

a warden on the police force was assaulted. This particular beating was the result of a friction between Morimoto and the inhabitants of his block, 54, and considering the temper of the people and the steps taken by the Administration was almost inevitable. This beating was far more widely discussed than that of Hitomi's brother and considerable data are available. But the information is confused and fragmentary. Moreover, the beating was tied in with the difficulties of the Japanese Language School and with the young men's groups who were sponsoring morning exercises in the Japanese style in the blocks. Making allowances for the incomplete information the story may be told as follows:

Since the November incident, the residents of block 54 had been notorious for the strength of their political views. The block, according to its manager, a frank informant, was split about half and half, and each section was vociferous and militant. Morimoto a warden and another man residing in the block were strong anti-status quo and pro-Administration in their sympathies. Pro-Japanese block residents accused them of constant carping criticism and of threatening to report activities of which they disapproved to the Administration. Even if most of this is discounted, it would appear that the two men were both domineering tactless. Resentment increased when Morimoto's children got into difficulties with the Japanese Language School in their ward. Some informants say that Morimoto's children were impudent. Another version, to which there appears to be more basis, holds that the Japanese Language schools expressed disapproval of their pupils attending motion pictures on school evenings and that Morimoto, in spite of the hostile sentiment in his block, allowed

his children to attend the movies. There are vague stories of threats made against the children and petty violences, such as bottle throwing. It is said that the children were expelled from the ward school whereupon Morimoto made an unsuccessful attempt to enroll them in the adjoining ward.

The friction came to a head when Morimoto and his ^{friend}/criticized the seinen-dan in his ward for their sponsorship of the morning exercises, threatening the parents of children participating in these exercises and accusing them of bringing the wrath of the army down upon the block. Thereupon, a group of young men, seinen-dan members, called upon the two men and remonstrated with them. The conversation is described by Mrs. "Q", who is entirely hostile to Morimoto.

"So the boys went to see them and tried to make them see the thing their way. 'If you are real Japanese,' they said, 'You would co-operate with us.' The boys heard one of the men say, 'Maybe I'm not Japanese.'"¹

The argument grew more heated and eventually culminated in the boys' locking one of the men in the block ironing room while the other ran to call the police. At this time no arrests were made. However, the pro-Japanese block residents decided that matters had gone far enough and petitioned the administration to remove the two men and their families from the block. The administration refused to consider this request. /Mr. Shimokon, evacuee chief of police, to remove Morimoto from the police force. No attention was given to this attempt at pressure either. At this stage in the development of the trouble, the following attitudes were expressed:

¹ibid., May 23, p. 4.

In addition to the statement quoted above, Mrs. "Q" said,

"Those two men were against everything that was done in the block. They had what they called a Young Men's Club (seinen-dan). They had radio exercises in the morning. These men threatened the parents of the boys who attended these exercises that the Army will come and stop them. 'They'll kick you for doing this,' they said."

Mrs. "Q"'s husband added:

"That was only one of the things these men did. Previous to this, they annoyed the block by their actions again and again. This Young Men's Group was the first to stand up to them. . . .

"One of the men is a policeman. He called the Internal Security and told them to arrest the boys. But they didn't arrest them because there was no reason."¹

The "O"'s, very conservative people, showed similar sympathies when they were asked about the incident. The following statements are particularly interesting since they show the attitude of two gentle minded people who disapproved of the violent acts perpetrated by the Daihyo Sha Kai in November. It should be mentioned, however, that criticism of the morning exercises, particularly on the part of old Tule Lake nisei is fairly general. The commonest complaint is, "They wake us up in the morning."

"The issei (like the two men in block 54) are really hard minded. They're stubborn. It's hard for the old folks and the young folks to get along.

"We used to have morning exercises too. But they stopped it. I believe Manzanar is still having them. They are not militaristic exercises. I think the wardens are just afraid of public gatherings. There were one or two teachers arrested while they were having the exercises in school. I think that's why they have been stopped here (block 59). The block people didn't want any more victims."

Mrs. "O" added:

"It was the little children who just loved the exercises. They had a lot of fun getting up in the morning. He (her husband)

¹ ibid., May 20, pp. 3-4.

was too lazy to get up. For the children it was tanoshimi (a treat).¹

A few days after the Okamoto shooting, the writer heard that about a dozen men had been arrested in block 54 and placed in the stockade. A Caucasian member of the police force, remarked in the writer's presence that the police were not going to give way to pressure and that they felt capable of protecting individuals in camp who were threatened by trouble-makers.

Due to the extreme secrecy maintained by the police (even Dr. Opler was unable to pry much information from them), the unsettled state of the camp, and the fact that it was impossible to visit any informant in block 54 after this arrest had been made, no additional information could be obtained. In the excitement which followed the Okamoto shooting, nothing was heard from the block. Then, a few days after the beating of Hitomi's brother, on June 13 at 11:30 p.m., the writer encountered Mr. Schmidt, the head of the police. In a trembling voice, Mr. Schmidt told the writer that Morimoto had been beaten up. He was on his way to block 54 to investigate. Morimoto is said to have suffered a fractured skull. His assailants were never found.

On the day following the Morimoto the writer questioned "U" on the wave of hostility toward the inu and the beatings, Mr. "U", an ex-Santa Fe internee and a Stanford graduate, is one of the best educated issei in Tule Lake. The writer asked him outright if he thought any innocent people were being attacked. When the Morimoto beating was mentioned, "U"'s wife a delicate woman with exquisite manners and genuine kindness remarked in a tone of humorous disappointment, "He wasn't killed though, was he?"

¹ibid., June 20, p. 2.

See
Cat!

Mr. "U" ignored this interruption and gave his considered opinion:

"This is only my feeling on the matter. Knowing the Japanese as a race, knowing them for their courtesy and their good behavior, I say that if anyone is beaten there should be a certain fundamental reason for it.

"I hate to see any Japanese beaten by our countrymen. The fundamental reason for such beatings might be caused by the way this camp is governed.

"If I were head of this camp, I would realize the condition and the attitudes of the people. I would order something to be done and as long as I was convinced that such an order was beneficial for the residents, I would stick to it. Mr. Best is trying to make the camp peaceful by trying to make the Japanese people change from being loyal to Japan to being loyal to America."¹

This statement is not only interesting because of its defense of the beatings but because it betrays what may be one of the important psychological factors responsible for the exaggerated hatred of the inu and the fence sitters: the unadmitted fear that the presence of the people not willing to express loyalty to Japan, coupled with resentment of administrative pressure on those who had committed themselves to Japan to change their minds, constituted an ever-present threat and temptation to the pro-Japanese element - a threat and temptation which must be removed because they themselves were not completely convinced of their ability to stick to their decision to be loyal to Japan.

On June 17, "K" expressed himself on the beatings as follows:

"The beatings can be looked at from various angles. The Japanese have grievances against the Administration, but they know as a fact that they're helpless. Naturally, the only thing they can think of is how to get back at those who spy on them. I think these beatings will keep going for quite a while. I think there will be at least a half a dozen more. The Administration listens to the spies and not to the others. So such things will happen....."

¹ ibid., June 14, pp. 1, 2.

"This is one point you no doubt have noticed. These certain persons here beaten up, you'll find the majority of the people are enjoying it."¹

"K"'s last statement was entirely true.

On June 19, Henry Shiohama, the chief eye-witness of the Okamoto shooting narrowly escaped a beating when it was rumored that his testimony had been unfavorable to Okamoto, and had contributed to the Coroner's Inquest verdict favoring the sentry. While this beating did not take place, the informant's story of how a group of irate young men came to see her husband to discuss the matter with him and to decide whether the story told of the young man were true and merited a beating, is a significant hint on the manner in which some of these beatings were arranged.² The manner in which beatings were arranged is a difficult subject on which to gain information. However, some very frank individuals have admitted that there are at least three different methods. In some cases an individual in a certain block or ward became so unpopular that a group of his enemies coming upon him in a convenient place spontaneously took advantage of the situation and beat him up. In other instances the beating may have been arranged as in the case just cited. A gang of young men met, discussed the situation, and determined to teach someone they consider an inu an unforgettable lesson. Other beatings were unmistakably planned with care and were probably engineered by older men who stayed in the background. Such groups were capable of planning and carrying out a series of beatings. One young man boasted to the writer that he had personally engineered a dozen beatings in

¹ibid., June 16, pp. 1-2.

²ibid., June 19, pp. 1-2.

the relocation center from which he came. "K" emphasized the importance of this latter method; stating that he knew it had been employed in Manzanar. He added:

"Some of them deserve it and some don't. Like Yamatani, he should have been buried long ago. But some don't deserve it."¹

Mrs. F., an older nisei woman did not approve of the beatings. She wished "that the Japanese people could get along peacefully together." She blamed gossip for the trouble, saying, "People talk and say they're inus. The Hitomi beating was a mistake. They mistook the man for his brother."²

Mrs. "I", a younger nisei woman, hated the "dogs" but was worried about the beatings. On June 24 she said:

"I heard that the man in block 35 (Hitomi's brother) can't see. He was attacked after an Engel Kai meeting. He just came out of the Santa Fe Internment camp and as soon as he got into camp he was employed as manager at the Sewing Factory. His brother is manager of the Co-op.

"I think everybody is nervous in here. This place gives me the willies."³

HOSTILE DEMONSTRATION AT COMMENCEMENT

An interesting manifestation of the temper of the people at this period took place when Mr. Black, head of Community Management addressed the graduating class, their parents and friends, at the Commencement Exercises. An excellent Caucasian informant related the incident. Mr. Black began his address by stating that it was customary to paint the future in rosy colors for a graduating classes, but that in the present circumstances he did not feel justified in doing this. He touched on the disturbed state of the warring world and then said, "You, perhaps,

¹ibid., Oct. 16, p. 6.

²ibid., June 21, p. 1.

³ibid., June 24, p. 1.

have your own opinions and without doubt your parents have definite convictions. But I am an American, and as an American, I can see the outcome of this war only as a complete military victory for the Allied cause." As soon as these words had been uttered, a surge of disapproving noises rose from the audience. Whispers, moving feet, rattling programs, made it difficult for the remainder of the speech to be heard. Muffled boos came from unidentifiable parts of the rear of the auditorium where many young men were seated or standing. The caucasians present became nervous and alarmed. Black continued, apparently unaffected: "This does not mean that we wish for the annihilation of the Japanese people. In order to take her place among the nations, Japan needs leadership and there has never been an overabundance of leaders in any country of the world. Those of you who plan to return to Japan during the post-war period can prepare yourselves to enter the communities of your choice with the idea of becoming leaders in the preservation of the rights of individuals to participate in the forming of the laws of government.

"You will ask the question, however, how about us who are at Tule Lake Center, a center that is termed a disloyal camp? What will be our opportunities if we remain here? I wish to say in this respect that despite the outcries of certain newspapers and certain interested and militant groups, there is a growing appreciation on the part of a large number of the American public about the facts entering into your decision to remain at Tule Lake. An increasing number of people realize that the decision was not simply a matter of loyalty, that many other factors entered into your being in this center. Again, there may be radical changes

in the policy of the WRA and even the government itself, in respect to the residents of Tule Lake. Even the fact that the Japanese were moved out under a military necessity is being questioned by some people."

After Mr. Black's initial statement that he hoped for a complete allied victory noise from the audience was so continuous that it was impossible to judge the degree of response to any of his later statements. When he finished, a mixture of applause and boos filled the hall, applause from the parents in the middle section and boos from the young men in the rear. Almost all of the Caucasians present were offended by the rudeness shown by the audience and were unable to understand it. It was said, however, that a few staff members remarked that the statement on the Allied victory showed poor judgment and poor taste. Mr. Black himself was heard to say that he had expected this reaction but felt that the speech should be made nevertheless. He added, "I would have to make an honest speech on the day Tokyo was bombed."¹

Unfortunately none of the writer's informants attended the commencement. Some older people expressed disapproval of the bad manners shown by the young people, but most were of the opinion that Mr. Black should not have made such statements. "K", strongly pro-Japanese, expressed himself as follows:

"That wasn't the place for a person to make that kind of a statement or speech. A man of his position should know a thing like that could cause trouble. It would cause bitterness among the youngsters. They're going to take it as an insult, not to them, but to the Japanese government....."

"You'll find in this camp that if you talk against Japan, even the kids will get sore. When Japan was making those big advances, even the seven and eight year old kids brought papers

¹ibid., June 16, pp. 2,3; June 17, p. 1.

to read the headlines. Some of them are for America, but when the Japanese Army suffers a reverse, they say, 'I don't believe it.' The thing that changed their minds was evacuation."

To a repetition of Mr. Black's implication that the American public did not consider the inhabitants of Tule Lake as entirely disloyal and that therefore, the road back to life in America was not completely cut off, "K" said scornfully:

"When Colonel meek came to Moab he tried to persuade me to become an American again. I told him I wouldn't change my mind. He said, 'What percentage of people is loyal to Japan?' I told him 97%. This was just before the talk about the draft. I told him, 'I doubt if you will have more than 2% enlist.' It turned out to be 1½ per cent.

"When I was in Manzanar I told the Citizen's Federation 97% of the people were loyal to Japan. Perhaps 80% true to Japan and 15% doubtful right now. The Japanese American Citizen's Federation had to disband. I was right."¹

It is interesting that three or four months after Mr. Black made this speech Japanese still commented upon it with scorn and disapproval, stating that he should have known better than to make such statements in a "disloyal camp."

Hoodlum activities of high school age boys

At the reception given for the high school graduates the teachers noticed that a group of boys entered, dressed in their everyday clothes. They behaved boisterously and when they were questioned by the teachers, said they were high school seniors, but had gone home to change to everyday clothes after graduation exercises. Their presence was reported to Mr. Gunderson, the high school principal when he arrived at the reception. Mr. Gunderson asked all uninvited persons to leave. The boys left.

Later, it was discovered that someone had gone into the boys' latrine and taken off all the moveable fixtures and flushed

¹ibid., June 17, p. 2.

them down the toilets. Some three inches of water had flooded the floor before the damage was discovered. So far as is known, the culprits were never found, although it was generally suspected that the vandalism was the work of the reception crashers.

Dismissal of the Coal Crew

In mid-June 100 men employed on the coal crew were terminated. According to Mr. Robertson, head of Operations, these men deserved their terminations, having loafed on their jobs for a long time. They were terminated without notice. On June 14, Mr. Robertson told the writer that the terminated men were going about the colony telling people that they had been laid off for nothing at all. Robertson feared that the general population was taking the matter seriously, because of the already very aggravating lack of employment. The fact that the termination was not published was also supposed to be causing resentment. However, no criticism of this act was heard from any informant who was not a member of the undercover pressure group. Mr. Robertson, whose contacts with this group are very close, probably allowed their remarks to influence his perspective unduly.

"K" said:

"I don't think the colony itself is taking any interest in it. That is only the men who were working."¹

Many other informants stated that they had heard nothing about the termination. Mrs. "Q", however, an active member of the pressure group said:

"We had to work hard to keep the coal crew boys from making trouble. We had to tell them again and again that now isn't the time."²

¹ibid., June 17, p. 1.

²ibid., June 19, p. 1.

The terminated members of the coal crew attempted to see Mr. Black but were refused. They then sent a committee to see Mr. Best, but Mr. Best stated that he would see only one man. Dr. Opler guessed that this was Best's method of avoiding making any statement before witnesses. This one man did see Mr. Best, but nothing resulted from the interview.¹

WAVE OF GOSSIP ABOUT THE CO-OPERATIVE ENTERPRISES

After the beatings of Hitomi's brother and Morimoto, gossip about the misdeeds of the Japanese employed in high positions of the Co-op increased. Fantastic stories of graft swept the camp. Almost every resident appeared to take part in relating the stories and it is probably that a good proportion of the gossip was believed. It is almost certain that some of these tales originated with the undercover pressure group who had hated the Co-op's Board of Directors bitterly ever since they stood against the luxury issue in December and helped break the status quo in January. Nevertheless, no matter what their source, the stories were eagerly accepted and repeated by the great majority of the camp residents. June 19, Mrs. "Q", a member of the pressure group related a wild story about Mr. Hitomi, the General Manager of the Co-op. She said that the Manzanar group had not wished to get mixed up with the unsavory men heading the Tule Co-op and had determined to form a separate enterprise. (This part of the story is almost certainly true and corresponds with the general stand-offish and somewhat superior attitude taken by the large group which came to Tule from Manzanar in late February.) Mrs. "Q" continued the story, saying that Mr. Hitomi had approached the

¹ibid., June 15, p. 6.

Manzanar group with a large sum of money to bribe them to enter the Tule Lake Co-op. This sum, a member of the Manzanar group probably Mr. "U" had kept pinned to his wall "to show to Mr. Robertson when he came."¹ The writer does not believe Mr. Robertson was ever shown this "evidence."

On June 21, Mrs. "F", an older nisei woman said:

"People say that the Co-op men are making big money for themselves. They say that whenever a Co-op man leaves here (relocates) he takes a big pile of money away with him. If the Co-op would make a statement every month, showing where the money goes, maybe the people wouldn't feel so bad."²

On June 25, "I" said:

"Take the "well-organized Co-op" for instance. (This statement was meant sarcastically.) Heretofore there has been a rumor that quite a few of the boys high up in the Co-op very nicely relocated with a big wad of dough. That's a very nice thing to do to the poor Japs in here.

"They claim it is the policy of all good Co-ops to pay off when their working capital is tripled - then the dividend can be paid. But inasmuch as the people are stuck here for the duration, I don't think that's necessary. Instead of paying off, what do they do? Build a new soda water factory and other things, and you can't tell me they're going to be able to pay that off in one summer.

"The Co-op has from 150 to 200 cases of Troco Margarine. I'd like to know where they get it because that stuff is on the point list."

At this point in the conversation "I"'s sister-in-law told how she had been in a Co-op store the day before when Akitsuki, the ex-Co-op Secretary and ex-chairman of the Co-ordinating Committee entered:

"I was in the Co-op yesterday when Akitsuki came in. You know - we all turned the back to him. Everyone of us. You could see how it was - public inu number one."

"I" continued with a story about Yamatani, who had been a

¹ibid., June 19, p. 1.

²ibid., June 21, p. 1.

member of the Co-ordinating Committee and since the resignation of that body had taken over the positions of Police Commissioner and manager of the Co-op's tofu factory.

"Yamatani tried to gyp us out of about 100 cakes of tofu the other day. The tofu is sent to the messes in tubs of about 50 cakes each. Each mess called up and complained that they were from five to ten cakes short. I went to see Yamatani about it. He said, 'Of course, it's possible that the fellows in the mess took them (the tofu) home with them.' He finally promised that the Co-op would make the loss good."

As a final indictment of the Co-op "I" added:

"It wouldn't surprise me a bit if Mr. Best wasn't getting a little from the Co-op. Inasmuch as there have been three dividends passed up for lack of funds. That starts to smell."¹

It should be noted that "I" and his family who appeared to believe that many stories of the Co-op graft were true, are intelligent nisei and at this time, had no sympathy whatever with the "agitators" or the pressure group. "I" was, in fact, already planning to relocate.

The bitterness of the attitudes expressed by his family, and by several other informants who had no connection with the pressure groups or who were hostile to the "trouble-makers" made it quite evident at this time that hostility toward the Co-op's Board of directors was widespread throughout the camp.

