you to do this because we don't want any violence.

Myer: I am not ready to do that under the circumstances. I have to get all the information together and know all the facts. I am sorry I can't commit myself now. We will go into the matter and give it further consideration.

Kuratomi: Mr. Peck who is the head of Mess Management in this Center is responsible for making allotments of food to each mess hall. The goods were never brought in according to the menus. Many items such as milk and eggs are absolutely necessary to the growth of children. Before I go into this Mess Management statement and its facts and figures Mr. Sugimoto can present it for further clarification.

Sugimoto: These are the findings the food investigation committee gave me. This was necessitated by the fact that when we came in, the segregants felt that the food was qualitatively and quantitatively below that of the other Centers. They waited a few days but the food continued to be worse than it was in September so with the records existing right here in the Tule Lake Center these facts were investigated. During the month of September the cost of food per person per day was 27¢ a day including the food products produced within this Center. I think you signed the administrative instruction, Mr. Myer, regarding 31¢ per person for whatever food products were consumed over and above the food produced at this Center. But the way this food was computed in September it was all in one, with the amount of 27¢ per person per day including the food produced here. The average cost of subsistence on October 3 which was an average day one record was available and at that time the average was found to be 27¢ per person per day including the food produced here. Going back to the above statement, during the month of September vegetables and eggs and farm produce raised in this Center was well over 11,000 dollars and this is equivalent to about 3¢ per person per day. That included in the 27¢ makes the cost per person per day about 24¢. The commodities brought and shipped in from the outside by WRA are figured according to the OPA meat ration system to feed 14,700 persons. By computing the points at 95,359 it was short rationed to the evacuees and over rationed to the caucasian personnel mess hall, which is in operation here, to the extent of 34,133 points, so there was enough shipped in to be distributed to the people in this center but was evidently over rationed to the project employees and 168,00 points of processed food was bought and shipped into this project where only 127,00 points were needed but the funny part of it is that it was over rationed to the extent of 7325 points to the caucasian mess hall and under rationed to the evacuee mess halls according to the existing records in the warehouse. And another item, between the time of September 17 and September 30

there is a record of 1880 pounds of beef being dumped for reason of being unfit for human consumption and we thought this beef was to be government inspected. Investigation reveals that the caucasian mess hall not only gets some of the project meat but takes the choicest part of it. They get the cuts such as T-bone, rib steaks and tenderloin steaks. That part goes to the personnel mess hall and the evacuee mess halls get what is left. All of these items are contributing factors about which these evacuees in this camp are complaining, because they are not getting their proper share of food that comes into the project.

Myer: Let me say that if it proves to be true that you are not getting the food that you are supposed to be getting, that will be corrected immediately. Furthermore, proper action will be taken to have someone operate it. I know there are problems in mess management. We are investigating them. It will be necessary to go into the matter thoroughly. If you have any facts that will help Mr. Cahn or Mr. Best they will be delighted to have them. Let me say it is the responsibility of the WRA to provide the proper food. If the evacuee mess halls are not getting the points because someone else is, that will be corrected. I hope we can get this matter taken care of quickly. I am just as much interested in it as you are. I want to say one thing, that the developments within the last week or two within this Center may affect the immediate supply as it will take some time to get some of the products of the type that is produced in other Centers. That will have to be taken into consideration in looking out for immediate needs. I want to repeat it is the policy to trade with other centers to provide food in the quantity and quality necessary. Without that we will have to wait and get what food is available from the Quartermaster. I am sure that Mr. Best and Mr. Cahn are just as interested in getting those facts because we have a record to take care of. We will be pleased to have any information that we can so that we can get into it and get this straightened out soon.

Kuratomi: If we are called in to clarify these problems we will be glad to furnish any information we have and follow along as food is the concern of all the people. We are not asking for the impossible. We are not asking for things that can't be had outside.

Myer: There is no argument about that between us. We are not going into that now. Do you want to say anything Mr. Best or Mr. Cahn?

MR. CAHN:

All these things we will clarify, when going into detail.

We have been working on it for several weeks--checking ration points, taking inventory, and renting space in Klamath Falls. We had our own inspection of meat in the last 30 days. We had a government inspector--for the first time--inspecting all meat and vegetables that came into this Center. It is true they did not approve all the meat, but the meat that was rejected was sent back to the point of origin.

MR. KURATOMI:

Going on to the question. As a request from the colonists, we want you to promise us that uniform porches, and latrinal service improvements be made at once; dust control of the road should be attempted immediately. This has been more or less of a repetition. We have asked you for them before.

MR. BEST:

We agreed on that the other day.

MR. KURATOMI:

What later attempts have been made?

MR. BEST:

We agreed that you would have a committee and we would try to devise a standard porch and try to compute the total number of porches from that figure and prepare an estimate of what the entire program would cost, and if approval could be secured for lumber, nails, and other materials going in there from the WRB. We said that we would consider it. We told you that the other day.

MR. KURATOMI:

Many units are still without brooms, buckets, mops, and other essentials. They still lack privacy, because the walls are up on one side only. The women cannot dress without being seen. There are still no closets. We are still waiting for buckets and brooms. This is my personal matter. I am not going to wait until the administration furnishes me with all these essentials. I am going to keep a record of it. If Mr. Myer wants to see all this, he can come down. It is a mess and I don't see how the people in responsible positions could be so indifferent to the welfare of the colonists.

It is a request from the Center residents that at all times, six ambulances should be in operation. This will be more or less of a repetition. Nevertheless, I will bring it up.

MR. KURATOMI: (Cont'd.)

The Center residents want you to recognize a Central Organization to report for the colonists on all matters concerning the welfare of the residents. They also want you to recognize various committees which will work with the administration on some of the functionings of the Center. They also want you to promise that the hospital be supervised more humanely and that the Japanese doctors in this Center be given equal authority as those of the Caucasian doctors. As you all know, employment in this Center is very grave, and the people want unemployment compensations made available to all the workers who find no employment, just as soon as possible.

Going back a little, what steps are being taken to furnish each unit with sufficient essentials?

MR. BEST:

I couldn't tell you. I don't know.

MR. GAHN:

We had a quantity of brooms on hand and issued those. We didn't have the buckets; we couldn't buy them, but I do think that Mr. Black has gone into the matter and has issued the brooms we had on hand; we had 20,000 at the time. I don't know if Pete Zimmer could tell you more about the buckets.

