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NOTES ON VISIT TO ROHWER RELOCATION CENTER

OCTOBER 1 - 5, 1944

The visit to the Center was predominantly concerned with the school program, although through the courtesy of staff members it was made possible for me to see also some of the evacuees in their own homes, to watch artists among them at work in their studios, to drive over the farm which supplies some of their food, and to talk with a number of youths and adults with regard to their plans. Throughout my visit there was characteristic Southern hospitality accorded to me on the part of the staff, and I feel the richer for having had this experience.

1. General Atmosphere. - The general atmosphere of the school department was most gratifying. Pupils seemed content and fairly well adjusted to the situation in which they were placed. There was excellent rapport between teachers and pupils, and between superintendent and school staff. I have the greatest admiration for those who are working on this project, with all the inconveniences of pioneer life that it demands.

2. Special purpose of visit. - The special purpose of my visit was to look over the school situation and to make suggestions with regard to the education of exceptional children. In order to do this, it was, of course, necessary to observe the instructional program throughout the elementary, junior high, and senior high school grades. I found, as might be expected, some variation in the quality of teaching. There were artist teachers at work, whom it was a joy to see. There were others not so skilled. But, on the whole, there seemed to be genuine interest on the part of the teachers in their work and a sincere desire to help the children.

3. Ways of serving exceptional children. - Owing to the very serious shortage of teachers, it does not seem feasible at this time to recommend organization of a special group for handicapped children. If a specially trained teacher can be employed or if the school population should decrease to a degree that one of the existing staff who is particularly interested in the adjustment of children's problems can be assigned to the work, the organization of such a class would be highly desirable. In the meantime the problem seems to be one of finding ways and means of

helping teachers in the regular classrooms to detect and to serve the needs of atypical children. If they are to succeed in doing this, administrative procedures and guidance programs must be so planned as to lay the basis for the teacher's work. The remaining notes make certain suggestions in this direction.

4. Primary grades. - It was found that children in the primary grades (1,2, and 3) are in school 5 hours daily. The classes are large. A teacher can give little attention to the special problems of a seriously handicapped child when she has some 40 children to care for all day long, especially when so many of them have the language handicaps of these young Japanese-Americans. To meet this difficulty I suggested that the school-time of children in the first three grades be reduced to 4 hours (which is a common practice in educational systems), the entire group coming for 2 hours in the morning and 1 hour in the afternoon. Only one-half of the group would then be present for the last hour of the morning, and the other half for the last hour of the afternoon. The teacher could, if she desired, make these two groups somewhat homogeneous with respect to seriousness of the instructional problems involved. She could then handle the cases needing individual attention much more effectively.

5. Promotion policy. - Modern educational principles emphasize the need of making it possible for the child to make consecutive progress in his school career. This emphasis has led to the practice in some school systems of promoting on the basis of chronological age, regardless of mental or social maturity. Unless adequately safeguarded, such a practice may lead to tragic results for particular children who are utterly unable to cope with the work of the grade to which they have been assigned. For example, one child at the Center (9 years old, I believe), who is not only mentally retarded but is also physically and socially immature, is in the third grade. His physical stature, social adjustment, and learning ability would all make him seem not out of place in the first grade, where he would probably be happier in meeting experiences within his grasp. With a large class of 40 or more children, the 3rd grade teacher finds it difficult to make the needed adjustment for him. One way which has been found successful in meeting problems similar to this is the organization of the "primary unit," constituting the work of the first three grades. Children who can cover the work of the primary unit in three years or even less progress to the next higher level at the appointed time. Children who need additional time to complete the work of the primary unit remain with it, without the experience of defeat or failure, until it seems wise for them to go on. In carrying out such a plan, it is desirable for the same teacher to continue with a given group of pupils throughout the primary unit.

6. Homogeneous grouping. - In the upper elementary grades and in the junior high school some degree of homogeneous grouping might help, in view of the large classes, to meet the needs of those deviating seriously above or below normal in learning ability. I make this suggestion with full realization of the objections that are commonly directed against homogeneous grouping.

Under favorable administrative and instructional conditions those objections may be valid. With crowded classes and other disadvantages encountered at Rohwer, however, it is proposed that the organization of fairly homogeneous groups is worthy of consideration.

