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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, PACIFIC COAST REGION,  
AND ALL PROJECT DIRECTORS:

It is expected that regulations establishing a system of self government for Relocation Centers, within the limits of the legal framework of the War Relocation Authority, will be announced in the near future. This will give concrete expression to our purpose of allowing the evacuees themselves the greatest possible latitude in forming and administering the democratic institutions by which the various community services will be carried on. Before the full scope of these regulations can be determined upon, it will be necessary to have some experience and some tangible evidence of the aptitude of the evacuees for the exercise of governing power. As a transitional matter, therefore, we want now to provide for setting up a temporary system in each Relocation Center, having only advisory authority. This will serve for the immediate needs of each community, and should prove to be a valuable laboratory from which lessons may be drawn in formulating definitive regulations. This preliminary experiment should also be of important educational value to the evacuees themselves on the organization and processes of self government.

Each Project Director should proceed, as soon as practicable, to effectuate on his project the system herein outlined.

The provisional system will consist of a temporary Community Council, to be composed of elected Block Representatives.

Temporary Block Representatives

For the purpose of electing Block Representatives, the Project Director shall divide the Relocation Center into blocks, each block to consist of an aggregate of houses grouped around a single set of common facilities. A Block Representative shall be elected by the majority



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vote of the eligible electors of each block, who shall consist of all persons within the block who are eligible for enlistment in the War Relocation Work Corps. (Note that actual enlistment is not required as a condition of the franchise in this provisional system.) Each Block Representative shall be a citizen of the United States, shall be over 21 years of age, and shall not, during his incumbency in office, be eligible to hold any appointed office in the Project Area.

It shall be the duty of each Block Representative to cooperate with the Project Staff in facilitating and supervising the participation of the inhabitants of his block in all community functions and in the application to his block of all administrative regulations and policies. It shall be the duty of the Block Representative to make adequate reports to the Project Director and to the Project Staff concerning the functioning of the community services, and to perform such other duties as may be designated from time to time by the Project Director.

The Project Director is authorized and directed to fix a date, as soon as conveniently may be, for the holding of elections of Block Representatives, and to cause notices of such elections to be posted, at least 5 days before each election, at all public places, within the Project Area and within the affected block, designated by order of the Project Director for the publication of notices. Elections shall not be deferred until all of the blocks in the Relocation Center are filled, but shall be held in each block as soon as it has received substantially its full quota of inhabitants. The Project Director is authorized and directed to issue suitable regulations governing the nominations of persons for the office of Block Representative and determining the method of voting, whether by secret ballot or by voice vote.

#### Temporary Community Council

The temporary Community Council shall hold an organization meeting, as soon as a majority of the Block Representatives have been elected, at which the Council shall elect a presiding chairman and a secretary, and shall adopt such by-laws as it may deem necessary to govern its further proceedings. The by-laws shall provide that meetings of the Community Council shall be held at stated intervals, not less than once weekly, and that written minutes shall

be kept of all of the acts taken at each meeting. The Community Council shall have no power to issue ordinances, but shall make such recommendations as it shall deem proper with reference to any matter relating to health, welfare, recreation, education, and any other matter of internal administration. The Council shall appoint from among its membership an Executive Committee of not less than 5 nor more than 7 members, who shall advise with the Project Director on the resolutions and recommendations of the Council. The Council may divide itself into such other committees as it may deem necessary or appropriate for the purpose of informing itself upon matters of internal administration and of making recommendations in respect thereof to the Project Director.

The Council shall appoint a Judicial Committee, which may be the Executive Committee, for the purpose of cooperating with the Project Director in dealing with disturbances of the public peace and order.

The cooperation of all persons in the Relocation Center, members of the project staff as well as evacuees, is essential if these preliminary steps in community organization are to lead to a more mature stage of self government.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. S. Eisenhower", is written over the printed name and title.

M. S. Eisenhower  
Director

*Comm. Gen'l*

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON

JUN 20 1942

*L.H.*

Mr. John Collier ✓  
Commissioner of Indian Affairs  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Collier:

I am very glad to have your letter of June 4 with the attached suggestions prepared by Felix S. Cohen of your Department's Solicitor's staff, concerning our first draft of proposed regulations to provide for self-government in the Relocation Centers.

The draft of regulations that we sent you was simply a first attempt to get something concrete down on paper to serve as a basis for clarification of thinking and discussion within the War Relocation Authority. It is serving its purpose very well in that it is eliciting critical reactions, on the basis of which I am sure we can prepare a much better document. We agree with much that Mr. Cohen says in his memorandum, and are adopting many of his suggestions.

I am enclosing, for your information, copies of two documents that we have recently issued in this field. The first is a memorandum providing for the provisional organization of advisory councils of block leaders within the Relocation Centers. The second sets up an emergency procedure for administrative disciplinary action in the field of law and order on the Manzanar Relocation Center in California. Both of these documents are intended as provisional arrangements while more permanent arrangements are being worked out.

We are working on a theory that would enable us to provide for the local election of a council of block leaders to whom the Director of War Relocation Authority can delegate certain rule-making and administrative functions, and for the establishment of what would be, in effect, project administrative courts to whom the Director of War Relocation Authority could delegate enough functions in the field of maintaining the peace, safety, and order of the project to provide the equivalent of a local civil and criminal court system. Our research into the administrative and legal questions involved is well advanced



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but not yet completed. For the more important civil causes of action, such as suits for divorce, probate of wills, and the like, as well as for the more serious misdemeanors and felonies, such as murder, rape, assault with intent to kill, larceny of more than, say, \$1000, and the like, we would make arrangements for using the local State and Federal courts. I shall be glad to get your and Mr. Cohen's suggestions on the new proposal when it has been more definitely formulated.

May I try to clear up one or two points that do not seem to have been clear in our first draft. The lightness of the penalties referred to on page 2 of Mr. Cohen's memorandum, should be considered in connection with section 4 of Article V of the regulations that places a \$1000 top limit on the crimes involving robbery, theft, larceny, embezzlement, fraud, forgery, receiving stolen property, or extortion, over which the courts are proposed to be given jurisdiction. Some of the other crimes, such as kidnapping, need to be considered in the light of the special circumstances of the Relocation Centers. A kidnapping could take place only within one of the Centers since the outer boundaries are guarded by military police.

You will notice, also, that section 3 of Article I of the regulations postponed the effective date of Articles V and VII until such date as the Director of War Relocation Authority should thereafter declare. Our intention in this provision was to postpone the effectiveness of all the provisions dealing with local courts and law enforcement until the legal theory on which they would rest was completely formulated.

I shall write you further on this subject in the near future.

Sincerely yours,

*(AS Myers)* SIGNED  
Director

Enclosures (2)

PMGlick:HB

*Cohen's criticisms of the WRA regulations for self government were principally that the regulations followed too literally the Indian Service manual, which WRA borrowed, and did not allow for differences between Indian & Jap. evacuees.*  
*Myers*

Memo from Shirrell to Fryer  
July 10, 1942

We have received your letter of July 6, 1942, Com. Organ., 5015-42, relative to our community council

The Issei members of the council were elected previous to the receipt of Mr. Eisenhower's memorandum of June 5 and, therefore, we were not in a position to put it into effect at that time. Since June 5th, no Issei has been nominated for the position of block representative. As suggested in your letter, we are retaining the non-citizen block representatives until some definite word is heard from the Washington office.

We feel that it should be pointed out, relative to the above restriction on the Issei, that there has been considerable discussion among the staff on whether the Issei should be prohibited from holding office. It is, as far as we are concerned here, still a rather live issue and one which deserves further intensive consideration. We feel quite strongly that much in regard to the relation to the final disposition of this matter rests with the opinions of the colonists on the subject. We sincerely believe that this issue is an important enough one to receive some additional consideration.

As requested by, you, we are enclosing the minutes of council meetings subsequent to those submitted to you during the early stages of project operation.

R.A.L.

9-29-42

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Province ✓  
Subject: Comments on Community Government Manual

This Manual seems to have been very well prepared both for the purpose of informing administrative officials as to desirable methods of organizing temporary and permanent community government, and for the purpose of informing the evacuees themselves on the same matters. The latter purpose would seem to be particularly important, and the Manual is so drawn in form and in language as to achieve this purpose very well.

Only a few minor suggestions in connection with the draft have occurred to me. None of them are so important that they must be included in it, but some of them might be helpful.

1. On page 12 in the third line reference is made to Temporary Council committee members becoming specialists in their fields. Since the Temporary Council is not designed to last very long it might be better to put this sentence at the bottom of page 29 where reference is made to committees of the permanent Community Council. Or the phrase "in the course of time" could be deleted from the sentence.

2. Page 13, paragraph on "Town Hall". It would scarcely seem necessary for a building to be set apart for no other use than council meetings. The purpose of dignifying the Council, etc., could it seems be cared for if the second line were made to read "some available building should be reserved at appropriate times for Council use".

3. Page 15, Section 2, Part "d". Should we not omit the line reading "1. entirely on his own initiative"? I doubt if any project director would create the Organization Commission in this manner. But one of them might be encouraged to do so if this line were left in the Manual. Such a method of creating the Organization Commission would certainly be contrary to the democratic principles which we hope to establish in community government.

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4. On page 17 in the second line the words "Temporary Council" apparently should have been "Organization Commission".
5. Page 18, third line. The word "indicate" could be omitted one time from this line without substantial loss.
6. Page 19, Section 2. In the illustration of overlapping terms on the Community Council it is suggested that members could be elected for two-year periods. This carries with it an implication of a long-term program which might be psychologically bad. An illustration based on six months and one year terms might be preferable. The war may last for many years, but we hope not.
7. Page 20, Section 3. There might be added to this section a sentence suggesting that members of the Council who know that they will probably be absent from the center for an extended period could be encouraged to resign thus making probable the earlier filling of vacancies.
8. Page 21. Would it be desirable, perhaps between sub-paragraphs "c" and "d", to suggest consideration of a rule that regulations be not enacted at the meeting at which they are first introduced or until reference to the Committee?
9. Page 24. It is suggested that the note at the bottom of this page concerning the availability of the Project Attorney to serve as prosecutor or defender in cases before the Judicial Commission be omitted. The reason for this is that the functions of the Project Attorney in this connection are not yet altogether clear, and it might be desirable, in some instances, to have him engage in this work.
10. Page 29. In the fourth line from the bottom of this page, "community enterprises" are mentioned as being among the matters that are primarily administrative responsibilities of the War Relocation Authority. The theory which we are following places such community enterprises under the control of cooperatives organized by the evacuees themselves so that the statement made concerning community enterprises is not correct. It is suggested that the two words "community enterprises" be omitted from this paragraph.
11. Would it not be desirable to indicate that the Community Council should feel free to make recommendations and that the Project Director could provide that evacuee officials of community government who might be called upon to devote a substantial portion of their time to the work of community government should receive work credit accordingly?

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At page 13 in the paragraph on "Town Hall" reference is made to the council appointing a permanent Secretary who would, of course, receive pay for his or her work. The Chairman of the Community Council might well also devote substantially full time to the work of his office, and other members of the governmental organizations might from time to time do so.

I agree that it is desirable that this Manual be issued to the field at an early date.

Philip M. Glick

Solicitor

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9/29/42

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Regional Files 510, Wash. DC  
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Memo from Kimball, Chief, Comm. Organization, to Fryer  
November 2, 1942

I have discussed with Mr. Shirrell most of the points made in this report. In our discussion of the general problems of Tule Lake he showed himself to be completely aware of the situation and of the need for taking the steps to remedy the conditions. Specifically we discussed the need for evaluating the present organization both as to its efficiency in operation and adequacy of personnel. Mr. Shirrell has already taken steps in this direction. We also discussed the need for establishment of devices which would permit a free flow of information from the administration to the evacuees and from the evacuees to the administration.

Tule Lake has now passed through its initial growing pains. The task of getting a community of 15,000 organized to do the essential jobs was tremendous. Our staff carried heavy burdens and there was confusion in lines of authority and responsibility since everyone had to pitch in to get things done. Much of this confusion has been straightened out but there remains the need for the administration to take stock and carefully define the working relationships of the personnel.

~~WRA Library Washington~~

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Dec. 15, 1942.

AIR MAIL  
CONFIDENTIAL

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**RESTRICTED**

MEMORANDUM TO PROJECT DIRECTORS - FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

By this time all centers will have had some experience with the problem of evacuee government, both in its temporary aspects under the Director's letter of June 5 and the more permanent plan envisaged in Administrative Instruction No. 34, dated August 24, 1942. A review of that experience is critically important to the Authority at this time, partly to evaluate progress in the field of self-government, partly to assist in formulating new policies should that appear desirable. You are requested to submit by air mail under confidential cover, as soon as practicable, your best judgment and recommendations on the local government program.

The advice of others on your staff should be obtained and discreet conversations should be had with responsible evacuees whose judgments you have reason to respect. No publicity should be given to this request, and your study should be so handled as not to imply that a change of policy is to be made, or that this is being done at the request of the national office.

In preparing your reply particular attention should be given to answering the following:

1. Issei-nisei participation on the Community Council, including attitudes, arguments, and rationalizations being expressed on this controversial problem.
2. Can the participation of the older evacuees on the project be obtained short of their election to the Council with full voting rights and privileges? If so, how?
3. WRA is under no obligation to establish or to permit establishment of evacuee government. The effort to do so was a liberal interpretation of our directive from the President, was intended to foster and develop self-expression and participation in community affairs on the part of the evacuees and to mobilize for administrative support the sanctions of a deliberative and representative body of citizens. Should this policy now be changed and WRA regulatory administration be substituted, with only advisory committees of evacuees?
4. Has evacuee government had a reasonable opportunity to prove or disprove itself on your project?
5. What groups, organized or otherwise, are leading the fight for or against the establishment of evacuee government?  
What form is the opposition taking and how many people are involved?
6. Who on your project is representing you in discussions of local government organization?
7. What, if any, changes do you suggest in the present administrative instruction should a revision be found desirable?