MR. KURATOMI:

There is an order out from the Civic Organization to all block managers, saying that no buckets, etc., were to be issued to the residents.

MR. GAHN:

I repeat, the instruction was to issue all brooms on hand. As I said, we had 20,000 in stock. We had no buckets and we couldn't buy any today any place. They are just not for sale.

MR. KURATOMI:

What do you want us to do?

MR. GAHN:

As I say, Mr. Black is working on that problem, and also on what you can use in place of it.

MR. KURATOMI:
Well, who is responsible for putting us in these centers?

MR. BEST:
Let's not go into that now.

MR. CAHN:
I am only discussing the problem as it arose at that time. Orders were given to issue them. I know that the problem has not been dropped and that they are working on it.

MR. KURATOMI:
We have been told to leave the brooms and buckets in Jerome, because they would be reissued here, but nothing has been done about it. I certainly think that the administration should do everything within its power to acquire these for us, because I don't see how you gentlemen could be so indifferent. I wish you were in our position.

MR. CAHN:
The assumption that we have been indifferent is not so. The problem was approached by the Community Management Division here immediately. I know they have taken steps to secure the necessary items for cleanliness and sanitation.

MR. KURATOMI:
About these units: They have only plaster boards on one side. You could hear people talking and you have to whisper all day long, and the embarrassment to us is beyond words. Many are without closets and the women cannot change their clothes without being seen from the outside. No attempts are being made to rectify these conditions. I believe it is about time something should be done, at least to show that the administration is sincere about the welfare of the residents here.

PETE ZIMMER:
Do you realize that all partitions that are put in during the day, disappear by night?

MR. KURATOMI:
Let me ask you this. Suppose you are put in a unit with nothing in there; wouldn't you do something like that?

MR. ZIMMER:

But can't you see that we can't gain on it at all? Housing tells us that this unit could be partitioned today. The partition is put in, but by tomorrow, it's not there. It's gone. Somebody else has it. I would much rather they took material that is not put up. When they keep taking those partitions, we can't gain on our work. Do you realize what I mean? Over in block 86, we partitioned nine buildings. Only two partitions were left in a week.

MR. KUBATOMI:

About this Central Organization or committees to work with the administration. I am sure that Mr. Best is in agreement with this.

MR. BEST:

I told you that if there is a fair representation of everybody, then that is what we wanted to work with. The quicker the better. Mr. Black was instructed to work through you or any committees you send to him to devise such a meeting.

MR. KUBATOMI:

I am sorry that you gentlemen had to sit such a long time, but I think Mr. Myer or any other gentleman has heard all the grievances, and dissatisfaction of the Center residents that came to a ~~boiling~~ point today. There is a statement here from the residents demanding the removal of Mr. Best as Project Director; Mr. Zimmer as Assistant Project Director; Mr. Schmidt, who is head of the Internal Security Division, for letting over 20 tons of goods pass without stopping it at once; Mr. Kallum, Head of the Agricultural Division, who is directly responsible for the termination of the farm workers; Mr. Peck, who is responsible for the management of all the mess division; Mr. Kirkman, of the Warehouse Division, who allowed 20 tons of food to be taken out of the warehouse; all the Caucasian doctors--five of them--and all the nurses to be dismissed from this Center administration. This is just about all that we have on hand, and there are many minor points that could be brought up which would take days to clarify.

Consequently, I feel that the committees should be entrusted with the responsibility of working out minor details. The last statement just made in my statement is a statement as requested by the Center residents. I would like to emphasize that and repeat it. This is a request not among the representatives here, but from the Center residents, to have these persons removed from the Center administration.

MR. MYER:

Have you finished?

MR. KURATOMI:

Yes.

MR. MYER:

All I have to say further is this. I am glad to have had the opportunity to meet with you. I want to say that I have absolute confidence in Mr. Best, or I wouldn't have placed him here. I placed him here because I felt that he had understanding, courage, and would know how to work with you people in working out your problems. I still think that. As far as personalities are concerned, I came up here to go over with him, problems in relation to personnel or any other problems that he might have. I am going to accept his recommendations and will probably make a few of my own. I want to make it quite clear that Mr. Best is in charge, and that we can't operate on the basis of demands, but only on the basis of sitting down and talking things over. There is only one agency I know of who operates on the basis of demands. We don't operate that way. I want to repeat. The War Relocation Authority has been in operation for a year and a half. We have gone through a good many trials and tribulations and troubles. We have been investigated twice by the United States Congress, as regarding the population and problems of these people. They have said things about your problems which I haven't agreed with.

We have tried to get together on facts and have tried to do it within the limits of the policies and our particular administration. We hope we can work with you. If we can't, I presume there will be someone else working with you. I don't know who that would be. I am sure you are not interested in having trouble. When I went into this position, I knew there would be some trouble and I was prepared for it. I am still prepared for it. When you have suggestions, bring them to Mr. Best. Don't bring them in the way of demands. That embarrasses him and it embarrasses you. We can't meet demands. We are operating under the United States Government and have to follow certain policies. We are willing to investigate charges and are willing to take action if we find they are based on facts. I am much obliged to you for coming in. I am sure that you will want to operate on that kind of basis, and if you don't, there will have to be some other kind of basis worked out.

MR. MYER: (Cont'd.)
I am not here to make threats. I don't make threats. We stand on what we are trying to do. We think our program has been pretty sound, so far, and that the evacuees generally understand that. I think you have some difference of opinion in this Center. While I don't know how many people you represent, I doubt that you represent all of them. I hardly think that you represent everybody's point of view. It is difficult to represent everybody's point of view when there are 18,000 people here. I hope that I can have an opportunity to devote my time and attention to the problems represented here within the next 24 hours or so and I want to get at some facts and I am sure that is what you want me to do.

MR. KURATOMI:
This case was just brought up. In block 34, I don't know which corner, there has been an evacuee picked up by an Army jeep and this man was inside a box. Around 30, rather stout, and he wore a beige hat, and I wonder if there is some way for you to check it up.

MR. BEST:
You say an Army jeep?

MR. KURATOMI:
Yes. He was picked up, I imagine.

MR. BEST:
When?