7. Experience as a basis of curriculum. - It was early in the school year and as yet the teachers whom I observed had not launched any planned units of experience. I was told that considerable emphasis had been placed upon this type of instruction in the past. No doubt the turn-over in the teaching staff has had some influence upon its effectiveness. I suggested that this plan of operation be further emphasized, with the child's experiences made the basis of the teaching program. Such a plan would open the way, too, for enriching the curriculum for bright children and for holding it to minimum essentials for the very slow. In this connection, Superintendent Thompson proposed to his executive staff the possibility of an in-service training program under university extension auspices, if it should prove possible to secure the services of someone who could make an experience program the basis of a vitalized and vitalizing training for the teachers who elect to enroll for the course.

8. Physically handicapped children. - Certain physically handicapped children were pointed out to me. Others were noted in the classrooms who seemed to have a physical defect. There are probably many others, as in every school population of this size, who have defective hearing, a visual handicap, or an organic weakness that has gone undiscovered. Orthopedic cripples appear to be conspicuously absent. I talked with Miss Bayliss of the hospital staff to see what services would be available from that source for physically handicapped children. She expressed her interest in doing what she could and said that she had already been working on several serious cases. I proposed to her and to Superintendent Thompson that she might draw up for the teachers' guidance a brief list of symptoms that the teachers should look for in detecting physical handicaps. Children exhibiting such symptoms should then be given priority for physical examination. Reports on their condition and suggestions for school treatment in consideration of any handicap discovered should be brought to the teachers' attention and a follow-up program instituted through the counseling staff.

9. Extreme physical handicaps. - Several cases of profoundly deaf children are known to the authorities of the Center. Efforts have been made to place these children in a State residential school for the deaf, but without avail thus far. With the lack of a specially trained teacher for the deaf at the Center, a State institution is the only place where their needs can be met, and no stone should be left unturned to make such placement a reality. Whether the institution to receive them should be in the State of their residence, the State of their nativity, or the State of their relocation is a matter that may need to be determined in the light of the possibilities made available by the respective States concerned. If relocation promises to establish a permanent residence soon, that would probably be the desirable basis of action. In the meantime the W.R.A should take steps speedily to facilitate enrollment of the children in any institution that will accept them. Similarly, provisions should be made for any blind

children and for feeble-minded persons in those institutions set up to serve their particular needs.

10. Coordinating work of education, health, and welfare departments. - In making arrangements for such serious cases, as well as in serving the needs of less seriously handicapped children, a plan of coordinated action could be worked out, whereby the welfare department, the health department, and the school department is each assigned a particular responsibility in terms of its designated functions. Sometimes a case may come to the attention of several agencies and each will work on it without clearing with the others. A well planned coordinating technique will eliminate duplication of effort and will insure a united attack on the problem, thus helping to promote more effective results.

11. Adjustments on the secondary level. - I noted with gratification that some pupils have been permitted to do needed work in the junior high school while enrolled in the senior high school. In an organization as closely knit as is the school system at Rohwer, such an arrangement would seem to have almost unlimited possibilities. Not only the junior and the senior high schools but also the high schools and the elementary school could work together toward the best possible adjustment for a particular child. Some exceptional abilities or talents could be cared for by permitting an elementary or junior high school child of suitable maturity to work on the high school level in the particular field of his interest. On the other hand, a high school pupil may need remedial work on the elementary level and should have access to it. All such adjustments made at the Center are to be highly commended and encouraged. There is nothing sacred about the lines that are drawn between the 6th and 7th grades, and again between the 9th and 10th grades. Each segment of the school system is an equally important part of the whole, and each can contribute to the effectiveness of the others in bringing about maximum growth for the child.

12. The counseling program. - Any effective counseling program must necessarily reach the needs of children who have exceptional problems of physical, mental, or social significance. The high school counselor at Rohwer pointed out a number of such problems to me and was deeply concerned about them. The lack of adequate facilities for serving exceptional pupils and the inability to secure sufficient counseling assistance seemed serious hindrances to the program. I proposed the technique of periodic guidance conferences to discuss individual cases. At such conferences, all (if not too many) or selected staff members concerned with the particular student whose problem is to be discussed would be present to pool their judgments and suggestions for action. Representatives of the health and welfare departments should also be present if these are concerned. A specific course of action could be determined, responsibility assigned, and follow-up planned. Thus teachers as well as counselor are given the opportunity of knowing the facts and of cooperating in the adjustment of the problem. Many exceptional children have been helped through this procedure.