The same day an interesting attitude on the part of the young Japanese teachers, teaching in the Caucasian school was reported. At one of their meetings, Miss Hobby, their supervisor, instituted a discussion on Co-operatives. Immediately, she was deluged by critical remarks and sneers at the expense of the Tule Lake Co-operative. She then suggested that the teachers get their complaints in order and invite Mr. Runcorn, the Supervisor

¹ibid., June 25, pp. 1, 3.

of the Co-op, to address them and answer their complaints. This, the teachers, young Japanese of superior intelligence and considerable American background, absolutely refused to do. They were not moved by Miss Hobby's argument that they were teachers and had a duty as "leaders of the community." One said, "We start this and it'll be two-by-fours for us."¹

Another informant, a kindly old issei who was extremely critical of any agitation or violence stated on June 27:

"The information I get from all over say that there are a few of the managers of the Co-op who have a close relationship with the WRA officials. They are getting graft out of the Co-op (both Appointed Personnel and evacuees). The first thing I heard when I came to this camp was, "If you say anything against the Co-op here you'll be arrested." As long as the Co-op is carried on this way, someday another big trouble will happen."²

On June 30, a gentle kibeï woman recounted the following gossip:

"There is a certain man working in the shoestore, an old Tulean. He is the man right under the Caucasian head. He told me that the man who worked before him (before Mr. Best came to Tule Lake) had taken so many thousands of dollars of the profits. We don't profit anything here. The project director sent him out of here (with the money)."³

On July 2, the afternoon of the day on which Hitomi was murdered Mrs. K, a nisei, remarked that she had heard that some people had said that when Hitomi's brother was beaten, the beaters had really been after Hitomi himself. But, said she, they thought the brother ought to be beaten up too. "The Co-op is getting more and more unpopular," she said. "Several people have told me, 'If you say anything against the Co-op anywhere, you're going to be put in the stockade.'"⁴ This specific accusation

¹ibid., June 26, p. 1.

²ibid., June 27, p. 4.

³ibid., June 30, p. 1.

⁴ibid., July 2, p. 1.

against the Co-op was made by half a dozen informants in the two weeks prior to Hitomi's death. It was stressed by "K", whose statement, made after murder, will be inserted later. (See p.)

After Hitomi's death some informants still repeated uncomplimentary rumors which they stated they had heard before the murder occurred.

"Y" remarked:

"Also, they said Mr. Hitomi hired nothing but Sacramento people in the Co-op. He hired his brother in the Sewing Factory, his relatives and his friends in the Co-op."¹

"K" said:

"Matsumoto (the Chairman of the Board of Directors) bankrupted the Nippon bank in Sacramento. Do you think he came out penniless.

"Mr. Yamatani has said numerous times, 'If I'm afraid of two by fours, I can't make money.'.....Mr. Yamatani embezzled \$20,000 and was sent to jail. A third party came in and he returned \$9,000 in bonds and stocks. So he didn't go to jail."²

Indication that the gossip about the Co-op was not confined to transferees but was also indulged in by old Tuleans may be seen in the remarkd of a very Americanized young nisei girl, an old Tulean, who planned to leave Tule Lake and enter a nursing school in the United States.

"The old Tuleans, I know, felt he got what he deserved. After all he did! They were all saying he was going to resign and leave camp. They said this after he died. They said he had made his kill and was planning to go.

"Even the old Tuleans hated him. Everybody knew him for what he was.

"A lady found \$300 in a box of cake. She was honest and took it back to the Co-op. They gave her a couple more cakes to keep her quiet.

"Individually in the canteens they graft too. If you have

¹ibid., July 19, p. 2.

²ibid., July 31, p. 3. Since "K" is an expert accountant and was hired to investigate the books of the companies concerned in these swindles, his remarks deserve credence.

a friend you can go to the canteen and buy things for half price. The clerks have no personal feeling toward the Co-op as their organization.

"I hear the new manager found lots of luxuries in the warehouse. We don't need such expensive cosmetics and things.¹ They found a lot of ice skates. They must have gotten them on the black market, because you can't buy them outside now. They have nothing but black market stuff!"²

Another old Tulean girl said:

"They say the Co-op was buying WRA stuff and selling it in the canteens."³

Only one informant, a nisei girl from Gila, absolutely anti-pathetic to the "trouble-makers" remarked that in her opinion the stories going around were rumors. Though many other colonists must have had their doubts about the wilder stories, these doubts were very seldom expressed.

"In camp there were so many rumors at that time. People believed they were true. They always said, 'My friends say it.' It almost makes anybody believe it."⁴

Attitude of the Board of Directors

The attitude which the Co-operative's Board of Directors held toward the general camp population was not one conducive to the establishment of better feeling. In interviews with Messrs. Akitsuki, Yoshimura, and Iwamoto, the writer was impressed by unmistakable tone of superiority and snobbery which their remarks took on, whenever they spoke of the common people. It is extremely difficult to show this tone in a printed verbatim statement. The following remarks made by Mr. Yoshimura are the best example available:

¹It is interesting to see this anti-luxury attitude expressed by an old Tulean.

²R. Hankey, Notes, Aug. 24, pp. 4-5.

³ibid., Aug. 30, p. 3.

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"An important fault of the Japanese people here: they don't pay too much attention whom they elect to certain offices. When you have a meeting, somebody that has not a speck of brains comes out and talk, talk, talk. He gets it. In one of the Co-op offices - I don't see why that man was elected.

"I find out that the more responsibility a person has, the less he can talk interestingly to the crowd. You can watch crowd psychology when you have no responsibility. In this center when you talk before a gib crowd, intelligence has nothing to do with it. If you make a sensible speech, anybody calls you inu.¹

A young nisei girl, an old Tulean and anti-status quo in sentiment expressed her reaction to this attitude of superiority. There is no doubt that her attitude of resentment was shared by many people in camp and that it was not limited only to Mr. Hitomi.

"Mr. Hitomi on the whole wasn't liked. To the average person he appeared to act superior. He made it tough. He made people hate him. He had no education. I don't see why he put it on. Being business manager of the Co-op went to his head."²

Dr. Opler made a similar comment:

"They were pretty damned snobbish about the people in the center. They took the attitude, 'We're smart business men. The people are dumb.' They never verbalized it but it was there. It showed in the Co-ordinating Committee's actions also. Hitomi was very much of that way of thought."³

Attitude of the Administration

Early in June, the Caucasian supervisor of Co-operative Enterprises, Mr. McNeil, was replaced by Mr. Runcorn. Mr. Runcorn, an idealist and a conscientious objector, did not make a good impression on Mr. Best or Mr. Black. Dr. Opler was of the opinion that the antipathy between Black and Runcorn was increased because Mr. Black had been director of the Black-Fox Military Academy in Los Angeles, and consequently, did not take kindly to a man of Mr. Runcorn's conviction. A serious disagreement developed

¹ibid., March 16, 1944, p. 20.

²ibid., Sept. 19, p. 3.

³ibid., July 17, p. 3.

over the issue of the salary to be paid those Japanese who were employed as domestics in the apartments of the staff members' families. The Caucasian employers had been paying \$30 a month, \$19 of which was received by the Japanese employee, ^{while} the remainder ~~was used to defray expenses and to supply the 18% of profit on which the Co-operative Enterprises operated.~~ Runcorn held that this salary should be raised to \$40 a month. The surplus would then go into the Co-op and increase the members' dividends. The Board of Directors, according to Mr. Runcorn, stood strongly behind him on the issue. Mr. Black, however was absolutely opposed to it. Receiving no satisfaction from Mr. Black, Mr. Runcorn took the matter up with Mr. Best. When Runcorn explained that he felt that the Caucasian staff was "taking advantage of the situation under which the evacuees were forced to live," Mr. Best stated, "I'm not going to have anybody here siding with the people against me." Mr. Runcorn made repeated efforts to win over Black but made no progress. When he pointed out that the staff members would have pay \$80 a month for the service they were receiving on the project for \$30, Mr. Black cursed and swore. This information came from Mr. Runcorn himself, and is undoubtedly true, since he was a naively honest and truthful man.

The Board of Directors took a very strong stand against the Administration on this domestic wage issue and threatened to resign in a body if the \$30 a month salary were continued. Eventually they agreed to compromise at \$35 a month but Mr. Black again refused to consider it. Runcorn, who, through Dr. Opler, had been given some idea of the low opinion in which the Board of Directors was held by the people, believed that if the Board's stand for a

\$35 wage were publicized it would increase the body's prestige. An article was prepared for the Co-operative publication. After 1,500 mimeographed sheets had been prepared, Mr. Black heard of the matter, and forbade the distribution of the sheets. They were thrown away.

Runcorn's reasoning in this matter is open to criticism, for publication of such a statement could do little against the great power of the peoples' hatred toward the Board. Moreover, since almost no evacuee in Tule Lake understood the principles under which a Co-operative operates, the higher wage would appear to be only a way in which the Board could add to the hoard of cash which they were popularly regarded to be accumulating for their own nefarious ends.

This domestic service issue was of infinitesimal interest to the people. No informants mentioned it. It has been recounted here to show the attitude of the Administration toward the Co-operative during this period of increasing tension.

Attempted hammer murder

On June 22 a deranged evacuee attacked his room-mate with a hammer. While it appears that this attack had no connection with the feeling against the inu, it notably increased the tension in camp. The following account appeared in the Newell Star on July 29:

INVESTIGATION CONTINUES ON BATTERY CASE

Investigation by authorities is being conducted of battery charges against Shigeo Okamoto, 40, of 3301-D for injuries inflicted on Sonosuke Suzuki, 51, of 3301-D and Haruji Tanabe, 56, of 3319-F last Wednesday night.

Suzuki received a severe hammer blow on the head and when taken to the hospital, he was reported suffering from a fractured

skull. Tanabe was also struck on the head but he escaped with only minor injuries.

The Colonial Police Department disclosed that Okamoto, immediately after the attacks, surrendered himself to the police.

The department announced that Okamoto was lodged in the local jail until Saturday; at which time he was removed to the Modoc county jail in Alturas until further disposition of his case.

According to fairly well posted evacuee informants, Okamoto and Suzuki had been old friends and were rooming together. Both of the men were said to be issei and had come from Rohwer. Many months before Okamoto had spent some time in the stockade. An account of an informant living in a nearby block is fairly accurate:

"I heard this man (Okamoto) went to this bachelor's place and cut him up with a hatchet. (Another version has it that Okamoto attacked his room-mate while the room-mate was on his cot, asleep.) Nobody knew what the reason was. They say the man who did the attacking was quiet and nice. After that he went to a married couple's place. He knocked on the door and the wife answered. He flung her aside and attacked the man. Then he went to the warden's office and reported (gave himself up). Suzuki and Tanabe were the men attacked, I hear. . . .

"I hear everybody is nervous in here. This place gives me the willies."¹

Several informants remarked that "the man must have been crazy, because he went to the warden's office and gave himself up." The "Q"'s hinted that the attacker may have considered his room-mate an inu. It should be remembered that the "Q"'s, as members of the pressure group, had an interest in increasing the nervous tension in camp.

On July 2, Mrs. "K" commented on this and the other beatings stating that the attackers were "too smart to get caught." She added:

¹ibid., July 24, p. 1.

"The man who did turn himself over was crazy. That's why he gave himself up. People are saying that even this beating was an inu beating. The old man had found out that his friend was acting like an inu."¹

ELECTION OF EIGHT WARD POLICE COMMISSIONERS

On June 22, the Newell Star announced that an election would be held to elect eight ward police commissioners whose function would be "to bring about an understanding and co-operation between the colonists and the Police Department in the enforcement of rules which have been set up for the good of the center." Attitudes toward this proposal were very difficult to obtain, because no one paid any attention to it. Every statement made was obtained only after a specific question was asked. The announcement made in the Newell Star follows:

PROPOSAL TO SELECT EIGHT WARD POLICE COMMISSIONERS

Residents are notified of a plan advanced by Project Director Ray Best for the selection of a body of eight men who will act as Commissioners of the Colonial Police Department. The Commissioners will have the responsibility of bringing about an understanding and cooperation between the colonists and the Police Department in the enforcement of rules which have been set up for the good of the center.

PROCEDURE

An election will be held Wednesday in each block to select by ballot or by acclamation one man whom they consider qualified to act as a police Commissioner. At the block elections, the block manager will take charge of the meeting and appoint a committee of three persons from the block to act as judges and to count ballots if the balloting system is used.

No person who is serving as a block manager will be eligible to be selected for this position.

After the elections are completed, the ward chairman will be provided with the names of person elected in each block. He will prepare the necessary ballots by listing the names of persons selected from each block and the number of the block which they represent. He will then call for an election to be held at every block in his ward on Wednesday, July 5 wherein all persons over the age of 21 will be entitled to vote. They will cast their

¹ibid., July 2, p.2.

vote for three persons on the ballots.

The three persons who receive the greatest number of votes in this ward election will be called in at a later date for an interview with Assistant Project Director Harry Black and Supervisor William C. Holding of the Police Department; at which time one of the three men will be selected to act as Police Commissioner for the ward.

The day following this announcement, "Y" was asked what he thought about the matter. He stated that he thought that the election might be more successful than the Administration's attempt to further the election of a Representative Body in May.

"It may have a 50-50 chance. You see the Internal Security is very bad. Somebody might think, "We're going to change this system." So the election might go better."¹

"K", when questioned, said he had not even heard of the matter. (K usually keeps well informed on such issues.) He was willing to guess, however, that it would be a resounding failure. Nobody with any self-respect would take the position because they would invariably be labelled inu.²

"I" did not think the proposal would succeed either:

"I don't know. I don't think it's going to be such a hot idea. The people aren't going to like it, I think. It's giving the people the impression that they're putting them under additional surveillance."³

The "Q"s, pressure group leaders, stated frankly that they were hoping that the election would be even a bigger flop than the attempt to elect representatives in May.⁴

The elections were held on May 27 and appear to have been very poorly attended. No announcement of the number of persons

¹ibid., May 23, p. 1.

²ibid., May 26, p. 1.

³ibid., May 25, p. 3.

⁴ibid., May 24, p. 2.

voting was ever made although the police commissioners were duly elected and accepted by the Administration. Some informants, when questioned about the election, said they had not heard about it. No one showed any interest. Mrs. "Y" said:

"The Block Manager announced it in the mess hall at lunch time. He said we'd have a meeting. But he said a certain number of people have to come to have the meeting and if you don't come, we can't have it. I don't think many people went. George (her husband) and I didn't go."¹

Mrs. "K", living in a very strong status-quo block, reported that her block had had no meeting at all.² Block 6, made nominations, to the great disgust of the "Q"'S who live in this block. They explained that only about ten people had attended the meeting whereupon the block manager explained that there was nothing in the announcement about a quorum and proceeded with the nomination.³ "K", who lives in block 7, reported that he and the block residents had been urged to come to the meeting but that only about four people had attended. "K" then turned to a friend from the Manzanar section who happened to be present and asked, "How was it in Manzanar? Were there enough inus there (to hold an election?" The friend said that he did not think there had been any nominations in his block. "Who wants to be a legal dog?" he added.⁴

ISSEI STOCKADE INTERNEES SENT TO SANTA FE

On July 28, the removal of 15 of the issei confined in the stockade, a movement which the administration had been considering for some time, was finally accomplished. Concern over possible reverberations in the colony had been expressed by several members

¹ibid., June 30, p. 2.

²ibid., July 2, p. 1.

³ibid., June 30, p. 2.

⁴ibid., July 2, p. 2.

of the Administration, Mr. Robertson in particular. This concern proved, for the most part, to be unfounded. While the pressure group made ominous remarks on what "the people would do," and while friends and acquaintances of the men removed were angry, no overt protest was made.

The day before the men were taken from camp, they were allowed to say farewell to their families, a privilege on which Mr. Robertson had insisted. It was also reported by a member of Internal Security that they had written to their families, requesting that no demonstration accompany their departure. Remarks made by members of the Administrative Staff indicate that they had attempted to reconcile these issei to the transfer on the grounds that their transfer to Santa Fe would increase their chance of an early return to Japan. Mr. Black, while not admitting that any such statement had been made to the internees, told a meeting of the Community Management Section that this transfer would increase the men's chances of repatriation.¹

The leave taking was accompanied by considerable ceremony. Speeches were made and songs sung, among which were the Japanese National Anthem and Auld Lang Syne. Some three to four hundred people gathered at that part of the colony fence nearest the stockade. Evacuees employed in the Administrative section watched the proceedings covertly from behind nearby barracks. The men, dressed in their best suits, left the stockade jauntily and as each entered the bus he was given a rousing cheer by those left behind in the stockade.

That same evening, or the evening preceding, Mr. Tsuda, the

¹ ibid., June 20, p. 4.

leader of one of the pressure groups which had been working to get the men out of the stockade called a meeting of the relatives of the transferred men. His home was watched by the police throughout the night. Mr. Best, however, was reported to be in excellent spirits and to have telephoned Washington that camp affairs were going beautifully.¹

It was not possible to obtain a general picture of how the removal of these men was regarded by the colonists. Only one informant "Y"'s wife, was contacted before the Hitomi murder made visits impossible. "Y"'s wife, while she voted against status quo, lived in a very strong status quo block. One of the men transferred to Santa Fe was also a former resident of this block.

"Both George and I think there's going to be a lot of trouble here since these 13 men were sent to Santa Fe. Mr. Komiya in this block was sent. He was just secretary to Mr. Takahashi. It's very mysterious. It's funny that he was sent to Santa Fe and Mr. Takahashi wasn't even arrested. I can tell you that everybody in the block thinks very little of him (Mr. Takahashi). The feeling is very bad.

"The people are very upset about the people being sent to Santa Fe. Many people say that they have been fooled: they aren't going to be sent to Japan first, just because they were sent to Santa Fe.

"I don't know. The people here just shut up. With Mr. Takahashi here, nobody trusts him."²

Mrs. Y. implies that the people did not dare to express themselves frankly on the matter of the transfer to Santa Fe, for fear that Mr. Takahashi would report them to the Administration. Two nights after the statement was made Mr. Takahashi was assaulted by mysterious assailants but was not injured seriously.

BEATING OF KURIHARA

On June 29 a resident of block 74 named Kurihara was beaten.

¹ibid., June 28, p. 1.

²ibid., June 30, p. 1.

According to rumor, he had come from Heart Mountain and was reputed to be a close friend of Mr. Tateishi, one of the "number one" inu. He was also said to have been a member of the Daihyo Sha Kai.¹ Informants contacted spoke of the matter casually. Beatings had become such common occurrences that they aroused noticeably less interest and excitement. On the Kurihara beating "Y"'s wife said:

"People are telling George that the man who was beaten didn't know why he was beaten. But some say there was a good reason for it."²

"K" remarked that he had heard that Kurihara had been very unpopular in his block. The writer asked him why only third rate inu were being beaten up. "You should know," said "K", "The big ones are too well guarded. But the guard will slip up some time." ^{3/}

The day before Hitomi was murdered the writer and Mr. Robertson discussed the colony situation and came to the conclusion that the tension and unease had reached a heretofore unprecedented pitch. Mr. Robertson was not residing at Tule Lake during the November trouble but stated that he believed that the state of tension in the colony at ~~this time~~ the moment was ~~xxxxx~~ probably worse than it had been in November. He had spent the afternoon of the 2nd of July visiting in the colony and had become depressed and greatly concerned over the attitude of the people. Persons who had heretofore greeted him courteously now ignored him or turned their backs. Since Robertson was extraordinarily popular and respected highly by the colonists, this coldness was very significant. He informed the writer that a group with whom he had met had told him that the sending of the internees to Santa Fe was the last straw. From now on they were through with Mr. Best. They were no longer going to try to control the young fellows, who, according

¹ ibid., p. 2.

² ibid., p. 1.

³ ibid., July 2, 1944, p. 2.

to their account, "we have had difficulty restraining for a long time." He was also told that from now on not only beatings were to be expected - There might be murder. Alarmed by the seriousness of the situation, he had had a talk with Mr. Runcorn, the Supervisor of the Co-op, and had re-stressed the necessity of making an attempt to decrease the unpopularity of the Co-op. Runcorn had suggested the immediate issuing of a dividend. Runcorn had insisted, however, that the books were correct, since they were gone over every month by an accountant from outside the project. Robertson recommended that the monthly statement be presented to the people in simple, understandable form. Runcorn said he had not previously thought of doing this.