MR. KURATOMI:
Just now. These people saw it:

Kiyohara
Saito
Nakano

MR. BEST:
I can call the army up and ask them.

(Upon later questioning, Mr. Kuratomi was unable to furnish the name of the man in question.)

MR. MYER:
We will be glad to look into that. We are taking so much time, I feel we should get around and get the job done. We will check with the Army and will report the facts to you.

MR. KURATOMI:

I would like to say in a concluding statement, that as we have already stated, we are not here for trouble and we don't expect to have any unnecessary commotions and we are sincere and feel that the rights of the evacuees here are being jeopardized and sometimes trampled upon, and I feel that you are a man of character and will see justice as it is and try to rectify some of the wrongs that might have been committed by some of the Caucasian personnel. We are depending on you and would like to say that we would like to get these answers or questions clarified for answer, just as soon as possible, because the people are waiting and the sooner we can give them the facts, the sooner these problems will be dissolved and we will have a peaceful center that much quicker.

MR. MYER:

First, gentlemen, it will not be possible to give you answers to all these questions this afternoon. Thank you very much for the compliment. We will try to operate on the basis of justice and I want to repeat that I don't want any misunderstanding on that. Mr. Best has checked with me on policy every time. People do things that we don't always know about, both among the evacuees and the administrative staff. I am much obliged to you and I hope that you will remember that we cannot operate on the basis of demands and the sooner we understand that, the better we will be getting along. We will operate on that basis, of sitting down with you folks as we have this afternoon.

MR. KURATOMI:

Will it be allright for us to report to the people?

MR. BEST:

You are reporting to your people. I don't know what you want to say to your people.

MR. KURATOMI:

Mr. Myer, will you say a few words?

MR. MYER:

I would be glad to say hello to your folks, if you want me to. I will tell them in summary what I have told you. I will be very glad to tell them.

Community
analyst

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY ANALYSIS SECTION

Tule

Meeting in Mr. Best's Office at 8:45 a.m., October 26, 1943

Present:	R. R. Best	Herbert Hoshiko	Kobayashi	H. Mori
	C. E. Z immer	I. Hayashi	Yoshiyama	S. Kai
	H. L. Black	George Kuratomi	Takada	Stenographer
	M. Lucas (rep)	K. Yamamoto	Yoshida	

Best: Who is to be spokesman?

Kuratomi: I am

Kuratomi: First of all I would like to ask if you would recognize us as being the representatives of Tule Lake evacuee residents?

Best: Is that a question?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Best: There is that word "recognize" back again.

Kuratomi: I could put it a different way. We have been asked to represent center residents as all cannot come in.

Best: And as such, will I agree to entertain you?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Best: Yes. But that word "recognize". I don't like the word. It doesn't mean what is intended.

Kuratomi: I imagine the nature of some of these questions would be beyond your authority. If such a question should arise, would you be kind enough to forward the question to Washington or wherever necessary?

Best: Wherever necessary.

Kuratomi: These are the questions that we have been asked to bring up.

Best: Okay.

Kuratomi: The first of all, the residents of Tule Lake Center wish to know the status of the people in here by the American Government and by the Japanese Government and what would be their status from the standpoint of International Law.

Best: This question should go to the Department of Justice or State Department. My Myer probably should answer that. It probably should be sent to the Spanish Consul.

Kuratomi: A supplement to that question - this Center has been designated as a Center for those persons who have either indicated they are disloyal or cannot abide by the laws of the United States Government or people who have expressed a

CONFIDENTIAL

desire to either be expatriated or repatriated to Japan. It is the wish of the residents to get the clarification of the Center established as soon as possible. Then, there is a strong feeling among the residents to resegregate the residents between the people who have just aaid "no" to question 28 and the people who have intentionf for going back to Japan. They wish to know how soon such a question could be answered and how soon such a plan could be worked out.

Best: To further segregate?

Kuratomi: Yes

Best: That is a good idea and is something that will have to be worked outt.

Kuratomi: To go back to the automobile accidents...

Best: Which accidents, the fire truck and farm truck?

Kuratomi: Yes, the two that we had. The residents wish to have it clearly understood that WRA should take full responsibility in regard to these accidents and the residents wish a public announcement made to that respece. Furthermore, the residents want the Administration to express a regret concerning these accidents.

Best: Okay. What is the next one?

Kuratomi: The Project Director has not expressed his condolence toward the people who have been the victims of the auto accidents and they feel regretful that you have not taken any steps to show your sympathy toward them and they wish to know the steps which the Administration has taken in regard to the people who have been injured or died from the accident. Maybe I could get an answer from you in regard to compensation.

Best: All forms have been properly complied with. The accident is under the United States Employees Compensation Commission. It is not WRA. All forms have been completed and transmitted to that Commission. Does that answer it?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Kuratomi: In regard to the late Mr. Kashima's funeral. The attitude taken by the Administration of this Center has been very inhuman and residents wish to know the reason for such an attitude by the Administration. Maybe you could answer me.

Best: I couldn't answer your question because you make a definite charge that myself, as Project Director, is inhuman. Who is to be the judge of that?

Kuratomi: The judge is the rest of the people in the Center. That is the way they feel.

Best: I have no inhuman tendencies.....

Kuratomi: Maybe I could add something. I imagine you have been approached by residents of thes center to have you or one of your representatives at the funeral to send words of condolence and, if my report is correct, you have refused to do so.

Best: Maybe I could tell you something. They didn't ask me, they demanded that I appear at the funeral and speak. They demanded that I transmit a letter of condolence to the widow. I do not recognize demands.

Kuratomi: Shouldn't you think the word "demand" could be interpreted in two
3 different ways?

Best: In my way--no. Your representatives that came down here didn't come down here with any other interpretation. They said, "you do it that way".

Kuratomi: I will have to verify that.

Best: I know. I was right here.

(Kuratomi talked to Takeda in Japanese)

Kuratomi: What he said was to have you come, asked you to come....

Best: It isn't anything to debate. I didn't go. I told the Funeral Committee not to have a public funeral.. .....

Kuratomi: What do you mean by a "public funeral"?

Best: Out in the firebreak, on the outdoor stage or in the highschool auditorium.

Kuratomi: Do you think that the people could possibly get into a Rec. Hall or mess hall?