I suggested also as a possibility for furthering the counseling program the plan of assigning qualified teacher-counselors to assist with specific grades. For example, one interested teacher might help with all 9th grade pupils, another with the 10th grade, and so on. Carrying out this plan successfully would, however, necessitate allotting some time to such teachers for their counseling activities. Under present conditions this may not be practicable or even possible.

I am sorry that the counseling program is for the most part limited to the high school level. Exceptional pupils in the elementary grades are likely to become problems on the secondary level if adjustment is not brought about before they reach the high school. I hope that some plan of coordination can be worked out in this area as in the instructional area between high school and elementary school programs. Perhaps the one emphasis that applies to all teachers alike, from the standpoint of guidance and from the standpoint of exceptional children, is the need of knowing the child first of all. His interests, his problems, his handicaps, his abilities are all a part of the total picture in the classroom. Knowing the child is a prerequisite to the adjustment of any exceptional conditions he presents. Administrative, counseling, teaching, health, and welfare programs all have important contributions to make to this end. Children with serious social maladjustments or emotional conflicts as well as those with marked physical or intellectual problems will gain the greatest benefit when all of these forces work together understandingly to find the best possible solution for each individual case.

SOME REFERENCES DEALING WITH EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN AND RELATED PROBLEMS

Adams, Fay and Brown, Walker. Teaching the bright pupil. New York, Henry Holt and company, 1930. 249 p.

A manual of practical suggestions for adjusting the work of the secondary school to the interests and needs of bright pupils. Gives concrete proposals for enrichment in each of a number of fields of subject matter taught in junior and senior high schools.

Bentley, John E. Problem children. New York, W. W. Norton and company, 1936. 460 p.

An introduction to the study of handicapped children. Deals with children presenting various types of problems including physical disabilities, social disabilities, and educational disabilities.

Berry, Charles S. How the teacher may help the exceptional child (rev. ed.). Columbus, The Ohio State university, 1935. 24 p.

A bulletin prepared for the regular teacher to help her to "make better adaptation of training and instruction" to the needs of exceptional children in her class. Considers the physically handicapped, mentally retarded, gifted, and children with behavior problems.

Fernald, Grace M. Remedial techniques in basic school subjects. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co. 1943. 349 p.

Deals with the author's own method of teaching reading by means of kinesthetic techniques. Gives some consideration also to spelling and arithmetic, and makes application of remedial techniques to the mentally defective. Considerable technical material may make this book somewhat difficult for some teachers, but sections of it could be used to advantage with all.

Hathaway, Winifred. Education and health of the partially seeing child. New York, Columbia University Press, 1943. 216 p.

Deals with various topics and problems related to partially seeing children, including attention to health and curricular needs of such children.

Ingram, Christine P. Education of the slow-learning child. Yonkers, N.Y., World book company, 1935. 419 P.

On the basis of extensive supervisory experience in a city school system, the author discusses physical, psychological, and educational phases of the problem of mentally retarded children. Much practical information is given regarding instructional content and methods.

Macomber, F. G., Guiding child development in the elementary school. American book co., 1941. 335 p.

Gives practical suggestions for the application of units of experience in the elementary school grades, with examples of such units described in detail.

Michigan. Superintendent of public instruction. Helping the exceptional child in the regular classroom. Lansing, Mich., Superintendent of public instruction, 1941. 55 p.

Reviews the conditions and the needs of the respective groups of exceptional children, and points out ways in which adjustment for them can be made in regular classes when special classes are not available or advisable.

Morgan, John J. B. The psychology of the unadjusted school child. Revised edition. New York, The Macmillan co., 1936. 346 p.

Discusses the difficulties of school children from the standpoint of behavior and personality, and of the possibilities within reach of the teacher in helping to remove such difficulties. Numerous illustrative cases are cited.

Thom, Douglas A. Normal youth and its everyday problems. New York, D. Appleton and co., 1932. 267 p.

Written for parents, teachers, and others responsible for the guidance of youth. Attempts to answer questions relating to the everyday problems that normal youth encounters.

Travis, Lee Edward, and Baruch, Dorothy Walter. Personal problems of everyday life--practical aspects of mental hygiene. New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1941. 392 p.

A non-technical discussion of everyday problems of both adults and children, based on case studies. Very readable, and dramatically presented.

Note 1. If it should be possible to include subscription to a magazine in your professional library, I suggest the JOURNAL OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN, which has its publication office at Saranac, Mich. It is issued monthly and contains many helpful articles relating to various types of exceptional children. Subscription price is $2.00 per year.

