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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY  
COMMUNITY ANALYSIS SECTION  
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FINAL REPORT OF WASHINGTON COMMUNITY ANALYSIS SECTION  
by  
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When persons of Japanese ancestry were evacuated from their homes in Pacific Coast states by Army order in the spring of 1942, a civilian agency was created to meet the problems of the displaced population. This agency, the War Relocation Authority, assumed responsibility for (1) administering the 110,000 people in ten camps, called relocation centers, hastily built in western states and Arkansas and (2) planning and carrying out a program for re-establishing the evacuees in normal American communities. The activities of the War Relocation Authority in administering the group extended over four years --- from March, 1942, through June, 1946.

The people evacuated consisted of about 30,000 families of immigrant Japanese and their American citizen children and grandchildren. In the process of evacuation, the Army made every effort to keep families together. The Army also attempted, but with less success, to keep together people from the same West Coast communities. The population moved to the relocation centers was not therefore like that in the usual internment camp composed of adults without families. It was a population with the needs of family groups, such as family housing, schools maternity services in hospitals, and recreation facilities for young and old. It was a population of segments at least of old communities with long established ties and cleavages. Thus at the ends of the administrative lines of the agency were complex groups of human

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beings. Actions taken affected children, adolescents, young men and women, as well as adults, and family and wider group relationships as well as relationships of agency employees. Moreover, the people were in a very complete state of dependency on the agency, having been thoroughly uprooted and cut off from contacts with other Americans. What they could get in the way of food, shelter, medical care, work, and even hope for the future depended almost wholly on the operation of the government agency. The relation of the agency to the communities was thus many-sided and complex, and the people were sensitive to everything it did.

As a part of its technical staff, the War Relocation Authority employed a number of social scientists, chiefly anthropologists, as analysts and advisers on the problems of administering the relocation centers. What contribution these social scientists made to the program, how they worked and what problems they encountered is the subject of this report. The use of social scientists, other than economists, in government or other action programs is still not common and still in a tentative state of development. Therefore the effort is made to discuss at some length the problems of coordinating social science and administration and to evaluate the specific experience of the War Relocation Authority in attempting to do so.



### The Community Analysis Section

The War Relocation Authority had been wrestling with the problems of establishing peaceful communities out of the varied population of Japanese Americans for almost nine months before it turned to social scientists for any systematic assistance. When the agency was established in March, 1942, one trained anthropologist, John H. Provinse, had been employed in the Washington Office as Chief of Community Management<sup>1</sup> in charge of services to the evacuees such as schools, health, law and order, and recreation. He had had experience himself in the Soil Conservation Service in the application of social science to an action program and recommended in May, 1942, that sociologists or anthropologists with a specific knowledge of Japanese Americans be utilized as administrators in the program. As a result of his recommendation one anthropologist, Robert Redfield, (without specific knowledge of Japanese Americans however) was brought in as consultant for a short period to aid in determining basic policies, and later another, John F. Embree, who had made intensive studies of Japanese communities in Japan and Hawaii, was employed to take charge of documenting the program for historical purposes.

Meanwhile the idea of employing social scientists to study the relocation centers as they developed and to advise the administrators in the light of their findings had been acted on in one center. This was the Colorado River Center at Poston, Arizona, which was administered under an agreement with the Office of Indian Affairs.

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<sup>1</sup> At that time the division was called Community Services.



The Commissioner of Indian Affairs, acting independently of the WRA as a whole, secured a social scientist, Alexander H. Leighton, employed his as a regular member of the Poston staff, and authorized him to set up what was called a Bureau of Sociological Research. The Bureau working with three trained social scientists and a staff of about fifteen evacuees, began a systematic study of the Poston community and developed an advisory relationship with the project staff as an aid in current problems of administration. The work of this unit influenced members of the WRA Washington staff who visited Poston, saw it in operation, and read some of its reports.<sup>2</sup>

In November and December, 1942, serious breakdowns in the relations between evacuees and administrative staff occurred at Poston and at the Manzanar center in California, taking the form of a general strike at the former and a riot at the latter. During the summer and fall of 1942 the top staff in Washington had become increasingly aware of tensions in the relocation centers. Some efforts had been made by the Division of Reports to secure more abundant and more systematic information concerning the evacuees' reactions to what was happening to them. In October Embree wrote a report on behavior traits of the Japanese Americans which was designed to give more understanding of evacuees to center administrative staff and thus to provide a basis for more harmonious relations. Embree and Provinse urged systematic reporting of evacuee attitudes, reactions, and points of view to bring about more understanding of the human material of the program and to

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<sup>2</sup> The methods and results of the work of the Bureau of Sociological Research are set forth in Alexander H. Leighton's "The Governing of Men," Princeton University Press, 1945.



discover the causes of the widespread tensions. The reports of the Poston research unit indicated what could be done along these lines. The seriousness of the disturbances at Poston and Manzanar convinced the Director of the Authority that there was real need for specialized work in community analysis.

On December 15, one week after the Manzanar riot, the Director authorized the transfer of Embree to the Community Management Division, for the purpose of setting up a unit of social scientists to work under the supervision of the Chief of Community Management. A month later, on January 18, 1943, a section of Community Analysis was established with Embree as its head. The plan carried out was to place a trained social scientist at each relocation center as a permanent member of the staff. The Community Analyst, as he was called, worked in a purely advisory capacity without responsibility for administering any part of the program. With the aid of evacuee assistants, he prepared analytical and descriptive reports on the community, which were submitted to Washington through his two superiors, the Project Chief of Community Management and the Project Director. In Washington the Head of the Section with a small staff of assistants made available to Washington staff and other projects the pertinent findings of the center analysts and guided their work. Thus there was a trained observer working as an integral part of the staff at each relocation center and a processing unit in Washington to bring the findings from the centers to bear on over-all policy.

The organization was slow in getting into operation. The first field analysts, other than at Poston where the Bureau of Sociological Research continued to operate, were established in March, 1943. It was not until more than 18 months after the creation of the WRA



that analysts were placed at all the ten centers. Moreover, there was a good deal of turnover during 1943. It was only during the greater part of one year, in 1944, that experienced analysts were at work in all centers simultaneously with a full staff in the Community Analysis office in Washington.

As a result of the influence and background of the two anthropologists responsible for setting up the unit, the men hired as Community Analysts were chiefly anthropologists. Of the twenty-two who served as analysts in Washington or in the centers during the existence of the WRA, fourteen were anthropologists and eight were sociologists. With few exceptions they came from academic backgrounds. Only three had any experience, and that rather minor, comparable to the work they were asked to do for the WRA. They were accustomed to working with other social scientists, not with administrators, and had to learn new habits of work and new ways of reporting their findings.

The center analysts worked in the manner of a field anthropologist who studies the social organization and way of life of a whole community. They interviewed a wide variety of people, both evacuees and administrative personnel, in an effort to discover the different views toward administrative actions, current and past, and the relative importance of different views in the community. They followed, through interviews, reactions to current aspects of the program and sought to find out the causes for the variety of reactions. They observed the informal life of the community as well as the activities of the formal and organized groups. They attempted to predict the reactions of the various groups in the community to contemplated actions of the administration and to assess the effects of actions already taken. Their



observations were presented to the administrative officers both in written form and orally in staff meetings or in informal conversation. Most of the written reports were transmitted through channels to the Washington Community Analysis office where excerpts, summaries, and syntheses were presented in various ways to members of the Washington staff.

#### The Contribution of Community Analysis

By the time the Community Analysis Section was established, all but one of the basic policies of the War Relocation Authority had been decided. The setting up of large camps with populations as great as 17,000 employment of evacuees at a \$12-\$16-\$19 a month wage scale, the encouragement of self-government, the provision of indefinite leave for purposes of resettlement outside the camps, and the subordination of community development in the centers to re-establishment in normal communities --- all these basic policies were settled before December, 1942. Of major policy determinations, only that of segregation of the loyal and disloyal had not been decided by that time. Thus it was not as advisers in long range planning and fundamental policy decision that the Community Analysts functioned. Throughout the program they worked at sizing up problems which stood in the way of executing the basic policies and to a lesser extent at devising means for solving those problems.