Best: I think so.

Kuratomi: How could 10,000 people get into a rec hall or mess hall?

Best: I didn't say 10,000 people, I said the people who wanted to go to the funeral.....

Kuratomi: How can you make such a statement?

Best: If I told you that there were men forced to go to that funeral, would you say it wasn't so?

Kuratomi: Absolutely not (so)

Best: If I told you that certain people when asked where they were going and answered they were going to the store, canteen or elsewhere were told "you are going to the funeral", would say that is not so?

Kuratomi: I shall have to get witnesses on those.

Best: We are not before trial. I am just telling you this for your information. I am tell you this, that the widow did not want a public display or a big funeral. I abided by the widow's decision.

Kuratomi: I will check up on that. I do not think your statement is correct. What will you do if that statement is not correct.

Best: What would you do?

Kuratomi: I would apologize to the people. Wouldn't you?

Best: You, or none else, are going to tell me what to do in letters. Keep it informal. We will do this without putting me on the spot. I am not going to be put on the spot and you are not going to come here and tell me what to do.....

Kuratomi: I am asking you.

Best: I am going to tell you a few things later. I am not ready yet.

Kuratomi: They wish to have a public report from the hospital about each of these cases of injury and the death. To prevent further occurrence of such accidents what steps is the Administration taking?

Best: I don't know of any way of preventing a fire truck from turning over when a man turns a corner at an excessive rate of speed. Of course they have governors on trucks but fire trucks do not have governors. The person driving that fire truck is no longer a truck driver. He is asked to be relieved of driving....

Kuratomi: I don't know about that.

Best: There is nothing that we could do to prevent the accident of the fire truck with an incompetent driver. I understand that a warden pointed and he immediately turned, is that correct?

Kuratomi: That is not on the paper.

Best: That is the report I have. I don't know whow to prevent that. I am willing, and would like to have any kind of suggestions if you could tell me how to prevent any of those type of accidents.

Kuratomi: Motor pool drivers should be over 21 years of age.

Best: That is right. That is the order. They should be 21 years old for trucks and passenger car drivers 25 years old.

Kuratomi: The person who turned the farm truck over was only 17 or 18 years old.

Zimmer: 18

Best: 18, which is a legal age in California.

Black: This has already been published and is in effect. The orders have already been issued. We do not have any drivers now that are not 21 or 25.

Kuratomi: Some of these additional people you have here as drivers don't even seem to know how to use the gear in reverse or the compound. There is quite a complaint in the Motor Pool on that. We feel that if the Motor Pool could more or less control such drivers, that is, if they could fire them or hire them it would remedy this situation. The residents feel that the persons in the Motor Pool Division should be given more authority to supervise, or if not, recommend for the dismissal of the drivers if such a case should come up. The way it is, that is, the system now the Motor Pool has nothing to do with hiring or firing drivers.

Best: That is an Administrative Instruction. The Employment Division hires or fires people. Each section does make the recommendation but the actual termination is through the Employment Division. That is an Administrative Instruction and cannot be changed, but we could recommend that it be changed in Washington. However, that is a mere detail and is something that will have to be worked out. Termination through the Employment Division is merely a mechanical detail of the operation of termination. It is an instruction that we didn't write or have anything to do with and it couldn't be changed here. It wouldn't make any difference where the termination is processed, a man would be terminated for inefficiency regardless of who does it.

Kuratomi: The mechanism of some of these automobiles is not adequate to transport people or haul goods and those automobiles should not be put into operation, especially the one that tipped over. Defects were found in the truck.

Best: Of what nature?

Kuratomi: I did not bring the statement but I have a statement submitted from the garage in that respect. There were nine or ten items.

Best: Just for my own information, what was the matter?

(Mr. Yoshiyama talked in Japanese to the spokesman)

Kuratomi: Shall I have him go after it?

Best: No, that is not necessary now, but I would like to know just what it was.

Kuratomi: Going back to the farm. It is the feeling and it is the determination of the people that we should not farm any more than the acreage to feed the Center residents.

Best: Have you thought that through?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Best: In other words you don't want to ship anything out and you don't want anything shipped in?

Kuratomi: That is up to the Government.

Best: No. The reason that other people are raising crops is so that they can ship us what we can't raise and we ship out what they can't raise. We are getting carloads of beef from Gila. The Government is going to feed you, certainly, but if you don't use what is raised here and exchanged with other centers it will have to requisitioned from the Quartermaster and you will have to take what comes. Have you thought that through? I am very much interested in that because I have something here this morning that I will show you in a few minutes.

Kuratomi: That is what we want, only raise enough for the residents of this Center.

Best: Have you discussed this to the point that you don't want beef that is raised in Gila? You would rather get it thru the Quatermaster rather than get it from Gila?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Best: You don't want to get any other than through the Government?

Kuratomi: No.

Kuratomi: The reason we came here is because we cannot comply with or abide by the laws of the United States.

Best: That is the reason this Center was established. That is the reason I am trying to find out some of these things. I think you should think that through further because a carload of beef from Gila will be ours if you want it. If we go thru the Quartermasters we will have to take what comes. Is that what you want?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Best: Mr. Zimmer take this (telegram) and cancel it right now. We will have to wait 50 days before we get any.

Kuratomi: We would like to have a committee do decide how much we want to raise.

Best: That is one thing that I would like to do. We have got all winter to plan that. I would like you to have an agricultural committee so that we can plan what acreage we want. If we are not going to farm I want to know; if we are going to farm I want to sit down and decide how many acres we want to take care of. I presume there will be about 20,000 people here. Dont you think so?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Best: I want a good agricultural committee to sit down and plan, to see how much land we need, what crops we want to raide. If we are going to raise chickens, how many? And to plan in advance. I want you to think about that. We can raise chickens and hogs. We cannot raise cattle. We can raise chickens, hogs, and turkeys and we can raise farm crops and we will want to figure them for 20,000 people. That is what we have to think about and I don't want to wait until next spring when we don't have time. We are going to here and I want to get this planning done because we want to raise the crop--that is if you want the crop.

Kuratomi: Since it is evident that the acreage of the farm could be cut down there will be unemployment caused so that it is the wish of the residents that these people should be given some other employment and if such is impossible then be given assurance of their well being such as clothing, and of course the food and shelter is provided by the Government, and a little spending money besides. Also is there any thruth to the report that the farm products here have been sent to the Army or the Navy?