Rohwer

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

Memorandum

To: Mr. Robert Dolins **Date:** 8/28/45

From: Community Analysis Section
JDY

Subject: Background of Center Population
(Revision of 9/9/44 report)

Rohwer:

9/9/44 - The population of Rohwer is predominantly rural coming from two areas of California, San Joaquin County and Los Angeles County. Those from San Joaquin County (Stockton area) are a prosperous, well-established group. About one-fourth were farm owners, others were tenants and paid supervisors, and 850 were farm laborers. This last group were older bachelors. The farms in this area were large and specialized in raising potatoes, cannery tomatoes, beans, peas, and grapes. The second rural group come from the southern part of Los Angeles County (about 4,000 rural people). They were engaged in poultry farming, seed-growing, nursery and greenhouse work, and truck farming. Most of the people from this section were poor farmers, only one-thirteenth were owners, the others leased land, supervised or worked as laborers. This group was more insecure than the San Joaquin people; they had to plan operations from year-to-year and never knew if they would survive the season financially. There are very few wealthy farmers among them. However, some of the greenhouse owners were well-to-do and did not sell their property when they left but merely leased it to Caucasians.

The 1,500 urban people came from Stockton and Lodi where they were established in service occupations and businesses, wholesale and retail businesses. They were a middle-class group and lived in attractive homes in the Italian-Chinese sections of the cities.

Rohwer probably has more Issei bachelors than the other centers. They come from the rural districts of San Joaquin and Los Angeles. The population of the center is predominantly Buddhist.

Colorado River

9/9/44 - Unit I has a mixed rural-urban population. The one-third urban people are from Los Angeles City. The rural people are from Imperial Valley, Orange County, Kern County

(Bakersfield area), and a few from Riverside County and San Diego. The population is mainly Buddhist. There are not many wealthy people among those from rural districts. The Imperial Valley people are especially poor and, in addition, the prejudices against them in that section were severe. Those from Orange County, Los Angeles County, and San Diego grew celery, lettuce cauliflower, and berries. The people in Unit I follow the usual age distribution among the Japanese and Japanese American population. There are two blocks in this Unit which are largely inhabited by elderly bachelors.

Unit II people are almost entirely from Salinas. There are few bachelors among them. Most of the people are Buddhists. They were from rural districts and had truck farms which supplied the San Francisco area. A number of people lived in cities but had farms. Salinas is well organized against the Japanese and much prejudice has been expressed against them. The group was moderately well-to-do.

Unit III has most of the San Diego Japanese population. They were quite well-to-do and were well adjusted and integrated in the life of the community. They were predominantly rural though a large number were produce merchants. Though the majority of them are Buddhist, one finds a large number of Christians among them. The crops they specialized in were fruit orchards, melons, and celery. A few were truck farmers. There are few bachelors among them. Most of the farmers owned their own farms or were supervisors of large ranches.

8/28/45: The analyst at Poston estimated during the summer of 1945 that approximately half of the Nisei who have gone east plan to stay there, and that the other half is undecided and may return to California later.

Manzanar

9/9/44: Most of the population of Manzanar come from Los Angeles County and the communities of Terminal Island, Florin, Venice, Glendale, San Fernando, North Hollywood and Santa Monica. The large group from Terminal Island were engaged in fishing and canning industries. A few had retail stores and service trades. The group is predominantly Buddhist. There were not many wealthy people among them, and as a result of evacuation all of the people suffered serious losses. Most of the families were large and close-knit. Those from Florin raised strawberries and grapes. Most of the people were landowners of small twenty-acre, well-equipped farms. The families had resided in Florin for many years and were an established permanent community. The families were large. Most of them were Buddhists. These farmers suffered heavy losses during evacuation and a large number sold their farms. The West Los Angeles people were gardeners and were in the service trades. Venice farmers grew celery mainly. They were an urbanized group although engaged as farmers. Many were prosperous and had large

families. They lost heavily during evacuation but a number still have property in Venice and will probably wish to return. Those from San Fernando were farmers and flower growers. The latter were a prosperous well-organized group. They had large and expensive farms. Their relations with their Caucasian neighbors were excellent and they leased their market to them for the duration with the hope of returning after the war. The Santa Maria farmers had small farms on difficult terrain. The North Hollywood population was mainly urban. They were engaged as gardeners, domestics, owners of nurseries, service trades. The Los Angeles people were entirely urban engaged in the usual urban occupations, service, retail, professional, etc. They are both Christian and Buddhist, the latter influenced by the Caucasian Buddhists of the city. There are many wealthy produce market owners among them. Some of the zoot-suiters of Manzanar come from Los Angeles. The San Gabriel people raised strawberries and owned nurseries mainly.