The problems of the WRA covered a wide range. There were two major sets. One the one hand were those connected with setting up and maintaining the relocation centers, which as towns of 5,000 to 17,000 required many things from adequate food supply to religious organization. On the other hand were the problems of resettlement ranging from advising evacuees in the centers concerning opportunities outside to establishing services to aid resettlers in the communities of their choice. Except



during the final year of the program when some work was carried on outside, the Community Analysts confined themselves to problems within the relocation centers.

The work of the Section was concentrated successively on three types of analysis: (1) the causes of friction and social disturbances in the centers, (2) the causes of the evacuees' limited acceptance of the WRA resettlement program, and (3) running analysis of reactions to the program as reflected in relocation center life. The first activity, although it continued to be a focus of Community Analysis throughout, was of far greater importance in the first six months of the section's work from December, 1942, through June, 1943. During the winter and spring of 1943 the WRA began to put into operation its plans for resettlement; from June 1943, through August, 1944, the reactions of the evacuees to the resettlement program became the major concern of the Community Analysts. By the summer of 1944, both policy and the communities had become relatively stabilized, and the analysts settled down to reporting current developments in the interaction of the people and the program. The whole of what the analysts did cannot be compressed into a discussion of these phases of the work. However, it was in them that the basic contribution was made.

Human Relations Problems in the Centers. In the beginning the relocation centers were composed of very unsettled and disorganized agglomerations of people. Suddenly uprooted from their homes and thrown together in groups of several thousand, the different kinds of people among the evacuees had to make many adjustments among themselves before achieving anything like communities. As a part of the process they had to adjust to administrators whom they had never seen before and who were suddenly placed over them in positions of power and authority. The administrators in turn, most of whom



had never seen each other, had to learn under pressure how to work together to carry out the urgent jobs of getting the communities going. Moreover very few of the administrators were familiar with Japanese Americans and had to make an adjustment to working with them under the peculiar conditions of relocation center life. In addition both evacuees and administrators had to learn the nature of the wholly new agency which was still in process of hammering out policies in Washington for the people to live by. The adjustment took time. It required more than a year before the collections of people settled down to anything that could be called a mutual working accommodation.

To the administrators in the centers the problem of adjustment presented itself in many different facets. They had clear cut jobs to do as quickly as possible --- organizing the distribution of food, getting partitions into barracks which had not originally been designed for family living, cleaning up the rubbish of construction, preparing land for agricultural production. A work crew would refuse to work for what seemed no good reason. Little frictions slowed up urgent jobs. The administrators were asked by Washington to organize Community Councils to assist in camp management. The councils wanted to know why facilities were not better in the hospital. They seemed to bicker or they seemed unable to help the administration in informing the evacuees about what the administrators had in mind. Gangs of young men formed in most centers and certain evacuees were singled out and beaten at night. The administrators could not find evacuees who would help them discover the gang leaders. Law and order was threatened. Just as a camp director felt that he was getting a few responsible evacuees to help him something would happen and a man who had appeared interested the day before would withdraw from further cooperation. Some administrators saw the low wage scale as the source of non-cooperation and



trouble. Some thought pro-Japanese evacuees were sabotaging the WRA program. Some blamed staff members for poor handling of evacuees. Some thought Washington lacked a firm policy. All were looking at the problem in terms of the question: how can we get the people to join in and do the job of making the centers livable places?

While the administrators and evacuees in the centers were getting used to one another, the WRA staff in Washington was thinking in terms of high policy and what framework ought to be established for solving the long range problems of the displaced Japanese Americans. Steadily they became aware of the seriousness of the tensions on the projects. This was brought home in crisis form when the general strike at Poston broke into the newspapers all over the country and when three weeks later the disturbance at Manzanar resulted in the killing of two evacuees. If more disturbances were to occur it would threaten the whole WRA program. The Washington staff began to see the problem of adjustment in terms of the question: what must we do to prevent strikes and riots from interfering with our broad objectives of humane camp management and resettlement in normal communities.

The institution of Community Analysis was one aspect of an effort on the part of Washington staff to exercise, through better understanding, more control over what was happening at each center. At the time that Community Analysis was set up, the Director of the Authority called conferences of all project directors and asked them for more detailed and more frequent reports on their problems and troubles. A weekly reporting system from each center to Washington was proposed and a plea made both for more factual details concerning difficulties and for more interpretation of



the causes of work stoppages, gang activities, staff-evacuee maladjustments. In proposing Community Analysis as an aid to the center administrators, the Director coined the phrase "the trouble pattern" and said that he thought Community Analysts could help in heading off trouble by analyzing the conditions that led to it.

The work of Community Analysis in connection with the early "trouble pattern" was of greater importance at the Washington than the center level. It was carried out chiefly through one man, John Embree, before any Community Analysis staff had been recruited. In his field trips as head of the Documents Section, he had interviewed evacuees and staff widely. He had collected letters from evacuees. He used this material in discussions with Washington staff and in memos to them. He put down in systematic form, at first in memos to the Director, later in a short report which was distributed to the center administrators, an analysis of the general conditions giving rise to "unrest in the relocation centers."

Specifically, the Community Analyst pointed out causes of the unrest by relating present conditions in the centers to what had recently happened to the evacuated people.

"A mass evacuation of people on the basis of Japanese ancestry, regardless of length of residence (in the United States), citizenship, or past individual behavior, has created in many evacuees a sense of disillusionment or even bitterness in regard to American democracy. WRA personnel being the only government representatives with whom most evacuees now come in contact, it is this personnel that bear the brunt of evacuee criticisms and resentment.

Another effect...has been to create feelings of extreme social and financial insecurity as to the future....Anxieties associated with this feeling of insecurity form a fertile field for alarmist rumors.

The throwing together on the basis of racial lines of a group of people made up of a wide range of interests, educational background, and social class has caused many unfortunate situations such as putting people with little in common together as neighbors in the same blocks. Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans) who were becoming Americanized in California are now subjected to strong Japanese influences. A racial solidarity vis-a-vis the Caucasian administrative staff is another inevitable



result of center life.

....Most residents in relocation centers spent weeks and even months in assembly centers before finally moving to their present "homes." This long uncertain waiting period, during which they had little opportunity or incentive for reorganizing community life has had a demoralizing effect on the individual, and a disorganizing effect on traditional forms of community life and social control....

Physical conditions of life in the centers have also contributed to social disorganization. Eating in common messhalls has had the effect of weakening family solidarity. The weakening of parental authority, in turn, has made it more difficult for law abiding parents to restrain the activities of young men who may form gangs which can easily drift from anti-project administration to anti-American in attitude....

Armed guards, barbed wire fences, searchlights, visits of government agents, all engender the feeling of being in a concentration camp.

....In general the speed of settlement in the centers, the heterogeneous population, and the artificial social and economic situations of center life have created a new society with no regular system of social controls. As with the old boomtowns of the West, the law is taken in one's own hands simply for the lack of any integrated set of social controls as represented by family and community organization, public opinion and folkways.

The report then described situations in the centers which administrators could do something about.

Out Groups - At many projects as things were first organized, it was volunteer Nisei with a good command of English who landed most of the good jobs. Late comers and those less fluent in English tended to be left out as well as those who regarded the boasting of one's ability to be vulgar.

....Thus in one way or another there has grown up on most projects a large "out-group," which is dissatisfied, has little responsibility and is consequently uncooperative with WRA administration, especially with Nisei officeholders.

The undermining of authority of the Issei (first generation evacuees) and of the social control functions of Japanese societies such as the Kenjinkai<sup>4</sup> contributed to this uncooperative

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3. Community Analysis Report No. 2, "Causes of Unrest in Relocation Centers," by John F. Embree, January, 1943.

4. Benevolent and fraternal associations based on prefectural residence in Japan.



attitude in the first generation. The Issei having lost both economic and social predominance tend to be uncooperative with the administration, and some even go so far as to encourage Nisei non-cooperation.

Special efforts should be made to enlist members of out-groups to useful work....The traditional leadership and responsibility of older men (whether Issei or Nisei) should also be recognized.

The Growth of Caste Attitudes - This is related to a factor inherent in the situation, i.e., the fact that the WRA administrative staff is "Caucasian", while the evacuees are "Oriental." Too often this gives rise to attitudes of superiority on the part of the administrative personnel. Citizen evacuees feel the distinction keenly.