Best: No truth to it. No farm productshave been sent to the Army or Navy

Kuratomi: Never Has?

Best: Never Has.

Kuratomi: In regard to the public shcool here. Under what plan has it been operated and under what plan does it plan to open here?

Best: Probably Mr. Black can tell you. The plan is to open school just as soon as we possibly can. You know what we are faced with here. The segregation movement, people coming in and people going out.
(Rev. Kai and H. Mori joined the group)
We thought we would have to use the recreation halls for additional residents, however, we didn't have to. We had to use the high school for processing. I don't know how soon they can start, possibly next month.

Black: There is still some construction work to be completed before school can begin.

Best: On the highschool?

Black: On the highschool.

Kuratomi: Let me ask you this question. Would there be a flag ceremony in the morning?

Blakc: There will not be. It is planned to have a flag over the administration area here and not in the colony area. We have a number of teachers here as you know who have been doing other kinds of work and are ready to start teaching as soon as construction is finished. There are some stoves to be installed, some painting to be done and installation of desks, table and chairs. The school census has been underway for several days but still is not completed and we have to wait for the results from the census to know how many classes are required, how many teachers will be needed and what the division of classes will be. We hope to be able to start elementary schools about November 1, and every preparation is made to open just as quickly as facilities are available. High school teachers will be used in the elementary schools and elementary schools will be opened first. Later when more facilities are available we will open the high school but not at the same time as the elementary schools. Because there are more children to go to school than there are facilities it is planned to operate on a platoon system. Part will go in the forenoon and part in the afternoon. The students that live the

nearest will go to school in the morning and in the afternoon the ones who live further away will come for their session so we can start at 8:30 to 12:00 and from 1:00 to 5:30 and get pretty good school operation. Does that answer your question?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Black: As facilities are available, either by using rec halls or vacant apartments we can make a transfer of elementary schools to those facilities and use the high school for highschool classes on a staggered system. The schools will be opened for everyone who wants to go to school but it is not required. It is a service rendered to the community and is agreeable to all the people but will not be forced on them.

Best: It is not compulsory.

Black: No, it is not compulsory.

Kuratomi: The people want a center organization to govern and take care of the welfare of the center residents and this center organization would have every right and power to negotiate with the Administration, that is, with you or with the other personnel if such case should arise. It is the feeling and the request of the residents that the whole set-up should be left to the free will of the center residents and that they wish to have you more or less recognize such a group in the center.

Best: Just so that you be sure to get complete representation. I don't want it out of one block. I want complete representation. That is being worked on. We had to wait until all were here or it would not be a fair representation. I want you to have a working committee to go to the Community Activities section to devise some kind of program so that you can have an election to get the proper representation. Are you set up to do that at the present time? Or do you think you have it already? I don't care how big the representation is just so it is not bigger than this group here. We can't work with a bigger committee than this and get anything done.

BLACK: May I ask a question?

Best: Yes.

Black: We would like to have suggestions from the people on that plan. I believe that any workable scheme depends on working between members of the colony and of the administration. I have in mind to submit to the colony a proposal something like this: That an advisory council be composed which will be almost entirely selected

by the people within a geographical area. In order to keep a committee of a workable size it should be composed of a chairman and representatives from each of the 7 wards. The chairman of the ward committee might be one of the Block Managers or it might be any other person who residents of that ward would select. Certain groups such as the PTA, Red Cross, YMCA, religious organizations, catholic and protestant churches, and such other project-wide organizations as we have had would give us a representation but it would not be a geographical one, but rather would represent the interests of the whole project. We are having a meeting of the Community Management staff this afternoon in order to discuss that a little further and then find out if you have this committee or another committee to represent the people in the development of such a plan. May I ask if this committee is specifically for the farm situation or whether it is an over-all committee. Could I have an answer to that?

but it

Best: He is asking whether this committee is a general or overall committee or whether it is a specific committee for the farm situation.

Kuratomi: The farm problem became so big for the farm group that they asked for center-wide support to work out some agreeable solution of center wide problems in connection with the farm problem. Therefore, an election was held in each of the 64 blocks and each block sent in a representative elected by the people and they came to a meeting and decided on some of the questions for clarification for the colonists. They chose a committee and we happen to be the committee to negotiate with the administration. What I was saying a while ago is this, that if something comes up the committee would bring it to your attention. The idea is that some of these people who have been here all the time and some have come in have different ideas, such as some people wish to go out on relocation or people who came in here with a plain "no" answer and the people who have a definite mind to go back to Japan when the opportunity arises. The ideas among those groups are definitely not the same. There will always be friction of some sort unless resegregation is carried out. I think it would be easier for you to run the center if such a program was put into effect.

Best: Much easier. One of the things we are going to discuss. when the director is here is further segragation.

Kuratomi: That is about the biggest problem right now.

Best: That is one of things that will be taken up with the Director first.

Kuratomi: We should have a center organization eventually. Since this is such a large center and the problems concerned are so various it is evident that it will be necessary to have different committees to work in particular divisions. It is the idea that these committees or representative groups be allowed to work in cooperation with the administration. Would it be possible to recognize such an organization in this Center?

Best: We are anxious to have that organization.

Black: We are anxious to have an organization to advise and counsel the administration for the over-all promotion of well being and welfare of the community by I want to make it quite clear that there cannot be such a thing as a self-government. I am asking that in lieu of self-government your committee and all of its personnel serve as an advisory committee to the administration or the project director so he may know what things you wish to have done. Does that make sense?

Kuratomi: Very logical. It is the feeling and request from the residents that these working committees be paid under WRA wages.

Best: They always have been.

Black: Block Managers, wardens, public welfare, etc. are paid by WRA.

Best: All committees under Community Activities.

Kuratomi: Offices should be set up in some central location in the colony.

Best: Don't worry about the offices. We will have office space for every activity that we need. Definitely we will have that.

Kuratomi: So that the central governing body from the Center residents could get into direct contact with the administration to discuss all negotiations?

Best: Yes.

Black: I don't like the use of the expression "central governing body". Should use the expression Center Committee or council.