Your immediate attention is requested. In the meantime no action to accelerate charter commissions or other committees engaged in organizational work should be taken. Proposed plans for the permanent government should be sent to Washington for study and review before being approved by the Project Director under Administrative Instruction No. 34.

s/s D. S. Myer, Director.

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MEMORANDUM TO JOHN H. PROVINSE

1-15-43

From Solon T. Kimball

Attached are memoranda on the following subjects:

1. Community Evacuee Government Policy
2. Summarization of Replies to the Director's Memorandum of Dec. 15, 1942
3. Issei Participation in Community Government
4. Problems of Community Government
5. Recommendations on Community Government

These memoranda contain much material for discussion with project people of the problems of community government. The most significant subjects include:

1. Issei Participation
2. Administration - Community government relationships
3. Judicial Commission
4. Recommendations for immediate consideration.

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#### COMMUNITY EVACUEE GOVERNMENT POLICY

One of the first considerations of the War Relocation Authority after its inception was the establishment of policy for community government at the relocation centers. The decision that community government should be an integral portion of the program was made and publicized at an early stage in the evacuation program.

The scope and structure which community government was to take was the subject of much discussion on the part of members of the Washington, regional, and project staffs. The need to clarify thoughts on community government was recognized and on June 5 the Director issued a memorandum on this subject. This memorandum provided for the creation of temporary community government and the election of a council. Significant points of this memorandum include the provision that only citizens were eligible for election; that all persons over 21 were eligible to vote; that each block was entitled to elect one representative to the council; and, that the council would have only advisory function.

The experience of the projects during the interim period of temporary government was to be used as a basis for the establishment of permanent policy. The rapidity with which new situations developed, and the obvious need for some immediate statement of policy on permanent government and other matters

led to the policy conference in San Francisco the early part of August. Sufficient time had not elapsed to give the temporary councils a chance to provide the material for careful analysis and discussion. The projects having government had been visited previous to the conference and key persons interviewed to secure their recommendations. The policy finally formulated was based on the rather short experience of temporary councils, the practical and legal exigencies of relocation, and the judgments of those who had been working in this field.

A Administrative Instruction No. 34, issued August 24, enunciated the policy that was to govern the structure, creation, and functions of permanent community government. There were several provisions of this instruction on which there was not complete unity of opinion and which were controversial. Some of these provisions still remain a subject for discussion and consideration.

The essential elements of this instruction provide that there shall be established a commission to draft a permanent plan of government. It provided that this permanent plan of government should be submitted to the evacuees for their approval or rejection. It also provided that the plan should provide for the establishment of a community council to which only citizens were eligible as members. It stipulated that all persons over 18 years of age were eligible to vote. It enumerated the functions of the council, among which were provisions for the enactment of regulations and the establishment of a judicial commission and an arbitration commission.

The most controversial of the provisions was that which limited membership on the council to citizens. Various reasons were advanced both in favor and against this proposal, and substitute proposals were also considered. Some held that only citizens be allowed to vote or hold office. Another point of view was that there be no distinction as regards citizens and non-citizens. In its final acceptance a compromise was accepted in which there was no distinction for voting privileges but elective office was limited to citizens.

This decision was based on several considerations. It was recognized that the evacuation of American citizens from the West Coast implied a suspicion of their loyalty and a possible injustice based on the denial of full citizenship rights. It was thought that some special recognition of the rights of citizens should be given and that by limiting council membership to that group some amount of the stigma placed upon them would be removed.

A second consideration was the recognition of an obligation to educate and train citizen evacuees to take their place in American society upon their release from relocation centers. Training in the procedures and philosophy of democratic government was considered to be one of the ways by which this might be accomplished. Since aliens would presumably continue to be barred from participation in civic affairs, experience which they gained would be of little use to them in the post war period.

There was also some preoccupation with the possibility that if non-citizens were allowed to hold office community councils would be dominated by this group. At best, we would then have a community government composed of Issei who would work for the interests of the community but not necessarily provide the opportunity for the younger members, who are almost entirely citizens, to have that participation necessary for training in good citizenship. At worst there was the possibility that the council would be dominated by the

pro-Axis or subversive group that might be in conflict with the administration and use its position to dominate the loyal or spread subversive propaganda among all.

A further consideration was the desire on the part of the Authority to create as normal a community as possible. Since aliens were prohibited from direct participation in civic affairs in American life it was argued that the same condition should continue to exist in the relocation centers as part of a general policy to continue the conditions to which these people were subject before evacuation.

The argument in favor of permitting Issei to hold office was based largely on recognition of the fact that relocation centers were not normal American communities and did not reproduce the conditions in the communities from which these people came. It was argued that a community to be successful must provide opportunity for all groups and segments to have representation. Since the older and largely alien element were parents and exercised parental control, their wisdom and experience was necessary for a smoothly operating community. It was also recognized that these older people were economically able to dictate to their children even though in many cases their children had superior education and qualification for acceptance in American society.

The decision to exclude Issei from Council membership was also based on the examination of the functioning of temporary councils and upon the situation which had developed at some of the already occupied centers.

Particular weight was given to the situation at Manzanar, which was the oldest and most settled at the time the policy was drafted. At Manzanar, a situation had developed in which there was active conflict between an aggressive pro-American citizen group and an aggressive pro-Japanese, Kibei and Issei group. It was believed that this conflict was partly due to the failure of the administration at Manzanar to observe the memorandum of June 5 which provided for the establishment of the temporary council composed of citizens.

The administration at Manzanar had created a block leaders council. Members of this council were elected by popular vote from each block. The council was both a legislative and an administrative body. A large proportion of its members were Issei who were thought to be definitely opposed to the principles which the pro-American group stood for. Quality of Issei selected and their failure to give leadership to the community, raised doubts as to the availability of intelligent Issei to occupy the important council positions.

In the first week of August the aggressive pro-American group held a meeting for the purpose of organizing a citizens federation. This meeting was continuously disrupted by a disloyal element, thought to be largely kibei. A few days later a meeting of kibei was held at which time open professions of loyalty to Japan were made and wildly applauded.

The demonstration of the desire of the pro-American citizen group to work with the administration and to establish a responsible community government, when projected against the disorderly behavior of the pro-Japanese group, weighted the decision to limit elective office to citizens. There was the suspicion that the kibei expression represented the feeling of a large portion of the Issei group.

Reports from Tule Lake and Poston, the only other two centers which had established temporary councils at that time, provided no information that would favor the abandonment of the restriction of elective office to citizens. The Project Director of Tule Lake was in accord with this point of view. There were no reports to the contrary received from Poston.

It is also possible that the decision of the WCCA to limit Assembly Center councils to citizens after a trial period, in which anyone had been eligible to office, influenced the decision although no facts were presented to justify the necessity for such a change on the part of WCCA.

The next period in the history of community government was the creation of commissions at the respective relocation centers for the purpose of preparing the plan of government. During the period from September 1 to December 1, when most of the centers had been established these commissions and were working on preparation of the plan of government, it became obvious that the work of the commission was seriously handicapped by the provision limiting membership on the council to citizens. It also became obvious that there were at each relocation a number of issei who were cooperative with the administration and who had the intelligence and leadership to assist and advise temporary councils, the commission on government, and the project administration. It also became apparent that the nisei themselves were far from unanimous in feeling that they alone should have the right to hold office and that capable issei should be excluded.

This provision provoked more discussion and thought probably than any other. Various and devious ways and means were formulated to provide an opportunity for formal issei participation in community government. At Minidoka it was proposed to have an issei advisory council elected. At the two projects in the Denver region the possibility of creating an upper house to be composed of issei was discussed and finally rejected by administrative officials who refused to sanction such a measure. At Gila River a plan was evolved by which a Block Chairmans council was to be formally created and recognized by the council with the nominating authority for candidates for the community council. Other projects had similar proposals.

Manzanar again provides us with important insights in the problem of community government. No provision was made for the inclusion of issei in community government. The Manzanar charter was the first one to be completed for submission to the voters. Almost immediately violent opposition developed which was based on objection to three points. There was objection to the proposal that the council be allowed to license evacuee operated enterprises. This objection was based on a misunderstanding that the council had authority to permit individual evacuees to establish private businesses within the center. A second objection was based on the fact that two of the members of the Commission were suspected and disliked by the issei and pro-Axis groups. A third objection was to the provision excluding issei from holding office. In addition to these objections there was also the objection of some nisei to the establishment of the form of government which in reality gave no measurable amount of self government. There was also objection from a small group which took the position that any cooperation with the administration, which tended to identify the evacuees with America, was to be opposed.

As a result of this opposition the charter commission, having completed

its work, resigned and an election was held to select a reviewing group to make such changes as were permissible in the charter. It was hoped that through this wider participation and understanding of the limitations affecting the establishment of community government that acceptance would be achieved. Mr. Merritt, the Project Director, held one meeting with this group before the incident of December 6, which doomed any possibility of immediate acceptance of community government.

As a result of the incidents at Poston and at Manzanar, and because of continued reports of the difficulties of the commissions in framing a plan of government, that would give some measure of recognition to the issei, the Director, on December 15, requested each of the project directors to submit a statement on community government. This statement requested specific information on seven points. Replies from all projects have been received.

Past events, the probable future course of events and project experience should guide us in recommending changes of policy.

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#### Summarization of Replies to the Director's Memorandum of December 15, 1942.

The following is a summary of answers received in reply to the memorandum sent to Project Directors December 15, requesting information on community government. The summarization will be by topics, each of which will precede the report from the projects.

1. Issei-nisei participation on the community council including attitudes, arguments, and rationalizations being expressed on this controversial problem.

Tule Lake. Shirrell reports that Issei participation has been secured through the establishment of a seven-man Planning Board. The creation of this Board has served to eliminate or reduce issei-nisei friction. (No official report has been received on the organization or purpose of the planning board. However, I am generally informed on these points. The idea of the Planning Board was originated by a member of the temporary community council who introduced a resolution that was passed by the temporary council and approved by the Project Director, providing for the establishment of a planning board. In theory and practice the planning board was to be completely separate from the jurisdiction or direction of the community council. Its purpose was to assist and advise the community council and the Director on problems of community concern. To achieve this objective there was to be created a staff to be composed of a permanent secretary and several experts who would do the leg work and prepare comprehensive and detailed reports on such matters as the planning board directed. Membership on the planning board was secured in the following way. Each block selected one man to represent it at a ward meeting. Each of the several wards then held meetings and selected one of this group to be a member of the planning board. The planning board members reported to the ward group from which he had been selected and these men in turn reported to each of the blocks in which they resided.)

Manzanar. No Community Council. (Issei have participated through

membership on the charter commission and as members of the block manager's assembly.)

Poston. Mr. Head listed three points: 1. The exclusion of Issei from membership on the community council served as a basis for subversive elements to stir up issei against the administration and the council. 2. Issei participation was secured by the election of an issei advisory group in the same manner as the community council. 3. Issei representation would take "the edge from opposition groups". Representation should be on a population basis. If issei are represented it will be easier to secure their participation in economic affairs of the community.

Gila River. Reports were made by Messrs. Bennett, Hoffman, Gaba, Terry and Williamson. Since each held slightly different views it will be well to summarize each one separately.

Bennett. Expressed the view that issei representation would be successful if the subversive ~~element was weeded out. He adds that this would bring issei attitudes into the open and make possible the use of the best qualified.~~ group on the project were removed, otherwise the council should be 100 % citizen.

Hoffman. Favored issei election to the council if the subversive element was weeded out. He adds that this would bring issei attitudes into the open and make possible the use of the best qualified. He remarks that the nisei are split on this subject with some of them favoring retention of the present policy and others favoring issei election to the council.

Morton Gaba. Reported that the present policy of exclusion of issei from office was unacceptable to both issei and nisei. That this exclusion accentuated the cleavage between the groups so that all issues were finally decided on the basis of citizen or non-citizen. He adds that this policy forces the issei into "underground" action. He also adds that nisei do not feel qualified to accept the responsibility of community government without the aid of the issei.

Terry. Reported that the full reflection of varying interests is possible only with issei representation on the council, but that there is the danger of pro-Axis elements securing control. He points out that this subversive group prefers to operate outside the established channels or administrative procedure in order to control through threats and intimidation.

Williamson. Said that whole-hearted cooperation is impossible with Issei exclusion.

Central Utah.. Mr. Ernst reports that the issei have participated in community government through membership on committees established by the community council. Present exclusion from holding office is unjustified.

Minidoka. Mr. Stafford listed three points pertinent to this question. 1. The colonists feel that the distinction made on the basis of citizenship was unwise but accepted the provision. 2. The administration feels that anything which leads to the division of group unity is harmful. 3. He reports the experience

in the assembly centers where "whippersnappers" were apparently encouraged to disregard the advice of the elders and where much hard feeling developed.

Heart Mountain. Mr. Robertson did not report on the manner in which issei are now participating but did advocate changing the policy to permit issei election to the council.

Granada. The question was not answered directly but Horn, the Project attorney, said that issei representation should have been allowed but that no change is advisable now.

Rohwer. Mr. Johnston did not report on present participation of issei but advocated that they be allowed to hold office in proportion to population.

Jerome. Taylor reported the arguments of the issei that they should have been permitted to hold office since the older men are more responsible and capable. He reported the opinion of the nisei to the effect that the older men should not object to this provision but give the young men a chance to show their abilities.

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It is apparent from the replies that the problem of issei representation and participation in community government is one of the significant issues of project administration. The specific provisions limiting council membership to citizens has created a storm of discussion at every project but the ruling has been accepted as a necessity but with obvious attempts to get around the strict interpretations by the creation of formally elected advisory boards of one kind or another.

2. Can the participation of the older evacuees on the project be obtained short of their election to the council with full voting rights and privileges? If so, how?

The answer to this question is in many instances a part of the answer to the preceding question.

Tule Lake. The issei participation has been secured by the establishment of the Planning Board, and block and ward advisory committees composed equally of issei and nisei. Meetings with issei were also held on alternate weeks.

Manzanar. No participation of older evacuee group can be expected short of full voting rights and the privileges of election.

Poston. Issei participation secured through an advisory council and as advisors in matters of particular interest to them.