Affronts to evacuee ideas of propriety. Among older Japanese, it is not considered proper to slap one another on the back. They also look askance upon WRA staff members acting in too friendly a way with evacuee assistants, whereby they call one another by their first names, etc. Together with this, traditional (and useful) Japanese culture patterns are sometimes ignored --- e.g., for responsible work in local government, respect for age in Japanese society (placing young men in responsible positions on the police force, for instance, is not always a good policy).<sup>5</sup>

This sort of analysis focused on the background of human relations in the centers did not uncover wholly new facts. Probably all the best informed center administrators found the material to be familiar. What it did was to organize the bits of knowledge about evacuees that had been picked up and the miscellaneous experiences in staff-evacuee relations and put them into intelligible relation in the perspective of the recent experiences of the Japanese Americans. For the top staff in Washington it constituted the sort of over-all view of the tensions, the gang activities, and the "incidents" that they had been trying to get. It helped make them intelligible as part of a larger whole. Center administrators, on the other hand, were critical of the analysis and, although finding it in the main a good generalization of what they had learned through close contact with staff and evacuees in the centers, they saw flaws in it and

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5. Community Analysis Report No. 2, "Causes of Unrest in Relocation Centers," by John F. Embree, January, 1943.



tended to regard it as something they already knew. The formulation was unquestionably less important for them than for Washington.

At the same time that Washington staff were becoming articulate about the need for paying attention to evacuee points of view, they set on foot an action which resulted in a new series of disturbances in the centers. This was a registration of all the evacuees, initiated by the War Department as a preliminary to re-opening Selective Service to the citizens and broadened by the WRA to include all adults as the basis for a general program of leave clearance for resettlement. The registration forms included two questions which came to be called "loyalty" questions. The registration was announced at the centers with little time for preparation of either staff or evacuees through adequate explanation of the purposes behind it. Registration, including some stand on the "loyalty" questions, was compulsory for every adult. It created crises in family relations and, in several centers, in staff-evacuee relations. In every center there were many meetings of evacuees, some of them extremely turbulent. There were refusals to register and in some centers gangs of young men attempted to intimidate others to answer "No" to the loyalty questions or not to answer them at all. It was clear to the administrators in Washington and most of the projects that they had not yet learned how to "deal with Japanese Americans" successfully.

The Community Analysis Section by this time consisted of only two men in the Washington office. Both went to the centers where they carried out studies of what was happening, and one participated in bringing about a smooth ending to what had begun as a very tempestuous registration. Their observations in the field became the basis for an inductive study of the causes of the evacuee reaction to registration and of the effects of administrative handling of it. Analyses of what happened at two centers



were promptly issued as Community Analysis reports to project and Washington staff. Five months after the event a detailed comparative analysis of registration at all centers was issued and circulated as a confidential report. The memoranda and reports issued by the section attempted to explain the reactions to registration by presenting the evacuee viewpoints towards the procedure and the issues involved:

For the older people, registration represents a new insecurity, just when they were settling down, and they are afraid that it may mean another forced move.....The Issei held a meeting... in which they poured out their past woes, and present worries --- financial losses as a result of evacuation, the disappointment of seeing their children treated as aliens after they had sacrificed so much to give them a good education and training to be law-abiding citizens, worrying about having to ask for leave clearance and the implication that such application might result in a forced move again, unfortunate experiences in sugar beet labor last summer.<sup>6</sup>

The crux of the whole problem is that the aliens were asked a question to which they felt they could not, in safety to their future and conscience, say "yes." On the original form...the aliens were asked not only to swear unqualified allegiance to this country, which refuses them naturalization and citizenship, but to forswear allegiance to Japan, the country of which they are nationals. It is true that this question was withdrawn and another substituted for it, but the very fact that it appeared on the form created uneasiness. It must be realized that these aliens are well aware of the resolutions of legislatures and of group and individual demands that they be returned to Japan as soon as possible. Many, despite an earnest desire to end their days in this land, have been led by circumstances to the conclusion that they will never again be able to earn a livelihood in this country, and assume that they will therefore be forced to seek a refuge in Japan. Naturally they wondered whether such a renunciation of Japan would not jeopardize their Japanese citizenship or subject them to punishment or disability at the hands of the Japanese government should they come within its jurisdiction, and they reacted accordingly. A negativistic attitude set in.

(The Analyst has) dealt with the underlying meanings of the "no" answers of the non-citizens because the decision of the older people was so central for the response that the younger people felt impelled to make. Once their parents, for any of the reasons listed above or for a combination of them, determined

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6. Project Analysis Series No. 1, "Registration at Central Utah," by John F. Embree, February, 1943.



that they would answer "no", the children were faced with a grave problem. The older people assumed the worst, that a "no" answer would bring segregation and eventual forced return to Japan. They appealed to their children to return a comparable answer so that, whatever happened, the families might remain together and inviolate. The pressure upon the children was intolerable. They had seen their parents uprooted and humiliated. A good many, resolved to spare their elders any further worry and sadness, suppressed their own desires and voted "no". Others resisted parental pressure for some time, only to give in at the end. The movement to have all members of the family reply in the same general way, so that a like fate and destination would be shared by all, precipitated an endless number of quarrels and misunderstandings within families. No more unfortunate and disorganizing event could have occurred. Ill-feelings and family disruptions which were occasioned then still persist...this has materially contributed to delinquency and gangsterism....There is much evidence that these internal disputes have greatly affected personal happiness and family life, and it is therefore imperative that the issue be settled as sensibly as possible and as soon as possible.

The feeling of loyalty to the old people and the resolve to share their fortunes and keep the family united was the dominant factor in "no" answers of citizens. In part this loyalty was volunteered; in part it was exacted. Where it was exacted, a note on the attitude of the elders is in order. It must be remembered that the non-citizen group has very rapidly been reduced from a position of leadership in the Japanese community to a position of impotence. Since the Nisei as a group were young and untried, financial and community control was in the hands of the first generation. And, of course, their positions as family elders left the parents, particularly the fathers, in the ascendancy. No group has been more rapidly deflated. Their assets and jobs were swept aside. The more prominent they had been in community life, the more likely they were to be investigated, detained, or interned. Criteria of prestige were suddenly rendered void. When self-government for assembly centers and relocation centers was instituted the Issei were barred from office. The family was the last as well as the strongest refuge of this older generation, the only spot where the word and advice of the elders still carried weight and authority. Both aliens and citizens sensed this, and because of it, the former were more insistent and the latter more pliant than would otherwise have been the case.

The reports discussed the relation of evacuee behavior during registration to the complex of attitudes arising out of their experience as an Oriental

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7. Project Analysis Series No. 3, "Registration at Manzanar," by Morris Edward Opler, April, 1943.



minority group and the special experiences of the period since Pearl Harbor in an effort to develop some understanding of what had happened during registration. They emphasized the complexity of evacuee motives in giving their answers and the impossibility of interpreting answers on the loyalty questions at face value.

They went on to show how different types of administrative handling had resulted in different evacuee reactions. This was the first systematic effort in WRA to compare centers in an effort to arrive at principles for administrative behavior. The range in reactions was so different from center to center that it became possible to relate specific administrative actions to smooth accomplishment of registration or to crisis and disturbance. A comparison of events at four centers led to the following conclusions:

The Central Utah presentation of the registration program was clear enough to give the residents of the center a much better understanding of the registration than the people of Tule Lake had received. As a consequence the resistance from the residents was immediately centered on the major issues.....The administrators were constantly prepared to discuss the problems of registration with evacuees. The effects of the protracted conferences were twofold: they provided a channel for the release of much evacuee resentment in talk rather than in oppositional action; and they acquainted the administration with the kinds of problems faced, thus permitting effective action to be taken.....

In striking contrast, the poorly informed residents of Tule Lake were not able to formulate their objections to registration so clearly, they were given no real opportunities to discuss the problems with administrators in the early stages of registration with threats of force rather than discussion and ameliorative action.....The very different results of the registration at the two projects must largely be attributed to these differences in administrative handling even when allowing for the opposition of a pro-Japanese minority at Tule. It is significant that such a minority also existed at Central Utah.