Kuratomi: Is it perfectly agreeable with you to go ahead with the organization and submit the full plans to you?

Best: That is what we are here for.

Kuratomi: It is the feeling of the residents that the Block Managers be put under supervision of the Center Committee. That is the way the residents want it.

Best: That would be right back to Community Government. We have to get away from that. We have no choice in the matter. Those are our instructions.

Kuratomi: What capacity are the Block Manager's working under right now. Each Block Manager has a different interpretation of his powers, etc.

Black: They transmit to the people information that we feel is for their benefit and we have used that means in many instances to combat rumors that are not true. If the people want something done they tell the Black Manager. The Block Managers notify the people that their freight has arrived and the letters are distributed through the Block Managers. Through the Block Managers come complaints and reports to the administration. Part of this work probably would be better served by the Center Committee. The main function of the Block Managers is the transmission and exchange of information with the administration.

Best: We discuss the problem and lay our problems right out on the table for the Block Managers to discuss. We have no secrets. It is our desire to give them information as far as the administration is concerned.

Kuratomi: What difference would there be if the Block Managers took orders from the Center Committee who represent the residents.

Best: We don't want to try to get around the instruction that has been handed down to us. By reason that this is a segregation center we can't have self-government. I want to keep in the clear on that. The Block Managers might be on your committee though.

Z immer: Since the planning board and the City Council dissolved during registration the Block Managers have been the clearing house for grievances.

Kuratomi: The people have a right to ask for re-election of the Block Managers. The reason I say that is this: Since this is a segregation, the language of Japan has become predominant. Some of the Block Managers can't understand Japanese. They cannot transmit your instructions to the colony because they cannot interpret in the Japanese language.

Best: I have though there probably will be a complete change of Block Managers.

Black: Many people are not settled down. We have got to go through the process of having new people integrate with the community. It is better all around to have Block Managers who have been residents of Tule Lake before until the new people familarize themselves and get settled down.

Kuratomi: In regard to the hog and poultry farm out there. There are quite a few doubts and questions among the residents in getting their share of pork and eggs.

Best: We can settle that quickly.

Zimmer: S ince the 22nd of June there hasn't been a hog slaughtered from the farm. Every egg comes into the Mess Management warehouse and

from there it goes to the colonists. Everything from the hog and poultry farm goes to Mess Management. We have nothing to do with it from then on. We deliver it to them. What they do with it from then on, I don't know.

Kuratomi: The people here haven't seen any pork.

Zimmer: Haven't seen any since June 22 because we have slaughtered none since then.

Kuratomi: They say there is 190,000 pounds of hogs on hand. Residents who have been here all the time tell us they haven't seen that much pork at any time even if it was divided among 16,000 people. Will you be kind enough to check this with Mess Management as to what basis these eggs and pork and other products are distributed to each mess hall.

Best: We can find that out.

Best: Everything from the hog or poultry farm is all going down to your mess and no place else. I can't tell you what happened in the past because I didn't arrive until August 1,. We all have to live here and I want to make it just as liveable as possible. All the hogs and poultry are coming into the Mess Management warehoused. Now if you have a tie up and have no one out to the farm to work of course I am going to have to dispose of the product. If you don't have a work crew out there we will just have to find a buyer and sell it.

Kuratomi: As far as I know they are working out there.

Best: I mean <u>if</u> you should stop working I couldn't give you any of the crop.

Black: With all the produce raised it doesn't begin to meet the requirements of the Center. We still have to buy more all the time.

Kuratomi: Will you please be kind enough to investigate this from the day you came here to the present date as to what basis farm products have been distributed to each mess hall.

Best: That is a matter of record and should be easy enough to do.

Kuratomi: We would like to have you make a report to the people.

Best: I think you have plenty of people working in the Mess Division who can tell you.

Kuratomi: Just want a verification.

Best: I know we haven't shipped any out. We have to ship in all the time.

Kuratomi: This has come up often. The people would like to have latrinal facilities improved. If you came down to these blocks and could see the conditions.....

Best: We can see they are crowded but with the addition of the 10 blocks that is starting today, 3,750 people will be moved out of those blocks and will relieve the pressure and size of the blocks, and there won't be nearly so many people using these facilities. We can't buy some of the fixtures and materials that is going into the new blocks. We want to improve conditions in the wash housed and the men's rooms. As soon as I came here that was one of the things we talked about be we can't buy things like we used to. But I want to try to make this place just as liveable as possible. This condition may be due to the fact that some of the blocks are over populated. There may be more men and there may be more women. However, the next adjustment in housing will relieve that.

Kuratomi: Can't even wash our faces in the morning. The hot water and the cold water won't operate. It is either too hot or too cold. No basins to accommodate the water.

Mr. Best: You mean you can't mix the hot and the cold water.

Kuratomi: Yes, that's it.

Best: That is purely a matter for local adjustment and I want to improve all such conditions.

Kuratomi: What about the lots around the barracks?

Best: I am very much interested in that. I am getting kind of touchy about that. I don't want all those porches. They look terrible. We will have to have a committee to sit down and make plans. I think we can probably do this whole thing for about $20,000. We will have to plan it and work things out. We can't just go up to people and say your porch looks terrible, tear them off. When we get a plan that all can agree on then we have to send it to the Washington Office for approval by the WPB. We have to have approval to buy lumber, approval to buy nails, roofing, et. When we get that we can tell the people this is what we want to do.

B lack: In that connection, there are rumors to the effect that we will tear the porches down and not replace them. That is definitely not true.

Kuratomi: The resident feel that since it was possible for the people at other relocation centers to receive first class mail delivered to the individual units and since we are using the U. S. postage stamp that delivery of mail should be to each unit instead of to the Block Managers. Some of the mail which might be very important are missing. The people would like to get letters delivered to each unit.

Best: That is a matter of adjustment later. Lots of cities this size don't have mail delivered to the door. But that is nothing. We will try to work that out as soon as possible. The people will get their mail even if it is still delivered to the Block Managers. That is what we will have to do next winter--work out details.

Kuratomi: The food is very poor in this center. Especially food given to children. There is not nearly enough of somethings such as milk and other essentials. They are not getting enough in quanity. The last two or three days some mess hall did not give out any milk.

Best: That is probably the fault of Mess Management.