Although Mr. Robertson had entered the colony secretly on Saturday, immediately on returning to the Administrative area he was called in by Mr. Best. Mr. Best asked him how things were going. "Do you want me to tell you the truth?" asked Robertson. "Certainly," said Best. "They are worse than ever," said Robertson. "You're crazy," said Best, laughing. 1/

On the morning of July 4th, the camp was electrified by the news that Yasao Hitomi, the Co-op's General Manager, had been murdered while on his way home from the carnival held on Sunday night.

A long knife had been driven through his throat, from the region of the larynx to the base of the brain. He had, evidently, been attacked near his apartment, for he was found on the doorstep of one of his neighbors. Whether the assailant or assailants followed him from the carnival or waited for him near his home is not known. Some investigators were of the opinion that several men were involved, since the knife was driven in a manner which would indicate that Hitomi was held by one or more men while another stabbed him. Other investigators stated that a man who knew how to use a knife could have done it alone. Much later, it was remarked by the Project Attorney, Mr. Noyes, that it had been discovered that the murderer had gone into the latrine and washed himself at which time he might have been easily captured. Little of the above information can be corroborated unless the writer is given access to the reports of the investigators.

On July 6th the following information was released in the Newell Star.

COOP MANAGER SLAIN BY MYSTERIOUS ASSASSIN

Officials Offer Resignations

Victim of an attack by an unidentified assailant, Yaozo Hitomi, 44-year-old general manager of the Tule Lake Cooperative Enterprises, was found knifed to death Sunday night near his residence at 3514-A.

Hitomi was found by his niece Fumiko Hitomi lying against the porch of his neighbor's apartment with a stab wound through the throat, which apparently was administered with a long-bladed knife. He was dead when removed to the base hospital.

Prior to evacuation the victim had lived in Sacramento as an agent for Sunlight Insurance Company. He is survived by his wife, Shizuye, and three children, Mamoru, Mitsuru, and Reiko, all residing in this center.

MEETING

As a result of his slaying, an emergency Cooperative Board of Director's Meeting was called Monday morning; at which time all 17 members of the board resolved to tender their resignations collectively.

Subsequently, the following officials of the Cooperative tendered their resignations which were approved and accepted by the Board of Directors: Masao Nishimi, assistant manager; Masamori Maruyama, treasurer; Reno Yoshimura, executive secretary; George Nakamura, business manager; Masao Iwawaki, personnel director; and Toshio Tomoshige, information director.

Canteens were reopened yesterday as the result of a meeting between the Board of Directors and canteen and factory managers on the same day.

EVENTS RESULTING FROM HITOMI MURDER

Mr. Hitomi's death was followed by a number of interesting occurrences, all of which hinged upon it to some degree. First of all came the immediate resignation of the Board of Directors of the Co-operative and all the key employees. For a time it appeared as if there would be wholesale resignations among the entire Co-op staff. The store managers wished to resign but were eventually coaxed into keeping their jobs by the new Board of Directors. Every member of the old board resigned except Mr. Gunderson, the Caucasian member who held his position by virtue of canteen number 4, which was located in the Administrative area for the convenience of the personnel.¹

Fifteen families of Japanese, were removed from the camp to protect the lives of some member who had reason to believe he might be murdered next. Among these men were Yamatani and Akitsuki, ex-members of the Co-ordinating Committee, Mr. Tateishi, the rumored public inu number 1, Mr. Shimokon, the Japanese head of Internal Security, Mr. Matsuoka, the president of the Co-operative who had also resigned, Mr. Takahashi, and several other persons

¹ibid., July 12, 1944, p. 2.

who had held high positions in the Co-op. Whether this exodus was initiated by the Japanese or by the Administration is not certainly known. Well informed persons stated that the members of the Caucasian police called at these men's homes and told them to come with them or Administration would not be responsible for their lives. Some are said to have gone under protest. Almost half of them returned to the center a few days later. The remainder refused to return for several weeks (?) even though Mr. Best, who after about ten days had a change of mind regarding their fate, urged them to do so. Three of the men eventually left Tule Lake ^{on August 15} and took up residence in other centers. These were Messrs. Yamatani, Shimokon and Tateishi. The latter is reputed to have been forced out of Heart Mountain, his center of refuge, by adverse public opinion there. The people of Heart Mountain, it was said, did not wish to harbor Tule Lake's dogs. It is impossible to say that the removal of these men was unwise. Yamatani, Tateishi and Akitsuki were so unpopular that had they remained in the center during this tense period they might have suffered violence. The Administration received word of several anonymous threats immediately after the murder; one threat in particular, is said to have promised the murder of all the Board of Directors of the Co-op. The peoples' attitudes regarding these fleeing persons will be discussed later.

Immediately after the murder the canteens were crowded with people stocking up on food supplies. They feared that the stores would be closed, a policy which Mr. Yamatani strongly urged upon Mr. Runcorn to Runcorn's great disgust.

"Yamatani just pleaded with me to be a dictator and close the stores. I was disgusted with him. I can see how the people feel about him."¹

The stores were not closed and the hoarding impulse wore itself out.

Two weeks after the murder the entire staff of the Japanese Colonial Police resigned in a body, having no doubt decided that they could no longer carry on in their state of unpopularity. Two events which closely followed the murder but had no connection with it were the announcement of the results of the Court Martial trial of the soldier who shot Soichi Okamoto and the arrival on the project of Mr. Ernest Besig, the representative of the American Civil Liberties Union to which organization the stockade internees had appealed. All of these matters will be discussed in the following sections in complete detail.

IMMEDIATE EVACUEE REACTIONS TO THE MURDER

The immediate camp reaction to the murder was a universal state of great excitement, tension and fear. At first the ~~great~~ majority of the people assumed that Hitomi had met his fate because of his tremendously bad reputation, and the fear of committing any act which would remotely resemble that of an inu rose so high that all but the most courageous of the writer's informants refused, though politely, to receive her in ^{their} ~~her~~ apartments. After a period of about two weeks the fine edge of this terror decreased and guarded contacts with Caucasians were resumed. So thoroughly did the murder purge the abnormal hatred of the inu that it never arose again as a significant campwide phenomenon.

The dominant immediate reaction to the death itself was a widespread conviction that the deceased had met the fate he deserved.

¹ibid., p. 3.

coupled with the determination not to say anything which would betray the murderer. As K. expressed it: "The chief attitude is that everybody shut up like a clam. The murderer did a nice piece of work as far as that goes." 1/

1/ ibid., July 20,, 1944, p. 1.

Time tempered this attitude a great deal, but the first expressed reaction of many people, people who were in no way radical or blood-thirsty, was that Hitomi had got only what was coming to him. A most vivid and accurate account of this attitude was prepared for the writer by K. Though this paper was largely an expression of K's personal opinions, the attitudes expressed therein were common to the majority of the people. K. kept himself well acquainted with popular attitudes. His personal hatred of the "dogs" as revealed in his statements must not be considered particularly exaggerated. Most people bore similar sentiments but did not express them as frankly.

K'S MANUSCRIPT prepared before July 20.

It may seem rather unjust to those who are not posted with the affairs of the camp to blame the Administration for the present fear and unrest caused by terrorism, but however unjust it may seem, it is true. It is the product of the American Justice as practiced by the W.R.A. Administration at Tule Lake.

The beating of Hitomi, Morimoto, I. Takahashi, and the murder of Y. Hitomi can be placed at the very doorsteps of the Administration. Ever since my arrival here at Tule Lake, I have heard constant resentments being voiced by the residents against the Co-operative Enterprise.

The basic reasons of constant grumbling that which finally had culminated in a murder are:

1. The Co-operative Enterprise was arrogantly selling articles such as buckets, brooms, and even coal hand shovels, which the W.R.A. was under obligation to supply to the residents. The residents have again and again voiced their objection but the management, instead of heeding the voice of the people, kept right on selling with a take-it-or-leave-it attitude and at a handsome price.
2. The Administration, well aware of the facts deliberately withheld the distribution of the buckets and brooms when these articles of household necessities were piled high in the warehouses.
3. The Co-operative was selling many items of luxury. Opposition to such practice was heard everywhere. Block representatives attending and discussing such matters have vigorously voiced the opinion of the people but the management instead of heeding it, have boldly spited them.

4. Any person who unflinchingly attacked the Co-operative was immediately reported to the Administration through the Civic Center. Without question, that person was then apprehended and thrown into the stockade and confined there indefinitely without even a semblance of a trial.¹

5. It is the belief of the residents that the Co-operative was solely responsible for the defeat of the Status quo. They've urged the people to return to work. The Co-ordinating Committees in function at the time of strike were men who were directly connected with the Co-operative. They, instead of helping the residents, became the tool of the Administration. Those who openly defies them or voice any opinion condemning the Administration was reported and thrown into the stockade. The committee thereafter were branded as Administration Spies. Drunk with the power vested in them, they became unbearably haughty. Daily arrests were a common thing. Scores were isolated and kept within a narrow confinement without a trial for months. Such is American Justice here at Tule Lake.

6. The Committees believing themselves immune have openly challenged the residents after receiving threats through mail. At the same time they weren't so brave. Fearing attack, they employed body-guards at the expense of the people, paying out of the Co-operative fund. Some were even paid by the Administration, I heard. It may only be a rumor, but the employment of body-guards are true. Even under such circumstances, they refused to listen to the voice of the people, because they firmly believed that they were immune under the protection and power vested in them by the Administration.

7. All these facts were undoubtedly known to the Administration, but not-a-thing was done to alter or better the situation. The Co-operative was the sorest spot in the camp. The heads of Co-operative were under constant threats which they were laughing away. Hence the murder took place which brought them to realization.

Today those people, scoundrels in the eyes of the Japanese people are under protective custody, sleeping in one of the Nurses' Quarters in the Base Hospital. They are not wanted there. They are fed in the Caucasian Mess Hall, where they are likewise despised. Director Best has a problem on his hand, trying to take care of unassimilable oriental dogs.

This problem can be easily solved. My suggestion is - release all those in the stockade and place those dogs within its confinement. It is the best place for them. They will be well protected with high fences around them. Lately the north side was plaster-boarded so none can look in or out. It is just the place for them. They can meditate undisturbed and at leisure.

¹This remark was heard on every hand one to two weeks before Hitomi's death.

.....

The killing of Y. Hitomi was a blessing to the residents. I have yet to see who really feels sorry for him, other than those of his immediate family. Never have I seen such pleasant reaction to a murder in all my life.

Several others are said to be in line for the grave. Had they not been given protective custody, they too may be dead by now; and their death, violent as it may be will be openly rejoiced by the residents.

Thus public sanction of Y. Hitomi's murder will undoubtedly encourage the executioner to carry on his or their work. A good work. He no doubt is feeling like a hero receiving public approval and rejoicement. Hope he won't betray himself, feeling elated.

.....

Why do I approve it? Because there is no law here in this camp. If there is law, which the Administration would say that there is, then I would say, there is no Justice. Law without justice is no law.

The Administration have so far listened to the Rats and upon the strength of their flimsy charges, it arrested and threw many into the stockade, isolating them for many months without a trial. It kept this up too long and too often. If this is not a Gestapo Method what else is it?

.....

In the case with the Administration dealing with the spies had gone too far. It cannot wash its hands off so easily. The dogs it sponsored must be fed and cared. They are now being housed in the Warehouse section, furnished with ice-box and stove of their own so they can prepare a meal for themselves. The refusal of the crews employed in the Caucasian Mess Hall to care for them have necessitated it. What a sight to have them around the Administration Area.

.....

A second group of pups are now being raised by the Administration. These were those born in the stockade. They are now working hand in hand with the Administration.

From the informations which I have secured, the master minds are forming a gang of their own for protection. They are being carefully watched. They are trying very hard to convince the residence by putting up a brave front, broadcasting aloud that what they are doing is for the good of the people, but their deception is so clear, they are being shunned. With every move they make, they are edging deeper and deeper into the Administrative quagmire from which they will not be able to extricate themselves.

It is my prediction the next person whose throat would be slashed will be out of this group of dogs, especially the one which wagged its tail the most. I feel that I could positively name the victim. When his throat is slashed, Mr. Best will have more hounds to care, the very reflection of his administrative ability. Must America continue to suffer by tolerating such a man to manage the affairs of this camp?

As long as the Administration continues to employ the services of the lowly dogs, this camp will never return to normal. And as long as the Administration uses them, there will be an execution or executions.

Those who escape execution under protective custody may someday be forced to return to Japan. Though he may sail across the great ocean, all the water in the seas will not be enough to wash the stigma he had earned. They are good as dead or probably worse by suffering a living hell.

.....

The present trend of war is not very encouraging to the Japanese. Those who cannot take it are grumbling. Those who are unable to think for themselves are worrying. But those who know are rejoicing over the fact that the climax is approaching fast in favor of their beloved country, Japan.

If their plan is discovered, then the war will either enter a stalemate or be fought for many years. How long will America be able to fight? My personal opinion is; America has reached the climax. Another year of war, two at the most is all she can fight. The country in the meantime will be torn with strikes and revolt.

Japan on the other hand will fight on indefinitely. Her greatest strength second only to the Will of the Soldiers to fight unto death.

Hence my faith in her remains unchanged whatever the reverses at present may be.

A nisei girl, who like K. was not radical in her general views expressed herself almost as frankly but more briefly:

"This might sound awfully heartless, but nobody had any sympathy for him (Hitomi). The whole camp felt that way. It had a log to do with the Co-op and people felt he was really behind all the things going on with the Administration and especially for the people sent into the stockade - especially the more recent pick-ups. The people began to hate the Co-op especially after Akitsuki and Hitomi were - sus was transferred from the Co-op head to the Co-ordinating Committee. Akitsuki and Hitomi were

suspected. When people kept being put into the stockade after the Co-ordinating Committee was put into office, the people became angry."¹

Mr. Abe, a kindly issei made a similar statement, emphasizing the reaction to Hitomi's death by contrasting it with that which followed the shooting of Mr. Okamoto:

"I have not heard a single man say, 'I'm sorry he's dea.' When Okamoto was shot to death the whole camp closed down all entertainment, even small parties at homes."²

Abe pointed out that the large camp recreation events, such as base-ball games, were carried on after Hitomi's death as if nothing had occurred.

A few weeks after the murder, however, ^achange of mind began to make itself shown. The disturbing fact that a murderer or a group of murderers was free in camp, who, encouraged by apparent success, might turn on anyone whose actions did not meet approval began to obtrude itself through the satisfaction of seeing a man regarded as a hated traitor meet his proper doom. As Mr. Fujimoto, who was growing steadily more conservative in his views, expressed it:

"The funny thing is that the murder had split the camp into two parts. half feel sorry for the guy and the other half are glad. of course, they say he was killed for embezzling Co-op funds, but that was just talk. Nobody could prove it."

Fujimoto expressed another camp reaction with regard to the attitude of the administration, a reaction very typical of camp psychology:

"The people are saying that the Administration is deliberately not making a serious attempt to find the murderer. If the people think that the murderer is loose in camp, more of them will want to relocate."

¹ibid., July 18, 1944, p. 1.

²ibid., July 24, 1944, p. 2.

He added that he had been snooping in the project attorney's office and seen an enormous sheet of applications for leave clearance.¹ Whatever he may have seen, there was no appreciable increase of applications at this time.

The Yamaguchi's expressed a very interesting and delicate sentiment:

"The people are very quiet about it. Mr. Hitomi is dead; so the people are quiet. If they aren't quiet they may go to jail. They say, 'Well, he's passed away. After all, he's a Buddha now. Let him sleep peacefully.' It used to be he had a very bad reputation. But since he's passed away the people don't say much. It wouldn't be good manners."²

Mr. Abe showed a change of heart about a month after the murder:

"Of course, Mr. Hitomi was one of the most hated men in camp. But he wasn't bad enough to be assassinated. I heard that Hitomi signed a petition to send the people in the stockade away (to Santa Fe).³

It is not improbable that some of the apprehension which began to manifest itself at this time was due to the incautious remarks of certain members of the undercover pressure group who took the opportunity of exploiting the murder by hinting that somewhere within their group was the impetus for the deed. Whether the group was in any way implicated or not, many people, including the authorities, suspected that they were. Its members spared no effort in pointing out that the murder was a glaring example of Administrative ineptitude. The remarks of Mr. Yamashita, who was an important leader of the group, are typical of this propaganda:

"I think as soon as the attacks which ended with the murder.... temporarily ended for the time being, the effect on the oppressed minds of the people was to a more or less optimistic viewpoint.

¹ibid., July 17, 1944, p. 1.

²ibid., July 19, 1944, p. 1.

³ibid., Aug. 8, 1944, p. 1.

Especially since the action was successful and the Administration was not able to find the attacker."

Mrs. Yamashita remarked here with satisfaction, "It was a perfect crime." Her husband continued:

"People were sorry for the victim, but the camp as a whole, if they did not rejoice for such a happening, when they thought that was the last resort or last step to be taken to let the public and the Administration know that wrong doing cannot continue forever. Deep thinking people do not think the choosing of this barbarous action is wise and think that it would be more or less criticized by the American public when it is known outside by the paper or radio."

"But the condition of this camp was such that they were forced to use such a method. It was more or less in the atmosphere of the camp that they were forced to use such a method."¹

While Mr. Hitomi's evil reputation was not noticeably mitigated by the passage of time, the camp sentiment toward the murder and the apprehension of the murderer underwent a marked change after the passage of three or four months. Many people began to refer to the murder as a deplorable thing, stating that after all, nobody had ever proved anything against Hitomi and that, moreover, other individuals in camp were far more objectionable than he. The satisfaction over the fact that the murderer was not apprehended dwindled also and though the sentiment was far from unanimous, many residents cautiously expressed the hope that the murderer might be taken. On the whole, only the pressure group remained unchanged in its contention that the murderer was a type of public benefactor and openly rejoiced over his non-apprehension.

Camp sentiment as to why the murder was committed was never uniform. Some people held to the view that Hitomi was murdered because he was a dog, others that the slaying was a private affair, committed by a man with whose wife Hitomi was supposed to have philandered.

¹ibid., July 28, 1944, p. 1.

It has already been mentioned but should be reemphasized that the most important sociological effect of the murder was that it served as a prophylactic (word OK?) shock to the unhealthy psychological obsession with inu. Never afterwards did the writer hear denunciation of current inu-like activities comparable to those which preceded the murder, except from members of the pressure group, who were not representative of general camp sentiment. It was correctly assumed that henceforth nobody would have the temerity to engage in any activity which remotely assisted the Administration. The writer is of the opinion that the tragedy did cut informing to a minimum. In any case, "Remember Hitomi" became a camp watchword.

Actions of the Administration

Immediate suspicion of implication in the murder fell upon the fourteen men still detained in the stockade. All ingoing mail to the stockade was stopped and large pieces of plaster board were attached to that portion of the stockade which faced the colony so that no signals could be exchanged. Gate number 2, though which persons had heretofore passed in and out of the colony was closed and gate number 3, which was located several hundred yards farther from the stockade was used instead. The object again was to keep camp residents as far from the stockade as possible. The change in gates gave rise to much complaint from the school teachers who were obliged to walk several blocks out of their way to get to work. The stockade internees were given to understand by Mr. Best and by certain members of the Internal Security that they were under suspicion of having directed a conspiracy within the center to murder Mr. Hitomi. This accusation made them very indignant.¹

¹ibid., Sept. 15, 1944, p. 8; Sept. 18, p. 10.