The Granada experience, like that at Minidoka (both centers where registration moved quite smoothly) illustrates (1) the value of careful preliminary education, supplemented by further discussion when misunderstanding persists, in the presentation of new policies or programs to the residents of relocation centers;



(2) the prime importance of consultation with representative evacuee groups in the implementation of such programs.....The administrative techniques employed to meet the crises faced at these two projects successfully resolved them to the satisfaction of the administrators principally because they were founded on an understanding of the evacuee point of view and because they involved the active participation of evacuees.<sup>8</sup>

Evidently crisis and disturbance were not inevitable.

The months during and immediately following registration were the period of most intensive learning about the human beings of the program for WRA staff in Washington and at most projects. (At Poston and Manzanar there had been periods of rapid learning just following the major incidents there.) At all projects registration brought basic issues for evacuees up to the level of decision. Attitudes which had been kept from staff up to then for fear of misunderstanding came to the surface and were expressed openly. At first, administrators were shocked or mystified, but quickly they began to inquire and to learn.

At Manzanar, as a result of registration, almost the whole staff was brought into an intensive study of evacuee viewpoints and the background giving rise to those viewpoints. At other projects detailed studies of "No" answers and their backgrounds were made. Evacuees and staff were brought into personal contact on what had been too delicate ground to tread.

In Washington the same sort of intensive interest was engendered by the completely unexpected reaction.

While this widespread interest among staff was still current, Community Analysts were established at two centers besides Poston. They and the Washington Analysts in their study of registration and all that it had uncovered were not working alone on the job of interpreting evacuees

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8. " Army and Leave Clearance Registration," by Frank I. Sweetser, June, 1943.



to the administrators. The administrators were everywhere doing it themselves. The Community Analysts were able to present systematically in their reports for general staff use the findings resulting from the intensive inquiries. They were moreover able to carry out the comparative analysis by centers and again to aid in giving the over-all picture which Washington staff wanted. This was their main function in the learning process that took place among staff during the spring of 1943.

Fruits of the learning were most clearly manifest in connection with putting into execution a new major policy --- segregation. The decision to segregate loyal and disloyal was taken only after long consideration and with much doubt as to desirability and probable results by top WRA staff. To most center administrators it appeared as a desirable move in meeting the problem of the "trouble pattern" in the centers. They had become convinced that a good deal of non-cooperation sprang from pro-Japan individuals in the centers and that the existence of pro-Japanese made for disharmony and conflict among the evacuees. They looked on segregation primarily as a move for smoother adjustment in the centers. To Washington staff this had some importance, but it was conceived primarily as a measure to further the resettlement program. The procedure was settled on in May and announced in July, 1943.

For the first time Community Analysts were assigned a clear-cut role in a specific new program of major policy significance. Analysts had now been placed in nine centers. The field analysts were asked to do two things: (1) to survey their centers by interviewing a wide variety of people to determine what the probable reaction of the evacuees would be to segregation and (2) as soon as the segregation procedure was set in motion to report weekly to their project directors and to Washington what the current reactions were to the process. The forecasting of reactions



resulted in a consensus that evacuees, as a result of registration, were generally expecting such a move, that many of them wanted it to take place, and that, providing it were handled with due regard for evacuee attitudes, no disturbances or incidents need be expected. These findings were not a basis for policy decision; they were called for in an effort to find out what might be expected after the decision had been made. Reporting on the process from week to week resulted in Washington's keeping abreast of evacuee reaction.

The Washington staff of the section was brought into the detailed planning of segregation procedure. They prepared a statement which was issued as an administrative instruction to all WRA staff outlining the basis of a general approach to the new problem. The instruction emphasized the presentation of segregation as a non-punitive measure in line with evacuee attitudes towards it, the importance of utilizing evacuee leaders in carrying out the process, careful attention to communicating this official approach as well as operational details to both staff and evacuees, provision for considerate handling of people such as allowance of time for farewells, and attention to welcoming and receiving persons who would be moving from the newly designated segregation center of Tule Lake to the other relocation centers. It also warned of resistances, which did materialize, on the part of loyal evacuees then in Tule Lake to being required to move again. The attention to careful preparation of staff and evacuees for the new move and to consideration for evacuee viewpoints and leadership in carrying out the process embodied the essence of what had been learned by staff generally as a result of registration.

The activities of Community Analysis in systematizing what had been learned and injecting it into procedures for segregation defined a role which was an important one thereafter. Top staff now generally believed that "incidents" and disturbances must and could be avoided. They



felt they had a key to means for avoiding them in recognition of the evacuees' own approach to things. Frequently thereafter Washington staff, and to some extent project staff, utilized the Community Analysts in planning the presentation and communication to evacuees of policy announcements which would affect the residents of the centers profoundly. The most notable subsequent activity of this sort was in connection with the presentation of the plan for ultimate liquidation of the centers after the War Department's lifting of the West Coast exclusion orders in December, 1944.

The social explosions resulting from throwing heterogeneous groups together suddenly, registration and the loyalty issue, and segregation were the most spectacular of the human relations problems that arose in the centers. Constantly, however, throughout the program there were less spectacular problems which involved fewer people at a time and consequently less general disturbance in a center. There were strikes of work crews for various causes, maladjustments of Community Councils and administrators, juveniles at odds with their relocation center worlds. The juvenile problems increased with the age of the centers, strikes became occasional and generally of less community concern, the council-administration relations developed into more or less workable accommodations of interest. The field analysts studied these problems and advised with center administrators on solutions. Their reports came into Washington where they contributed to an understanding of the community contexts of trouble and helped make clear the patterns of successful and unsuccessful administrative handling and of evacuee reactions to different administrative techniques.

Resistances to Resettlement. The second over-all problem of the WRA program in connection with which Community Analysis made a contribution arose out



of the decision to focus the agency's activities on resettling the evacuees widely over the United States. The movement of people out of the centers in response to job opportunities which the WRA had opened up by the spring of 1943 was very limited and confined almost exclusively to a few thousand of the younger men and women. Through the spring and summer it became obvious that to the people in the relocation centers resettlement was not so much of an opportunity as the administrators believed it to be. There was a deep seated desire to remain in the centers on the part of the majority of the older people and they tended to keep their families with them. By May, 1943 the limited response to resettlement was recognized by the WRA as a major problem.

The Community Analysis Section was the first branch of the organization to make any systematic investigation of what was holding the evacuees back. As soon as field analysts were established in five of the centers, they were instructed to study the causes of "resistance." Their reports were prepared for distribution widely to WRA staff and in June a general summary of the findings was issued by the Community Analysis Section. For more than a year thereafter, Community Analysts continued to focus on this problem and to point out the factors influencing the evacuee attitudes towards resettlement.

The June report of the Community Analysis Section was called "Evacuee Resistances to Relocation." It accepted widespread resettlement as the most desirable solution of the problems of the uprooted people. Calling attention to the fact that only a little over 4,000 persons had resettled up to June, the report proceeded to analyze the factors behind the reluctance.



Most of the evacuee reluctance to relocate is due to deep-seated feelings of insecurity in regard to life "outside", together with another set of resistances due to a newly developed social organization within the center.

#### Social Reorganization

Relocation centers began with a badly disorganized lot of people. But human society abhors a vacuum, and in the course of the months since last summer, new social forms have developed and old ones have been recreated.

The family in particular has gained strength as a result of evacuation, in the sense that family members depend upon one another for the lack of other stable groups. Thus the Issei-Nisei cleavage which was growing before evacuation has been in some ways reduced.

After the initial shocks and the early unhappy JAOL<sup>9</sup> attempts to run the centers, Issei control has re-emerged. With a Nisei population, young and inexperienced, this was bound to occur. The strike at Poston was, according to the analysts there, a crisis which ended with a reorganization of the society along more stable lines. Local block and neighborhood public opinion is re-emerging to control individual behavior.

There is thus a new social structure replacing the disorganization of last summer which has grown up in the projects. That means a new stability and cohesiveness. The relocation program threatens this new equilibrium and the society is bound to resist this threat to its existence, just as it resisted registration which carried in it the suggestion of relocation and segregation; i.e. the suggestion of a new moving of people and breaking of social ties.

#### Importance of Issei Influence

All this means, among other things, that the views of the Issei need serious consideration in any War Relocation program whether it be relocation or recreation. By influencing them in favor of a program, the whole center is influenced. That means attention to a relatively small number of older males since the women will follow their lead, but it also means patience and long discussion over extended periods of time. No newspaper announcement or brief statement before a meeting can be considered as informing the center about a new program and its meaning.