Black: Had a report yesterday that mess hall 16 or 44 failed to have their quota of canned milk delivered for infants and children. Mr. Peck explained that it had been a clerical error and that an allocation of milk would be made from another mess hall.

Kuratomi: That must have been in two or three blocks.

Black: I just heard about one block.

Kuratomi: This is a known fact--that there are slightly tuberculosis patients being sent back to the blocks. They should be segregated and sent back home.

Best: Any matters pertaining to TB patients are referred to the medical staff.

Kuratomi: I think that the project director should check into these matters.

Best: I understand that there are two buildings--919 and 913--housing TB patients. We know all about that. That is where they take arrested cased. That is what you are talking about isn't it? 919 and 913?

Kuratomi: Yes, that 's it. Now going back to food again--the food in this Center is very poor.

Best: When did it get poor? Just since you people came here? There hasn't been any radical change.

Kuratomi: The food is lots worse than when I got here.

Best: The quality or the preparation?

Kuratomi: The quality.

Best: Meat or staples?

Kuratomi: Especially breakfast. We get hotcakes and things of that nature but have never had eggs. Not once.

Best: Eggs are on the menu every day.

Kuratomi: But we never have them.

Best: 7,000 people have been here 15 or 16 months. Do they find it bad too?

Kuratomi: The other people that were here have no way of knowing how the other centers were treated. When we compared notes they couldn't believe that other centers were treated so much nicer than this Center. Food is the major problem of each individual.

Best: I will tell you this so that you can make a big complaint about food. When the Spanish Consul comes again, you holler about the food. He said he has never had any complaints about the food. So when he comes you complain about it to him. Now is your chance.

Kuratomi: At any rate the fact that the food is not distributed according to the menu is a foregone conclusion. I wish you would check this matter with Mr. Peck and verify it.

Best: Some places I have been and I have seen it work very satisfactorily is to appoint a Japanese head steward. Let him handle it. I haven't had time to get into details on some of these things but I am very much interested in Mess Management. I can see no reason why we couldn't have a Japanese head steward here to correlate with Mr. Peck. We are bound by very strict rules. We can spend just so much. We can requisition just so much and the Quartermaster buys it. It is our fault when we don't distribute it right or when we don't cook it right. I don't like to see food spoil either in the kitchen or in the wardhouse. I would like to get into this thing myself. If you have someone in your organization, some good Japanese head steward, that can function as such, he could handle such things.

Kuratomi: I think all of us agree that the preparation was not adequate to meet the on rushing work of the incoming into this Center when segregation took place. We wish to know whose responsibility it was.

Best: I would say it was the Congress of the United States. They demanded and ordered segregation. The Tule Lake Center was selected as the place. We had all of these trains coming in and going out and I don't believe that you or I or anybody else could have done better with what we had. We didn't have time. I didn't get here until before the first of August. Other centers knew all about it before the first of August, but Tule Lake had no preparations made and no plans. Other Centers moved out one to three trains. We moved 14 trains out and received trains from every center. I believe there were 18 or 19 trains in.

Black: 19.

Best: I guess we will just have to blame Congress. I don't want to blame you and I don't want to take the blame. I guess the blame rests on Congress.

Kuratomi: In the event any strike of any other incident should take place within the Center and if the residents should fail to solve it and there is any liklihood that it couldn't be mastered, then I imagine that the WRA or administration would take steps to see that some quick solution be made.

Best: Well, the WRA is not going to call a strike and the WRA couldn't make a solution when you call a strike when we don't know what is going to prevent it. A strike isn't the way to deal with me. We don't need a strike and I can't tell you what will happen. If you want to find out what will happen, have a strike and find out. I am not going to call a strike and I can't tell you there will be a apeedy solution when I don't know what it is about. Possibly I don't understand you.

Kuratomi: I think you do all right. The residents wish to know if we have been treated according to the Geneva Conference.

Best: I imagine so. I don't know anything about that. But Japan didn't even sign the Geneva Conference. We are taking all of our orders from Washington office which is in contact with the State Department The State Department would know all about the Geneva Conference. I am taking my orders from Mr. Myer, who is in daily contact with the State Department and I would presume and would say that they are following the provisions of the Geneva Conference, I will tell you this, You are not prisoners of war or anything like that if that is one of the questions. You are not here as prisoners of war.

Kuratomi: Our status might change later.

Best: I couldn't tell about that.

Kuratomi: In the past--it hasn't occured here yet--but in other relocation centers when some articles belonging to the WRA disappeared we, the residents of those centers took the blame without any investigation. That has been done in the past. If such a thing should happen in this center I wish the Administration would investigate thoroughly before making any accusations.

Best: What articles do you mean?

Kuratomi: In other centers such things as saws, hammers, and various other things. At Jerome at one time someone stole 38 brand new double edged axes. Without making a proper investigation, Mr. Cook, Chief of Internal Security at that Center, made accusations that evacuees were to blame for losing such items. I have heard that in other centers similar cases have taken place and evacuees were blamed and the administration made reports to that effect.

Best: We don't blame anyone around here without an investigation. I don't like to put those things in the paper anyhow. I can assure you that we will have an investigation.

Kuritomi: Some of these questions it will be necessary for you to refer to Mr. Myers?

Best: That is right. He will be here on this Center next Monday and Tuesday. I would like, as a matter of fact to have a transcript of this for him to read so he can see how we are proceeding. If it is at all possible I would like to arrange so that we can sit down and talk with him.

Kuratomi: This is something I haven't clearly stated in the beginning. People going out to the farm realizing that this problem is too big to handle have made resolution to abide by the will of the residents and refrain from working until final words are received from you here or WRA office in Washington. We will wait until then.

Best: About what? What we are going to do with the crop?

Kuratomi: No. These questions.

Best: In other words you are going to tie all of the questions and the answers to the questions into the harvesting of the crop.

Kuratomi: No, the thing is.....

(Rev. Kai talked in Japanese to Kuratomi)

Kuratomi: The residents of this center are not clear as to the need of 3,900 acres of farm. They have had various reports that the crops are being sent to the Army or Navy.

Best: No. None of it has been sent to the Army or Navy. Some of the crops have been sent to other relocation centers in the past. We get crops from them that we can't raise and we send them things they can't raise. It is worked on the basis of exchanging of commodities with other centers. Now, with this being a segregation center, it is your unanimous consent that you will not ship to any other center. That is the way I get it. Is that right?