The Administration also suggested to the block managers that a camp-wide curfew be enforced. The block managers refused to accept the responsibility for this act and suggested that it be referred to the people. The people were by no means enthusiastic about it and the matter was dropped. A block manager gave his reaction:

"At the time of the murder the situation was so grave that the WRA called a block manager's meeting and suggested we have block meetings to decide whether the residents wanted a curfew for protection. The block managers could not decide and accept that suggestion because the proposition was too important for the block managers to decide whether such matter should be brought back to the block for consultation. As far as I can see the colonists and block managers have nothing to do with such important matters. In other words, we have no authority and power to make decisions. Of course, some blocks may need a curfew for protection but perhaps other blocks do not want it. It appeared to me at the meeting that the block managers felt that the residents do not want it -- probably past experience."¹

From second hand information gained chiefly from Dr. Opler and Mr. Robertson, it appeared that the Administration had two theories about the murder. One was that already mentioned: that the detainees had conspired with some group in the center. Two separate groups in the center came under suspicion: one was the so-called Resegregation Group and the other was the group purportedly headed by Mr. Tsuda. Both groups had been working for the release of the detainees for many months. The motive in this case would be a deliberate attempt on the part of these groups to embarrass the Administration and particularly Mr. Best by ^{bringing} down so much adverse publicity upon his head that he would be forced to resign. The second theory, said to have been espoused by Mr. Best and Mr. Schmidt, was that the murder was a personal affair, committed by only one man well known to Mr. Hitomi.

¹ ibid., July 24, 1944, p. 5.

Schmidt's reasoning was that Hitomi would have cried out and been heard, had he been approached by a stranger or a strange group. The motive in this case would be revenge for a personal injury, i. e., that Hitomi had been killed by the husband of some woman with whom he had been philandering. Later, this theory was directed against Mr. Hitomi's brother, with whose wife Hitomi was rumored to have had immoral relations. The fact that the brother did not accompany Hitomi's corpse to the hospital was considered very suspicious. The befuddled atmosphere which prevailed at this time is well exemplified by the following statement made by Dr. Opler:

"Their (Administration) ideas on "Who-done-it" are the funniest things you ever heard. They have a new and opposite theory every day.

"A lot of the colony thinks one group paid off another group to do this. They talk as vaguely as they dare, but they say as much as they dare along that line. You get the impression that the leadership in the group that was behind it is older and they kept behind the scene and had a younger group do the killing. It was an expert job."

Another member of the Administration who was present added:

"All the Administration is talking about on the Hitomi killing is that it was a personal affair and that all the evidence points to Hitomi's brother as the culprit."¹

Mr. Best went so far as to call on "K", with whom he had become well acquainted at Leupp and ask him for information on the murder. According to Mr. Robertson, "K" retorted that Mr. Best ought to know who committed the murder and added that he (K) was unable to understand how all this could go on and the Administration not be aware of it.² "K" is also supposed to have admitted at this interview that he knew who was responsible for the murder,

¹ ibid., July 20, 1944, p. 5.

² ibid., July 20, p. 2.

but the writer doubts this.

On July 13 it was rumored that four Japanese had been taken from the colony and were being given a twenty-four hour third degree by the Internal Security. So far as is known, no information was gained from them. The grilling was reported to Mr. Besig of the American Civil Liberties Union. This action on the part of the Administration was not approved of by those Japanese who expressed themselves on the subject:

K said:

"Several boys from Leupp were investigated. But the good thing was that they were released immediately. If they had been put into the stockade, the Administration would have been doing a great injustice. They were very studious boys. One of the boys was taken just because the Administration thought he was a fanatic. That was no reason."¹

Mr. Yamaguchi said:

"I heard those boys were grilled for three days and nights. One of them was Kitadani, a tough kid. We used to call him the 'dead end kid' in Leupp. He was grilled because they found him with a knife."²

Another result of the Hitomi murder was the appearance of Mr. ^{Ennis?} Wallace, the special investigator for Mr. Ickes. This gentleman talked to Japanese and Caucasians. What he accomplished is not known. He did, however, start several rumors in the center, either because he was not too circumspect in his questions or remarks or because his statements were misinterpreted by the Japanese to whom he spoke. The most powerful of these rumors was that the camp was to be divided into three sections because it was too large for one man to control. The clearest expression of this particular rumor came from Mr. Abe, with whom the writer suspects Mr. ^{Ennis} Wallace talked:

¹ ibid., July 19, 1944. p. 1.

² ibid., July 13, p. 1.

"There is a rumor that the Administration is trying to divide the camp into three groups. A man asked my opinion about it. He said this camp is too large to be controlled under the same Administration. So I told him, "No matter how big the camp may be, if the policy of the Administration is based upon justice, it can be controlled. Even if it is divided into three or a dozen groups, if the Administration plays monkey business, no peace will be established."¹

Five months later, Mr. "L" of the Department of Justice told the writer that ^{Ennis} Wallace had apparently made some very unwise statements and promises to the Japanese at the time of his visit. He (Wallace) was later found to be on the verge of a nervous breakdown at the time of his stay in Tule Lake.²

Attitudes of the Administration

The murder plunged the Caucasian residents of Tule Lake into a state which in some individuals bordered closely on panic. One of the manifestations of this was a meeting held by the Caucasian members of the Co-op where it was proposed that canteen number 4 be severed from the Japanese Co-operative Enterprises. This was not done.

For many weeks the staff members remained very jittery. Some expected another murder and the subject of who would be next was frequently discussed among those members of the staff who had contact with the colony. Mr. Robertson believed that those of the ex-members of the Co-ordinating Committee who had remained in the colony were in a very precarious position. Mr. Shimada and Mr. Namekawa were at this time working on the Newell Star, an unpopular activity. Messrs. Nakao, Okamoto and Naido were also mentioned as possible victims. Incidentally, several intelligent Japanese also expected another murder, particularly if the men

¹ ibid., July 24, 1944, p. 1.

² ibid., Dec. 13, 1944, p. 3.

who had fled the colony returned. K. went so far as to say:

"There will be one more incident. The administration is at fault, if that incident develops as I anticipate. I feel that the camp is in a state where unless the administration makes an absolute change, the beatings and the killings will continue." Now it's beyond the administration's power to control it. Things have gone too far." 1/

1/ ibid., July 20, 1944, p. 3.

~~who had fled the colony returned.~~ Mr. Robertson was of the opinion that the murder had been a deliberate attempt to discredit Mr. Best. Mr. Best, however, according to all reports had espoused the theory that the murder resulted from a personal quarrel. The names on the "black-lists" were not limited to Japanese. Messrs. Best, Black, Schmidt, Huycke, and Kirkman were rumored to be gracing some of the lists.¹

The tense attitude of the staff members was well exemplified by an incident which occurred in the presence of the writer. On July 14, during an informal visit at the home of Dr. Opler, at which Mr. Robertson was also present, a car drew up outside. Mr. Bagley the head of social welfare, was driving. He said he had been told to go to messhall 16 with his camera. Robertson and Opler became quite excited and Robertson called Internal Security for information. They knew nothing. Thereupon Robertson and Opler accompanied Bagley into the center. When they arrived at messhall 16 they found several Internal Security cars already there "to investigate the report." The affair proved to be a farewell dinner given by the evacuee staff of the Reports Office to Mr. Markley who was leaving the project. Bagley had been sent in to take pictures.²

Another somewhat amusing Caucasian fear sprang from the fact that the so-called inu were living outside the fence in the hospital. Certain of the more timid female members of the personnel spoke openly of their fear that Japanese, bent on murdering the inu, might come out of the colony at night and murder some of the Caucasians by mistake. This idea, suffice it to say, was not widespread.³

¹ibid., July 12, 1944, p. 7.

²ibid., July 14, 1944, p. 2.

³ibid., July 19, 1944, p. 5.

In spite of the grievous state of the Co-operative Enterprises, the high ranking members of the personnel were reported to be delaying the issuance of the patronage dividend. The writer has no information on their reasons for this policy and it is possible that they were well grounded. The informant was Mr. Runcorn.¹

Japanese attitudes on the "inu" who fled camp.

The treatment meted out to the "dogs" by their fellow Japanese surpassed in cruelty anything the writer has ever witnessed. While some of the residents held to the view that some of the men who fled were not suspected and should not have left camp, the prevailing attitude was one of indescribable satisfaction over every inconvenience and humiliation heaped upon these unpopular men. Few opportunities to heap additional humiliation upon them were ignored. The more the inu suffered, the better the people felt. They were housed in the hospital, and the Japanese hospital mess crew refused to feed them. The Japanese workers in the hospital would not sit down to eat with dogs. They were then instructed to eat in the Caucasian mess hall. The Japanese mess crew here promptly refused to feed them. One of the suspected individuals complained to the writer:

"And Mr. Akitsuki got that cook (the head chef) his job. The Caucasians didn't want any Japanese cooks or waitresses, but Mr. Akitsuki convinced them they should have them."²

The unfortunate refugees were at length forced to eat in one of the warehouses where facilities for cooking were set up for them by the Administration. Mr. Tateishi acted as cook. A rumor promptly sprang up that pressure was being brought on Mr. Tateishi to poison them.

¹ ibid., July 12, 1944, p. 3.
² ibid., July 19, 1944, p. 5.

Whenever any of them walked about the Caucasian area in daylight they were likely to be greeted by barking noises from the Japanese employed in the area.

Some of the refugees were utterly terrified. The writer, having contacts in the group, called on a friend residing in the hospital and saw them sitting silently, staring at the walls, doing nothing. They were at this time under considerable pressure from Mr. Best to return to the center, a step which some of them regarded as a death sentence. Mr. Akitsuki, showing great courage, did return to the colony after several weeks. However, he left his family and took up residence with a group of judo boys who were reported to have sworn to be ready to give their lives for him. He also acquired two large dogs, an act which was commented upon with malicious relish by some of the evacuees. All of the remaining men and their families eventually returned with the exception of Messrs. Yamatani, Tateishi and Shimokon who were transferred to other centers. Those who returned to the center met varying receptions, depending largely upon how they had been regarded before the murder. Some of the Co-op Board members were reported to have established themselves satisfactorily in their blocks. Mr. Akitsuki and Mr. Takahashi, however, remained symbols of despicable treachery and continued to live miserable pariah-like lives. Nobody in camp "who knew them for what they were" would talk with them or be seen with them. So powerful was this sentiment that for six months after the murder, even the writer would not have jeopardized her standing in the colony by calling upon them. It is interesting that the writer never came upon an example where any discrimination or cruelty was meted out against

the families of these unpopular men. Their wives many have suffered social ostracism but the writer never heard that their children were taunted by other children because their fathers were inu.

Is this a correct observation do inu's children get called names?

A generally widespread attitude was expressed by K; who also analyzed the errors in judgment made by the members of the Coordinating Committee:

"Akitsuki is not wise in coming back. If he wants to continue to breath it's better that he stays out. Many of those boys (Coordinating Committee Group) were too arrogant. If they had listened to the voice of the people, they wouldn't be in trouble now.

"They didn't stop to think. They were just getting in well with the Administration. Especially those in the Co-op, that bunch of gamblers and embezzlers. They were sitting in high offices. They shouldn't have held those positions. They did not stop to think that there were many well educated persons who were not working in the Co-op but were far more capable. . . .

"They didn't have the character strong enough to refuse. They went ahead and co-operated with the Administration. Little by little they were dragged into the mire until they couldn't get out any more."¹

About a month after the murder when some of the refugees had still not yet returned to camp, Mr. Robertson called on K. and asked him for his opinion on whether it was safe for them to return. K. repeated his reply to the writer:

"Mr. Robertson asked me about sending the people back. I said, some are all right but some shouldn't be back even for a day. I told him Yamatani won't live very long (if he returns)."²

During this period several moderate individuals expresses regret that some of the suspected men had ~~even~~ been ^{so} foolish ~~as~~ enough to flee from camp. In their opinion, it would have been

¹ ibid., July 20, 1944, p. 2.

² ibid., July 31, 1944, p. 3.

far better if they had stayed and not given such obvious ground for suspicion to their neighbors. Mr. Takahashi, in particular, was thought to have made a great error by fleeing.

When however, three of the most unpopular men transferred to other centers, most residents were happy about it. A few remarked with satisfaction that they would be hated and despised in the other centers also. Mrs. Q. an active agitator, expressed disappointment, insinuating that it would have been preferable to have them stay and meet the same fate as Hitomi.¹

After Akitsuki returned to the colony, K. expressed himself as follows:

"But those people (the inu) who may return - I don't think they could contrive to sleep without worries. The longer Akitsuki maintains bodyguards, the longer he'll be hated. If he lived alone the people might forget. Getting bodyguards was a very short-sighted policy."²

When he heard that the three men had left the center, K expressed the following attitude, which was common throughout the center:

"Yamatañi, Tateishi and Shimokon - it was wonderful that they were transferred. That also helped to relieve a great deal of the tension. But I feel sorry for them; they're branded for good. People from Tule are writing to Minidoka, telling their friends all about them."³

RESULTS OF THE OKAMOTO VERDICT

The release of the Court martial verdict in the case of the soldier who shot Shoichi Okamoto on May 24, followed closely on the Hitomi murder. The institution of proceedings was announced in the Newell Star of July 6, 1944:

¹ ibid., Aug. 16, 1944, p. 2.

² ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, pp. 3-4.

³ R. Hankey, Notes, Aug. 21, 1944, p. 1.

Shoichi Okamoto CaseSENTRY FACES COURT MARTIAL HERE TODAY

Court martial proceedings for the sentry, who fatally shot Shoichi James Okamoto on May 24, commenced today at the military area here, announced the Administration. Officers from other military posts have been detailed here to conduct the court martial.

Although it is contrary to military rules for any civilian to be present at a military court martial, exceptions were made in this case. Arrangements were made by Dillon S. Myer, national director of WRA, with the War Department so that eight residents of the center may be present at the proceedings. Among those attending today will be a member of the Okamoto family and representatives of the committee of Japanese nationals which will make a report covering the case to the Spanish Embassy.

Representatives of the WRA project staff and Edgar Bernhard, WRA attorney from San Francisco Regional Office will also be present.

The soldier was acquitted. Unfortunately very few attitudes were obtained because the state of tension in the camp, brought about by the murder, made visiting almost impossible. On extremely incomplete evidence it appears as if the acquittal of the soldier caused extreme resentment in some individuals. With others it was received cynically, as all that might be expected of the American government. No action was taken by the residents, although some dreadful threats are rumored to have been made by hot-headed individuals. K. an extremely idealistic individual said:

"The unfavorable verdict on Okamoto's case will be a ground for further killing. The resentment will be great. It will know no bound, therefore it will be my advice that all should be careful. Slightest suspicion will be magnified manifold and the poor suspect will in course of time be beaten or killed. (K. referred here to suspicion against the inu.) Therefore, too intimate a friendship with any Caucasian will be dangerous. Explanation will not help. It will only tend to add greater resentment . . .

"The American laws are born out of Congressional incubator turned out by the thousands to suit the occasion which benefit themselves. I would rather live among the barbarians than among the hypocritical, selfish, everything-for-myself Americans. Their laws are mockery to civilization. They can shoot and kill an innocent man for no reason whatever and be acquitted, as pronounced by the Court martial freeing Pvt. Bernard Goe who shot Shoichi Okamoto on May 24

"The resentment over this very unfavorable verdict is great. Why shouldn't it be? To kill a man just because he was afraid of him is no excuse, yet the officers have acquitted the sentry. A cowardly shooting and a shameless verdict. That is America, a hypocritical America."¹

Undoubtedly many individuals felt as bitterly as this, although they would not express themselves as frankly. A nisei girl said:

"There were very harsh reactions (to the acquittal). It was very shocking and disappointing news. It seemed so unfair and unjust."²

Another nisei girl of very conservative point of view said:

"The verdict was kind of expected. They knew the result before they even started. All those things are whitewashed."³

VISIT OF MR. BESIG, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

The phenomenon of Japanese, avowedly disloyal to the United States calling upon their Constitutional rights as citizens was regarded as peculiar by many members of the appointed personnel. In fact, this action was probably adopted only as a measure of last resort. The Spanish Consul had not shown himself either able or willing to assist the men imprisoned in the stockade and the WRA appeared ready to keep them there for the remainder of the camp's existence. A Japanese named Okamoto took the initiative in the center, organized the relatives of the detainees, raised a fund, and wrote the ACLU in San Francisco for assistance. The attitudes of two of the detainees themselves are given below:

"At first we had no idea as to whom we should hire as a lawyer. We did have a feeling that the last thing we could do as a citizen of the United States, we could hire ourselves a lawyer to defend ourselves. The thought came to our mind at the time WRA announced the nisei in the stockade would be sent to Leupp and branded as troublemakers. We thought at that time, if we are to be sent to Leupp as such, we want to clear ourselves of that accusation.

¹MS. July 20, 1944, pp. 4, 5.

²R. Hankey, Notes, July 18, 1944, p. 2.

³ibid., July 19, 1944, p. 4.

"If the WRA or the state department had permitted us to consult with the Spanish Consul, the thought might never have arisen. But they definitely denied us to see the Spanish Consul because we were citizens of the United States.

"But we thought if we were citizens of the United States we have a Constitutional right to defend ourselves. That was the first thought which came to our minds. Later on it developed that the lawyer who was asked to defend us through the American Civil Liberties Union put the idea to a committee of families. As to the actual hiring of the attorney, we don't know anything about it.

"Off the record, I think that the trial would not have come up anyway. A thing which would be a detriment to the prestige of the United States would not be allowed."¹

"That was instituted by the people in the colony, especially by Mr. Okamoto. He suggested it.

"All along we knew what the Administration was doing toward us was an invasion of our Constitutional Rights. All our mail was censored. We could not initiate anything like that (calling a lawyer).

"From the very beginning, I've maintained that anything we have done wasn't any too radical or against our Constitutional rights. As chairman of the Committee I conducted the job in a correct manner. And the job was difficult because the people didn't understand."²

FIRST VISIT

Mr. Besig, the representative of the ACLU, arrived on the project about a week after the murder of Hitomi. His arrival at this time was most unfortunate, for his investigation and interviews were greatly handicapped by the fact that the administration, was busily engaged in the attempt to solve the murder and found his presence exceedingly irritating. At first he was refused permission to visit Tule Lake as is shown by the following letter he sent to Mr. Okamoto, the Japanese who is credited with having organized the relatives of the detainees to appeal to the ACLU.

¹ ibid., Sept. 18, 1944, p. 2.

² ibid., p. 10.

I regret to inform you that Mr. Robert B. Cozzens, assistant director of the W.R.A. here in San Francisco, has denied my request for a permit to visit Tule Lake during the week of June 12. At first he stated there would be no difficulty about my visiting Tule Lake and suggested that I go ahead and make train reservations. After conferring with Mr. Best and Mr. Myer, however, he informed me that the request was being turned down because of a "Tense situation" that persists at Tule Lake. I have made representations to Mr. Myer by telegram, and have presented the matter to Mr. Ickes in an air mail letter.

I think it would do no harm for you to write to Mr. Cozzens if you limit yourself to a simple request that you be permitted to consult personally with me as a representative of the American Civil Liberties Union to the end of securing court action in your behalf. Such a request can at least do no harm.

As a result of the administration's action, I will apparently be compelled to develop our projected test cases by mail. I will write you further at some later date.

As for loss of property, I would say that as a legal matter there is liability. As Judge Denman suggested in the Korematsu case, however, there is a certain moral obligation, and Congress should at an appropriate time set aside funds to compensate the evacuees for the losses they have suffered.

ss Ernest Besig.

Since Mr. Besig's object was to investigate the stockade situation, his presence would not have been welcome at any time. Arriving at a period of unparalleled tension, when the administration was making every effort to keep contacts away from the detainees, he was received in a manner which enraged him. His first action was to interview the relatives of the detainees, the wives of the men, Miss Terada, and some of the released detainees. These meetings were arranged by Mr. Okamoto who had played the leading part in bringing Besig to Tule Lake. Next Besig asked Mr. Best to be allowed to talk to the men in the stockade. Mr. Warren, the man assigned to assist Besig around the project was a good friend of the writer's and consequently, the data available is unusually good. When Besig arrived at the stockade, he was stopped by Mr. Mahrt, a member of Internal Security, who insisted that a

policeman accompany him and listen to his conversation with the detainees. Besig objected. Mahrt telephoned Mr. Leckliter, the Project Attorney, who said that the presence of a policeman was necessary and is reported to have added, "The Administration does not want an outsider murdered." Besig shouted in a loud voice, clearly audible to the detainees, that he had come down to interview the detained men and not a cop, and that he wasn't going to be bossed around by any cop. He then telephoned Mr. Best but received no satisfaction. He returned to the stockade and began to talk to the detainees, telling them that under the circumstance he would not have much to say, since they could not converse freely with a policeman present. At this point Mr. Leckliter drove up. He rushed in and said, "What's the matter now?" Besig explained. He was not, however, allowed to see the detainees in private.