The price of neglecting this fundamental social fact is evacuee resistance to administration, bad feelings between evacuees and administration and thus an impeding of the relocation program.

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9. Japanese American Citizens League, an organization of second generation Japanese Americans.



Thus it is the Issei who need to be convinced of the desirability of relocation and their children's future. Through their leadership and their parental relationships they can counsel their children in favor of relocation. This can only be done if they are convinced of the good faith of the War Relocation Authority if they believe that the local project staff is with them, not against them.<sup>10</sup>

These general conditions were analyzed further into specific factors involved in any individual's decision to resettle, such as reluctance to break up the family, fear of loneliness outside, reluctance to give up status achieved in the center, financial problems and insecurities, misinformation and rumor concerning prejudice and discrimination outside, and the insecurity of older people as a result of the denial of citizenship to them. Contained within the report were suggestions as to a basic approach in presenting resettlement to evacuees: (1) patient discussions of resettlement with older leaders, (2) need for family discussions and for informing parents concerning the purposes of the program, (3) the encouragement of friendly and unprejudiced attitudes of staff members in order to help restore confidence in America's attitudes towards evacuees, and (4) the discouragement of attempts to increase feelings of insecurity in the centers through, for example, reducing the number of jobs available.

The approach to resettlement outlined in this report was not at the time it was issued in line with all the thinking that had taken place in Washington. It represented one school of thought among the top staff, where there were two more or less competing points of view. One view held that the greater the sense of insecurity in the centers the

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10. Community Analysis Report No. 5, "Evacuee Resistances to Relocation," by John F. Embree, June, 1943



more people would decide to resettle; the other held that insecurity in the centers from whatever cause would upset people further and increase their hesitation to re-establish themselves elsewhere. Gradually the latter viewpoint, during the summer of 1943, became the dominant one in the Washington office. By October, when a new Relocation Division of the Authority was organized, two of the suggestions of the Community Analysts, embodying approaches to the evacuees through Issei leaders and through family discussion, became a part of the Official program in regard to resettlement.

The first Community Analysis reports were admittedly sketchy and did not probe deeply into the older generation's lack of interests in leaving the centers under the existing conditions. More detailed studies were carried out during the following year, particularly at Granada and Rohwer. As the relocation center communities settled down and resettlers, despite an abundance of job offers outside, continued to be numbered in thousands instead of tens of thousands, gradually the evacuee attitudes towards the centers and the outside world became clear. A report prepared by the Analyst at the Rohwer, Arkansas, center in the summer of 1944 concluded:

Issei feel completely stymied as they realize that they may never be allowed to resettle in large colonies and that the only method of relocation open is the dispersal of isolated families and individuals. Not even day-to-day social life with other Japanese community life will cease. Small groups of families living contiguously can maintain social intercourse and Japanese institutional and community activity in a limited way. But, for the most part, benefits derived from social and economic cohesion and cooperation will be gone. Instead they will face the many problems of individual relocation described above.

In their mental state of mild group-frustration, their natural reaction is to do nothing and simply to hold what they already have. Rohwer, after all, is a Japanese colony in all the more important respects. It is self-sufficient and completely isolated from the host of social and economic difficulties Issei necessarily encounter on cutting loose from its protection and relocating in their own.



### Temporary Postponement of Relocation to Stay in the Center

An ever-growing number decide that only Rohwer Center itself will provide them with social and economic security, freedom from discrimination and severe competition, and the enjoyment of some leisure and recreation. The shock of evacuation and the conditioning of center life have led older Issei to compare the undesirability of individual relocation with the safety and security of the center. The appeal of center life increases as the war continues and as more and more Nisei disappear on relocation or into the Army.

Many have decided, therefore, to stay in the center and hold its advantages until the war is over, until the feeling against Japanese has abated, until the family can agree on relocation plans, until the children graduate from center schools, until California opens, until older Issei are cared for, and until any number of other conditions have been met.

These conditions to relocation are primarily the result of evacuation and subsequent relocation center experience. They discourage the relocation of some Issei temporarily and indefinitely, and lead them to weigh the advantages of avoiding individual relocation and preserving the colony life of the center. These Issei who postpone relocation temporarily are probably in the majority, but there is a group of Issei putting off relocation permanently. They are settling down in the center with no thought of relocating anywhere at any time.

### Permanent Postponement of Relocation to Stay in the Center

The very old, the poor, the less aggressive, and the women are in the forefront of those who do not wish to relocate under any circumstances or in any manner. They will choose, if possible, to remain at Rohwer indefinitely.

Life at Rohwer to them is attractive, ideal, and suited to their declining years. In contrast with pre-evacuation life, they have very little hard work to do.

They are fed, clothed, and provided with facilities for spending leisure time whether they work or not. Some Japanese arts, crafts, and games are carried on at Rohwer so that they are reluctant to exchange this Japanese milieu for a life and locale in which old cultural forms are entirely absent. The prospect of starting their lives anew on their own resources, even in a colony of their own people, is a little terrifying.<sup>11</sup>

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11. Project Analysis Series No. 18, "Relocation at Rohwer," Part II, "Issei Relocation Problems," by Charles Wisdom.



Other Community Analysis reports made abundantly clear the nature of the Issei acceptance of relocation center life for the duration of the war, and the motives back of it. So long as resettlement was a voluntary matter, it would continue to drain off the able-bodied young people but would move very few of the older.

The role of Community Analysis in the agency's resettlement problem was that of helping in the formulation of a basic approach and in the definition and re-definition of the human attitudes on which the program was impinging. The techniques which could be used under the given conditions for influencing evacuees to accept the WRA resettlement program were already devised by the fall of 1943. Family counseling and the utilization of evacuee leadership in Relocation Commissions were developed slowly and imperfectly during 1944. Analysts continued to provide information concerning the reaction of evacuees to various minor techniques employed by the Relocation Division <sup>and</sup> to make predictions concerning the volume of resettlement to be expected over given periods. The nature of the impasse existing in the resettlement program was set forth repeatedly in various Community Analysis reports. The analyst at the Granada center wrote in November, 1944:

#### Evacuee's Reaction to WRA's Plan for his Future

WRA says resettle and sets about finding opportunities for resettlement. When the evacuee does not take advantage of those opportunities, we say "here is resistance." The fact is that WRA's purpose in evacuation has resulted in an added program of resettlement while the Issei's purpose in evacuation is to wait until conditions right themselves and he has the opportunity to return to the situation out of which he came. The Issei has not been able to accept WRA's major premise, and resettlement under those conditions is just as much a matter of loss of self-determination as was evacuation. WRA's philosophy of resettlement no doubt constitutes an effective solution to many of the problems which brought about evacuation. However, the people have not been taken fully into WRA's confidence, nor has a full and complete discussion of the problems been held in order that the residents



may have the time and opportunity to gain their own insight into the situation, and participate in working out the solution. Facing facts together leaves nothing to resist.

#### Typical Behavior Patterns: WRA and Evacuee

WRA's typical behavior pattern is to arrive at its own solution as to what is best for the people, to implement that solution with opportunities which it feels are adequate, and by high pressure salesmanship to persuade the people to take advantage of these opportunities. The typical evacuee's reaction to this approach is first to distrust a cut and dried solution in the development of which they have not participated and to try to find the "bug" in the program feeling sure that there is a "bug" in it.

The very speed with which a program of resettlement is carried on such as recruiting for various industries is translated in the evacuee's mind into pressure, and pressure is translated into loss of self-determination, and loss of self-determination leads to resentment, and resentment results in emotional blocking and inaction or immobilization. Resistance then is a result of the evacuee's failure to accept WRA's solution to his problem, and this failure is a result of his not having the opportunity to develop the insight into his problem which the WRA has developed. Again it may partly be due to difficulty of communication, and partly due to unwillingness on the part of WRA to take the people fully into their confidence; to give opportunity and time for full discussion and insight and then to leave responsibility with them in working out their plans based on this insight.