Gila River. Bennett advocated an elder council, and issei on the judicial commission. Hoffman doubts that issei participation can be secured short of full rights but says that an attempt can be made by appointment to committees. Gaba reports that real power rests with the issei and that in a recent crisis they were the active ones whereas the council was inactive and lost prestige. The new constitution provides for a block chairman board which will be composed almost entirely of issei. Terry's point of view is that issei or nisei could wreck any government.

Central Utah. Issei participation has already been proved by their use on committees of the council.

Minidoka. Reports that participation secured through an advisory committee.

Heart Mountain. Replies that full cooperation cannot be secured without elective representation.

Granada. Says that participation can be secured short of election. The commission has agreed to abide by the regulation. A provision was being made for an elected executive committee of five and five in an advisory capacity to the project director. Issei also serve on the commission.

Rohwer. The plan now being used is for each councilman to have one alien advisor.

Jerome. Participation proved by issei on commission and on committees of council.

In summary the projects report that it will be possible to secure participation without holding office but that we cannot expect to get full responsibility without permitting elected representation.

3. War Relocation Authority is under no obligation to establish or to permit establishment of evacuee government. The effort to do so was a liberal interpretation of our directive from the President, and was intended to foster and develop self expression and participation in community affairs on the part of the evacuees and to mobilize for administrative support the sanctions of a deliberative and representative body of citizens. Should this policy now be changed and WRA regulatory administration be substituted, with only advisory committees of evacuees?

Tule Lake. The growth of individual councilmen and the increase of community support indicates that self government should be continued.

Manzanar. Advisory committee formed to meet present conditions from which a form of limited (not self) government will be evolved.

Poston. Self government should be continued because of previous commitments, the desire to have evacuees assist in the formulation of policies and need to utilize talented and qualified persons.

Gila River. Bennett favors a community council, especially if the judicial function remains a part. Hoffman believes it is inadvisable to abolish government because of previous commitments and the work of the intelligent and loyal to further community government. He points out, however, that it might have been wise in the beginning to have only advisory committees. Gabe says that a change of policy in this regard would be interpreted as a victory of dissident elements who would automatically become a majority. Terry comments that the subversive groups should be removed and that abolishment of government would not prevent their action if they remain.

Central Utah. Says that community government should be continued but with a more liberal interpretation.

Minidoka. A large part of the reply from Minidoka was an explanation and interpretation of administrative policies at that center where no temporary government has been established. Their reply indicated that participation has been successful without government and that any change in policy would not adversely affect them. They believe that the establishment of community government may lead to confusion and difference among the evacuees and there would be no loss if community government was not established.

Heart Mountain. To abolish community government at this time would be bad because of previous commitments and the desires of the residents. There is need, however, for clarification of policy to indicate definitely the fields in which the council may act and those which remain definitely with the administration.

Granada. To abolish government would be a breach of faith, and government will work.

Rohwer. The limited experience does not permit of an adequate reply, but it would appear desirable to go ahead with the present plans.

Jerome. Their reply indicated that in any event the community council could act only in an advisory capacity and that any attempt to give it real disciplinary authority would fail because of the fear of reprisals.

4. Has evacuee government had a reasonable opportunity to prove or disprove itself on your project?

Tule Lake. With 5 months of the temporary council and one month of the permanent council, community government has proved successful.

Manzanar. No.

Poston. Reports indicate an increasing prestige of the councils.

Gila River. Hoffman said that the councils have shown progress but have not proved themselves. Gaba said that community government has not yet proved itself since representation was on a basis of blocks which tended to develop block consciousness rather than community consciousness. Terry advises that adequate time has not elapsed for a definite statement but that when it is deemed a failure the volcano will have already erupted. He believes it can succeed.

Central Utah. The increasing confidence in the council indicates that it is successful.

Minidoka. Does not apply.

Heart Mountain. Temporary council has been satisfactory.

Granada. So far, yes.

Rohwer. Inadequate experience for reply.

Jerome. Inadequate time for temporary council to furnish basis for statement.

5. What groups, organized or otherwise, are leading the fight for or against the establishment of evacuee government? What form is the opposition taking and how many people are involved?

Tule Lake. No opposition.

Manzanar. All groups oppose so-called self-government, but all agree to a limited government.

Poston. Such opposition as may be present will stress the lack of issei representation. There will be little opposition if the issei advisory board is continued. Majority of people are in favor.

Gila River. The JACL, the temporary council and members of the charter commission are generally those in favor of community government. Those who are against include issei organized in dramatic, athletic and other associations and kibe, plus all who are pro-Japanese. Terry comments that those opposed are pro-Japanese. They are not opposed to community government, specifically, but are apposed to any administration action which would pull the evacuees closer to American government.

Central Utah. No known groups either for or against government. The vote on the charter indicates that the Santa Anitaans may be against.

Minidoka. The JACL is the only group which has any expressed opinions and favors.

Heart Mountain. None for or against.

Granada. No known organized opposition.

Rohwer. The council and commission favor it, otherwise no active groups.

Jerome. None for or against but if abolished there would be a storm of protest. If the internal organization gets difficult we may assume the council will give up and administration assume control.

6. Who on your project is representing you in discussions of local government organization?

Tule Lake. Paul Fleming, Director of Community Services, Don Elberson and Robert Throckmorton, Project Attorney.

Manzanar. Ralph P. Merritt, Project Director.

Poston. Ted Haas, Project Attorney.

Gila River. L.T. Hoffman, Director of Community Services, J.H. Terry, Project attorney, Morton Gaba, Community Activities for Canal community and the Project Director.

Central Utah. Lorne W. Bell.

Minidoka. Project attorney and Community Services Division.

Heart Mountain. Project Director, Project Attorney, and Community Services Division.

Granada. Don Harbison, Assistant Project Director; William Ray Johnson, Chief of Community Services; Donald Horn, Project Attorney.

Rohwer. Dr. Hunter, Chief, Community Services Division; Mr. Curtis, Project Attorney; Project Director has also taken some part.

Jerome. Mr. Leflar, Project Attorney; Mr. Melton, Assistant Director; and, Paul Taylor, Project Director.

7. What, if any, changes do you suggest in the present administrative instruction should revision be found desirable?

Tule Lake. Recommendation for the establishment of the Planning Board, regular issei meetings and black and ward advisory councils.

Manzanar. Suggest present Administrative Instructions should be cancelled. New instructions issued to permit each project to establish own advisory government based on local situation.

Poston. A supplementary letter will be prepared.

Gila River. Bennett made no recommendations. Hoffman recommended the removal of the barrier for aliens to hold office. Gaba recommended issei representation with a nisei majority and a full grant of authority to the Community Council to operate community enterprises, finance and direct most community activities. Creation of a board of education and a board of health with final responsibility in project director. Terry replied that the present policy is sound if the pro-Axis group is removed.

Dentral Utah. None.

Minidoka. Any change in policy can be made easily.

Heart Mountain. Issei should hold office and there should be a clear definition of the function between the council and the administration.

Granada. Recommend no change.

Rohwer. Recommend aliens to hold office on a population basis.

Jerome. No change recommended.

It should be noted that although several projects recommend no change in their answer to question 7, they did indicate in their reply to preceding questions that issei should be permitted to hold office. It is also interesting that replies to this question are primarily concerned with a change of policy in only one regard and that is issei participation. Either policy on other points is satisfactory or sufficient time has not elapsed to show the need for modification.

The replies from Manzanar, Minidoka and Gila River deserve special comment. Five persons prepared replies at the latter project. All are in general agreement that community government has a place and that the issei should be brought into

greater participation with full elective rights if possible. Each person projected his reply against a critical internal situation and there was general agreement that if the subversive elements were removed government would work.

These replies carry the implication, explicitly stated in one instance, that a community government would be unable to stand against an aggressive pro-Axis underground movement. But by strengthening government, by inclusion of issei, and by removing the subversive, then government could work.

The reply from Manzanar was projected against the recent major disturbance. Mr. Merritt said that a form of limited advisory government with full participation of issei was possible. But he made an additional significant point, that no form of government could be successful except through slow and painful growth and as a direct expression of the needs of the people. In those areas where they have already had some experience, internal policing, judicial committees, block administration, and advisory relationships, the evacuees were now ready to assume some responsibility.

The reply from Minidoka parallels that from Manzanar. There is recognition that the major responsibility rests with the administration, and under present instructions a council has no real authority. They say why not be realistic and create an advisory group which can meet with the Project Director and interpret community needs to the administration.

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#### Issei Participation in Community Government

The following statement on the participation of issei in community government is based upon my personal knowledge and the replies of the project directors to the memorandum of December 15. Such participation as is indicated below represents a minimum. We know for example that at many projects strong block organizations of a semi-political nature have been created. We also know that older people almost exclusively participate in block meetings. There are also gaps in my knowledge of the eastern projects. For example, I do not know whether issei were members of the commission on government at Central Utah, Heart Mountain, and Rohwer. The absence of issei membership on committees for the temporary council may represent a lack of knowledge.

Tule Lake. An all-issei, seven-man Planning Board selected on a representative basis was created in late October. Block and ward advisory boards with membership equally divided between Issei and nisei operate in conjunction with the permanent council. The former project director held bi-weekly meetings with a selected group of issei.

Manzanar. Five of the 17 members of the commission on government were issei. The block managers assembly was composed of approximately 50 % issei. This group had semi-advisory functions. The committee of 108, elected after the recent Manzanar incident, is undoubtedly composed largely of issei. The negotiating committee selected by this group also contained issei.

Poston. An advisory group of Issei was elected in the same manner as the temporary community council. Representation was by blocks. This group was supposed to advise the council. Report was also made of issei membership on committees. The committee of 72 after the Poston incident, probably contained a large number of issei.

Gila River. Approximately half of the members of the commission on government were issei. Canal Community and probably Butte had a council of block chairmen composed almost entirely of issei.

Central Utah. Issei were reported as serving on committees of the temporary council.

Minidoka. 6 of the 7 members of the commission on government were issei. Issei are also reported as serving on advisory committees to the project administration.

Heart Mountain. No information.

Granada. Issei on commission.

Rohwer. Each council member has one issei advisor.

Jerome. Issei are members of commission on government and on committees of the council.

It has been reported a number of times that immediately following December 7, most of the leaders of the Japanese community in America were picked up for internment. The effect was to discourage alien leaders not arrested from continuing their leadership in a difficult situation. Into the breach stepped younger men through the JACL. Their behavior has been criticized as self-seeking and harmful to other Japanese, by many. It can probably be assumed as generally true that responsible issei leadership has only recently begun to assert itself in our projects. The removal of immediate fear of reprisal, and the developing community solidarity with attendant crises will stimulate increased participation by those who are important to us to maintain a well-ordered community. Formal recognition by us may aid and the immediate danger of radical issei grabbing control seems lessened.

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#### Problems of Community Government

The problem of community government is the problem of the divergent geographic, economic, social, political, educational, and age groups that have plagued all attempts of the Japanese in America to achieve a true community of interest. It is the problem of a racial cultural minority suddenly catapulted from their former adjustment by reason of a world situation. It is a problem of the necessity for creation of new values, and social structure to meet the conditions of a new social and physical environment.

Through administration we have given a real measure of physical security to those who have been uprooted. They have food, shelter, clothing, warmth, and opportunities for keeping healthy and clean. But everyone in the WRA knows that physical security is far from enough for the establishment of a well-ordered community. There must be opportunity for education, recreation, respect for law and order, community values, and the opportunity for realization of some of the hopes and aspirations which all people have. In addition, there must be mechanisms which give the feeling of significant determination and understanding of the forces which control the physical as well as the social world. We had hoped to help create this latter through community government.

Many more obstacles stand in the way of our, or the evacuees, achieving this latter objective than mere physical security. They are obstacles inherent in the whole relocation program and center life. They flow as much from administrative responsibility as from social and psychological factors.

One Project Director has referred to the difficulties of the problem of evacuee government by dividing those who are sincere in their desire to forward such a program into two groups "those who question the sincerity of a plan of self-government which prohibits a large percentage (and particularly the more mature people) from the holding of office and the exercise of administrative authority, and those who question the sincerity of any plan of self-government prepared and limited by the authorities above, whose authority includes the maintenance of a barbed wire fence as visual evidence of the actual complete lack of the fundamentals of self-government. Their view boils down to the conclusion that it is silly for mature men to spend time playing with dolls." (Ralph P. Merritt)

There is another difficulty which is equally insurmountable to the creation of any sort of truly representative self-government. That is the explicit responsibility of the War Relocation Authority for the administrative direction and policy-making function. As long as policy, and as long as administrative direction originates outside the community, without consultation with it, or without regard to its wishes, (no matter how enlightened or liberal) then self-government must remain a truly limited and misnamed activity.

Perhaps we should recognize the situation for what it is and say that it will be impossible to ever have a fully responsible government with opportunity for implementing decisions by administrative action. On the other hand, perhaps it is possible over a period of time to extend to the evacuees a greater measure of self-regulation and planning. If so, policy becomes the formal recognition of an already existing achievement. In other words, if the development of governmental forms and responsibilities are not limited by hard and fast boundaries, but permitted to meet new needs, we may achieve the type of dynamic living government which expresses a real need and has a real meaning.

Significant government, after all, should not consist of an enumerated list of specified powers, but should be the opportunity for people to concern themselves with the problems which are of major concern in their lives. Let us examine some of these problems and see which of them might possibly become a function of government.

There is the problem of law and order. The policy on government already extends to the council some measure of control. It provides that regulations and penalties can be established and a judicial instrument created to enforce them. However, control over the enforcing arm is completely absent. That is retained by the administration. We should ask, if it is possible to relinquish any of this control to a community government. Offenses are now divided into two major kinds, the felonies to be handled by state or federal courts and misdemeanors to be handled by project courts. The first kind need not concern us here.

The violations of law handled by project courts include the serious, and the infractions of regulations. With the addition of a number of administrative police officers to the staff of each project, the need for use of evacuees to arrest persons for acts of a more serious nature is practically eliminated. We shall have two police units under one head; an administrative police and an

evacuee police. Would it not be possible to make the separation in function also a separation in organization? Under such circumstances why not give to the community council the administrative supervision of the evacuee police force with the administrative personnel providing the technical training.