Warren added:

"I heard Marht tell the policeman who was present to listen. I think the lack of co-operation was on the part of Mahrt and not Best. They had instructed Besig not to mention anything about the murder since it was their impression that the murder had been initiated from the stockade."

Besig then proceeded to talk to Mr. Best. Leckliter, Schmidt, Besig's stenographer and the writer's informant were present. All of the conversation was handled by Mr. Leckliter. Neither Mr. Best nor Mr. Schmidt said much. Leckliter said that if Besig wanted to do any work at all, he would have to conform to the requirements put upon him, i. e., not talk about the murder. Besig replied, "That's an admission that you listened to my conversation." Leckliter said, "We're carrying on an investigation of a murder. I must have an agreement." Besig replied, "What I talk about is my own business." Leckliter protested and Besig added, "You shut your damn big mouth. You may be able to push

these Japs around, but you can't push me around. I'll do what I please." Besig is also supposed to have told Leckliter that he couldn't be an honest man if he worked for the WRA, that he was an upstart and a nincompoop. At 8:15 on the following morning (July 12) while Mr. Besig was at breakfast, Mr. Best's secretary told him that Mr. Best wished to see him. About 20 minutes later, Warren found Besig packing his suitcase. He had been told that he must leave the project because his conversation in the stockade had interfered with the investigation of the murder. Besig said that since he'd had an appointment with a Japanese doctor in the colony whom he had not been able to see the day before his ejection from the project "was an infringement of the right to demand council and he was going to make one sweet stink about it."

Warren continued:

"Afterwards, Black called me to Best's office and Best said he had requested him to leave because he had asked one of the men in the stockade, "Do you think Hitomi's murder was engineered from the stockade?" Actually, the woman's notes (Besig's stenographer) had said he had asked the fellow if he knew the murder had occurred.

"Best said that he was very much disgusted about the whole thing. 'They couldn't have sent a worse representative. We both want to see the same things accomplished, but the first words he (Besig) said to me were, "I'm going to get in your hair." He never left up on this attitude for one minute. He refused to show even a normal decent courtesy.'"¹

Several Caucasian informants definitely sympathetic to the cause of the ACLU, who had the opportunity to observe Mr. Besig's contact with the higher members of the Appointed Personnel and to talk with him personally remarked that his attitude was unnecessarily tactless and belligerent. An intelligent young school-teacher of strong liberal leanings stated:

¹ ibid., July 12, 1944, pp. 4-5.

"I have a strong impression of his not knowing how to go about his job. He alienated people . . . I think he hurt the cause. His impression of this place seemed to be such a quickly gained, rather personal impression. He acted as if everybody were out to get him and was making it hard for him. . . .

"H didn't go about finding the facts in any scientific way. . . . When Miss A (a school teacher) was telling him what happened November 4th, he continually reading things into what she said. . . . He led her to say what he wanted. . . . He was so proud of the way he was brave that he went out of his way to show it at the expense of the cause."¹

Warren stated:

"He's got guts but that's about all he's got. I myself felt he had failed to use tact and diplomacy. My own impression was that his getting kicked out was highly satisfactory to him and he felt he was getting a weapon by it."²

Warren was distinctly leftist in his convictions and was, himself, one of the most tactless men the writer has ever known.

On the evening of July 12 Mr. Leckliter attended a meeting of the relatives of the detained men which was held in the center. Mr. Okamoto presided. Leckliter's task was to answer questions. Warren described the meeting:

"Okamoto asked Leckliter to explain the "kicking out" of the attorney. Leckliter said he hadn't been kicked out but had been requested to leave. The administration could not allow anyone to interfere with the murder investigation. He stated that WRA had called Mr. Besig's boss in New York, Mr. Baldrin, and Baldrin had said that Besig had not come under his authority.

"Those present wanted to know why they couldn't visit the people in the stockade. Leckliter said they (the detainees) were trouble-makers and that the Administration couldn't allow visits except on their own discretion. Very little visiting was going to be allowed.

"I was surprised at the extent with which Leckliter was frank with the people as to what had occurred. He said there were two major reasons that the administration didn't want Besig here at this time. One was that people had come to Best and said that they had been threatened with bodily harm unless they agreed to see Mr. Besig. The second was the killing.

"When Leckliter said they expected to solve the murder in a

¹ ibid., pp. 3-4.

² ibid., p. 5.

week or two the woman they call the queen of the colony (Mrs. "Q") and others exchanged glances of considerable amusement."¹

On July 14th Mr. Besig released a statement to the newspapers:

 If this is important it can be procured and quoted. R. H.

He stated that the detainees had been kept in the stockade for eight months and during that time were not allowed contact with their families and had been denied legal council. A statement by WRA appeared in the same issue of the paper denying the fact that the men had been denied legal council. Leckliter is said to have intimated that Besig erred in his statement and that he should have said, "legal council of their own choice." Moreover, said Leckliter, "These men whom Besig had contacted had expressed their loyalty to Japan." "That doesn't make any difference," said Warren, who was present, "You yourself have stated that an announcement of intention to repatriate had nothing to do with a citizens' obligations and privileges."²

This visit of Mr. Besig's caused surprisingly little stir in the center. Opler stated that stories about Besig were all over the colony, that he was greatly admired, and that his visit had probably decreased the "anti-Caucasian feeling."³ K. however, probably expressed a more common attitude:

"Everybody experienced disappointment on that. They were disappointed because the attorney was not allowed to see the men individually. That created some handicap toward expressing their opinions (of detainees). I wish he would put up a fight so that the American public will be informed of the facts."

¹ ibid., July 14, 1944, pp. 1-2. This term "queen of the colony" was applied to Mrs. "Q" only by the appointed personnel who greatly exaggerated her influence in the center.

² ibid., July 14 p. 1.

³ ibid., July 17, 1944, p. 3.

K. added, that even if the facts were made known, probably most Americans would not be influenced. A few, perhaps, might be.¹

When, however, several weeks later, the ACLU publication (get name) appeared with its sensational denunciation of the administration at Tule Lake,^{it} produced an understandable reaction of appreciation and glee. K. said:

"The people are very much rejoiced over the American Civil Liberties Union which wrote up the strong article regarding the tyranny at Tule Lake."²

An anti-status quo nisei girl commented upon the article, adding:

"Naturally, people got suspicious when Mr. Best chased Mr. Besig out. People want them given a fair trial. They feel they've been in there ten months and have served their sentence. If they've served their sentence they should be left free."³

On July 17, Mr. Besig sent the following letter to Mr. Yoshiyama one of the detainees:

Tom Yoshiyama:

In our opinion, your detention for over 8 months in the Stockade without charges being filed against you, and without being brought before a magistrate ought to be tested in the courts. We have presented the entire problem most fully in a letter to Mr. Ickes, but in the event that the release of all 18 is not ordered promptly by him, we would suggest the filing of an application for a writ of habeus corpus in the U. S. District Court in behalf of one of you, possibly yourself.

We are also entering a complaint with the Post Office Department against the censorship of the mails, for which we can find no basis in law.

Our presence at the Center was brought to a sudden and early Wednesday morning, July 12, when Mr. Best ordered our immediate departure, on the ground that our presence was interfering with the investigation of the recent murder.

Would you please let me have your prompt response to our suggestion.

Ernest Besig.

¹ ibid., July 20, 1944, p. 1.

² ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, p. 4.

³ ibid., Aug. 17, 1944, p. 5.

The following reports on stockade conditions were sent to Mr. Collins, attorney for the ACLU on Mr. Besig's request.

1805-B, Tule Lake Center
Newell, California
August 20, 1944

Attorney Wayne Collins
Mills Tower
San Francisco, California

Dear Sir:

Mr. Hiroyoshi Tsuda of Block 30, Tule Lake Center, showed me a letter of recent date sent by Mr. Ernest Besig, Counselor of the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California. Mr. Besig requested that Mr. Tsuda write to you and explain in details the conditions of the Stockade of this Center. Mr. Tsuda in turn asked me to do the same.

I was an inmate of the Stockade myself. Having spent a few months with Mr. Tsuda, I was requested by him to write to you, describing the conditions of the Stockade, covering the period since his release in April up to the time of my release, which was July 22, 1944, Saturday. I presume Mr. Besig has a detailed report of the Stockade during Mr. Tsuda's confinement; therefore, I will circumscribe my report from April to July 22 of this year. I might also add that I was arrested on January 6, 1944 and imprisoned for 199 days.

Size of Stockade and Barracks

The size of the Stockade was about 220' x 350'. There were six barracks and one mess hall and kitchen building. Barracks were of the same size as those occupied by the evacuees in the Colony, 20 x 100, but without partitions. Each barrack was one large dormitory with two coal stoves for heating purposes and 12 windows to each side. These barracks were numbered A to F. One half of Barrack F was used for latrine and shower, the other half, living quarters. Barbed wire fence was approximately 10 feet from the building on both ends.

Lighting of Barracks

Barrack A had one row of lights in the center, which was poor. Barracks B, C, D, E and ~~X~~ had two rows of lights; hence, better than Barrack A.

Sleeping Accommodations

At one time, there were over 260 inmates in the Stockade, distributed among all barracks; however, that was when the Army was in charge of the Stockade. On May 23, 1944, the WRA took charge of the Stockade officially and formally.

Lt. Shaner with his staff, accompanied by Mr. Mahrt, Internal Security Officer, and his staff entered the Stockade at roll call time, which was 1:00 p. m. daily, and formally announced the change of supervision as of that date. There were about 180 in the Stockade. Barrack F had been vacated previous to May 23, the men having taken their beds to other barracks according to the choice of each. Army cots with four blankets were provided to each. Men were released from time to time, which gave us more space. Although the number occupying the barracks were not even, Lt. Shaner kept a complete record of occupants of each barrack and redistributed the population nicely. By July 18, 1944, there were 18 of us left. About 2 o'clock in the afternoon of the 18th, eight or more men accompanied by Mr. Marht came into the Stockade and ordered all of us to move into Barrack A, nailing up all the barracks. The next morning, July 19, the only two Issei or first-generation Japanese were released about 4:00 p. m. in the afternoon and another was released, a Nisei; that left only 15. I was still there.

Reason for Arrest and Confinement: Trial and Sentences

No reason was ever given to me for my arrest. There were two or three occasions when I was given what was known as a 'Hearing' at which time, WRA officials asked me all sorts of questions. The reason for my arrest was never made known. I was kept in the Stockade under these circumstances without trial and sentence. Days of release was never certain at any time which kept us guessing.

Precaution against Escape

There were four towers located on each corner of the Stockade just outside of the fence and armed guards were stationed on each 24 hours a day. The fence was about 8' high with barbed wire extension. There was only one gate and each time, any of us were taken out to go for our food or to the office for various business, there was a guard standing at the gate and several Internal Security Officers attending.

Food

Food was not any too good up to May 23rd; however, it was enough and of such quality to sustain us. On May 23 when the WRA took over, we noticed a sudden change for betterment of our daily food supply. Unlike the time when the Army was in charge, WRA supplied us food for few days in advance and in number of cases, for instance, coffee and flour, we were given a sack each, which was sufficient for a week or more. As far as food was concerned, we believe they gave the

(I can't find the rest of this)

Letters and Packages

As far as I am concerned, cigarettes were rationed up to May 23rd because the Army was in charge of the Stockade up to that date. WRA, however, told us that they saw no reason why our cigarettes and tobaccos should be restricted inasmuch as we bought them with our own money.

Mail and Letters

All mail, both incoming and outgoing, were censored by the Army while they were in charge, and by the WRA when they took charge of the Stockade.

All in all, all of us behaved very nicely and obeyed all orders whatever they were. Our mess hall and kitchen were kept in good sanitary condition. We took turns in keeping the latrines and shower room immaculately clean. Our barracks were swept and mopped each morning. For recreation our friends in the Center sent us balls, volley balls, and gloves. These were the only means of outdoor recreation.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, I have given a fair account of the living conditions, etc., during the time of my confinement in the stockade.

Very truly yours,

ss/ Ernest Kozuma

Additional description of Stockade life - Ushita to Yamamoto - August 22, 1944EXISTED CONDITIONS IN THE STOCKADE DURING MY CONFINEMENT THERE

The Military Stockade was constructed for the purpose of confining so-called "alleged" agitators apprehended after the November riot.

I shall endeavor to give true account of my experience, during my custody there.

Area approximated an acre and a quarter.
 Maximum number of confinees 256 were confined at one time.
 These things were lacking or were not furnished by the authority; bed sheets, pillow, pillow case, toilet articles of any kind, clothing of any type, and medicine for emergency cases.
 Sanitation was considerably below par.
 Sick persons were immensely neglected.
 Quality of food-stuffs were not dietetical and not nourishing.
 Amount of food for each person was amazingly limited.
 Living quarters were badly constructed and each person was at one time limited to only few square feet of living space.
 No food stuffs from the colony was permitted, except in one occasion, during Xmas.

U. S. Postal mails were censored without the addressee's permission or knowledge.

Soldiers on sentry duty, on several instances threaten or intimidated the detainees.

On January, during the midst of hunger strike, soldiers entered our compound armed to the teeth, and unlawfully deprived us of food-stuffs (sent from the colony), money, clothes and other item of personal ownership.

On two occasions shots were fired in the proximity of our compound. Bodily harm was inflicted several persons without legal or rational reason.

No liberal trial or hearing was given anyone.

A separate isolation compound was installed and many were sent there to spend nights of suffering and misery for offense they were not proven to have had committed.

OCCURRENCE DURING HUNGER STRIKE¹

1. A member of the Internal Security warned us hunger strikers that inasmuch as food is brought into the stockade they will hold no responsibility for any one not eating. Nor will he be sent to the hospital for treatment in time of critical condition, resulting from the hunger strike.
2. Cigarettes were forbidden us for about a month.
3. Mail was withheld from us nor were we allowed to send out any mail for the period of approximately one month.
4. During the mass confinement in the hospital for medical attention, we were given insufficient period of time for convalescence and discharged to the stockade; from the weakest person on to the strongest among us thirteen.

ELECTION OF NEW CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

With the resignation of its Board of Directors, the Co-op was left leaderless, and loaded with a burden of public opprobrium and suspicion which surpassed that of any other organization in the history of Tule Lake. For a time it appeared that resignations would spread wholesale throughout all the positions of the organization. However, the appeal of a courageous group of Japanese, who temporarily stepped into the vacancy left by the resigned Board, and probably, the fact that the job was a job and the tension was decreasing, kept most of the employees at their posts.

¹This second hunger strike is described in detail in a closely following section.

The attitude and past history of the men on the New Board was in sharp contrast to the old. Instead of being ultra-conservative representatives of the "vested interests" of Tule Lake, some of these new men had been confined in the stockade during the November difficulties, and were classed as "agitators" by the administration. In its helplessness, however, the administration could not be too particular about the past history of individuals, willing to step into a position which might cost them their lives. Some attempts were made to get some "level headed" Japanese on the board, by which the administration meant persons of an anti-status quo conviction. However, for the most part, the policies followed in the month which followed Mr. Hitomi's death were left almost entirely up to the newcomers. Kuncorn, whole-heartedly favored letting the Japanese take a major part of the control and insisted, correctly, that the New Board would be much more aggressive than the old and that it would be intelligent for the administration to make them some concessions:

"My whole idea is to co-operate and get the good will of the Board. I know they're going to be a much more demanding Board. My idea is that the Administration has to maintain the initiative but not do it in a two-fisted manner. I told Black before this happened that he had the Co-op in a terrific nut-cracker. I feel we must keep the initiative by doing generous things. I know they're going to demand."¹

The new board did follow a more "demanding" policy, which, in future, was invariably regarded as "pressuring" by the administration. One of the first actions of the new Board was to make inquiries at other centers to determine how much the domestic workers there were paid. They found that the wages ran from

¹ ibid., July 12, 1944, pp. 2-3.

38 to 40 dollars a month. At this time, Mr. Best and Mr. Black were still demanding a wage of 30 dollars a month. The board determined to ask for 35 or nothing. Said Mr. Runcorn:

"I can't make Mr. Black see it at all. I know that the new Board is going to demand all sorts of things. I wish I could persuade Mr. Best to grant this before they ask for it."¹

Mr. Best was not persuaded, and this particular issue was not settled until August when Messrs. Currie, McNeil and Rossman arrived from Washington in August and managed to please both sides by removing the domestic work from Co-op supervision and placing it directly under the WRA placement organization.

The writer contacted one of the supposedly "radical" new board members at this time and was given the following brief but clear statement of policy:

"Naturally I refused the first time. But three representatives of the Board of Directors came and gave me a full view of the policy to be followed. The present board definitely states that they will never touch any political problems. They will keep to their business. The present camp feeling is just waiting to see how the Co-op Board acts."²

On July 17 Dr. Opler told the writer that some of the new Board Members had taken the position because of pressure from the old board. "They want them in there to keep things from going screwy."³

Later serious factionalism arose in the Board because of the markedly different views of some of its members. ^{Nevertheless} The personnel of the Board was able to work out a policy which, in less than two months, caused an almost miraculous change in the public attitude toward the Co-op. The development of this policy can be traced, to some extent in the issues of the Tule Lake Cooperator.

¹ ibid., p. 3.

² ibid., July 30, 1944, p. 6.

³ ibid., July 17, 1944, p. 2.

It is probable that the careful and conscientious issuance of this information was only a minor factor in the public confidence which the Board rapidly acquired. The truly significant factor was that the Board did its best to live up to the statements and promises it made and, little by little, as the people became conscious of this change in policy through the tangible changes in the Co-op policy which affected their daily lives, they began to pay serious attention to the statements issued.

On July 6, Mr. Runcorn released a statement on the financial condition of the Co-op in the Newell Star. This statement had been prepared before Hitomi's murder and was one of the all too belated actions decided upon when the dire plight of the Co-op finally came to be accepted by the administration.

RUNCORN RELEASES LATEST CO-OP FINANCIAL CONDITION

E. A. Runcorn, supervisor of the Tule Lake Cooperative Enterprises, released a statement concerning the financial condition of the local Cooperative Enterprises. The account is as follows:

The latest statement shows the sound financial condition of the Tule Lake Cooperative Enterprises. The total value or assets is \$280,000. Approximately \$100,000 of this is owing to wholesalers; the remaining \$180,000 is the property of more than 7000 members. Each member paid one dollar as a membership fee.

While the general condition of the Co-op is generally known to the people who have read the official audits issued at regular intervals, this net worth has not been stressed. The fact that for every dollar invested the member owns in assets, based on the amount of patronage, an average of \$25, indicates the remarkable efficiency of the management.

Of this net worth or members' equity of \$180,000, including nearly \$20,000 for a reserve fund required by law, the greater part of this value is represented in goods and equipment paid for and on the shelves or in daily use. The balance is working cash. According to pending plans enough cash will be available in July to pay some of the patronage savings while at the same time fairly normal replacement of goods and services for normal operation can be maintained for the convenience and service of all patrons.

It is doubtful if any camp resident paid much attention to this statement.

Ward meetings of the Co-op members were held and temporary board members elected in some of the wards. The following explanation which appeared in the Tule Lake Cooperator of July 11 is significant. Some wards put up no representatives, ~~probably~~ because no one could be found to take the positions.