As an example: WRA says, because you are going to resettle in communities throughout the country and become assimilated into the life of those communities you had better learn to speak English. So we will set up English classes in our adult education department and teach you English. The Issei do not show up for English classes in large numbers, and we interpret it as resistance. In reality he does not accept the premise WRA starts with and therefore does not see the need for learning English. This may be interpreted as resistance while it actually constitutes two different lines of thought.<sup>12</sup>

The work of Community Analysis in defining the resettlement problem was less influential on policy than the work in connection with the human problems in center management. The objectives of administrators and evacuees in center management were, in main outline, nearly parallel;

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12. Granada Community Analysis Trend Report, by J. Ralph McFarling, November, 1945.



both wanted harmony and were willing generally to make the basic adjustments once the sources of disharmony were understood. The objectives in resettlement were widely divergent and no means were devised for harmonizing them under the conditions of exclusion from the West Coast, the war, and the WRA form of organization. Only fundamental changes in this framework could create a situation in which the information concerning evacuee viewpoints supplies by Community Analysis could be used in important ways. The lifting of exclusion in December, 1944, ultimately constituted a basic change which led to a resolution of the impasse.

Reporting the Relocation Center Communities. With whole communities at the ends of their administrative lines, project administrators quickly became aware that almost every action of their staff had wide repercussions. A decision to shift a work crew from one construction project to another might result in an unexpected crisis in labor relations. A suggestion to the Community Council that they participate in the selection of a Relocation Commission might produce heated debate and no action. An election of a member of the board of the cooperative stores might result in protracted controversy and involve all the organized bodies in the center. A conflict might develop between a mess hall crew and the women's club of one of the blocks and settlement of it involve members of staff for days. Reactions to what seemed a simple administrative instruction from Washington were often unexpected, extremely complex, and long drawn out.

Center administrators worked out various devices for keeping in touch with the community. A few worked closely with the formal Community Councils. All developed either a formal or an informal group of evacuee advisers who knew what was going on in the community and kept them informed.



The miscellaneous contacts of staff were a source of news and information. One of the devices at the disposal of the center administrators was the Community Analyst. It was the latter's job to keep informed concerning what was happening. In every center some members of the staff relied heavily on the Analyst for a knowledge of events and trends in the community life. In a few centers the top administrator utilized the analyst's information constantly either through having him participate regularly in staff meetings, through more informal regular conferences, or sometimes, more rarely, through reading his reports.

In Washington, particularly after the major disturbances of 1942, the problem of keeping abreast of events in each project so that something might be done before they had gone too far in a wrong direction loomed large. Washington staff, as much as any center administrator, felt the need of systematic channels for direct knowledge of the evacuee communities, but they did not have as many devices at their disposal. They could not utilize evacuee friends and advisers and the routine administrative reports from the centers did not usually give a sufficiently detailed or intimate picture of what was taking place. The device of Community Analysis came, as a result, to be used to supply this need of Washington staff, chiefly through regular reading of the written reports as they came in from the centers.

From the beginning, in addition to reporting on their special assignments in connection with registration or resettlement, the Community Analysts at the projects prepared reports on miscellaneous current events. At first these were little more than a record of getting acquainted with the community and had little value for the administrators in



their current problems. When the segregation process began in July 1943 weekly accounts of reactions in the communities were requested by the Washington office from all centers. After the completion of segregation when the segregation center was in a state of upheaval, regular reports interpreting the swiftly moving events in that peculiar center were written by the Analyst, Marvin K. Opler, and read both in Washington and at the center. At two centers early in 1944 the Analysts began to write weekly reports in an effort to present the trends in community life and the reactions to administrative action. In September, 1944, the weekly reporting technique was adopted in all centers and continued in use for a year until the centers were closed.

These "Trend Reports" did not follow a fixed form. They reflected the personality, the particular contacts, and the limitations of each field Analyst. They were, however, the record of observation by trained social scientists who were trying to see their communities whole and to trace the interaction of the people in them with the program of the agency. There was great variation in their content, which was guided by the criterion of "events of greatest community interest," and in their coverage of the community, which was limited by the contacts and to some extent the personality of the observer. They sought primarily to report the viewpoints of evacuees, but inevitably also reported the interaction of staff and evacuees. They were based on what the Analysts learned from a variety of community leaders, on gossip and conversation picked up here and there, and on the Analysts' observation of formal meetings and other gatherings in the center.



Perhaps the most notable thing about this week is that the residents have, in general, been more concerned with events outside of the center than within the center.

When the analyst asked his best source on gossip in the laundry room what the women were talking about this week, he was astonished at the answer. Other weeks she had reported carping criticism of the center and its management, uncomplimentary remarks about the Caucasian personnel and the way it lived on the fat of the land at the expense of evacuees, small gossip about this and that. This time, however, she replied, "All they are talking about are the casualties in Italy and the boys going to the Army."

Then she went on about as follows: "You know things are a lot different than they were a while ago. People really rebelled at the time of registration. They said awful things about the Government, and they spoke of the boys who volunteered almost as if they were traitors to the Japanese for serving a country that had treated the Japanese so badly. When selective service was reinstituted, all one heard was that the Government had no right to draft men out of a camp like this. At first when the boys left, their mothers wept with bitterness and resentment. They didn't think their sons should go. This week five have gone from our block. I tell you I'm surprised at the difference. Wives and mothers are sorry and they weep a lot. But now they really feel it is a man's duty to serve his country. They wouldn't want him not to go when he is called. When they talk among themselves, they tell each other these things. They feel more as they did before evacuation."

The point of all this seems to be that the war, instead of being merely "the war", is becoming "our war" to an increasing number of Heart Mountaineers. The report given above agrees with many other things that have been observed that show the same trend. The most recent indication of the new feeling is that so many people have manifested a desire to participate in a memorial service that is being planned to honor the first Heart Mountain man killed in action that no place with adequate space can be found.

It may be added that rumors regarding casualties became quite rampant. False reports circulated about almost all of the Heart Mountain soldiers who are known to be in Italy. The administration is planning to publish the correct information from now on as soon as the War Department has notified the families. This should serve to check the rumors to some degree.

The change of feeling about Army service and the war described in the foregoing discussion has not been universal, of course. But this does seem to be the general trend of sentiment in the center. There is a minority which resists participation with



and support of the United States, either because of pro-Japan convictions or persistent bitterness about evacuation. Some of them seem to intend to keep up agitation against accepting the draft in a quiet underground way. One report was received of an instance in which some of these recalcitrants sought to exploit the grief of a father who had been notified that his son was seriously wounded. In his presence, they made remarks to the effect that, if his son had not been a fool, he might be lodged safely in a Federal prison for the duration instead of being wounded in Italy. This sort of thing is not likely to endear the resisters to the rest of the people who feel differently about the war and who certainly have other ideas about how one should behave toward a grief-stricken parent. Such action clearly does not help their cause, and one suspects that there is probably nothing they can do to increase their influence in any important way. They are opposing a general trend that seems likely to continue.<sup>13</sup>

This report referred to a particular week in 1944. Against the background of similar accounts written from week to week, it called attention to the fact that response to selective service which had earlier been a matter of concern to the administration, was now a settled question. Moreover, it pointed to a basic reorientation of thinking. It could be concluded that the community would probably become more cooperative with the administration and more receptive to the resettlement program of WRA. The change recorded was subtle, clearly observable only to a person who was in close and continuous contact with the evacuees, as the analyst was. With knowledge of this sort at hand, the administration could move with a little more assurance in carrying out its plans.

Trend reports helped fill a peculiar need of the WRA. It was a very fast moving program in the sense that events of great emotional impact on the evacuees took place in rapid succession. These events, such as movement from the Army's assembly centers to the relocation centers, the early "incidents," registration, segregation, the reopening of Selective Service, the lifting of exclusion, and the setting of closing dates

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13. Heart Mountain Community Analysis Trend Report, by A.T. Hansen, July, 1944



for the centers, occurred at intervals of about six months. Each event changed the whole framework of life, in that it affected every family's plans and hopes for its future. As a result the communities never became really stabilized in a manner comparable even to war-time communities outside. The effect of the various events was to create every few months distinctly new situations for center administrators to deal with. The process of getting acquainted with the community had to be repeated over and over again.