A second major concern is food. The report from Tule Lake corroborated at other projects demonstrated that anxiety over food is a major preoccupation. We have done little to let evacuees participate except through employment in clerical work, food distribution, and preparation and some efforts at production which are not as closely related to consumption as they might be.

Have we so perfectly planned the whole complicated process of getting food from some distant place and then into a man's belly that we have regimented away this driving urge through impairing one of the basic incentives to existence? The anxieties show we have driven the urge into the other channel of expression. Should we not examine the whole complex business of feeding people and see if it is possible to delegate some responsibility to the community.

There is another important area of concern,--productive activity. We can logically ask, how far can we go in allowing the evacuees to plan productive efforts? How much responsibility for the employment of persons and the allocation of manpower? Manpower and production is their problem as much as ours, and yet to what extent have we made it entirely ours and not theirs? It is true that we have established a work corps, but in its definition and framework it is a weak thing. Perhaps through necessity it will grow to be strong. And if the evacuees do achieve a greater measure of responsibility for the planning and direction of productive efforts just how can community government fit it?

It is a fact that every community must have an economic base. There is also need for productive use of manpower in significant activities. That is also one of our problems for those thousands who will remain in the relocation centers because of inability or disinclination to settle elsewhere. How far should administration go in making the solution to this problem a function of government?

The problem of adjusting the conflicting interests and background of issei, nisei, and kibe belongs primarily to the community. It is probably impossible nor would it be wise for these groups to sublimate their differences. It is possible, however, to rationalize or even utilize these groups in the interests of community advancement. Here is one function not listed in our Administrative Instruction that should be the immediate and continuous concern of a community council.

There are many other problems. Housing, health, education, city planning, relocation, recreation, are all concerns of any normal community. How far can we go in entrusting council assistance in these questions?

The evacuees are not yet ready to assume such responsibilities as await them. The needs must first arise. Then they must be expressed through some formal mechanism. Proof must be given of the ability to assume further responsibility.

If it is ever possible to extend the field of community government the project staff must then give leadership instead of direction. Government then becomes the dynamic record of people planning for themselves. Progress will be made by fits and starts. Some projects under wise leadership will move rapidly. Others

because of special conditions may never approach any measureable degree of self-determination.

What is the first step in the achievement of a goal of project determination? It should be the appointment of a committee to examine the functioning of community government, to report in three months time its findings for recommended changes in the operation of community government. The same or similar committee might well continue as long as the projects operate since it is as the evacuees see the good and bad points of policy, not as we see them that significant changes can be made to relieve the ever present tensions.

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#### Recommendations on Community Government

- I. As part of the Community Services Division program a Community Government Institute should be held at each project. The Institute should be for members of the Community Council and a select group of non-Council members. The program should stress three main topics.
  1. ~~Admin~~ Training in parliamentary procedure
  2. Study of the structure and function of Community Government.
  3. Clarification of the differences of function and responsibility between Administrative and Community Government.
- II. An evacuee committee to study the function and operation of Community Government should be appointed at each project. This committee should be prepared to submit a report, within a stated time interval, which includes specific recommendations for changes in policy ~~affecting community government and other relationships~~ and for a more effective government.
- III. The project director should appoint a committee from his staff to study the field of administrative-evacuee relationships. This committee should submit recommendations for changes in policy affecting community government and other relationships.
 

Or, a joint committee of administrative personnel and evacuees should be established to study and recommend policy changes in community government and other relationships.
- III. Thought should be given to one or more conferences to be held in late spring to be attended by Community Council officers and others for the purpose of discussing community and government problems.

1-15-43

To: John H. Provinse  
From Solon T. Kimball

Attached are memoranda on the following subjects:

1. Community Evacuee Government Policy
2. Summarization of Replies to the Director's Memorandum of  
December 15, 1942
3. Issei Participation in Community Government
4. Problems of Community Government
5. Recommendations on Community Government

These memoranda contain much material for discussion with project people of the problems of community government. The most significant subjects include:

1. Issei Participation
2. Administration - Community government relationships
3. Judicial Commission
4. Recommendations for immediate consideration.

Comm  
govt

Jan. 23, 1943 B

Solon Kimball

### Community Evacuee Government Policy

One of the first considerations of the War Relocation Authority after its inception was the establishment of policy for community government at the relocation centers. The decision that community government should be an integral portion of the program was made and publicized at an early stage in the evacuation program.

The scope and structure which community government was to take was the subject of much discussion on the part of members of the Washington, regional and project staffs. The need to clarify thoughts on community government was recognized and on June 5 the Director issued a memorandum on this subject. This memorandum provided for the creation of temporary community government and the election of a council. Significant points of this memorandum include the provision that only citizens were eligible for election; that all persons over 21 were eligible to vote; that each block was entitled to elect one representative to the council; and, that the council would have only advisory function.

The experience of the projects during the interim period of temporary government was to be used as a basis for the establishment of permanent policy. The rapidity with which new situations developed, and the obvious need for some immediate statement of policy on permanent government and other matters led to the policy conference in San Francisco the early part of August. Sufficient time had not elapsed to give the temporary councils a chance to provide the material for careful analysis and discussion. The projects having government had been visited previous to the conference and key persons interviewed to secure their recommendations. The policy finally formulated was based on the rather short experience of temporary councils, the practical and legal exigencies of relocation, and the judgments of those who had been working in this field.

Administrative Instruction No. 34, issued August 24, enunciated the policy that was to govern the structure, creation, and functions of permanent community government. There were several provisions of this instruction on which there was not complete unity of opinion and which were controversial. Some of these provisions still remain a subject for discussion and consideration.

The essential elements of this instruction provide that there shall be established a commission to draft a permanent plan of government. It provided that this permanent plan of government should be submitted to the evacuees for their approval or rejection. It also provided that the plan should provide for the establishment of a community council to which

only citizens were eligible as members. It stipulated that all persons over 18 years of age were eligible to vote. It enumerated the functions of the council, among which were provisions for the enactment of regulations and the establishment of a judicial commission and an arbitration commission.

The most controversial of the provisions was that which limited membership on the council to citizens. Various reasons were advanced both in favor and against this proposal, and substitute proposals were also considered. Some held that only citizens be allowed to vote or hold office. Another point of view was that there be no distinction as regards citizens and non-citizens. In its final acceptance a compromise was accepted in which there was no distinction for voting privileges but elective office was limited to citizens.

This decision was based on several considerations. It was recognized that the evacuation of American citizens from the West Coast implied a suspicion of their loyalty and a possible injustice based on the denial of full citizenship rights. It was thought that some special recognition of the rights of citizens should be given and that by limiting council membership to that group some amount of the stigma placed upon them would be removed.

A second consideration was the recognition of an obligation to educate and train citizen evacuees to take their place in American society upon their release from relocation centers. Training in the procedures and philosophy of democratic government was considered to be one of the ways by which this might be accomplished. Since aliens would presumably continue to be barred from participation in civic affairs, experience which they gained would be of little use to them in the post war period.

There was also some preoccupation with the possibility that if non-citizens were allowed to hold office community councils would be dominated by this group. At best, we would then have a community government composed of Issei who would work for the interests of the community but not necessarily provide the opportunity for the younger members, who are almost entirely citizens, to have that participation necessary for training in good citizenship. At worst there was the possibility that the council would be dominated by the pro-Axis or subversive group that might be in conflict with the administration and use its position to dominate the loyal or spread subversive propaganda among all.

A further consideration was the desire on the part of the Authority to create as normal a community as possible. Since aliens were prohibited from direct participation in civic affairs in American life it was argued that the same condition should continue to exist in the relocation centers as part of a general policy to continue the conditions to which these people were subject before evacuation.

The argument in favor of permitting Issei to hold office was based largely on recognition of the fact that relocation centers were not normal American communities and did not reproduce the conditions in the communities from which these people came. It was argued that a community to be successful must provide opportunity for all groups and segments to have representation. Since the older and largely alien element were parents and exercised parental control, their wisdom and experience was necessary for a smoothly operating community. It was also recognized that these older people were economically able to dictate to their children even though in many cases their children had superior education and qualification for acceptance in American society.

The decision to exclude Issei from Council membership was also based on the examination of the functioning of temporary councils and upon the situation which had developed at some of the already occupied centers.

Particular weight was given to the situation at Manzanar, which was the oldest and most settled at the time the policy was drafted. At Manzanar, a situation had developed in which there was active conflict between an aggressive pro-American citizen group and an aggressive pro-Japanese Kibei and Issei group. It was believed that this conflict was partly due to the failure of the administration at Manzanar to observe the memorandum of June 5 which provided for the establishment of the temporary council composed of citizens.

The administration at Manzanar had created a block leaders council. Members of this council were elected by popular vote from each block. The council was both a legislative and an administrative body. A large proportion of its members were Issei who were thought to be definitely opposed to the principles which the pro-American group stood for. Quality of Issei selected and their failure to give leadership to the community, raised doubts as to the availability of intelligent Issei to occupy the important council positions.

In the first week of August the aggressive pro-American group held a meeting for the purpose of organizing a citizens federation. This meeting was continuously disrupted by a disloyal element, thought to be largely Kibei. A few days later a meeting of Kibei was held at which time open professions of loyalty to Japan were made and wildly applauded.

The demonstration of the desire of the pro-American citizen group to work with the administration and to establish a responsible community government, when projected against the disorderly behavior of the pro-Japanese group, weighted the decision to limit elective office to citizens. There was the suspicion that the Kibei expression represented the feeling of a large portion of the Issei group.

Reports from Tule Lake and Poston, the only other two centers which had established temporary councils at that time, provided no information that would favor the abandonment of the restriction of elective office to citizens. The Project Director of Tule Lake was in accord with this point of view. There were no reports to the contrary received from Poston.

It is also possible that the decision of the WCCA to limit Assembly Center councils to citizens after a trial period, in which anyone had been eligible for office, influenced the decision although no facts were presented to justify the necessity for such a change on the part of WCCA.

The next period in the history of community government was the creation of commissions at the respective relocation centers for the purpose of preparing the plan of government. During the period from September 1 to December 1, when most of the centers had established these commissions and were working on preparation of the plan of government, it became obvious that the work of the commission was seriously handicapped by the provision limiting membership on the council to citizens. It also became obvious that there were at each relocation center a number of Issei who were cooperative with the administration and who had the intelligence and leadership to assist and advise temporary councils, the commission on government, and the project administration. It also became apparent that the Nisei themselves were far from unanimous in feeling that they alone should have the right to hold office and that capable Issei should be excluded.

This provision provoked more discussion and thought probably than any other. Various and devious ways and means were formulated to provide an opportunity for formal Issei participation in community government. At Minidoka it was proposed to have an Issei advisory council elected. At the two projects in the Denver region the possibility of creating an upper house to be composed of Issei was discussed and finally rejected by administrative officials who refused to sanction such a measure. At Gila River a plan was evolved by which a Block Chairmans' council was to be formally created and recognized by the council with the nominating authority for candidates for the community council. Other projects had similar proposals.

Manzanar again provides us with important insights in the problem of community government. No provision was made for the inclusion of Issei in community government. The Manzanar charter was the first one to be completed for submission to the voters. Almost immediately violent opposition developed which was based on objection to three points. There was objection to the proposal that the council be allowed to license evacuee operated enterprises. This objection was based on a misunderstanding that the council had authority to permit individual evacuees to establish private businesses within the center. A second objection was based on the fact that two of the members of the Commission were suspected and disliked by the Issei and pro-Axis groups. A third objection was to the provision excluding Issei from holding office. In addition to these objections there was also the objection of some Nisei to the establishment of the form of government which

in reality gave no measurable amount of self government. There was also objection from a small group which took the position that any cooperation with the administration, which tended to identify the evacuees with America, was to be opposed.

As a result of this opposition the charter commission, having completed its work, resigned and an election was held to select a reviewing group to make such changes as were permissible in the charter. It was hoped that through this wider participation and understanding of the limitations affecting the establishment of community government that acceptance would be achieved. Mr. Merritt, the Project Director, held one meeting with this group before the incident of December 6, which doomed any possibility of immediate acceptance of community government.

As a result of the incidents at Poston and at Manzanar, and because of continued reports of the difficulties of the commissions in framing a plan of government that would give some measure of recognition to the Issei, the Director, on December 15, requested each of the project directors to submit a statement on community government. This statement requested specific information on seven points. Replies from all projects have been received.

At the present time two projects, Tule Lake and Central Utah have voted upon and accepted their plan of government and have elected a new council. Other projects are in varying stages of progress with the probability that the work at all projects, except Manzanar, will be completed within the next month.

Summarization of Replies to the Director's Memorandum of December 15, 1942.

The following is a summary of answers received in reply to the memorandum sent to Project Directors December 15, requesting information on community government. The summarization will be by topics, each of which will precede the report from the projects.

1. Issei-Nisei participation on the community council including attitudes, arguments, and rationalizations being expressed on this controversial problem.

Tule Lake. Shirrell reports that Issei participation has been secured through the establishment of a seven-man Planning Board. The creation of this Board has served to eliminate or reduce Issei-Nisei friction. (No official report has been received on the organization or purpose of the planning board. However, I am generally informed on these points. The idea of the Planning Board was originated by a member of the temporary community council who introduced a resolution was passed by the temporary council and approved by the Project Director, providing for the establishment of a planning board. In theory and practice the planning board was to be completely separate from the jurisdiction or direction of the community council and the Project Director on problems of community concern. To achieve this objective there was to be created a staff to be composed of a permanent secretary and several experts who would do the leg work and prepare comprehensive and detailed reports on such matters as the planning board directed. Membership on the planning board was secured in the following way. Each block selected one man to represent it at a ward meeting. Each of the several wards then held meetings and selected one of this group to be a member of the planning board. The planning board member reported to the ward group from which he had been

selected and these men in turn reported to each of the blocks in which they were resident.)

Ma Manzanar. No Community Council. (Isseis have participated through membership on the charter commission and as members of the block manager's assembly.)