8/28/45: In recent months Manzanar, as the other centers, has become a center of old and young people. Roughly 50% of the residents are either too young to fend for themselves or are too old to work, or at best have only a few years of productive labor before them. The great mass of Buddhists still remain in the center, but with increased relocation Buddhist churches have been established outside so that the pulling power of the Buddhist Church is no longer entirely center-linked.

Granada

8/28/45: 37% of the Granadans came from urban Los Angeles, via Santa Anita Assembly Center, where they were gardeners, nursery men, retail and wholesale produce dealers, grocery men and other business men, and clerical workers. Many were once farmers who turned to the city because of restrictive alien land laws. 63% came from rural northern California (Bay Area, Modesto, Stockton, Sacramento, Yuba, Merced, etc.), via Merced Assembly Center, where they were mostly farm laborers, vegetable growers, fruit growers and poultry farmers. Professional workers and skilled and unskilled workers are pretty evenly distributed throughout both groups.

In October, 1944, 40.2% of the Granada people were Issei, 55.4% Nisei and Sansei and 4.3% Kibei. Since that time the center has become more heavily weighted in the old and very young.

Rural Nisei as well as urban have in the past been interested in job opportunities in eastern urban centers. In general, the rural group seems to take longer formulating relocation plans then the urban, since the former thinks more in terms of the whole family and the adjustment to the idea of a new environment is harder.

Minidoka

9/9/44: Those in Minidoka are from the Northwest, Oregon, and Washington. They are both rural and urban and include a number of wealthy individuals. In the cities they were engaged in the usual city occupations. Several had very large hotels. The group is, on the whole, well-educated, conservative, and are more likely to know English than those in the other centers. The largest numbers come from Portland and Seattle and vicinity. The rural people were engaged in truck farming, berry farming, and the other types of agriculture of the area. Although predominantly Buddhist, a large number of Christians are found among them.

8/28/45: As relocation progressed, the population of older people at Minidoka became predominantly non-farmers. Business and professional people stayed in the center because of lack of opportunity in their specific lines.

Gila

9/9/44: There is a small urban group in Gila from Los Angeles, but the largest portion of the population is rural. They come from Alameda and San Joaquin Counties, Ventura County, Santa Barbara and San Luis Counties (large number from two latter counties). There are very few prosperous farm or city people among the Gila population.

Heart Mountain

8/28/45: The people come from both urban and rural centers of Los Angeles, Silver Lake and West Lake, Covina, Monterey Park, Santa Clara, and San Jose, and rural areas in Washington and Oregon (White River Valley and Hood River Valley). The Los Angeles people are an urban group with the usual urban occupations represented. The Hood River group were largely property-owners and have relocated in the main, but the White River group were predominantly farm laborers or tenant farmers.

Central Utah

9/9/44: The population of Central Utah is primarily urban from the Bay Region. The people come from Berkeley, Richmond, Oakland, San Francisco, Alameda, and San Mateo. They include a large white-collar occupational group, and the intellectuals of the University of California. There were a number of wealthy businessmen among them. Others were engaged in wholesale and retail businesses, small trades, service trades, owned hotels, and the like. There is one block of Hawaiians in this center.

8/28/45: The headquarters of the Buddhist Church of America was found there but important Buddhist leaders have recently relocated and the official Buddhist headquarters is now in San Francisco. The majority of the Topazeans are Buddhist, as in the other centers. Topazeans are largely urbanites. Approximately 4500 people came to Topaz from the Bay Area. Only 7% of the original population came from rural districts, and mainly from Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Mateo counties.

Jerome

The Jerome people transferred to Rohwer, Gila River, Heart Mountain, and Granada. They were a rural group from the area around Fresno, Tulare, and Kings Counties, and a few from Sacramento and Amador Counties. They had good relations with the Caucasians with whom they had lived and worked. A number of people and lived in cities. Forty-nine per cent were engaged in farming before evacuation, 11% were in retail trades, and 8% in managerial and professional occupations. Among the Hawaiians, there were few farmers and more in the last two categories. One block contained mainly bachelors, and of the entire adult population about 70% were married. Sixty-nine per cent of the population were Buddhist.