Kuratomi: Yes.

Best: That is your choice. Nothing shipped out and by the same token there will be nothing brought in from other centers. We will have to get all our food through the Quartermaster. The only thing I am concerned about is that it takes us 50 days to get our requisitions in. We are going to be short on some vegetab les until they can be picked up, as long as we have our own crop out here and won't use. I am going to sell this crop. There is a food shortage. There is a war on. We are going to salvage this food. I am going to sell it to the govenment. We will never see any of the money. I am going to sell the crop to save it. The crop is going to be harvested. We will work out this winter what to farm and what size you want, if any. And I don't want to wait until next spring to do that.

(Kuratomi to Kai in Japanese)

Kuratomi: I am sure the people will be satisfied with the statement you have just made.

Best: You get a good agricultural committee. I don't want some one who doesn't know agriculture. Get yourselves some farmers. I assume you still want the hog and poultry farm, the pork, the chickens and the eggs. You are still going to carry that on, aren't you?

Kuratomi: Never said such a thing.

Best: You want that don't you. You better meet to talk about that.

Kuratomi: We are still working on that.

Best: I want to know. We can raise more hogs and we have quarters for 25,000 chickens.

Zimmer: 21,000

Kuratomi: We will raise that if given assurance that they will be used for center consumption.

Best: I will guarantee it. That is what they are for. There is no question about that.

Z immer: We have a quota of what we can slaughter in points on hogs. We can't slaughter more than what a ration book would be per person per week. We are duty bound to slaughter so many pigs according to the population. You are a little better off in here than on the outside because you have 15,000 ration books and on the outside you would have only 10,000 ration books.

Kuratomi: Are you finished?

Z immer: Yes, that's all.

Kuratomi: Then, have you any plan whereby center residents would not suffer any financial setback in the future. From the way I can see it, it appears certain that each and every person who wishes to work cannot find employment. Have you plans made to care for those people?

Best: There are instructions to govern all that and people that need clothing grants we have that. There is so much money appropriated to operate this Center. We don't know exactly what the census is going to be or how many constitute a family. We haven't even got the school census broken down to exact figures. It takes time to get what the local situation is.

Black: I want to point out that people who haven't a work opportunity should be entitled to Public Assistance grants. They would need to qualify by an investigation of need.

Best: Yes, that is a detail of operation. There are instructions, there are rules that apply to this center. If they do not fit, they will be adjusted to fit but we can't do anything until we know what the census will be. It takes a little time to work these things out. There is no ulterior motive along the line to work any hardship on anyone. We want to start making this center just as liveable as we possibly can. I intend to see to that. I am here to carry out the Director's wishes clear up to the top and I want you to know that I am here to make this just as decent a place as we can possibly make it. I want to ask you, what is your attitude, what is your thinking on Internal Security?

Kuratomi: We have been approached by Mr. Tsuda on that. Think we should wait wait until a representative committee is set up. Then it could be worked out for everybody.

Best: Will do just what you want. If you want a good Internal Security you can have it. If you want a bad internal security you can have it. Suit yourselves. If you want law and order you can have it. You can have trials and sentences and punish those who violate laws. You can have a jail if you want it. We will do what you want. I wn want you to talk about that.

(Kuratomi to Kai in Japanese)

Kuratomi: That is about all we have at this time. The minor details can be worked out with the committee.

Best: That is fine.

Kuratomi: I want to mention to you that from time to time you have promised people certain things as they come in to talk with you and we have talked with Dr. Opler and he feels the same, that to gain the confidence of the residents is the quickest solution to local problems.

Best: I want that.

Kuratomi: I am sure you could get it very easily if you could fulfill your promises. Everybody is looking up to that. Such as the erection of uniform porches.

Best: That isn't a promise.

Kuratomi: You promised.

Best: No, I didn't promise. That is my personal desire and I want a committee to sit down with an engineer's drawing and a plan to see how many porches it takes. See what goes into them. That is my desire but not a promise. I will see that it will be given every consideration and see what we can get first, that is a promise.

Kuratomi: If you are going to build new ones the old porches could be taken off.

Zimmer: That will have to be the responsibility of your committee, to work out a plan. We couldn't just go down there and tear them off. If we did that then we would be in bad. If we all get together on the detail for the new porches, if we can get a new one, and explain it to the people then the old ones could be taken off, but you can't just go to your neighbor and tell him his porch looks like the devil,take it off. What would he tell you.
(
(Kuratomi to Kai in Japanese)

Best: If we want to get together here and want to get in touch with your committee, can I contact you?

Kuratomi: You can contact Rev. Kai (503-B) on anything.

Best: I have a lot of things to take care of so you contact Miss Lucas when I am not here and she can tell you when I can meet with you here. I have got to go to San Francisco tomorrow night. I am coming back with the Director. I won't be here for a few days. Any other time get in touch with Miss Lucas.

Kuratomi: One more thing. It appears to me that the people who come in here as interpreters more or less give you a wrong interpretation from time to time, such as "demand" which we don't like. I want you to know we are just as anxious to work for the benefit of the colonists as you say you are.

Best: You will find that I aim to.

Kuratomi: That is a promise. Don't make it a broken one.

Best: There is not one thing we can't do if we sit in here and talk it over.

Kuratomi: I am going to see that you carry that out.

Best: Getting back to Internal Security. I am very much interested in that. I wish you would do some thinking on that.

Kuratomi: We have a plan but we have to submit it to the people.

Best: Internal Security can be as good as the people want it. I want you to think that through. It is just what you make it. If you want lots of law and order you will get it. If you don't, well that is your business, not mine.

Kuratomi: That covers everything. We will send in a committee as soon as we get it worked out.

Best: I will be right here. There is no reason why we can't come to an understanding. We can lay our problems right here on the table. I am here to help you. I am not here for any other purpose. I want to spend 90 percent of my time with you and your committee. That is what I am here for. If you make it possible for me to do it we can get together and solve our problems. There is no reason why we should get off on the wrong foot. I don't think there is a problem that we can't solve if we get together. We can work these things out just as they come up. I don't like to let things magnify and get worse. We can get right down to the bottom of these things. Come up again.

- - -