Poston. Mr. Head listed three points: 1. The exclusion of Issei from membership on the community council served as a basis for subversive elements to stir up Issei against the administration and the council. 2. Issei participation was secured by the election of an Issei advisory group in the same manner as the community council. 3. Issei representation would take "the edge from opposition groups". Representation should be on a population basis. If Issei are represented it will be easier to secure their participation in economic affairs of the community.

Gila River. Reports were made by Messrs. Bennett, Hoffman, Gaba, Terry and Williamson. Since each held slightly different views it will be well to summarize each one separately.

Bennett. Expressed the view that Issei representation would be successful if the subversive group on the project were removed, otherwise the council should be one hundred percent citizens.

Hoffman. Favored Issei election to the council if the subversive element was weeded out. He adds that this would bring Issei attitudes into the open and make possible the use of the best qualified. He remarks that Nisei are split on this subject with some of them favoring retention of the present policy and others favoring Issei election to the council.

Morton Gaba. Reported that the present policy of exclusion of Issei from office was unacceptable to both Issei and Nisei. That this exclusion accentuated the cleavage between the groups so that all issues were finally decided on the basis of citizen or non-citizen. He adds that this policy forces the Issei into "underground" action. He also adds that Nisei do not feel qualified to accept the responsibility of community government without the aid of the Issei.

Terry. Reported that the full reflection of varying interests is possible only with Issei representation on the council, but that there is the danger of pro-Axis elements securing control. He points out that this subversive group prefers to operate outside the established channels or administrative procedure in order to control through threats and intimidation.

Williamson. Said that whole-hearted cooperation is impossible with Issei exclusion.

Central Utah. Mr. Ernst reports that the Issei have participated in community government through membership on committees established by the community council. Present exclusion from holding office is unjustified.

Minidoka. Mr. Stafford listed three points pertinent to this question. 1. The colonists feel that the distinction made on the basis of citizenship was unwise but accepted the provision. 2. The administration feels that anything which leads to the division of group unity is harmful. 3. He reports the experience in the assembly centers where "whippersnappers" were apparently encouraged to disregard the advice of the elders and where much hard

feeling developed.

Heart Mountain. Mr. Robertson did not report on the manner in which Issei are now participating but did advocate changing the policy to permit Issei election to the council.

Granada. The question was not answered directly but Horn, the Project Attorney, said that Issei representation should have been allowed but that no change is advisable now.

Rohwer. Mr. Johnston did not report on present participation of Issei but advocated that they be allowed to hold office in proportion to population.

Jerome. Taylor reported the arguments of the Issei that they should have been permitted to hold office since the older men are more responsible and capable. He reported the opinion of the Nisei to the effect that the older men should not object to this provision but give the young men a chance to show their abilities.

It is apparent from the replies that the problem of Issei representation and participation in community government is one of the significant issues of project administration. The specific provisions limiting council membership to citizens has created a storm of discussion at every project but the ruling has been accepted as a necessity but with obvious attempts to get around the strict interpretations by the creation of formally elected advisory boards of one kind or another.

2. Can the participation of the older evacuees on the project be obtained short of their election to the council with full voting rights and privileges? If so, how?

The answer to this question is in many instances a part of the answer to the preceding question.

Tule Lake. The issei participation has been secured by the establishment of the Planning Bosrd, and block and ward advisory

committees composed equally of Issei and Nisei. Meetings with Issei were also held on alternate weeks.

Manzanar. No participation of older evacuee group can be expected short of full voting rights and the privileges of election.

Poston. Issei participation secured through an advisory council and as advisors in matters of particular interest to them.

Gila River. Bennett advocated an elder council, and Issei on the judicial commission. Hoffman doubts that Issei participation can be secured short of full rights but says that an attempt can be made by appointment to committees. Gaba reports that real power rests with the Issei and that in a recent crisis they were the active ones whereas the council was inactive and lost prestige. The new constitution provides for a block chairman board which will be composed almost entirely of Issei. Terry's point of view is that Issei or Nisei could wreck any government.

Central Utah. Issei participation has already been proved by their use on committees of the council.

Minidoka. Reports that participation secured through an advisory committee.

Heart Mountain. Replies that full cooperation cannot be secured without elective representation.

Granada. Says that participation can be secured short of election. The commission has agreed to abide by the regulation. A provision was being made for an elected executive committee of five and five in an advisory capacity to the project director. Issei also serve on the commission.

Rohwer. The plan now being used is for each councilman to have one alien advisor.

Jerome. Participation proved by Issei on commission and on

committees of council.

In summary the projects report that it will be possible to secure participation without holding office but that we cannot expect to get full responsibility without permitting elected representation.

3. War Relocation Authority is under no obligation to establish or to permit establishment of evacuee government. The effort to do so was a liberal interpretation of our directive from the President, and was intended to foster and develop self expression and participation in community affairs on the part of the evacuees and to mobilize for administrative support the sanctions of a deliberative and representative body of citizens. Should this policy now be changed and WRA regulatory administration be substituted, with only advisory committees of evacuees?

Tule Lake. The growth of individual councilmen and the increase of community support indicates that self government should be continued.

Manzanar. Advisory committee formed to meet present conditions from which a form of limited (not self) government will be evolved.

<sup>1</sup> Poston. Self government should be continued because of previous commitments, the desire to have evacuees assist in the formulation of policies and need to utilize talented and qualified persons.

Gila River. Bennett favors a community council, especially if the judicial function remains a part. Hoffman believes it is inadvisable to abolish government because of previous commitments and the work of the intelligent and loyal to further community government. He points out, however, that it might have been wise in the beginning to have only advisory committees.

Central Utah. Says that community government should be continued but with a more liberal interpretation.

Minidoka. A large part of the reply from Minidoka was an explanation and interpretation of administrative policies at that center where no temporary government has been established. Their reply indicated that participation had been successful without government and that any change in policy would not adversely affect them. They believe that the establishment of community government may lead to confusion and difference among the evacuees and there would be no loss if community government was not established.

Heart Mountain. To abolish community government at this time would be bad because of previous commitments and the desires of the residents. There is a need, however, for clarification of policy to indicate definitely the fields in which the council may act and those which remain definitely with the administration.

Granada. To abolish government would be a breach of faith, and government will work.

Rohwer. The limited experience does not permit of an adequate reply but it would appear desirable to go ahead with the present plans.

Jerome. Their reply indicated that in any event the community council could act only in an advisory capacity and that any attempt to give it real disciplinary authority would fail because of the fear of reprisals.

4. Has evacuee government had a reasonable opportunity to prove or disprove itself on your project?

Tule Lake. With five months of the temporary council and one month of the permanent council, community government has proved successful.

Manzanar. No.

Poston. Reports indicate an increasing prestige of the councils.

Gila River. Hoffman said that the councils have shown progress but have not proved themselves. Gaba said that community government has not yet proved itself since representation was on a basis of blocks which tended to develop block consciousness rather than community consciousness. Terry advises that adequate time has not elapsed for a definite statement but that when it is deemed a failure the volcano will have already erupted. He believes it can succeed.

Central Utah. The increasing confidence in the council indicates that it is successful.

Minidoka. Does not apply.

Heart Mountain. Temporary council has been satisfactory.

Granada. So far, yes.

Rohwer. Inadequate experience for reply.

Jerome. Inadequate time for temporary council to furnish basis for statement.

5. What groups, organized or otherwise, are leading the fight for or against the establishment of evacuee government? What form is the opposition taking and how many people are involved?

Tule Lake. No opposition.

Manzanar. All groups oppose so-called self-government, but all agree to a limited government.

Poston. Such opposition as may be present will stress the lack of Issei representation. There will be little opposition if the Issei advisory board is continued. Majority of people are in favor.

Gila River. The JACL, the temporary council and members of

the charter commission are generally those in favor of community government. Those who are against include Issei organized in dramatic, athletic and other associations and Kibei, plus all who are pro-Japanese. Terry comments that those opposed are pro-Japanese. They are not opposed to community government, specifically, but are opposed to any administration action which would pull the evacuees closer to American government.

Central Utah. No known groups either for or against government. The vote on the charter indicates that the Santa Anitans may be against.

Minidoka. The JACL is the only group which has any expressed opinions and favors.

Heart Mountain. None for or against.

Granada. No known organized opposition.

Rohwer. The council and commission favor it otherwise no active groups.

Jerome. None for or against but if abolished there would be a storm of protest. If the internal organization gets difficult we may assume the council will give up and administration assume control.

6. Who on your project is representing you in discussions of local government organization.

Tule Lake. Paul Fleming, Director of Community Services, Don Elberson and Robert Throckmorton, Project Attorney.

Manzanar. Ralph P. Merritt, Project Director

Poston. Ted Haas, Project ~~Director~~ Attorney.

Gila River. L. T. Hoffman, Director of Community Services, J. H. Terry, Project Attorney, Morton Gaba, Community Activities for Canal community and the Project Director.

- Central Utah. Lorne W. Bell.

Minidoka. Project Attorney and the Community Services Division.

Heart Mountain. Project Director, Project Attorney, and Community Services Division.

Granada. Don Harbison, Assistant Project Director; William Ray Johnson, Chief, Community Services; Donald Horn, Project Attorney.

Rohwer. Dr. Hunter, Chief, Community Services Division; Mr. Curtis, Project Attorney; Project Director has also taken some part.

Jerome. Mr. Leflar, Project Attorney; Mr. Melton, Assistant Director; and, Paul Taylor, Project Director.

7. What, if any, changes do you suggest in the present administrative instruction should revision be found desirable?

Tule Lake. Recommendation for the establishment of the Planning Board, regular Issei meetings and block and ward advisory councils.

Manzanar. Suggest present Administrative Instructions should be cancelled. New instructions issued to permit each project to establish own advisory government based on local situation.

Poston. A supplementary letter will be prepared.

Gila River. Bennett made no recommendations. Hoffman recommended the removal of the barrier for aliens to hold office. Gaba recommended Issei representation with a Nisei majority and a full grant of authority to the Community Council to operate ~~comm~~ ~~unity~~ community enterprises, finance and direct most community activities. Creation of a board of education and a board of health with final responsibility in project director. Terry replied that the present policy is sound if the pro-Axis group is removed.

Central Utah. None.

Minidoka. Any change in policy can be made easily.

Heart Mountain. Issei should hold office and there should be a clear definition of the function between the council and the administration.

Granada. Recommend no change.

Rohwer. Recommend aliens to hold office on a population basis.

Jerome. No change recommended.

It should be noted that although several projects recommend no change in their answer to question 7, they did indicate in their reply to preceding questions that Issei should be permitted to hold office. It is also interesting that replies to this question are primarily concerned with a change of policy in only one regard and that is Issei participation. Either policy on other points is satisfactory or sufficient time has not elapsed to show the need for modification.

The replies from Manzanar, Minidoka and Gila River deserve special comment. Five persons prepared replies at the latter project. All are in general agreement that community government has a place and that the Issei should be brought into greater participation with full elective rights if possible. Each person projected his reply against a critical internal situation and there was general agreement that if the subversive elements were removed government would work.

These replies carry the implication, explicitly stated in one instance, that a community government would be unable to stand against an aggressive pro-Axis underground movement. But by strengthening government, by inclusion of Issei, and by removing the subversive, then government could work.

The reply from Manzanar was projected against the recent major disturbance. Mr. Merritt said that a form of limited advisory govern-

ment with full participation of Issei was possible. But he made an additional significant point, that no form of government could be successful except through slow and painful growth and as a direct expression of the needs of the people. In those areas where they have already had some experience, internal policing, judicial committees, block administration, and advisory relationships, the evacuees were now ready to assume some responsibility.

The reply from Minidoka parallels that from Manzanar. There is recognition that the major responsibility rests with the administration, and under present instructions a council has no real authority. They say why not be realistic and create an advisory group which can meet with the Project Director and interpret community needs to the administration.

ISSEI PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

The following statement on the participation of Isseis in community government is based upon my personal knowledge and the replies of the project directors to the memorandum of December 15. Such participation as is indicated below represents a minimum. We know for example that at many projects strong block organizations of a semi-political nature have been created. We also know that older people almost exclusively participate in block meetings. There are also gaps in my knowledge of the eastern projects. For example, I do not know whether Issei were members of the commission on government at Central Utah, Heart Mountain, and Rohwer. The absence of Issei membership on committees for the temporary council may represent a lack of knowledge.

Tule Lake. An all Issei seven man Planning Board selected on a representative basis was created in late October. Block and ward advisory boards with membership equally divided between Issei and Nisei operate in conjunction with ~~a selected~~ the permanent council. The former project director held bi-weekly meetings with aselected group of Issei.

Manzanar. Five of the seventeen members of the commission on government were Issei. The block managers assembly was composed of approximately 50 percent Issei. This group had semi-advisory functions. The committee of 108, elected after the recent Manzanar incident, is undoubtedly composed largely of Issei. The negotiating committee selected by this group also contained Issei.

Poston. An advisory group of Issei was elected in the same manner as the temporary community council. Representation was by blocks. This group was supposed to advise the council. Report was also made of Issei membership on committees. The committee of

72, after the Poston incident, probably contained a large number of Issei.

Gila River. Approximately half of the members of the commission on government were Issei. Canal community and probably Butte had a council of block chairman composed almost entirely of Issei.

Central Utah. Issei were reported as serving on committees of the temporary council.

Minidoka. Six of the seven members of the commission on government were Issei. Issei are also reported as serving on advisory committees to the project administration.

Heart Mountain. No information.

Granada. Issei on commission.

Rohwer. Each council member has one Issei advisor.

Jerome. Issei are members of commission on government and on committees of the council.

It has been reported a number of times that immediately following December 7, most of the leaders of the Japanese community in America were picked up for internment. The effect was to discourage alien leaders not arrested from continuing their leadership in a difficult situation. Into the breach stepped younger men through the JACL. Their behavior has been criticized as self-seeking and harmful to the Japanese, by many. It can probably be assumed as generally true that responsible Issei leadership has only recently begun to assert itself in our projects. The removal of immediate fear of reprisal, and the developing community solidarity with attendant crises will stimulate increased participation by those who are important to us to maintain a well-ordered community. Formal recognition by us may aid and the immediate danger of radical Issei grabbing control seems lessened.