NEW BOARD IS ORGANIZED

Transfer of the Authority July 12 Stores and Shops will be Kept Open

In order to continue the undertaking of Tule Lake Cooperative Enterprises, and to transfer the authority from the former Board of Directors who felt themselves responsible for General Manager Hitomi's violent death and resigned July 3rd, the Ward Representatives Assemblies have been holding meetings under consultation since then to work out emergency measures.

Ward I held a general membership meeting, but has neither elected new Representatives nor new Directors yet.

Ward II re-elected the two former Directors by votes of confidence.

Ward III. All members of the Ward Representatives resigned, and the newly-elected Representatives selected two Directors.

Ward IV elected two new Directors.

Ward V. All members of the Ward Representatives resigned, and the newly-elected Representatives selected two Directors. However, these two resigned after attending meeting on the 9th.

Ward VI elected two new Directors.

Ward VII held a general membership meeting and informed the members of the resignation of the Board of Directors. But, the new Directors have not as yet been elected up to date.

Ward VIII elected two new Directors.

Mr. Runcorn commented upon the dubious character of these elections. Under the circumstances, however, he made no complaint, believing that any board members, no matter how selected, were better than none.

"I don't know what's going on in the block elections or how difficult it is to get the people out. There is no quorum required in our rules. Probably very few turned out. We were careful to make the Board Members representative, but at the block level the elections are just a black spot."¹

Mr. Runcorn meant that he was quite in the dark as to procedure and attendance at these elections, not that they were a disgrace.

On July 9th the newly-elected Directors and the old Board met in joint meeting. What took place at this meeting is not known. The personnel of the new Board was selected however, subject to approval of some of the men by an additional ward meeting, in those wards where the Board Members had been selected by a group too small to be considered a quorum.² The following very interesting statement by Messrs. Matsumoto and Hayashi, ex-directors was also printed at this time.

Messrs. Manki Matsumoto and Masami Hayashi ex-Directors, sent in their formal resignations dated July 10th, despite the fact that Ward Assembly re-elected them as Directors. These two men are firmly determined to get out of the Board now and would not consider nor accept the recommendation made by their Ward Assembly.

The next day Mr. Tadaichi Nomura was elected as temporary chairman. He remained in office for about three months and eventually resigned due to conflict within the Board itself.

The following three excerpts from the Tule Lake Cooperator of July 24 picture the altered policy of the new Board very clearly. The distribution of the patronage refunds was another one of the points for which the new Board had to battle with the administration.

NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT

We, the new Board of Directors announce that the sudden death of the late General Manager Yaozo Hitomi has made a great change of managing staffs in various sections of our Co-op.

The new Board of Directors assembled at their first meeting on July 12th and elected president and vice-president by mutual votes. As probably you presume the Board is still facing further

¹ Ibid., July 12, 1944, p. 3.

² Tule Lake Cooperator, July 11, 1944.

difficulties in selecting the personnel for the key positions. If the actual condition of the Co-op has not been well presented to its members, then there will be a tendency to cause misunderstanding.

Our moto, however, always has been symbolized as fair play to everyone and of trying not to disturb the expectation of the members in majority.

Therefore, we appeal to you for the preparation to create a smooth and favorable operation of our Co-op in the future, you are urged and invited to assist in choosing the most capable men for this purpose.

As to the nomination of candidates all nominators are requested to furnish the details of their candidates' personal records and to hand it to the block manager.

The names given by each block's nomination will be discussed at the general assembly which is scheduled to take place on July 24th and then will be transferred to the Board of Directors' meeting for further examination.

If the members will carefully present a few candidates for the positions of General Manager, Treasurer, and Executive Secretary, it will greatly help the Board of Directors in making a final decision. Your fine judgment and generous cooperation is needed to carry on this program.

We may say there is a slight tendency of an atmosphere of "None of my business-sim" can be found among us members, Doesn't it?

We must eliminate totally such unfavorable feeling because it might happen to be a cause of unwelcomed incident.

We, especially take this opportunity to appeal to you for your hearty assistance and cooperation which is essentially needed to adopt a successful plan for mutual benefit of all patrons.

Lets' be in the full spirit of cooperation!!

PATRONAGE - REFUNDS ARE IN DISTRIBUTION

In accordance with the decision reached at the meeting of the former Board of Directors on June 26th, 1944, it was decided that the payment in script for the Certificates of Indebtedness issued for patronage from July 1, to September 30, 1943, will be made sometime in this month.

As the result of asking the members to wait for the redemption of Certificates of Indebtedness up to the present, the Co-op has been able to consolidate the foundation of its financial condition, and will be able to redeem the Certificates of Indebtedness every three months hereafter.

This method, as you members know, has been regarded as the

best way and will be carried out for the Co-op business operation in the future.

The procedure for the distribution of scripts will be the same as it was conducted in last December; that is, respective representatives will be requested to pass out scripts to the members in exchange for Certificates of Indebtedness.

EMPLOYEES ARE REQUESTED TO STAY ON THE POSTS

Due to the recent event of the Executive Staffs' resignations in succession, many other key employees, who have responsibilities of managing Canteens, Repair Shops, Service Shops, etc., have also tendered their resignations one after another. Consequently, the Co-op is now facing not only imminent difficulty in filling such vacancies but also difficulty in the management of the Co-op business. However, in spite of these difficulties the Co-op has been and will attempt to give better service to the residents, for that is the primary principle of the Co-op.

It is obvious that in case the proper function of our present Co-op business operation is discontinued and be at a standstill, all of its members as well as residents will suffer serious inconveniences.

In order to run our business smoothly and to give the better services to the colonists by continuing the operation of its canteens, the Co-op has requested earnestly to the executive staffs and key employees in the various canteens and service shops to remain in their positions, at least, until such time when successors are found, even though their resignations have been accepted by the Board. At the same time newly elected Board of Directors, who were installed very recently, have also strongly appealed to the generousities and spirits of cooperation of the resigned staffs to remain their positions for a while.

This is the present situation of our Co-op; therefore, the Co-op wishes all members to realize these facts and give their full cooperations in supporting this matter in order to meet the situation properly.

July 24th also marked the departure of Mr. Runcorn, who was "promoted" out of his position according to fairly reliable administrative rumor.

With the arrival of Messrs. Currie, McNeil and Rossman from Washington early in August, the complexion of the situation changed somewhat. ^{With remarkable insight} These men quickly took in the camp situation and the position of the Board ~~remarkably~~ well, and adopted a policy of championing ~~their~~ reasonable requests against the still hostile

~~the Board~~

administration. As has been mentioned previously, they settled the perplexing domestic service issue by obtaining Washington's permission to transfer the management of the domestic workers to the WRA placement bureau. An amusing but none the less significant account of the first interview these three men from Washington had with Mr. Best was given by a reliable informant present. The Co-op men outlined the necessity of considering the Board's point of view. Said Mr. Best: "There's only one ball team on this project and that's my ball team. I hope you men are going to play on my ball team." Mr. Currie replied, "Mr. Best, if there's only one ball team there can't be any game." Mr. Best did not find this remark amusing. One of the Co-op men described Mr. Best's attitude toward the Board:

"They'll take it or else."¹

Encouraged by Mr. Currie the Board proceeded with its policy of consulting the wishes of the people. The following publications are examples. The writer found, however, that on the whole, the greater part of the residents did not take this information very seriously. What impressed them, was the Board's changed attitude.

EXTRA

FREE OPINIONS INVITED TO DECIDE CO-OP'S NEWLY PLANNED UNDERTAKINGS

The plan for three undertakings; namely, to establish Photo Studio, to manufacture Age-Tofu (fried bean cake), and to operate Moving Picture Theater was contemplated by the former Board of Directors but it has failed to materialize during its term of office. The newly organized Board of Directors has decided at its last meeting to leave these matters to the discretion of the members. All representatives, therefore, are requested to refer these matters to their respective blocks for members' opinion. Furthermore, they are asked to present members' opinion at their respective Ward assemblies for reconsideration. Complete decision of Ward assemblies will then be submitted at the regular Board of Directors

¹R. Hankey, Notes, Aug. 7, 1944, p. 1.

meeting which is scheduled to be held in the near future. These new undertakings will be carried into effect after Board of Directors' final approval is obtained.

I. The Matter Regarding Co-op Moving Picture:

The former executive officers have assembled completely the two movie machines in accordance with the decision reached by the former Board of Directors. They had also completed negotiation with the WRA which will bear all the expenses which are necessary in making the auditorium sound proof. Permission was granted by the Authorities for the Co-op to use High School Auditorium as the place of theater on every Sunday and Monday. As yet final arrangement has not been reached with the local Community Activity Department for the showing of movies. Because it is very difficult to obtain Japanese films on account of various restrictions, movies shown will be mostly American films.

II. The Matter Regarding Establishment of Co-op Photo Studio

Preparation for this undertaking was progressing favorably in accordance with the decision of the former Board of Directors. It is possible to borrow photographic equipments from resident in this center who has such equipments now stored in the Government Warehouse. Prior approval must be obtained before transporting such equipments. The plan was to construct Photo Studio adjacent to the Fish Market. Official Permission to construct such a building has not yet been received; but, it has been granted unofficially. On June 12, 1944 the Co-op made a petition through Mr. Black, Assistant Project Director, to the Commander of Western Defense Command requesting for the permission to establish Photo Studio. This permission was necessary before taking any step on the work. However, the Co-op has not received any reply to the petition up to the present.

III. The Matter Regarding Manufacture of Age-tofu (fried bean cake)

As mentioned in the August 7th issue of the "Cooperator", the newly elected Board of Directors at its meeting on July 31st decided to table this matter until approval is received from the General Assembly whose meeting is to be held in the latter part of August. Judging from the present equipments which the former Board of Directors has assembled, production capacity of Age-Tofu is now estimated at 500 pieces per day which can be probably sold at the Fish Market. However, its production capacity can be possibly increased to 1,500 to 2,000 pieces per day when newly ordered equipment (usu) arrive, when the oven (kama) is improved, and when 7 to 8 workers are added to the working force. In case all the products can not be bought by the residents, after negotiation with the WRA the Co-op will try to dispose the surplus through the mess halls.

These informations are now given to the members for their reference and study. Therefore, the Co-op wishes the members to read this thoroughly and give their individual decision.¹

¹Tule Lake Cooperator, Aug. 15, 1944

DECLARATION, POLICY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. Tule Lake Cooperative Enterprises, Inc. shall not be operated for the purpose of profit, but to provide necessary merchandise and services at the lowest possible cost to the evacuee residents.
2. Being that war is a temporary thing, we shall not enter into a program of expansion where vast amount of capital would have to be invested.
3. Sale of luxury items will be limited to those goods and services considered necessary for the residents.
4. We shall not permit high pressure sales of goods, no discount to anyone and no quantity sale price.
5. Courtesy and Honesty shall be the guiding principles for all workers to follow.
6. We shall confine ourselves to the conduct of business and we shall not enter into any affairs having no bearing upon the proper discharge of responsibility.¹

The Board of Directors took another important action which was not known either to the residents or to the administration. This was the acquisition of a special accountant, a Japanese of recognized integrity and prestige, who consented to undertake the periodic checking of the Co-op's books, providing he received no salary for this. The Board now felt itself backed by the certain knowledge that their accounts were under periodic scrutiny by a man in whom they could place complete trust, and consequently, they could dismiss the nagging fear of grafting which might take place without their knowledge.

Changing attitude of the people toward the Co-op Board

It is difficult to picture the great change in the public attitude toward the Co-op Board because as the confidence in the new board increased, the people talked about it less and less. At the very first, some persons were cynical and expressed attitudes like those of Mr. Yamaguchi when he heard that a new Board had been elected:

¹ibid., Aug. 26, 1944.

"I was shocked. I was completely dumb. They told me to come (to the Co-op meeting) but I didn't go. Those people who took the job belong to the unwise group. Maybe they do it just to get a name. Perhaps it was somebody who used to be a farmer. He has no name and he's going to do something about it (i. e., get a name for himself.)"¹

The changing attitude is shown in a statement made by this same informant's wife, three weeks later, when asked how people were feeling toward the New Board, she said:

"People I know are very glad about it. It seems everything is in order now."²

That public sentiment was already changing as early as three weeks after the murder is shown by the following statement from a nisei girl:

"Well, as far as our block is concerned, they (the people) were very satisfied with the New Board representatives. The people expect some improvement now, although some people think maybe it will not go on as smoothly as I hope it will."³

On July 20, K, who had excellent contacts on the New Board said:

"I don't think the Administration can run this new Co-op Board so easily."⁴

On July 31 he again impressed the writer with the fact that that the old "luxury issue" must be settled. This attitude was widespread at this time:

"The quickest way to straighten out the Co-op from my point of view is they must cut out luxuries. If they cut out all the luxuries, then they will be respected.

"All the Japanese in this camp are not rich. Some are very poor. The sixteen dollars they get barely buys their tobacco. But if my neighbor buys watermelon for his children at 20¢ a pound I can't afford to buy it for my children. As a parent I will feel hurt. Those things hurt. I think the majority of the people agree; they don't want luxuries."⁵

¹R. Hankey, Notes, July 19, 1944, p. 1.

²ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, p. 5.

³ibid., July 18, 1944, p. 2.

⁴ibid., July 20, 1944, p. 2.

⁵ibid., July 31, 1944, p. 3.

On July 24, an elderly issei said of the New Board:

"The people feel it's better than it used to be. They will have a hard time, though, trying to make the whole camp understand. The Co-op is the biggest source of trouble."¹

On August 8, the conservative Mr. Okamoto said,

"The people don't say anything. It used to be the people complained so much."²

This improved rapport between the residents and the Co-op continued for the remainder of the camp's existence (if nothing happens). A few agitators made uncomplimentary remarks on occasion, but for the great majority of the people the Co-op assumed the status of a decent and correctly run organization working for "the good of the people."

THE JULY HUNGER STRIKE

News that the detainees remaining in the stockade had gone on a hunger strike was discussed by higher members of the personnel on July 19. The strike had begun on the 18th. An attempt was made to keep the fact from the personnel, but this was not possible. Details of what had caused the strike and what was transpiring were closely guarded by Mr. Best and Mr. Schmidt. This mysterious atmosphere served to arouse a tremendous curiosity among the staff members and the driblets of misinformation available were eagerly picked up and enlarged. Throughout the entire course of the strike the appointed personnel was far more nervous, anxious and tense than those of the camp residents who did not have a relative in the stockade. A series of reasons for the strike were hazarded by high ranking staff members. On July 19, Mr. Leckliter, the Project Attorney, blamed it on Mr. Besig. Leckliter

¹ibid., July 24, 1944, p. 2.

²ibid., Aug. 8, 1944, p. 5.

is reported to have said, "Just as we were getting ready to let Reverend Kai see his wife and child and reunite a married couple, they have to do that."¹

The next day Dr. Opler asked Mr. Black for the causes but stated, "I didn't get any reasons that sounded sensible."

"Black said that the men in the stockade had begun to send messages out on paper. As he (Black) rambled on, he said people in the stockade were beginning to send memos out to the Administrative Personnel. Sugimoto had sent one to Hayward (the Chief Steward) telling Hayward and the Mess Management what they wanted to eat, how they wanted it sent in, etc. They were told not to do this and got sore and went on a hunger strike."²

When the detainees themselves were contacted much later, it was difficult to obtain a really clear picture of why the strike was initiated. Yoshiyama and Uchida told the following story:

"In the first place we wanted to know the reason why we were being held. They didn't even give us a hearing. The hearing we had wasn't connected with the incident at all. They asked me if I would commit sabotage? Did I believe the Emperor of Japan is a God etc. That was one of the reasons.

"The other was when Mr. Hitomi was killed or murdered. WRA claimed we were the ones who told the colonists to murder Hitomi. They said there is proof that we made a particular group whom we made murder Hitomi.

"The food situation was another reason. . ."

Here Mr. Uchida interrupted, "The plaster board too."

Mr. Yoshiyama continued:

"I wouldn't say the food was worse, but Mr. Hayward promised Mr. Sugimoto that the food would be sent from the warehouse to the gate of the stockade. This was so that the eggs would not crack, etc. For a while they did that.

"Then they started bringing the food to the Internal Security Office. The eggs were cracked and not fit to eat. Not only that - some of the food wasn't there. It also meant we had to walk to the Internal Security Office with an Internal Security guard to get the food.

¹ibid., July 19, 1944, p. 5.

²ibid., July 20, 1944, p. 3.

"Also, they didn't let us have the letters coming in from the colony or let our letters go through."¹

Mr. Kuratomi stated:

"The motive for the second strike was about the same as the first one. We had been promised from way back that we'd be released in the near future. I was called into Mr. Best's office and fed the same thing. At the end, the boys would say to me, 'What's the use to go to see him? His promises don't hold water.'

"By the time the strike started we were told plainly that by the end of June the stockade would be liquidated. I even asked Mr. Best for his interpretation of the word 'liquidate.' It wasn't impossible that he might mean to liquidate the existing stockade and put us in another.

"The plaster board was put up. Things were bad enough without being accused of murder. Mr. Best insinuated that, and said that some people in camp had told him that I had something to do with the murder.

"Of course the mail was stopped. That was after Hitomi's death. They even refused to bring our food to the gate. It was all these things combined. Our motive never was so much our release but rather to prove our innocence. We wanted some statement from the administration. If accused, we wanted proof of our guilt. We wanted to be tried. They accused us of giving notes to the driver (fo the wagon which delivered food.)

"Until we started the second hunger strike around June 23, Mr. Schmidt came into the stockade for the first time in his life and told us how hard he was working for us. He told us, 'You might think I'm a son of a bitch, but some day you'll find out how much I work for you.'

(At this part of the conversation Mr. Kuratomi apologized to the writer for this language.)

"He was trying his best to show his kindly intentions to the stockade boys."

(Mr. Kuratomi implied that Mr. Schmidt's sudden change in behavior did not deceive the detainees.)

"The 21st of August - that was the first time we were allowed to see our families, except for the case of Mrs. Mori. On August 21st Mr. Kobayashi saw his wife and children. Mr. Besig suggested to the administration that some visiting day should be allowed because even penitentiary criminals were allowed visits. Mr. Best said it was his jurisdiction and he would not allow it."²

¹ ibid., Sept. 15, 1944, pp. 8-9.

² ibid., Sept. 18, 1944, pp. 10-11.

On initiating the hunger strike, Mr. Yoshiyama prepared a statement of reasons:

July 18, 1944

After a most serious consideration we have finally decided that the only weapon and the only solution to let known our sincerity to all that we are not a trouble maker such as the WRA has branded us we plan to undergo another hunger strike. I shall refrain from writing minor reasons for undertaking such steps. Some of the numerous grievances are:

- 1 - Imprisoned for over eight months without the filing of charges or the granting of a hearing or trial of any kind.
- 2 - No proof or evidence substantiating our guilt.
- 3 - Living in a world of infinity for no reasons whatsoever.¹
- 4 - During the entire time we have been in the Stockade we have been denied all visiting privileges from our wives, children, fiancées or anyone else.
- 5 - I was denied visits from my fiancée whom I was scheduled to marry the day after my arrest on November 13th.
- 6 - Children born since our incarceration, but to even see their wives were denied.
- 7 - Third degree methods used on many of us.
- 8 - Censorship of mails, including that coming from outside the Center.
- 9 - Since July 2, we were not permitted to receive cigarettes, toilet articles and our daily needs.
- 10 - Beaver board erected for no reasons whatsoever since July 2nd. Solitary confinement cannot be any worse.
- 11 - Constant abusive words from the attending Internal Security Staffs.
- 12 - No medical or first aid facilities. Service to the base hospital denied.
- 13 - Denied the constitutional right to counsel. Denial of due process of law to all of us.
- 14 - In connection with the interview which we had with Mr. Ernest Besig of the American Civil Liberties Union, all right of privacy was denied to us.

¹Mr. Yoshiyama perhaps means 'infamy' here.