The evacuees' reaction to the lifting of exclusion and the announcement of WRA's plan to close centers by January 2, 1946 was a matter of intense interest for the administrators. On it depended decisions regarding crucial next steps in the program. The Analysts' reports on the first reaction attempted to indicate the nature of the communities with which administrators would have to work during the coming year.

.....the center residents are tending to group themselves into two distinct classes, with respect to West Coast resettlement, the people who feel that constructive plans for resettlement must be made with dispatch and courage, and, on the other hand, those who say that it will be best to stay in camp until the war is ended even though definite statements as to center closure have been made. The negative group is made up principally of older Issei who for nationalistic or other reasons are reluctant to relocate at this time. The leaders of the positive group are older Nisei and the younger Issei, and also those older Issei generally who have close relatives in the armed forces.

While it is yet too early to say definitely, it appears that the positive group is much the larger and that in it are included the leaders who will attempt to lead the people to a realistic facing of the facts of the situation in terms of an early relocation. The Council Chairman and a few of his more important advisers, Nisei and Issei, are included in this group and are working hard to direct the thinking of Topaz evacuees in the direction of capitalizing on present economic opportunities.

In several previous newsletters mention has been made of the fact that the one-time relatively wide gulf between the Administration and the evacuees was being systematically harrowed.



It is significant to observe that the lifting of the mass exclusion order appears to have had the effect of harrowing this gulf still further. Evacuation is now no longer the issue it once was. The leaders of the positive group will probably be able to work with the Administration without losing the confidence of the people generally, although there will be older residents who criticize leaders for cooperating with the administration. 14

At the regular meeting of the Poston I Local Council on December 20 general opposition to the closing of the centers was expressed. Some men who are also members of the Community Council led in the presentation of a resolution calling for a meeting at Poston of delegates from all centers to discuss the matter.

The proposals of the council was based solidly on public opinion. With a few exceptions, the reaction to the closing of the center was strongly negative.....The announcement of the closing of Poston overwhelmed the lifting of exclusion as far as evacuee opinion was concerned. Almost immediately discussions of coercive nature of the new program began. (One man called it "evacuation in reverse.") Evacuees began to ask, "What will happen if we don't leave?" Almost none believe that all the residents would leave in the 6 to 12 month period. From the belief that many can't leave to the belief that the center will not close during the year after all was an easy transition. Hence, at the end of the week the majority opinion among evacuees was that the center would remain open well beyond a year.

Among the false ideas that developed: (1) the Army is taking over the center management; and (2) applications for revocation of citizenship would automatically guarantee a chance to stay in a center. 15

During the final year of the program the analysts' trend reporting assumed considerable importance. Administrators were much concerned over the evacuee reaction to closing and necessarily watched closely the response to freedom move back to the West Coast and any tendencies to "sit tight" in the centers. Would evacuees leave the centers with sufficient speed so that orderly closing could be accomplished at the end? At three centers the Community Analysts' weekly reports were read regularly in staff meeting as a basis for discussion of current trends and problems in the center. At others the Analysts' observations were used in less formal manner, but at all centers the current analysis was important in keeping some

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14. Central Utah Com. An. Trend Report by Oscar F. Hoffman, Dec. 28, 1944  
15. Colo. River Community An. Trend Report, by David French, Jan. 3, 1945



key staff members orientated in the rapidly shifting community reactions. Of special interest were the Analysts' estimated of probable effects of the announcement planned for July 1945 of specific closing schedules for all centers as well as the effects of setting the closing dates in all cases earlier than the end of the year. Predictions were asked for by Washington, and the Analysts' and other estimates were taken into account in determining dates and scheduling departures. The core of one analyst's reply was

Last week the Analyst predicted tentatively that there would be no reaction to speak of as a result of the Director's teletype regarding the setting of a closing date. When he made the prediction, he thought there might be a little. If there has been any at all, it has been subtle and inward.....Looked at primarily in terms of the responses of the residents, this is about how he sizes it up.

(1) There are many who have relocation plans they expect to mature during the summer. Announcing a date would not affect them appreciably.

(2) There are others who intend to go out before the center closes, but they are not pushing their plans actively partly because of a hope they still entertain that the center may not close; something may happen. They want to be absolutely sure it will close before they leave. The announcement of a definite date probably would not convince all of them absolutely, but it would diminish their hopes and make them more disposed to cut themselves off from the center. Their planning would be speeded up.

(3) Those who are determined to stay to the end and see what happens would have an opportunity to discover how determined they are somewhat sooner. The analyst suspects that persons who were determined sitters on, let us say November 1, would also be determined sitters on January 1. That is, if they hadn't changed their minds by November 1, not many of them would change in two additional months.

(4) There are others who expect to be here on the closing date who are not determined to be here. They simply see no prospect on the outside that does not appear worse than the prospect of facing a "closing center." They weigh the relative insecurity of staying against the insecurity of going. And staying, at least tentatively, seems to be preferable. They have faith that the Government will take care of them in some way -- by setting up a new agency or transfer to the Department of Justice.



....How would an earlier closing date affect this group? Probably about the same proportion would decide to stay if the date were November 1 instead of January 1. They must make economic and or psychological sacrifices to go out in any case and two months at the tail end of the program would probably not make much difference. Decisions are being arrived at now while large numbers of friends and neighbors are leaving the center.

To recapitulate: Category (1) would not be touched by the announcement of an earlier closing date. Category (2) would be benefited in that the waiters and hoppers would be stimulated to earlier action. Categories (3) and (4) would probably not be affected notably, i.e., the percentage that decided to go rather than stay would likely be about the same....<sup>16</sup> The number remaining at the end will be varied not by putting the closing date a little earlier or a little later but by the reports of conditions on the outside that come back to the center and by the kind of penalties for failing to relocate that are announced or people come to imagine.

The trend reports, during 1945, were summarized in Washington as they came in each week from the centers, and the weekly summary was mimeographed and distributed throughout the Authority to relocation field officers as well as to staff in the centers and in Washington. Some staff read and used them, many did not. It was nevertheless possible, thru them, for WRA staff generally to maintain some perspective on how the program was affecting the people involved in it and what relation their particular jobs bore to the general human problem.

Additional Functions of Community Analysis. The relationship of Community Analysis to major decisions and actions following the formulation of basic WRA policies has been sketched. There were other contributions probably not reflected in important decisions which forged the framework of the program, but which nevertheless influenced the whole tone of administration thru affecting the day-to-day relations of staff and evacuees.

When Community Analysis was first set up, the Chief of Community Management and other Washington staff thought it would have an important

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16. Heart Mountain Community Analysis Trend Report from June 22-28, 1945  
by A.T. Hansen



function in contributing to the education of WRA personnel generally in understanding the Japanese Americans. The first report of the head of the Section on "Dealing with Japanese Americans" was given wide distribution among WRA staff with this aim in view. He and the Chief of Community Management borrowed a phrase from an evacuee's statement in defining the basic function of Community Analysis. The evacuee had written in January, 1943, that a contributing factor to unrest in the centers was the WRA staff's "ignorance of the true pulse, sentiment, and psychological background of the Japanese community." As soon as it was established the Section was given wide latitude in preparing reports for distribution to all WRA personnel and also to persons outside the organization. Several series of mimeographed reports were produced during the course of the program.

Community Analysis Reports were designed to present simply and readably facts important for an understanding of the Japanese American background. Reports of a dozen pages discussed the less well-understood aspects of life before evacuation which because of ignorance about them were likely to be foci of prejudice and misunderstanding. The types and activities of organizations, such as the Japanese Association, the Judo clubs, and the popular Shinto sects were described. Japanese holidays, about most of which the staff were ignorant, were described so that celebrations in the centers might be better understood. A report on the nature of and extent to which assimilation had taken place among the second generation was issued. Another set forth the facts in regard to the very much misunderstood group of second generation young people educated in Japan, the Kibei, and indicated the administrative problems presented by the group. A report on the Buddhist church in the United States and



its activities, its aims, and state of assimilation was issued. In the same series were also a few comparative analyses of important problems at all centers, including the causes of unrest in the early months, the over-all picture of what happened during segregation, and the factors involved in labor problems in the centers. Three reports dealt with the nature of prejudice and discrimination in West Coast communities.