Problems of Community Government

The problem of community government is the problem of the divergent geographic, economic, social, political, educational, and age groups that have plagued all attempts of the Japanese in America to achieve a true community of interest. It is the problem of a racial cultural minority suddenly catapulted from their former adjustment by reason<sup>of</sup> a world situation. It is a problem of the necessity for creation of new values, and social structure to meet the conditions of a new social and physical environment.

Through administration we have given a real measure of physical security to those who have been uprooted. They have food, shelter, clothing, warmth, and opportunities for keeping healthy and clean. But everyone in the WRA knows that physical security is far from enough for the establishment of a well-ordered community. There must be opportunity for education, recreation, respect for law and order, community values, and the opportunity for realization of some of the hopes and aspirations which all people have. In addition, there must be mechanisms which give the feeling of significant determination and understanding of the forces which control the physical as well as the social world. We had hoped to help create this latter through community government.

Many more obstacles stand in the way of our, or the evacuees, achieving this latter objective than mere physical security. They are obstacles inherent in the whole relocation program and center life. They flow as much from administrative responsibility as from social and psychological factors.

One Project Director has referred to the difficulties of the problem of evacuee government by dividing those who are sincere in their desire to forward such a program into two groups "those who question

the sincerity of a plan of self-government which prohibits a large percentage (and particularly the more mature people) from the holding of office and the exercise of administrative authority, and those who question the sincerity of any plan of self-government prepared and limited by the authorities above, whose authority includes the maintenance of a barbed wire fence as visual evidence of the actual complete lack of the fundamentals of self-government. Their view boils down to the conclusion that it is silly for mature men to spend time playing with dolls." (Ralph R. Merritt)

There is another difficulty which is equally insurmountable to the creation of any sort of truly representative self-government. That is the explicit responsibility of the War Relocation Authority for the administrative direction and policy making function. As long as policy and as long as administrative direction originates outside the community, without consultation with it, or without regard to its wishes, (no matter how enlightened or liberal) then self-government must remain a truly limited and misnamed activity.

Perhaps we should recognize the situation for what it is and say that it will be impossible to ever have a fully responsible government with opportunity for implementing decisions by administrative action. On the other hand, perhaps it is possible over a period<sup>of</sup>/time to extend to the evacuees a greater measure of self regulation and planning. If so, policy becomes the formal recognition of an already existing achievement. In other words, if the development of governmental forms and responsibilities are not limited by hard and fast boundaries, but permitted to meet new needs, we may achieve the type of dynamic living government which expresses a real need and has a real meaning.

Significant government, after all, should not consist of an enumerated list of specified powers, but should be the opportunity for people

to concern themselves with the problems which are of major concern in their lives. Let us examine some of these problems and see which of them might possibly become a function of government.

There is the problem of law and order. The policy on government already extends to the council some measure of control. It provides that regulations and penalties can be established and a judicial instrument created to enforce them. However, control over the enforcing arm is completely absent. That is retained by the administration. We should ask, if it is possible to relinquish any of this control to a community government. Offenses are now divided into two major kinds, the felonies to be handled by state or federal courts and misdemeanors to be handled by project courts. The first kind need not concern us here.

The violations of law handled by project courts include the serious, and the infractions of regulations. With the addition of a number of administrative police officers to the staff of each project, the need for use of evacuees to arrest persons for acts of a more serious nature is practically eliminated. We shall have two police units under one head; an administrative police and an evacuee police. Would it not be possible to make the separation in function also a separation in organization? Under such circumstances why not give to the community council the administrative supervision of the evacuee police force with the administrative personnel providing the technical training.

A second major concern is food. The report from Tule Lake corroborated at other projects demonstrated that anxiety over food is a major preoccupation. We have done little to let evacuees participate except through employment in clerical work, food distribution, and preparation and some efforts at production which are not as closely related to consumption as they might be.

Have we so perfectly planned the whole complicated process of

getting food from some distant place and then into a man's belly that we have regimented away this driving urge through impairing one of the basic incentives to existence. The anxieties show we have driven the urge into the other channel of expression. Should we not examine the whole complex business of feeding people and see if it is possible to delegate some responsibility to the community.

There is another important area of concern, - productive activity. We can logically ask, how far can we go in allowing the evacuees to plan productive efforts? How much responsibility for the employment of persons and the allocating of manpower? Manpower and production is their problem as much as ours, and yet to what extent have we made it entirely ours and not theirs? It is true that we have established a work corps, but in its definition and framework it is a weak thing. Perhaps through necessity it will grow to be strong. And if the evacuees do achieve a greater measure of responsibility for the planning and direction of productive efforts just how can community government fit it?

It is a fact that every community must have an economic base. There is also the need for productive use of manpower in significant activities. That is also one of our problems for those thousands who will remain in the relocation centers because of inability or disinclination to settle elsewhere. How far should administration go in making the solution to this problem a function of agreement.

The problem of adjusting the conflicting interests and background of Issei, Nisei and Kibei belongs primarily to the community. It is probably impossible nor would it be wise for these groups to sublimate their differences. It is possible, however, to rationalize or even utilize these groups in the interests of community advancement. Here is one function not listed in our Administrative Instruction that should

be the immediate and continuous concern of a community council.

There are many other problems. Housing, health, education, city planning, relocation, recreation, are all concerns of any normal community. How far can we go in entrusting council assistance in these questions?

The evacuees are not yet ready to assume such responsibilities as await them. The needs must first arise. Then they must be expressed through some formal mechanism. Proof must be given of the ability to assume further responsibility.

If it is ever possible to extend the field of community government the project staff must then give leadership instead of direction. Government then becomes the dynamic record of people planning for themselves. Progress will be made by fits and starts. Some projects under wise leadership will move rapidly. Others because of special conditions may never approach any measurable degree of self-determination.

What is the first step in the achievement of a goal of project determination. It should be the appointment of a committee to examine the functioning of community government, to report in three months time its findings for recommended changes in the operation of community government. The same or similar committee might well continue as long as the projects operate since it is as the evacuees see the good and bad points of policy, not as we see them that significant changes can be made to relieve the ever present tensions.

Recommendations on Community Government

I. As part of the Community Services Division program a Community Government Institute should be held<sup>at</sup> each project. The Institute should be for members of the Community Council and a select group of non-Council members. The program should stress three main topics.

1. Training in parliamentary procedure
2. Study of the structure and function of Community Government
3. Clarification of the differences of function and responsibility between Administrative and Community Government.

II. An evacuee committee to study the function and operation of Community Government should be appointed at each project. This committee should be prepared to submit a report, within a stated time interval, which includes specific recommendations for change of policy and for a more effective government.

The Project Director should appoint a committee from his staff to study the field of administrative-evacuee relationships. This committee should submit recommendations for changes in policy affecting community government and other relationships.

Or, a joint committee of administrative personnel and evacuees should be established to study and recommend policy changes in community government and other relationships.

III. Thought should be given to one or more conferences to be held in late spring to be attended by Community Council officers and others for the purpose of discussing community and government problems.

February 17, 1943

To: John H. Provinse, Chief, Community Services Division  
Subject: Excerpt from February 8 report of Anthony E. O'Brien

I think you will be interested in the following excerpt from the February 8 report of the Project Attorney at Tule Lake:

"2. Community Government. I went to Klamath Falls and obtained the subject list of the so-called 'civil' ordinances of that city. These related to licenses, sanitation, traffic, etc. Saturday morning, I met with the ordinance committee and talked with them for two hours on the operation of Community Council through the medium of standing committees; on procedure at Council meetings and on the passage of ordinances. They were to start the first of this week and spend their entire time drafting a code.

"In the meanwhile, I assigned Sakae Hayashi to pull out the title index of all the misdemeanors under the California Penal Code. This work will be completed tomorrow and will be turned over to the ordinance committee to allow them to determine what ordinances they think should be adopted for this Project. Throughout all of this work, I have been constantly at odds with Dr. Jacoby. He insists that the Council need not pass, as an ordinance, any misdemeanor contained in the Penal Code of California. I insist that they should; that the primary duty of enforcing the State law is upon the District Attorney and the local courts; that in all municipalities, in order for city prosecution, there must be city ordinances which may or may not coincide with the State law. I cannot see how the clerk of our Judicial Commission can stand before the Commission and arraign a defendant by reading from the California Penal Code. My idea is that we should parallel these misdemeanors, as our own ordinances, and enforce nothing but our own ordinances

before the Judicial Commission. All other crimes should be enforced by the Project Director or the outside courts, State and Federal. If I am in error in this stand, I wish you would promptly advise me for I feel I have practiced enough criminal law to be fairly sure of my position.

"Perhaps you feel that I have dwelt too much on the crime situation here. However, I understand now that organized gambling is present here, ~~not~~ that commercial or at least semi-commercial prostitution exists here, and that the juvenile delinquency situation is becoming serious. For instance, across the road from the Project, we have a hill for the residents called Castle Rock. We have had considerable snow lately and the evacuees have used the hill for sliding and skiing purposes. Their sleds and toboggans are, of course, homemade. I would not even question as to where the wood came from with which to make them, for I already think I know; but I learned today that a large number of sleds and toboggans have bottoms of tin. One piece of tin, four by eight feet, five gauge, was stolen from the Government machine shop. Some of the other tin came from splitting and using ~~used~~ stove pipe. Where the balance came from, you may guess. With tin probably one of the scarcest metals in the United States today, and with the Congressional investigation staring us in the face, I can no longer look on the theft of Government property as a joke. Unless we have some adequate method of law enforcement and apprehension of offenders, I am afraid that I shall fall in with the rest and just take the attitude that the old procedure is all right and not bother about it any further. Saturday night a gambling raid was conducted and paraphernalia and players were arrested but, as usual, nothing has been done about it. The worst

ordeal the offenders face is a trial before the Judicial Commission without any ordinance against gambling and probably the usual Tule Lake result. I hope that you will speedily provide an answer to Mr. Coverley's appeal to the Director, prepared by me and forwarded to Mr. Coverley for signature today."

We have not seen Mr. Coverley's letter that is referred to in the last paragraph of the excerpt. With respect to the difference of opinion between Mr. O'Brien and Dr. Jacoby I believe that Mr. O'Brien is correct. Under Administrative Instruction No. 34 the Judicial Commission is given jurisdiction over only those offenses that are prescribed by regulations of the Community Council. The Tule Lake Charter, it is true, purports to give the Judicial Commission jurisdiction over all offenses which are less than a felony under California law and it is undoubtedly this provision that Dr. Jacoby relies upon. Since the inclusion of this provision in the Charter was unauthorized by the Administrative Instruction I do not believe that it should be relied upon as giving jurisdiction to the Judicial Commission. There is no reason, however, why the Community Council could not, if it wished, adopt a blanket regulation of the same nature and we have so advised Mr. O'Brien. This may sound like something of a technical point but I believe that it has substance behind it since we have envisaged the Community Council as the legislative body for the centers and contemplate that the Charter should by prescribing regulations itself limit the discretion of the Community Council in that respect.

/s/ Philip M. Glick

Solicitor

COPY

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON

Comm. govt

513

March 15, 1943

To: All Project Directors

Pending revision of Administrative Instruction No. 34,  
Section III-B may be interpreted to read as follows:

"Only citizens of the United States, who are 21 years of age, or over, shall be eligible as elective members of the Community Council. However, non-citizens may be elected, appointed, or otherwise chosen on committees, boards, or advisory councils to assist in evacuee government, and the plan of government drafted by the Charter Commission may make specific provision for the organization and functions of such non-citizen groups."

It is unlikely that the revision of Administrative Instruction No. 34 will permit the election of noncitizens to the Community Council.

Sincerely yours,

Signed: D. S. Myer  
Director



Memo to: E. M. Rowalt

From: Solon T. Kimball

*Community Govt*  
4-15-43 *FS*

I have read rather carefully the statements prepared by staff members and evacuees at Minidoka on the subject of Community Government and submitted recently to this office. These individual statements contain pertinent material to our present quandary regarding the release of the revision of Administrative Instruction No. 34, allowing non-citizens to hold office. For your information I have abstracted portions which are specifically concerned with this problem.

Philip Schafer, Assistant Project Director

Enough space has been devoted to the questions relating to the cleavage between the Issei and the Nisei so that I need not add any further comments, however, because we frankly were opposed to such a condition, wherein a minor quarter of the population could dominate the whole and in view of the fact that Washington was adamant in their position on this matter, we frankly felt unwise to proceed.

George L. Townsend, Chief, Community Activities

Even before all residents had arrived from the assembly centers we held discussions with various representative groups on how to proceed best in organizing community government within the limitations of Administrative Instruction 34. In those early discussions there was pointed out repeatedly the seeming injustice of an order which would deny to the majority of adults a direct voice in the government of the Center.

It is my belief that, although the stipulation in Administrative Instruction 34 restricting elected office to Nisei would receive hearty approval from most citizens of the United States, such a proposal

is bucking up against a Japanese cultural pattern that will lead to disunity, if not an actual open break, if pressed into practice.

At the Denver meeting, which Mr. Schafer and I attended, the consensus of opinion of those present was that the restriction holding membership on the council to the Nisei was wrong. I detected what I think was an attempt at "face saving" in not changing a policy which nearly all agreed was wrong. If this assumption be true, then I feel more justified than ever in the position taken at this Project.

A part of the two main objectives promulgated at the San Francisco policy meeting last fall read, "To mobilize for assistance in Project administration the active support and sanction of the entire body of evacuees." The underscoring is mine. With the restrictions of membership on the council previously discussed, how can the entire body be represented? Factors in the whole cultural situation, accentuated by shocks and attitudes inherent in evacuation, makes such sanctions impossible without direct participation by the Issei.

R. Sprinkel, Sr. Administrative Officer

This office has been uniformly opposed to the idea of restricting membership in office to citizens simply because such a restriction would destroy, in this community, the basic concept of democratic government as it would deny the participation of the community's most valuable men, the men who have contributed most to Minidoka's trouble-free record. This office has been very hopeful that the correction of this very obvious fault in the community government structure would be forthcoming from Washington.