To make an analysis of these reasons and decide which were actually the most pertinent would be vain. As with the tremendous surge of public fury of October and November of 1943, the motives for the strike were probably emotional rather than rational. Eight months of incarceration would not be likely to strengthen emotional stability. The shock of being accused of complicity in the Hitomi murder, the unsatisfactory interviews with Mr. Besig, and the overwhelming desire to triumph over Mr. Best and the administration were probably more important than any of the more materialistic reasons given. Very probably some of the detainees had convinced themselves that they would die before giving in. The hope that the center residents would rise to their assistance and create such a furor that the WRA would be forced to give in was probably cherished by some of the strikers. How vain his hope was will be shown later.

Four days after the initiation of the strike there were administrative rumors that Mr. Best was considering the release of the striking detainees. Robertson stated that in a conversation with Schmidt and Best, Schmidt asked Mr. Best, "Have you told Robertson how you feel about the strike?" "No, I haven't," said Best. Schmidt then said: "I feel those fellows ought to be down in the colony. They are doing more harm in there (in the stockade)." Best is reported to have stated, "I'm just about convinced that I'll let them go back."¹ Whether this was a true indication of Mr. Best's attitude at this time or not, the fact remains that as the strike continued Mr. Best determined not to release the men.

¹ibid., July 22, 1944, p. 1.

On July 25, after a week of fasting, Tokio Yamane, one of younger detainees, fainted and was taken to the hospital. On the same evening Reverend Kai's wife was brought up to see him with the hope that she could convince him to abandon the strike. She was not successful. Some indication of the attitude of at least one of the detainees may be obtained from the following excerpts from the Diary which Mr. Yoshiyama kept:

"I feel very lousy. My head feels heavy during the hot day but somehow relieves during the evening. . . Packed all our belongings during the morning for most of us are really getting weak. I am now ready to be carried back to the Center or to the Base Hospital. Cleaned our Barracks and burned all unnecessary things for too messy rooms gets in our nerves. I do not feel like talking too long. Mr. Fred Hamamoto is quite sick and he needs to be carried by someone to the rest room. . . Mr. Schmidt came to see all of us and brought us some chocolate candies but refused to touch it."

On the evening of July 25, Mr. Black addressed the meeting of the Community Management Division and released some information on the strike. He stated that the 13 men remaining in the stockade were striking to the death and that they had sworn they would not stop unless they were released. Mr. Best was extremely concerned and had telephoned Mr. Myer, but had been unable to reach him since Myer was on vacation. Mr. Black also stated that the administration had been considering every possible plan of action, even that of bringing up the men's wives. The administration, he said, was extremely anxious to release the men under favorable conditions when they could make a favorable contribution to the population. Such a time has never come for a moment since their internment. It would be impossible to release them while they were on strike for that would be giving way to their demands which would appear to be a great victory for them.¹

¹ibid., July 25, 1944, p. 2.

On July 26th Mr. Robertson informed the writer that three more men had asked to be taken to the hospital but had been returned to the stockade after treatment. Robertson also intimated that Washington had given Mr. Best carte blanche in handling the strike.¹

On July 28th some of the relatives of the detainees, who after ten days of nervous strain were quite frantic, came to Mr. Lecklitters office and demanded to see Mr. Best, stating that they would stage a sit down strike unless they were allowed to see Mr. Best. Mr. Best, however, was out of town and Mr. Black refused to see them. They returned home.²

On July 29th all of the fasters went to the hospital and the news that the hunger strike had been broken spread rapidly through the Administrative area. Why the men broke their fast was never adequately explained either by the administration or the detainees themselves. The writer was also informed that the Japanese doctors had met everyday while the strike was in session trying to come to some decision as to whether they should treat the men or not. By treating them, they felt they would be accused of assisting in breaking the strike and thereby aiding the administration, an action which would bring them much unpopularity.

It should also be mentioned that during the strike the members of the Internal Security continued to spread the comforting news to the Caucasian personnel that the stockade was full of food on which the strikers were surreptitiously gorging themselves. Why they did not remove this food, they never explained. When the

¹ibid., July 26, 1944, p. 2.

²ibid., July 31, 1944, p. 4.

detainees were examined, however, Dr. Sleath stated that they showed symptoms of starvation.¹

Attitude of the Camp Residents

The hunger strike caused no furor at all in the center proper. On the whole, the people disapproved of it as a foolish and useless gesture. The writer, who is always quizzed on matters of interest on the "other side of the fence" was seldom asked about the strike. On the other hand, sympathy with the men because they had been interned so long was very strong. On July 30, K. said:

"I think it (the hunger strike) has made a very strong impression on the people. Those boys have been kept in there unjustly when they should have been released. The only solution which would bring back the camp to normal is the release from the stockade."²

The attitude of the pressure group which had been agitating for release was well described by Mr. Robertson, who was in close contact with this group:

"I'm told (by members of pressure group) that these fellows have finally made up their minds that they are going to lock horns with the Administration and that they're not going to eat until they're released. And if they die, somebody's going to pay for their death. I said then, 'What about Tokio (Yamane)? He's receiving food.' They answered, 'No, he's just receiving medical treatment. Injections are not food.'³

On July 29th and 30th the members of this pressure group began to circulate a petition through the center asking for the release of the detainees.

I have a dim memory that "U" translated this petition for me much later. If I can find it in my notes it will be inserted here.

¹ ibid., July 25, 1944, p. 5.

² ibid., July 30, 1944, p. 7.

³ ibid., July 26, 1944, p. 2.

The agitation with which the circulation of this petition was accompanied aroused the ire of "K", a very influential Japanese, who became so concerned that he visited Mr. Best and obtained Mr. Best's promise that the internees would be released within a month. "K" then returned to the center and put all of his influence into stopping the petition. The petition was promptly withdrawn from circulation and according to rumor, was destroyed. Whether K's efforts were the determining factor or whether some other reason caused the instigators of the petition to change their minds, the writer does not know.

K. explained his motives as follows:

"There's a certain amount of agitation going on. The people are taking an interest. They have circulated a petition. It seems they're willing to sign. But I'm trying to kill it. Because Mr. Best told me that the boys will be released within a month. That's why I wanted to kill the agitation which may cause trouble and hardship to the Japanese as well as to the administration.

"Mr. Best told me they will be released within a month. I told people if he doesn't release the boys within a month they can have the petition already signed for presentation. In the meantime, if they present the petition to Mr. Best he will feel he's being forced.

"If Mr. Best will only live up to his word and release the boys within a month, we'll have a different atmosphere.

"The petition was explained to us in the messhall. In general - it was in Japanese, and is very difficult to translate properly - it states that the poor boys have been kept in the stockade a long time and we would like them released. If they should die it will be on our conscience. If the colony would get together and petition Mr. Best to have them released, people would be grateful.

"I couldn't find out who wrote it. So when I got this statement from Mr. Best, I asked a man to deliver this message to the writer. They may stop it or they may carry it through.

"Some people have told me that Mr. Best cannot be relied upon. But I told them it all depends on how we look at that person. I don't believe in high pressuring a man if you can avoid it."¹

¹ ibid., July 31, 1944, p. 2.

PETITION

BY THE RESIDENTS OF THE TULE LAKE CENTER
TO THE PROJECT DIRECTOR, R. BEST, REGARDING
THE RELEASE OF THE FOURTEEN RESIDENTS
CONFINED IN THE STOCKADE WHO ARE ON A
HUNGER STRIKE FOR THEIR RELEASE

We were shocked to learn that fourteen residents confined in the stockade are on a Hunger Strike for their release and returned to this center. The Hunger Strike is on the 10th day on Friday, July 28, 1944.

Naturally we, as members of the Japanese race, are very worried and anxious about the lives of our racial brothers. Already several persons have collapsed from hunger. If any or several of our racial brothers should die on account of the Hunger Strike, we all would feel deeply grieved. Reverse the case; suppose Americans in an internment camp in Japan should die on a Hunger Strike, how would you feel? Would not the American people be deeply grieved? So will we if our racial brothers die of a Hunger Strike.

Therefore, we, the residents of the Tule Lake Center, request you, Mr. Raymond Best, to be merciful to our racial brothers and release the fourteen persons on a Hunger Strike from the stockade. Your mercy will never be forgotten.

About a week later, K, gave his frank opinion of this pressure group. Incidentally, this was the first severe criticism of the under-cover pressure group which, the writer heard. Later, as the group gained more power, ^a ~~the group~~ became increasingly hated; however, it was so feared that few persons dared to criticise it. Had K. not been a man of extraordinary frankness, and moreover, had he not trusted the writer greatly, a large part of the machinations of this group would never have been known for the purposes of this study.

"One motive of these groups (working for the release of the men in the stockade is that they are working for publicity. At the present time the people are finding out what motive he (W., the man at the head of the group) has in working for these things. I'm afraid a great deal of the confidence of the people has been lost.

"In salesmanship you say you can talk yourself out of it. In publicity you can talk yourself out of it too. That's what happened in this case.

"The greatest mistake this group made) was regarding the verdict given by the Court Martial. Before that verdict was given out, a threat of a very serious nature was made. But that threat leaked out and that threat wasn't kept. Somehow, I think that person (W) must have lost the confidence of the people on account of it."¹

The great bulk of the camp population reacted to the petition very differently than K. Every informant contacted gave evidence of sympathy with the strikers (though they did not approve the strike) and all admitted signing the petition. ^{Krakora states 8,000 people signed it.} In spite of the fact that in a situation like this, no one could refuse to sign without appearing extremely heartless, the writer believes that this sympathy was sincere.

Mrs. Yamaguchi said:

"They all signed the petition in this block. It came back though."²

¹ ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, p. 3.

² ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, p. 4; July 31, 1944, p. 1.

Mr. Abe said:

"Just about everybody signed in this block. The families of the internees asked for the petition. I signed it myself. I think most of the people signed the petition. But the members of the families reconsidered and decided not to present it. I think Mr. Besig had something to do with it. The family think that if they present the petition, they think that indirectly they are admitting that they (the detainees) are guilty. That's why they withdrew the petition. In the meantime, they are seeing..."¹

It is very doubtful that Mr. Besig had anything to do with the withdrawal of the petition.

Mr. Okamoto said:

"About one week ago we signed the petition. But we hear it was burnt. They say 8,200 people signed it. I think that is true. Almost everybody in this block signed it.

"I heard a rumor about Best letting the men out in two weeks. I also heard that the strike was connected with the Hitomi case."²

Between August 4th and August 7th all of the detainees were dismissed from the hospital and returned to the stockade. Evidently they believed that they were about to be released and when they found themselves back in the stockade, they immediately resumed the strike. Mr. Yoshiyama's diary states:

"Received words that I would be leaving the hospital and be under the custody of Internal Security. . We thought we were to be released, but at 1:30 P.M. we were sent back to the Stockade again. A few minutes later Mr. Schmidt came to see us but his reaction unfavorable so we decided to continue with our hunger strike again."

The strikers rather dramatically nailed two red handkerchiefs to the sides of their barrack. The writer was told later that these handkerchiefs were signals to the relatives that the strike was still on.

The Administration took great pains to keep the resumption of this strike a secret. It was, so far as the writer knows, never released to the newspapers, since the stopping of the strike

¹ibid., Aug. 8, 1944, p. 1.

²ibid., p. 3.

had already been publicized. On August 8th the following conversation took place between Mr. Robertson and Dr. Opler:

Opler: The Administrative attitude is, "Don't tell the colony that the men have gone back on a hunger strike." Best said, "This time they're not to go back to the hospital unless they go to ward "X" (the morgue)."

Best also claims that Myer advised him during the first strike not to put the men in the hospital. (Opler hardly credited this.)

Robertson: The resumption of the hunger strike was a slap at the Administration for the sole purpose of embarrassing them. As far as I can see, there is no desire on the part of the strikers to get out now. They have said, "One man is going to die. Then Best is going to die."

Best made the statement: "I'm not going to let 14 fellows bluff me because if I give in I'll have no control over the colony."

Also he saw Kuratomi before the reinstatement of the strike. Kuratomi asked Best for a date of release. Best wouldn't give it to him. The understanding was that Best would give a date if they stopped the hunger strike first. Best said, "I've got just as much right to demand that you quit the hunger strike first."

Opler: I think it's still very much a matter of a personal feud between Best and Kuratomi. That was important in the November incident too.

Robertson: Best has made his decision. They are going to stay in there and starve to death. Now he doesn't even say, "If you stop the hunger strike I'll let you out," but, "If you stop the hunger strike and quiet down, I'll see about it."

Opler: There are a great amount of rumors about Best and that he'll be next if one of the boys dies.

Robertson: I heard he was being watched very closely in the colony. He never goes in without another Caucasian with him, usually a member of Internal Security.¹

The tension among those members of the personnel who knew what was going on was almost unbearable. A heavy pall of despair sank upon those who believed that Mr. Best was doing wrong. Had Mr. Best been murdered, there were a few who would have thought

¹ ibid., Aug. 8, 1944, pp. 6-7.

that he had received his just deserts. However, Mr. Best himself was far more worried than he would admit. The writer was told later, from a very reliable source, that he feared for his life and was so close to a nervous breakdown that he almost resigned. There is no doubt that at this period tension was far greater among the members of the appointed personnel than in the center.

By the evening of August 11, the anxiety of the relatives of the fasting men reached a state bordering on hysteria. A group came to the Internal Security office and when they were given no hope some stated, "If they aren't out by tomorrow noon, something is going to happen." They were taken back to the colony but refused to leave the gates, standing there until eleven o'clock at night and shouting imprecations at the members of the Internal Security: "If you were in here, we'd kill you right now." It is reported that the Internal Security threw water on them. Two rather unsentimental Caucasians reported the following occurrence. They were present when the wife of Mr. Kobayashi telephoned Internal Security to inquire about his condition. "He's fine, he's fine," said the policeman. Then hanging up the receiver he turned to the Caucasians present and remarked, "Huh, he's just about ready to be stuffed."¹ So great was the anxiety of the Administration that the Army was put on the alert on this evening, although there was not the remotest possibility of any uprising in the colony in behalf of the strikers.

On the night of August 12, the hunger strike broke. None of the strikers was willing to speak to the writer on the reasons. The only accounts available are from two Caucasians: Mr. Robertson

¹ ibid., Aug. 12, 1944, p. 1; Aug. 13, 1944, p. 2.

told the following story which he had had from one of the Internal Security men on duty in the stockade:

"At about 1:00 A.M. the internees called to the police that one of the men was very sick and should be hospitalized. Schmidt said, 'You're not going to be hospitalized. However, a doctor was brought (to the stockade). The doctor said that the elderly man's heart was in poor condition and was skipping. (This was Mr. Ishigami.) He also stated that some of the other boys would be in poor shape in another day or so. The doctor then left.

"Schmidt said, 'You're the guys who are keeping that old man from eating. His blood will be on your hands.'

"In about ten minutes the internee who had called the police (probably Rev. Kai) came back and said, 'You win. Take him to the hospital.' All of the men then took food."¹

Mr. Gunderson, the High School Principal gave the following account, supposed to come from Mr. Best and Mr. Schmidt:

"At midnight the men in the stockade saw that one of their number was on the verge of death. Three others were very ill. They called Schmidt and asked that the dying man be taken to the hospital. Schmidt said, 'Nothing doing. It's your fault they're dying. It's your responsibility.' Kai and Kuratomi tried to bargain with Schmidt, but he was adamant. 'Go off the strike' said he. Rev. Kai asked for a half an hour to talk to the other men. In ten minutes he came back and said that they had all agreed to quit. Dr. Sleath came over and fed them pablum and milk which they all promptly threw up. The dangerously ill man was taken to the hospital. Sunday morning (Aug. 13) three more were taken to the hospital."²

One of the strikers told the writer later that it was Rev. Kai and Mr. Sugimoto who negotiated with Schmidt. Less than a week after the breaking of the strike, Rev. Kai and Mr. Kuratomi were released. At intervals of a day or two thereafter all of the other men were released.

Attitudes of the Residents

Even at the most serious period in the strike when it appeared that one of the weaker men might die, there was never any indication that a significant number of the colonists had the slightest

¹ ibid., Aug. 13, 1944, p. 2.

² ibid., Aug. 12, 1944, pp. 2-3

intention of taking violent action in their behalf. Some Japanese believed there might be trouble if one of the men died,¹ but there is no indication that anyone with the exception of the pressure groups made plans as to what to do in this eventuality.

Unanimously, however, everyone in the colony wanted the men released. The fear that they might cause trouble, which had been expressed by some individuals months before, was entirely forgotten. On August 14, an extremely conservative old Tulean issei said on the subject:

"I think that Mr. Best and the people in the center don't see eye to eye on almost everything. . . .As you know, there are 14 people in the stockade at present. There has been no definite verdict given. There has been no hearing."²

After the strike had stopped, an intelligent nisei girl stated that nobody had been much concerned over the hunger strike. If a man had died, the feeling might have been different."³

K. denounced the strike as foolish:

"If Kai and Kuratomi really engineered the hunger strike, I have little respect for them. There must be something fishy. I thought Mr. Kai and the rest of the leaders were supposed to be leading the boys on the right road instead of going on a hunger strike which is not an honorable thing to do. . . ."

"I don't think if a man had died the people could have been stirred enough to demonstrate. There was great sympathy in camp and agitation - but there wouldn't have been a demonstration."

On the threats of the relatives, K, said:

"They were just making threats to satisfy their grouch. People who threaten out loud, seldom act. They (the detainees) should have been tried long ago. Many people in this center have been convicted of battery and sentenced. We ask for justice and if justice is given we won't complain against the administration."⁴

Mrs. Fujimoto, a gentle conservative woman, said:

¹ ibid., Aug. 11, 1944, p. 1.

² ibid., Aug. 14, 1944, p. 2.

³ ibid., Aug. 16, 1944, p. 2.

⁴ ibid., Aug. 14, 1944, p. 4.

"I don't see why they went on a hunger strike. They weren't doing the WRA any harm. They were just harming themselves. It made us sad though. I kind of pity them."¹

Her husband expressed himself much more bluntly:

"The people didn't pay any attention to the hunger strike. Except for their relatives, the rest of the camp thought they were plain damn fools."²

A nisei girl who had previously denounced the detainees as radical agitators, said:

"I think they should be left out or they should be given a reason for their being there."³

Another young girl of the same point of view said:

"I think it's better that they were released. I don't see why they should be punished. They thought they were doing something good for the camp. I feel very relieved. It's a good thing they were released. Naturally, we feel sorry for them."⁴

From these and many other statements it is apparent that relief over the release of the detainees was widespread even among those persons who had previously been hostile to them. Mr. Best's strategy in releasing Kai and Kuratomi first, that they might lose prestige thereby, did not have much effect on the people. The detainees had already lost almost all of their prestige and, except for a small group of loyal supporters, all of their hold as leaders. They had become objects of pity rather than respect.

RESIGNATION OF INTERNAL SECURITY

The resignation of the Japanese Internal Security on July 19, was one of the most serious repercussions of the Hitomi murder. The Administration experienced extreme difficulty in recruiting

¹ibid., Aug. 19, 1944, p. 2.

²ibid., p. 3.

³ibid., Aug. 24, 1944, p. 5.

⁴ibid., Aug. 30, 1944, p. 3.

another force and the change brought about in the attitude of those Japanese who finally consented to serve altered the character of the body a great deal. Before their resignation the Japanese police had been called dogs; after the resignation the succeeding body was called timid, spineless, and cowardly and the men were considered as all but useless by the residents. The mention of their name would usually evoke a scornful, albeit somewhat tolerant, smile.