The Project Analysis Series was designed to give insight into more specialized aspects of center life. It contained brief analyses of specific situations in particular centers in order to give center administrators more perspective on what was happening in their own projects. Reports described the reactions to registration at two centers, the attitudes to the fence as a symbol of restriction and discrimination at one center, a labor dispute of boiler men and administration, problems of community government at two centers, the complex reactions to the re-opening of Selective Service at one center, and so on. The focus of the project analyses was usually on evacuee reactions to administrative actions. They attempted to relate the reactions both to the background of the group and the context of community life at the moment.

Community Analysis Notes were not systematic analyses but consisted of statements by evacuees giving their points of view, brief descriptions of customs unfamiliar to staff, and descriptions of the communities evacuees lived in before evacuation as seen through their own eyes. Thus autobiographical statements were presented in order to show evacuees' approaches to the questions of registration, segregation, and relocation. Notes on the pre-evacuation communities were organized and presented as reports in order to give relocation officers some background in the problems they encountered in resettling the evacuees as they returned to the West Coast.



Copies of the three series of reports were distributed to WRA staff in Washington and in the centers. "Dealing with Japanese Americans" was incorporated in the kit of materials given each new recruit in WRA personnel. They were read by some staff members, filed away by others. What they actually accomplished in giving better understanding of the human problems to staff generally cannot be measured. Certainly one of their most important uses was in assisting in the orientation of new staff members as they came into the organization.

In the fall of 1943 a Relocation Division was organized to focus the resettlement activities of the agency, and the organization of field offices was carried out to cover the whole of the United States except the excluded areas on the West Coast. A proposal was made for setting up Community Analysts in the areas of resettlement. It was not accepted for several reasons. One was that the Relocation Division regarded the analysis of the communities in which it was working as part of the essence of the job of the relocation officers. Another reason was that it was not thought feasible to establish an analyst in free communities where WRA did not have full jurisdiction.

It was not until late in 1944 that Community Analysis extended any of its activities beyond the relocation centers in an important way. When the exclusion orders were lifted, two Analysts were assigned to the West Coast for the purpose of surveying attitudes in the coast communities towards the return of the evacuees. Their analyses were used by relocation officers in estimating the extent and nature of resistance to the return and as leads to areas of the communities in which they could work constructively. The findings in the California survey provided what turned out to be a sound estimate of the patterns of attitude and of the major problems to be encountered:



The return of the Japanese is but one of California's many wartime problems.

California population has increased in precisely those areas where Japanese concentrated before evacuation and where it is expected they will return. Towns have mushroomed and big-city problems have been dumped into the laps of small-town people. Not all the great emotion evoked by rescission was due to anti-Japanese feeling. Some of it resulted from blowing off steam over getting one more unsolved problem.

Among California's pre-rescission headaches were the housing shortage; local public transportation snarls; occasional bread-downs in food distribution; tensions resulting from the great influxes, before and during the war, of in-migrants, especially of minority groups; problems arising from the wartime industrial expansion and development of the state for military training camps, hospitals, and embarkation; and most constant of all, anxiety over the future of California after the war.

The West Coast, including California, differs from other relocation areas.

Unlike eastern relocation areas, California and the rest of the West Coast was the home of most Japanese. They were evacuated from there, an experience which has left scars not only on the Japanese who were removed but on their neighbors and business associates.

Every West Coast community has people who remember the first Japanese, helped plant and cultivate prejudice, kept it alive, through quiet periods, and fanned it when they thought the public in a good mood for it. Every community also has people who were friendly to the first Japanese, have encouraged community participation and worked for community acceptance.

Attitudes of individual friends and opponents are in a rapid state of change, the general direction being toward meeting on a common middle ground.

At first, friendly people rejoiced over rescission as a victory, while conservative, negative people in the public eye modified their opposition like good losers to fall into step behind Governor Earl Warren, Superintendent of Schools, Walter Dexter, Attorney General Robert Kenney, and from the University of California, President Robert Sproul and Dean Monroe Deutsch. The words of these state leaders outweighed those of the Army and national figures in their figures on California attitudes. Within particular communities, statements of respected local leaders affected sentiment. For example, in Yuba and Sutter Counties, State Senator W.P. Rich at the Marysville Presbyterian Men's Forum on December 29 was an important influence. After



bluntly reminding his audience of the Constitutional rights of the Japanese, he said, in part:

"The Supreme Court of the United States has spoken and no matter what individual personal opinions may exist, they no longer are the issue...All this reckless talk of people taking the law into their own hands has its perils."

Later, as practical problems like housing, responsibility for protection, and giving advice to evacuees began to loom up, the line between friends and opponents blurred even more. They began to meet on a middle ground and say,

"Evacuation was a mistake, but since it happened and people are in the camps, maybe it would be best for them not to come back as yet, maybe not for a couple of months or until after the war."

Concern for evacuees became the new angle. Opponents quickly seized and worked it. Evacuee scouts and evacuee letters describing their resistance to resettlement further confused friends who already were feeling sunk at finding the Yamamotos a house and worried about bad reception. They began to take the opposition line and to criticize WRA heartlessness.

Counties differ as to how near they are to the turn of the tide.

Tulare County seems the farthest away because the forces of resistance are in the saddle and the good-will people have not even begun to work together. The latter say, "The time isn't ripe." It took far less lawlessness in other counties than has already occurred in Tulare to anger conservative citizens to fight back for American principles, regardless of their feeling about Japanese. Each county has its own boiling point which it seems to have to reach before people start saying generally, "Well, I don't want to see them back either, but things are going too far around here to suit my taste."<sup>17</sup>

An important aspect of the educational function of Community Analysis was in relations with the outside public and with other government agencies. The mimeographed series were distributed on request to persons outside the agency. Frequently, an aspect of the program involved other agencies such as the War Department and the Department of Justice, which had not been working directly with the evacuees and had to acquire rapidly the necessary background for a common approach. The Community

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17. Community Analysis Report No. 11, "Exploratory Survey of California Attitudes Toward the Return of the Japanese," by Katharine Luomala.



Analysis reports, as interpretations of the problems in terms of the human beings involved, provided materials which were not available through the other administrative reports. They were consequently frequently used in WRA's efforts to transmit its experience and the point of view it had developed towards its problems.

Summary. Community Analysis functioned in the WRA program to help in the definition of many of the most important problems which the agency faced. The administrators were working with unfamiliar material --- people whose background was strange to them and whose recent experience gave rise to behavior which was not intelligible if one did not understand the psychological impact of that experience. Problems in center management and in resettlement could not be defined adequately if the motives and reactions of the human beings involved were left out of account. Community Analysis constantly presented to the administrators who were making daily decisions the nature of the past, present, and probable future reactions of those human beings. Its most important contribution was in keeping a focus on the hopes, fears, and points of view of the people whose problems the program was designed to solve.

In doing this Community Analysis was not defining the whole of any problem which faced the administrators. It brought up for consideration one aspect among the many that had to be taken into account. The defined powers of the agency, the budget, changing Congressional attitudes, relations with other government agencies, and American public opinion all shaped policy. The extent to which the program could take account of the



human element represented in the evacuee viewpoint depended on the balance of these factors in a given decision. The relative importance of the human factor varied in different situations. Sometimes it was not weighted, in view of the administrators, as a major factor, and Community Analysis became merely a guide as to what to expect after an action was taken. At other times it was rated as of major importance and Community Analysis became a guide in planning the course of action.

Community Analysis helped guide the program in two rather distinct ways. On the one hand, it offered predictions concerning what would most probably be the result of alternative actions by the administration. In estimating the probable reactions of the administered people it provided a basis for choosing among alternatives. On the other hand, Community Analysis served an important function in formulating the lessons of hindsight. The fast moving WRA program was constantly entering a new phase of action while the effects of the previous phase were still taking place. Systematic evaluation of what the program had accomplished or failed to accomplish, in terms of what it had done to the people, was repeatedly necessary. The strategy of next steps depended on such knowledge. The function of Community Analysis in periodically measuring the effects of the program was equally important with that of predicting the future.

The role of Community Analysis was that of an aid in maintaining communication between a group of administrators and a group of administered people. By communicating the viewpoint of the administered it aided in the adjustment of the program to the needs of the people as the latter saw them. Where the framework of policy permitted little adjustment, Community Analysis merely served to define the issues. Where considerable adjustment was permitted, Community Analysis was a useful guide to action.