Carl V. Sandoz, Head Counselor

To my mind, the form of government provided for by present WRA policy will, however, create more problems than it will solve. Limiting office holders to niseis may be good in theory, but it is basically unsound in practice because it is at cross purposes with the cultural pattern of the people. It is not necessary for me to point out to you that this culture puts great stress on the dominance of the aged, and that the average issei has little faith in the judgment of the average nisei on such matters as government. This situation may be undesirable but we must recognize that it exists and that it will continue to exist long after the duration. To ignore this fact is to invite disaster. I don't know what the answer is but I think that we should accept the fact that this is not a normal community and allow the non-citizens to hold office.

Briefly, my opinion on community government is this: Some recognized organization should be established to serve primarily as a channel of communication between the people and the administration. Whether or not it would be a policy forming or an advisory body is not of fundamental importance. It is important that all residents should be eligible to hold office. This is basic.

R. A. Pomeroy, Superintendent of Education

As matters stand, we have even limited the rights of suffrage to the American born. Such an arrangement in itself is almost certain prophecy of failure. We presume to set up the rules of government in this fashion for a race in which the elders have traditionally been reversed as the true leaders. How can we expect such a radical right about face?

Jerome T. Light, High School Principal

We have felt that every time we approach a situation which called for apparent discrimination against the Issei that there arose a feeling of tension. We have been very careful to take into account this aspect of the Japanese cultural pattern and feel that it has saved us a great deal of trouble. The establishment of community government on the basis of the present regulations would tend to negate our efforts in this respect. We would be very reluctant to establish any community government which would violate this very important psychological factor in the mental and emotional makeup of the colonists.

If the regulations concerning community government were to be revised in this respect, we would then favor the establishment of community government.

Howard Mann

It is my understanding that the proposed charter restricts elective positions to citizens only. This provision is definitely against all basic democratic principles including that set forth at the San Francisco meeting "to mobilize for assistance in the project administration the active support and sanction of the ENTIRE BODY of evacuees.....".

R. S. Davidson, Chief, Agriculture Division

THE respect of the young people for their parents is a Japanese tradition. Likewise family solidarity has been the controlling influence upon its younger members. Community self-government as prescribed under WRA regulations violates that respect for elders, breaks that family tie, and fails to recognize the traditional leadership and responsibility of older men.

The Nisei are expected to leave the Project under the present relocation program. The Issei who remain are not granted equal rights and privileges under the present policy. The prospects for a permanent, efficient community government appear to be not very bright.

Earl Ingham, Superintendent, Consumers' Cooperative

We believe that one of the points in the charter that would be a focal point of trouble would be the exclusion of Issei from legal participation. We feel that an equal opportunity must be given for all the people to play a somewhat similar role in this community as they would be in their local communities prior to evacuation. Would it be possible to take this into consideration in the charter?

L. M. Neher, M.C., Principal Medical Officer

While self government at the present time would consist of governing of the total, by a majority of the majority, as relocation progresses, it would tend to become a government of the whole, by a majority of a minority.

Dick T. Kanaya, A member of Charter Commission

There are the dangers if the Community Government is set up. It will create friction among the younger generation for a struggle to attain powers and also conflicts will probably arise between the Issei and the Nissei groups. Another possibility is abusement of powers by the elected persons.

J. Yukawa, A Charter Commission member

First of all, here is a question which should be analyzed with care. That is the cause of the troubles between aliens and citizens in the evacuee project. As far as my knowledge is concerned, it is axiomatically

clear that within the evacuee project everybody regardless of his nationality, ought to be all the same in right and duty as well. It is, however, incontrovertible that the unfairness in treatment is induced from the instruction #34 which seems to me to be undemocratic. I should say, therefore, that the discrimination of treatment in the political circle of self-government is the powerful incentive to sow dissention among the residents. The psychological phenomena created therefrom appear on everything, and upon the establishment of evacuee government with such political discrimination, our project would never be happy.

Roy Ichizo Akiyama, Member fo Government Charter Commission

It is my opinion that so long as the Issei are barred from all elective offices, no plan of so-called self-government should be put into effect here. The result wuld probably be a repétition of the disorders at Manzanar and Poston. I fell that the real basis of these troubles lies in the exclusion from elective offices of the older men who have experience and tact and in the attempt to place the relatively inexperienced Nisei over them.

If any plan of self-government is to be permitted, the rule excluding the Issei from elective offices should first be eliminated. Unless this is done, I believe any attempt at self-rule would be destined to failure. The alternative is the election of capable individuals, both Issei and Nisei, to an advisory board.

Kinya Okajima

I have always held and still hold that this is not and cannot be a normal community, as long as we are in the custody of the government. Such being the case, the members of this community should be treated

as one group in the matter of self-government, making no distinction between the nisei, whose citizenship rights are temporarily suspended to a certain degree, and non-citizen Japanese. This viewpoint seems to be in accord with that which the "evacuee government has", as adopted at the policy meetings held at San Francisco, which is mentioned in Director Myer's letter to you, namely, - "To mobilize for assistance, in project administration, the active support....."

John Essene, Superintendent, Community Enterprises

Secondly, what about creation of internal strife? A principal cause of discord has been the ineligibility of aliens to hold office. Our cooperative has granted equal vote and equal eligibility to office to all adults. The result has been to obtain a preponderance of older persons in responsible offices in the coop. Since the elections are free and equal, there is only one conclusion to draw--that the second generation adults are not yet ready for assumption of authority and responsibility.

The structure of the coop organization will permit Second Generation Japanese to take up authority, when they are ready, but not before. I would be inclined to favor community government only on the basis of equal franchise and eligibility to office for all adults.

Comm  
gov  
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M. M. Tozier

4-22-43

Solon T. Kimball

If the concepts expressed in that portion of the Quarterly Report dealing with Community Government are widely held either by our own staff or by the evacuees then some place along the line we have done a poor job of interpreting our policy. The theory upon which Community Government was established included neither the notion that we should pattern after municipal government nor that such patterning could be made to approximate normal community life. The policy on Community Government was developed from two basic considerations. The one consideration was the extent to which the authority of the Project Director could be delegated to formal-~~ize~~ Community Government and the degree of responsibility which could be accepted by the evacuees. The second consideration pertained to community aspects of relocation centers. It was recognized that a relocation center was not a normal community but that there was a community of interest which was part of the total situation. The second part of our policy opened the door for the encouragement of participation among all sections of the community.

The analogy to autonomy granted in schools or other institutions is a false one. The problems of the relocation center are similar to any community insofar as there is representation of all types and kinds of people. It was never intended to grant autonomy or self-government to the evacuees. Unfortunately the term self-government has become rather widely used and has served only to confuse the whole problem of developing an integrated community which, after all, is probably the basic function of Community Government.

It is not true that delays in establishing permanent government can be attributed to lack of agreement surrounding issei participation. It is true that there was considerable discussion of this point and at some projects a hesitancy to establish any kind of government along the provisions of Administrative Instructions. The latter part of paragraph 2 seems to be not a statement of fact but opinion and the projecting of our own notions.

I am confused by the wording of the third sentence of the last paragraph. I do not know what pattern is referred to, nor has it been established that Community Government as outlined through our policy is not adapted to relocation centers. In fact there is increasing evidence that the Community Council and related bodies are gaining increasing prestige in their respective communities.

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- 2 -

The statement submitted to me falls far short of being an adequate analysis for the development of Community Government. A more presentable analysis would be one which described the administrative and cultural complications of community life on the projects as a background against which the development of Community Government could be portrayed.

SK  
STKimball:HMP

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7-1-43

John H. Provinse

Solon T. Kimball

Attached is a report on the organization of Community Government and its relations with the administration at Poston. The material for this report was gathered during my recent visit to Poston. Ralph Gelvin, Ned Spicer, Len Nelson and others were of particular assistance in describing to me the changes which have occurred there during the past year. I hope that I have reported their statements accurately.

One interesting development which occurred rather early in the history of Poston was the establishment of the unit administrators for each of the three camps. You may remember that several months ago we discussed the advisability of recommending the establishment of a new position called Administrative Assistant who would represent the Project Director in his relations with the community. I was impressed that the Unit Administrator at Poston exercised these functions on a somewhat broader basis than we had conceived of in our discussions.

I spent a rather limited time with James Crawford of Unit 2 and Morris Burge of Unit 3. I would hesitate to attempt any analysis of the differences in administration and general organization of the three Units except to comment that each has unique characteristics. The outstanding similarity in the administration relationships between the Unit Administrators of 2 and 3 is the emphasis on a technical and advisory role of the project staff. The Unit Administrator is primarily a liaison in his community and the staff in Unit 1.

In addition to gathering information on Community Government I also conferred with staff members on some of their problems. I prepared for Mr. Gelvin a memorandum on the subject of communication. I also discussed with him and with Mr. Crawford the advisability of establishing a relocation committee in connection with the Council. I also had

some discussion with Mr. Matsuda, the Acting Project Attorney, on the organization and functioning of the Judicial Commission.

The agricultural program and utilization of land and manpower for the production of foods was a major subject of conversation during my visit. Mr. Gelvin's speech at the induction of the new Community Council emphasized the importance of food production to the community. Administrative changes were also being considered to improve the situation and it is encouraging to note that there was consultation with members of the Community Government on this problem.

Administration and Community Government  
at Poston I.

May 1943 was the first anniversary of Poston. The first few weeks of confusion, uncertainty and dust are history. Now there are gardens, laws, and ornamental plants which give Poston an air of a settled and reasonably well-organized community. The apartments have become home to many people and the interiors have been made livable with furnishings. These are the outward changes and they are striking. The less apparent changes are those which have come in the relations between the evacuees and the administration, and among the evacuees themselves. There have been changes of policy, of structure, and of attitude. These changes are even more significant than the physical manifestations.

A year ago many of the members of the administrative staff especially among those who occupied the top administrative positions believed in objectives about which they are now less certain. These persons were convinced that it would be possible to create a model community among the evacuees; that it was the job of the administration to point out to the residents this vision of a productive and satisfactory community; and that leaders would arise who would cooperate in the achievement of this objective. It was also believed that in the process of achievement a new pattern of relationships between the administered and the administration would be created. This pattern would represent the acme of achievement in the administration of native peoples. Some members of the staff who were convinced that despite evacuation democracy had real meaning and that there could arise a truly democratic and creative community. Other staff members were less certain or silently skeptical.

The interval of one year provides a time space adequate to evaluate the degree of achievement of these early objectives and beliefs. The

evaluation is based on the kind of administrative and community structure that has developed during this period.

No one would claim that exalted objectives of the early days have been realized yet remarkable gains have been realized in the face of discouraging resistance. The evacuees instead of following the reasonable path of cooperatives have in many instances proved (to the AP) stubborn and non-understanding. Some were cynical and disillusioned, others hostile, and some apathetic. The evacuees in the beginning were much more interested in their separate and individual welfare than in any responsibility toward the community, or toward the objectives of the Poston administration. The evacuees were much more interested in where to get lumber to make furniture, a broom to sweep out the dirt, or a hose to water the dust. It is true they asked innumerable questions about their citizenship and property rights and of their future, but assurances of their democratic rights fell on doubting ears.

As some measure of security and order was achieved residents turned their attention to block improvement. A general interest in wider community problems was present at first only among a few receptive young Americans who did cooperate in community improvement. Those who were members of the first temporary Community Council strove to meet many problems, but they never held the confidence of the people. They were representatives of a community which did not exist.

Nevertheless, there was a developing community pattern. It came from within the group and in one sense the November strike was the first genuine demonstration of community integration arising entirely from the evacuees.

Today, Poston I is a truly emergent community. It has yet failed to assume all of the responsibility which a community must accept and it is far from the ideal democratic community conceived by its early sponsors. Nevertheless, it is a true community and gaining strength and definiteness with each passing month. With the growth of community integration there has been a change in the structure and attitude of the administration.

The direct administration line between staff heads and evacuees has been limited. The Unit Administrator with his direct relation to the Project Director has assumed many of the contacts that formerly went to the Project Director's office and to the staff. As the project staff has found itself forced to take a more technical and advisory role some have felt that their functions and usefulness were diminishing. For some there has come a feeling of frustration and futility, for others a confirmation of their dislike of the situation in which they find themselves which is projected against the administration, the evacuees, or both. There are a few, however, who see the implications of the change and have welcomed it as progress in the right direction.

In contrast, the feeling of security and responsiveness of the community has been increasing. The rapid development and assumption of responsibility by community government is a manifestation of this change. The unique features of this government were first formulated during the November strike. The confused administrative picture, the inability of the administration to communicate effectively with the evacuees and vice versa, and the failure to reach common agreement on objectives for the community were three major factors contributing to the uncertainty and unrest which led to the outbreak.

In this light the strike can be viewed as a community-wide demand for more definite and concrete organization of relationships and functions. A number of the leaders of the strike have continued to hold responsible positions in Community Government. They were members of committees established at that time and have continued in the same capacity under the reconstituted temporary Council. The chairman of the Council became one of the key group, and others joined or were dropped with the shifting situation. The nuclear group has continued in control throughout the period of the temporary council and the election of one of their members as Chairman of the new Council indicates this control will continue.

The kind and structure of Community Government that was present on June 1, 1943 may be described as follows: The Community Council was composed of one representative from each block. Previous to the election of the new Council, the issei Advisory Board and the temporary Council met as one group. In addition to the Council there were a number of committees composed entirely of Council members and a number of other civic groups appointed by the Council but with membership largely drawn from non-Council sources. The Judicial Commission was not an important body.

The committees of the Council have been comparatively inactive. Their function has been to report to the Council on problems of immediate concern but they have had no administrative responsibility nor have these committees engaged in any type of action program.

In contrast to the Council committees are a number of Council created or sponsored groups which have been extremely active and which have played a significant part in the administration and management of the community. The two most important of these groups are the Executive Board and the Labor Relations Board. These two were products of the

November strike later given sanction by the new Council and continued in operation. There are also three other groups; the Social Welfare Board, the Health Committee, and the Police Commissioners. It is in these five groups that the significant part of Community Government is found.