The reasons for this mass resignation were well understood by the residents. The Japanese police had been unpopular since segregation. Some of the members had been arrogant and had used their positions to threaten fellow residents with their power. They were also widely believed to connive at or even be in partnership with the gambling groups. It is very possible that they were. The murder of Hitomi, the threat against Mr. Shimokon and possibly, the fear that they would be forced to co-operate in the apprehension of the murderer and thereby incur wrath of the mysterious but greatly feared underground group or groups was too much for them. Moreover, public pressure against them was tremendous. Mr. Abe explained their unpopularity as follows:

"The first trouble was that the camp residents suspected them that they were spies of the Administration. That was the main reason the police couldn't get the co-operation of the residents. And also there were the gambling groups who were protected by the police."¹

The resignation was announced to the people in an extra issue of the Newell Star on July 20:

POLICE STAFF RESIGNS; BEST ASKS FOR REORGANIZATION

Police Selection by Block Basis

The entire staff of the Colonial Police resigned in a body Wednesday (July 19) at midnight, it was announced today. The

¹ ibid., July 24, 1944, p. 2.

reason was reported to be lack of cooperation received from the center residents.

Project Director Raymond R. Best immediately asked the residents in each block to select two representatives to serve their own blocks on a new community police organization. Best sent a memorandum to the Civic Organization and to block managers asking block managers to call meetings to explain the reorganization of the colonial police.

"It is intended that each colony policeman to be selected will have the primary responsibility of doing the police work within the block from which he is selected or at least within the ward in which he resides," Best stated in his memorandum.

"Those persons selected by the blocks will be accepted by the Administration without question and will be assigned to the colony police force. Their work orders will be processed through the Placement office and they will become employees paid by the Administration at the regular classified wage rates."

He requested that the names, addresses and identification numbers of persons selected within each block be referred to the Civic Organization office not later than 4 p.m. Monday (July 24).

Since the resignation of Chief Minekichi Shimokon and Assistant Chief Dan Aoyama after the fatal stabbing of Yaozo Hitomi on July 2, the staff of the Colonial Police had dwindled from 115 men to 72 at the time they resigned. Shimokon and Aoyama resigned after anonymous threats were made against them. Other members of the Colonial Police were threatened and insulted although the Colonial Police has taken no part in the murder investigation.

"Every community has its own police staff to maintain peace and order," Best stated. "This community is now without its own police due to the attitude of the residents and through no fault of WRA. I hope the Colonial Police will soon again provide a valuable service to the community."

The mass resignation left the Administration in an untenable position. The policing of the colony was quite impossible without evacuee help. It was imperative that a new force be recruited immediately. Accordingly, Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Holding addressed the block managers and attempted to point out that the recruiting of this force was a responsibility of the block managers. This attitude was greatly resented by the block managers, especially Mr. Holding's statement:

"If there's a failure it's going to be your responsibility. You've got to see that people in the block co-operate with the Policement. For those blocks which supply no Policemen, no protection will be given."

The full minutes of this block manager's meeting follow:

CHIEF SCHMIDT'S REPORT

Chief of Administrative Police, W. Schmidt, upon introduction to the body by Mr. Huycke, commented that the community of criminal element is in inverse as to the activities of the Police; if you have activities by the police officers, you have the tendency to suppress the crime of the community. He then, by illustration, gave some statistics relative to police work commensurate to the crime committed in Tokyo in 1927-1929. He then talked at some length appertaining to police work. He especially pointed out that investigation work is performed purely from a professional stand-point and the work is unquestionably not done by so-called "Dogs" or "Stool Pigeons." Approach to the police is purely ethical and professional and certainly not any inveiglement. He went on to remark that gambling, prostitution, and other vices are not so 'bad' if it weren't for the things that come with it. In a community, so unusual in its atmosphere, broad concept of the community should be considered and reflected upon as a prerogative of a resident, especially in view of the many children who are not matured enough to understand certain situations.

POLICE FORCE MISUNDERSTOOD

Mr. Shirai believed that undeniably a decent police force is necessary, however; people have misunderstood the Police. Despite this fact, clarification of misunderstanding was neglected. Lack of closer co-ordination may have been the cause, Mr. Schmidt remarked.

REASON FOR CHANGE IN TITLE OF WARDENS

Mr. Yamashita questioned why the WRA changed the title of Wardens to Colonial Police. Mr. Schmidt replied that the reason for the change was to let the colonists know that this organization was theirs, that this force was for the people of the camp, and also to make the distinction between the Administrative Police and the Colonial. Terminology of Internal Security is used by virtue of fact that the Civil Service classifies the force as such. The name Internal Security is more-or-less a hangover. At the present time, there are 47 on the Administrative police staff.

REPORT BY MR. HOLDING

Mr. Holding took the floor and in his talk he included the following statements: Shot time ago when the Police Department was functioning three men known as Commissioners were selected. Their job was to help run the Police Department, but when the Co-ordinating Committee dissolved, Commissioners dissolved at the

same time. This time we have a new idea, instead of three Commissioners, we have 74 Police Commissioners. Each one of you are going to be Commissioner. People in the block have selected the Policemen, it's going to be your Policemen, if it fails. If there's failure it's going to be your responsibility. You've got to see that people in the block co-operate with the Policemen. For those blocks which supply no Policemen, no protection will be given. Now, we have 86 men who will work right in the block from which they came from. Block without Policemen are: 35, 32, 31, 26, 27, 52, 54, 51, 49, 59, 42, 40, 16, 18, 13, 5, 6, 7, 9, 21, 20, 73, 69, 67, and 56. No telegram service or Sunday visiting passes to the Hospital will be given to those without police representatives.

BLOCK WITHOUT POLICEMEN

Chief Schmidt reiterated that Colonial Police service will not be available for the issuance of passes and sending of telegrams for those blocks without representatives, but there will be other ways or means more complicated and delayed available. According to Mr. Black, no written statement in regard to this will be issued. Inavailability of Colonial Police service is an instruction issued from the Administration.

RECTIFICATION OF STATEMENT

Messrs. Ikeda and Takahashi immediately contended that Block Managers were merely an instrument for channeling information and announcements, and emphatically should not be responsible for the failure of the Police Force. Mr. Schmidt rectified Mr. Holding's statement. Block Managers are not Commissioners, but they are a focal point in exchange of information from the people to the Administration, vice versa.

POWER OF POLICE FORCE

Power of the Colonial and Administrative Police forces was the next topic of discussion. It was informed that the Colonial Police will be responsible for the inside of the fence. Responsibility of the Administrative Police is to merely advise the Colonial Police, to give professional assistance. In your major types of crime, which borders on felonious type of crime, the Administrative Police renders aid, but there is certain delegated power to certain groups, such as the District Attorney, who has certain obligation in dealing with crimes of more major types. In cases of murders, the Administrative Police does not have the power to trial; the District Attorney is to take care of it.

The extreme resentment which this policy on the part of the Caucasian police aroused was shown by the fact that Mr. Oakmoto, a conservative block-manager of the mildest character, denounced it. Okamoto believed in co-operating with the Administration as much as possible, but on this occasion he lost his temper.

He gave the writer the minutes, saying with indignation:

"When Mr. Holding of Internal Security said that those block who didn't elect policemen would not get any telegrams delivered or no Sunday passes to the hospital, everybody got mad. That's why some people tried to get him off the force. We feel they are using the block managers as a weapon. If that's WRA's policy, that's pretty serious.

"The reason we can get no organization is anyone taking such a job is afraid of being called an inu. That's why most persons don't want any jobs where they have to contact Caucasians.

"In certain of the meetings, like the Police, the Co-op Board elections and the Spanish Consul, we could get only about 5 or 6 people to come out. That was not only in my block here either. The block managers have a very hard time. That's why so many block managers are quitting. They're having to take too many orders from WRA."¹

The block elections were held and about two thirds of the blocks elected wardens. The following account appeared in the Newell Star:

49 BLOCKS RESPONSE TO BEST'S NEW PATROL BODY PROPOSITION

Result of the election of patrolmen from each block was released today by the Civic Organization. The Civic reported about two-thirds of the 74 blocks responded by electing representatives. Residents were asked last week through the Civic Organization by Project Director Ray R. Best to elect this week two representatives from each block to serve in the new community police organization, which supersedes the resigned Colonial Police. The breakdown revealed 33 blocks each chose two policemen, 13 blocks elected one each, and three blocks each elected three members. many of the blocks electing one person expressed their desire to select another one within a few days. It was also disclosed that 25 blocks failed to elect representatives. (However, this report of 25 blocks failing to elect members is not to be judged as final. Some blocks have requested time for further study and information. It is hoped that all remaining blocks will carefully reconsider this plan which may help eliminate the present anxiety and fear of disorder in this center.-- Ed. Note)

A meeting will be held this week by the newly formed police body to elect an evacuee chief and his assistants.

The success of the election of the police officers varied through the camp. The Manzanar section filled every position. Ward VI and ward VII filled least. In spite of the threatened

¹ ibid., Aug. 8, 1944, p. 5.

penalties, some blocks refused to elect wardens and remained unpoliced for six months or more. Some of the reasons for refusing to serve in this capacity was fully explained by K:

"I don't think the Japanese want the name 'policeman.' The Japanese don't want Japanese to rule over them. They say, 'We are all behind the fence, behind barbed wire, and we don't want anybody to pick us up.'¹

"What I heard is that some blocks are going to have watchmen and that others are not going to have anyone serve as police in their block.

"The rumor that whoever serves as police in the centers and works as stooges - their records will be sent to Japan - that has a great bearing with many.

"There is also a matter that has been confirmed by one of the boys from the stockade. When he was released he asked why he had been impounded. The policeman (Caucasian) told him that a man in the block had written a letter saying that he was dangerous. The boy asked to see the letter. The Caucasian said he can't have it because the letter is going to be sent to Japan with the man who wrote it. All the records concerning him will be sent to Japan. If this is true that is the most wonderful thing that could happen."²

What delighted K. about this matter was that he believed that stern justice would be meted out in Japan to those men who had acted as dogs against their own people in the camp.

The following descriptions of the block meetings were given:

Mr. Okamoto stated in a letter:

"Up to date the reputation of police is so grave that it seems to me the colonists have no interest in the colonial police affairs. It tells very clearly by past experiences and every meeting which we held has failed. None of them succeed. The colonists held meetings regarding the election of the police commissioners but unfortunately failed except for two or three blocks. It appears to me that the colonial police department feels they have no support by the colonists."³

Mr. Abe, who lived in the Manzanar district where the election was most successful, stated:

¹ ibid., July 30, 1944, p. 10.

² ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, p. 4.

³ ibid., July 24, 1944, p. 5.

"I think they'll get an Internal Security but it will take time. So far the police department has been looked upon as administrative agents.

"Now we are trying to get the police of this camp - our own police. We elected two officers from each block in ward VIII. We have 10 blocks and 20 police officers will be elected. That way I think we can maintain a police force.

"Most of them hate to take the job but if they understand the new system I think we can get police. One man we elected might take the job and the others refused for personal reasons.¹

"At the Internal Security meeting - the people in this block wanted me to go. They wanted me to be police chief for the Manzanar section. Naturally, I would never accept the position but I went to the meeting just to get the tone. They were a bunch of rabbits.

"Most people who wish to be policemen are not very well educated. They didn't even know how to handle the meeting. They didn't know procedure. But most of the people there were well meaning and wished to organize a camp police force. But the old group (men from the old force who were re-elected) agitated among themselves and tried to get to be head of the police (so they could) co-operate with the gamblers."²

"I went to the police organization meeting the other day. Some of the men were so afraid even to be on a committee to make negotiations with the Administration. They appointed three committees to talk over the reorganization of the police force with Mr. Best. Even the men on these committees were afraid.

"The rumor about the old organization was that they were subordinates of the Administration to keep the peace of the camp. They thought the police would have to be loyal to this country.

"The old group (resigned police) were men with stubborn heads. The new people (segregues) knew they couldn't co-operate with them. They want to keep to themselves. Especially the people from Manzanar, Jerome and Rohwer that have just come in after February. We have nothing to do with it (the old November 1943 troubles of Tule Lake)."

An amusing result of the elections was recounted by a nisei girl who remarked that her block had no police. "Two men were elected but one man's wife kept after him until he resigned. Then the other resigned because he didn't want to be the only policeman in the block."³

¹ ibid., July 24, 1944, p. 3. "Personal reasons" is the most frequent excuse used by a Japanese who wished to avoid taking a position which would lead him to be called a dog.

² ibid., Aug. 8, 1944, p. 2

³ ibid., p. 1.

It should be stressed here, that the underground pressure group did all in its power to spread propaganda to inhibit the election of the police.¹ However, general pressure was so strong that their efforts were scarcely needed. Considering the amount of pressure it is remarkable that the police force was restaffed at all. This pressure continued to cow the police force for more than seven months (and will probably continue for much longer). The "wardens" as they were henceforth called, came to be known as a species of Caspar Milquetoasts. Whenever any infringement of law incurred which might remotely be connected with "politics" or might conceivably offend the residents if action were taken, the wardens refused to act. They would call up the Caucasian police and say, "You better take this. It's too hot for us." On August 8, when wardens had been obtained for most of the blocks, Mr. Okamoto said:

"Finally they changed the name of the police to wardens. I believe that the main cause of the resignation was that the police say, 'The colonists don't support the colony police.' Their bad reputation, I think, was due to their lacking capable personnel. Some reported very little detail of anything that happened in the blocks. It used to be that the Japanese police didn't report every little thing to the Caucasians and then things would settle down.

Okamoto means here that it is far better to allow minor matters to settle themselves and not drag the Caucasians in on every occasion.

"They said the name of 'police' was too official.

"Our block failed the first time. Particularly the issei were against it because they heard the rumor of sending records to Japan. Also the Internal Security used to wear a badge of the regular United States police. It said United States police on the badge. Most of the people were afraid (to connect themselves so obviously with the U. S. government).

¹ ibid., July 31, 1944, p. 2.

"The old police were always looking for something to report. They got a very bad reputation. That is not police officers! That just disturbs the public order!"¹

The following rather conciliatory statement was printed in the Newell Star on August 10. The last four paragraphs in particular are noteworthy:

Patrolmen

REORGANIZED FORCE ASKS RESIDENTS' COOPERATION

A complete reorganization of the center police set-up with many fundamental changes in policy was announced this week by the Colonial Peace Office.

In a statement addressed to all residents of the center, the new peace officers asked for guidance and whole-hearted cooperation in maintaining peace and order and promised to expend their every effort in making this a peaceful and liveable community.

Discussed at the several general meetings of the newly elected peace officers were weaknesses and defects of the former police force and it was resolved that in order to create a police force operating for and by the people of the community, it was necessary first to dissolve the previous suspicions and opposition surrounding the old Colonial Police force.

In line with this, a request was submitted to the project director asking the Administration to inform the Colonial Peace Office of the reasons for arrest whenever residents are apprehended in the future by either the Internal Security officers or by the FBI. This request was taken under consideration.

At the same time, the director suggested that the members of the force consist mainly of repatriates, preferably older issei and nisei because of the possibility of future friction if non-repatriates dominated the peace force and further that all executive officers be persons not connected with the old force. These suggestions were taken under consideration.

It was also emphasized that problems arising between the Administration and the residents did not come within the jurisdiction of the peace force.

Officers of the Department of Colonial Peace may be removed by majority vote of the blocks.

THE RAPE RUMORS

Coincident with the resignation of the colonial police, the camp fell victim to one of the most bizarre rumors of its history.

¹ ibid., Aug. 8, 1944, p. 4.

For ten days story after story of rape, perpetrated by one individual or a gang of boys, swept through the camp. Opler said this rumor might possibly have been started by Mr. Yamatani, the Police Commissioner who fled the camp after Mr. Hitomi's murder and is reported to have said as he left, "When my boys leave the colony, there will be rape."¹ However the rumors may have originated, they were taken very seriously by most of the people in camp. For about a week the girls and young women imposed a curfew on themselves and a woman was seldom seen outside of a barrack after dark. Girls who attended the Japanese night school were escorted home by a group of the young men students. Typical versions of the rape rumors follow:

From Mr. Yamaguchi:

"They say a girl was attacked in block 69. She ran away screaming. The girls can't go to school (Japanese night school). Now the boys are getting together and they all leave school together.

"Some people say that the administration is spreading the rumors to frighten the people so they will quick make another Internal Security. Other people are fighting for it (for Internal Security). So there are two groups fighting; one wants an Internal Security and the others say we can take care of it ourselves.

"It's a fact that some people are scared. Especially all the girls. Ward III quit night school. Even the movies have quit.

"People would like an Internal Security, but nobody wants to run. They don't want to be inu. I think the trying to get a new Internal Security will fall to the ground."²

A nisei girl said:

"I think it's mostly rumor on the part of Internal Security. They have to make it sound bad so that we'd demand to have Internal Security back. It sounds so wild and fantastic. Most of it - like covering a girl with blankets and throwing her in a ditch. I think that's rumor.

"But in ward VII a girl is supposed to have been attacked by some of the boys. Some of the boys in camp are bad.

¹ ibid., July 25, 1944, p. 1

² ibid., July 24, 1944, p. 1.

"According to the man next door there is a bad bunch of boys in camp. One of the boys has been outcast from his family for things that he has done. He was so good for nothing."¹

Mrs. Yamaguchi said:

"There is still a lot of talk. Some boy chased a girl in block 69. The boy had a blanket over his head. My girl friend who lives only with her mother and sister has been annoyed by having boys knock on her door at night and shine flashlights in the window."²

The practical Mr. Abe, an elderly issei was the only individual the writer contacted who doubted the rumors strongly:

"The bothering of girls is just rumors, I think. Of course there is a high possibility that such a crime could be committed when living this abnormal life. But a friend of mine tried checking up the rumors. There is no way to prove it that there was any such crime. I think that's a rumor made by the administration to make people form a police department."³

A very intelligent young nisei admitted that there might be some truth to the rumors. Pointing out that the young men in camp far outnumbered the girls, he suggested:

"There is only one thing that could be done to control this. That is establish a house of prostitution. If I were the administration I would permit the operation of a licensed house where the girls could be given regular medical inspection. That would be the only solution."⁴

After a short period of extreme concern, the rape rumors died down very rapidly. Long before the Internal Security was securely established they were heard no more.

ARRESTS FOR DRAFT VIOLATION

In mid-July 27 nisei were arrested, charged with failing to report for their pre-induction physical examination. They were taken to Eureka to await trial. The following announcement was made in the Newell Star:

¹ibid., July 25, 1944, p. 1.

²ibid., July 26, 1944, p. 2.

³ibid., July 24, 1944, p. 3.

⁴ibid., July 30, 1944, p. 7.

27 TAKEN TO EUREKA ON DRAFT VIOLATING CHARGES

Arrested on federal warrants charging them with violating the Selective Service Act, 27 nisei were removed to Eureka, California this week, reported the Administration. The 27 Japanese failed to report for pre-induction physical examination for the Army when examinations were held May 2 and 3 at the community hospital.

Deputy Marshal Weslick Erich of the United States Marshal's office at Sacramento assisted by three other deputy marshals served the warrants Friday. All 27 will be tried in the federal district court at Eureka.

This arrest was received in the colony with the greatest calm. The general concensus of opinion was that the boys who had said No-No or repatriated before the proper date would be returned. For those boys who might have said Yes-Yes, there was no pity. They ought to go to jail. Why the residents had such implicit faith that justice would be meted out in this case when ordinarily the activities of the courts of the United States are regarded with the great suspicion, the writer is unable to understand.

Miss Doi, an intelligent young nisei with status-quo leanings stated:

"I haven't heard much about that. They all expect them to come back. People who are repatriates say, 'After the trial they'll all be back soon.' (About) the Yes-Yes - people just don't give a hang about them anyway."¹

Mr. Yamaguchi said:

"The people are doing nothing. Everybody is willing to go (to jail) if it comes to that. The Japanese don't think anything about it. Those 27 boys had a lot of sympathy though. I wouldn't change (for fear of going to jail)."²

K. stated:

"There was no reaction. None whatever. We discussed the things but the general feeling is that if they do not wish to be loyal they should not have said Yes-Yes. It was no more than

¹ ibid., July 18, 1944, p. 2.

² ibid., July 19, 1944, p. 2.