The Community Council and its affiliated boards and committees work closely with the Unit Administrator. The Unit Administrator is responsible for the administration of Unit I and has under his direct control, block managers, and police. He is the City Manager. He is in direct consultive relation with Community Government and acts as a liaison with the Project Director and the administrative staff. The Unit Administrator, the Block Managers and Council groups are housed separately from the administration headquarters. This makes possible a continuous<sup>and</sup>/frequent relation between the officers of the Council, the action committees, Unit Administrator and Block Managers. This close working relationship has been demonstrated on a number of occasions. The volunteer program for additional labor to build the schools, the formulation of policy to meet manpower needs for community operation, and the reorganization of police and suppression of gambling were problems met through this cooperative arrangement. There are many others.

Within the past two months Community Government has assumed two additional functions in cooperation with the Administrative staff. The Social Welfare Board was created to handle difficult social problems. An Advisory relationship with the Chief of Community Services has been established.

A second significant innovation has been the establishment of the Police Commissioners. An informal group at the City Hall composed of the Chairman of the Community Council and members of the Executive and Labor Relations Boards decided that measures should be taken to eliminate professional gambling. The Executive Board Chairman and others met with block groups arousing sentiment for the correction of the gambling situation with the result that the resignation of the Chief of Police was given to the Project Director. The man who replaced him was picked on the recommendation of this informal groups. There was then established the Police Commissioners (on the suggestion of the Unit Administrator) who were to represent the public and were to give moral backing to the Police Department ~~and~~ in the enforcement of law. Actually, however, the Chief of Police and the Police Commissioners are persons picked by and acceptable to the group which is in control of Community Government.

With each crisis has come a further assumption of responsibility by Community Government, but not a commensurate decrease in the authority of the administration. The emerging pattern is one of redefining the respective functions of the two groups. We may expect that as long as the administration and the group in government can compose their differences and work cooperatively there will be no serious trouble. If either group makes excessive demands which permit no compromise then a rupture may occur. There has been no evidence that Community Government questions the authority or position of the Project Director. With each additional increment of responsibility Community Government is in a stronger position to secure serious ~~and~~ consideration of its recommendations from the administration and to enforce its decisions on

the community.

The developing pattern of Community Government has many implications. With additional administrative contacts channeling through the Unit Administrator, the staff has found that its direct associations and direct control of community life has lessened. The staff function has been moving in the direction of a technical and advisory relationship to an organized community.

There is developing, and very rapidly, an evacuee leadership that will be able to take over and manage for better<sup>or</sup>/for worse the affairs of the community of Poston with the need for only limited administrative direction but need for technical assistance and leadership. It is in this area of administration that the Project staff is going to find the greatest opportunity for furthering the development of Poston as a community.

#### Recommendations

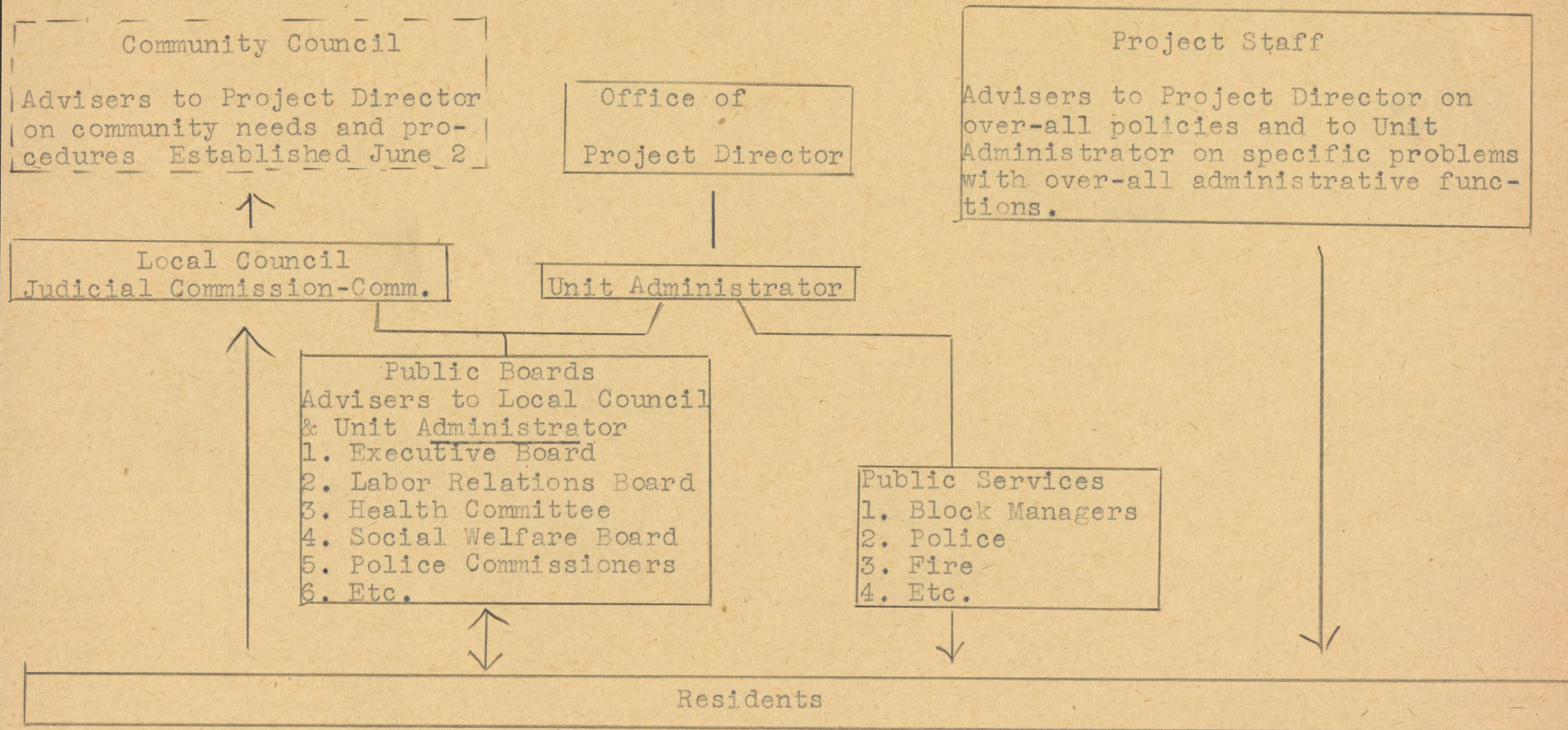
1. That the administrative staff reexamine its functions in terms of future relations to the community. That special consideration be given to increased emphasis of the technical and advisory function.

2. That there be a further centralization of line authority in the Unit Administrator.

3. That the project and unit administrators continuously bring all problems of management to the community and local Councils for discussion and advice.

4. That arrangements be made to insure that block representatives meet frequently with block groups and inform them of council action and community problems.

Community Government and Administrative Organization  
Poston I, June 1, 1943



Comment: The new Community Council composed of members from the three Units was not organized until June 2. It is faced with the necessity of establishing relations with the local councils and project administration. We may expect that its establishment will speed the limiting of the Project Staff's function in line administration.

The problem of the Project Director will be to bring these two groups into an harmoniously cooperative relationship. As the focus of attention shifts in this new orientation, the staff may be expected to be less concerned with line administration and the Unit Administrator and local government will assume more of this burden.

7/2/43

John H. Provinse

Solon T. Kimball

The attached report represents a summary of the status of Community Government at the various projects as of July 1st. At that time there were five projects which had established a permanent form of government with councils operating for them. Two projects have had their plans of government approved subject to modifications and we may expect a vote in the near future. Heatt Mountain is still in the process of approving a suitable document. Minidoka has rejected its plan and the first steps have been taken at Manzanar toward the creation of a formal type of government.

Status of Community Government-July 1, 1943

Tule Lake

Although Tule Lake was the first relocation center to establish a permanent Council there has been no functioning government since the registration in February when the Council resigned. A recent report of the Project Attorney indicates that the former chairman of the Council and a few others are actively interested in holding an election. Project administration has taken the position that the reestablishment of the Council must come as a result of the desire of the people for such action.

Central Utah

On July 1st the second Council group composed of 22 issei and 11 nisei was inducted into office. Topaz approved its charter in December 1942. Ordinances have been enacted and a Judicial Commission appointed.

Granada

Granada approved a plan of permanent government in January. The permanent Council has been functioning since February and a Judicial Commission since April. Ordinances have been enacted and a Judicial Commission appointed.

Poston

The plan of government for Poston was approved May 18 by the vote of 3667 to 1008. Over one-half of the adverse vote came from Unit 3 and was an expression of the desire of that Unit to retain its political autonomy. Elections were ehld for councilmen the latter part of May and the new Community Council of nineteen members, representing the three Units, was organized on June 2.

Rohwer

The residents of Rohwer approved their constitution by a 95 percent majority in a vote on May 20. On June 1st the election was held for councilmen of which approximately two-thirds are issei and one-third

nisei.

Gila River

The charter for Gila River was submitted to Washington the middle of June. It was approved subject to modifications to conform with recent policy on Community Government.

Jerome

The plan of government for Jerome was resubmitted June 26 and was approved subject to changes to conform with recent policy in Community Government.

Minidoka

A plan of government for the establishment of an Advisory Council, a system of block coordinators, was voted on in the middle of June and was defeated 2375 to 15864. The rejection of this plan has been variously interpreted as the result of agitation of block managers against establishing a form of Community Government plus inadequate explanation and education, the injection of personalities and a willingness by most residents to accept the status quo.

Manzanar

An Advisory Council of 9 members was selected in May. Each member represents a group of 4 blocks and was selected by representatives from these blocks. The Block Managers Assembly continue to function in an administrative and semi-advisory capacity.

Heart Mountain

A revised plan of government was submitted the latter part of May. There was need for additional revisions and these were called to the attention of the Project Director. The Block Chairman Council has continued to function.

S. T. Kimball

July 2, 1943

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY  
WASHINGTON

5/30/ (77)  
JUL 9 1943

To: All Project Directors  
From: Dillon S. Myer, Director

It has been reported that at one of the relocation centers where a large number of the Council members are issei some of the nisei are unable to understand the discussions carried on in Japanese. It is presumed that some of the Japanese speaking members may also have difficulty in understanding proceedings in English.

The usual practice in a bilingual situation of this kind is to employ an official interpreter who translates all discussions and proceedings into both languages for the benefit of those who do not understand one or the other of the languages used. The use of an interpreter will materially lengthen the time spent by the Council in the conduct of its affairs. Nevertheless, it is important that each member be completely conversant with the discussion and for that reason it is suggested that you employ on a part time basis, to be paid from the ten percent allotment for temporary evacuee personnel, an official interpreter and translator to be used when required by the Community Council. This individual can also assist in translating the official proceedings of the Council into Japanese for the information of the Japanese speaking and reading portion of the population.

D. S. Myer



WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY  
WASHINGTON

*D. & M. J.*



*Check:  
Our summaries, ideas  
in Gov't as of this date.*

OCT 6 1943

*Drafted by Glick*

Mr. Ototaro N. Yamamoto  
Gila River Relocation Center  
c/o Pima Indian Agency  
Sacaton, Arizona

Dear Mr. Yamamoto:

I am addressing this letter to you because yours is the first name to appear on the letter that you and thirteen other residents of the Gila River Relocation Center sent me on September 18 enclosing a resolution adopted by the residents of twenty-one blocks in the Gila River Relocation Center. I feel, however, that I am addressing this letter to all those who considered the resolution, and I should appreciate your making this letter public to them.

The resolution calls attention to the fact that, in the procedure we have established for the organization of community self-government at the ten relocation centers, only citizens of the United States are eligible to hold elective office. The resolution notes that evacuees who are aliens are nevertheless also loyal to the United States, and emphasizes that many of them would have become citizens of the United States if they were permitted to do so under the naturalization laws.

I am glad to have your resolution on this subject, and have carefully considered the reasons you have urged for making alien evacuees eligible to hold elective office in the community self-government offices.

Our reasons for limiting eligibility to these elective offices to evacuees who are citizens of the United States can be briefly summarized. In the first place, we believe that the citizenship status and privilege of the evacuees who were born in the United States needs to be given special recognition. The fact that, as a matter of military necessity, all persons of Japanese ancestry were evacuated from the West Coast, both aliens and citizens alike, has caused some of the citizen evacuees to wonder what value their citizenship has. We regret that fact very much. We understand, also, that a few among the alien evacuees have been taunting the young Niseis with this fact and have stated that the citizenship of the Niseis was valueless.

It is our intention, therefore, to help make up for this fact, as much as possible, by giving special recognition to the citizenship status of the Niseis.

In addition to making elective offices open only to evacuees who are citizens of the United States, it is our intention to give them preference in considering applications for leave from relocation centers, in assignment of work opportunities, and in other respects.

A second consideration had a great deal to do with our decision. In general, the Niseis are much more Americanized than are the Isseis. This has nothing to do with the question of loyalty to the United States but is simply a product of the fact that the Niseis, through having been born and educated in the United States, at least in most cases, are, to a greater extent, products of American institutions. We know that you share with us the belief that it is important that the Americans of Japanese ancestry should not be a separate group but should become amalgamated with the general population. We are of the opinion that if the Niseis alone are eligible for membership in the community council, the general character of the action taken by the community council will be more in keeping with American institutions and practices.

I am writing frankly to you because I feel that we have a common interest in achieving the best possible self-government within the relocation centers.

May I emphasize that the Isseis have not been completely barred from holding office in agencies of community self-government. It is only the elective offices that have been closed to the alien evacuees. This means that no alien evacuee can be elected to the community council. Which of the other offices will be elective rather than appointive can not be known until the permanent plan of government is formulated for each relocation center by its organization commission. The alien evacuees are eligible to hold appointive offices. Thus they can serve on committees appointed by the community council, and in other appointive offices.

I am confident that the wisdom and experience of many of the alien evacuees will become available through their being appointed to such offices.

- 3 -

For these reasons, although I welcome your resolution and am glad to have the benefit of your suggestions, I believe our decision was a sound one and should be adhered to.

Sincerely,

/s/ JOHN H. PROVINSE

Acting Director