

CHAPTER VII -- THE DEVELOPMENT OF FACTIONALISM

RESEGREGATION GROUP V. KURATOMI FACTION

SYNTHESIS

By ~~the~~ late spring of 1944 the Resegregation Group was the only group in camp with any pretensions of ~~power~~ political power. In a sense they were now the vested group. Undoubtedly they considered themselves the future guiding force of Tule Lake. For many months they had expressed repeatedly that one of their chief aims was obtaining the release of the stockade, in particular, the Negotiating Committee, "the peoples' representatives". They strove to give the impression to the residents that they were in a sense acting as trustees for the imprisoned members of the Negotiating Committee, that they were trying to free them so that they might regain their rightful places as leaders of the people.

However, they ran into their first organized opposition in the person of Mr. Tsuda who was released from the stockade in April of 1944. Tsuda immediately joined forces with Kimura, Mori and some other ~~xxxx~~ ex-stockade detainees and began an unceasing campaign to get Kai, Kuratomi and Sugimoto out of the stockade. (Tsuda and Kimura had been among Kuratomi's most loyal supporters in the October-November uprising and they continued to work faithfully in his behalf now.) Tsuda's efforts to bring about release conflicted with the pressure group's aims, since the pressure group <sup>greatly</sup> ~~xxxx~~ coveted the prestige which it hoped to get if it succeeded in getting the men released.

~~Sometime between March and May (have written Kuratomi~~

connected with a  
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Both the Resegregation Group and Tsuda's group were connected and worked with a minor organization called the Saiban-iin (Trial Committee) which was organized some time between March and May. (Have written Kuratomi for exact date.) The membership of this body was composed of relatives of the detainees who ~~had~~ organized to work cooperatively for release.



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for the exact date), <sup>and was composed of</sup> the relatives of the <sup>internees who</sup> ~~internees~~ formed an organization to work cooperatively for the release of the detainees. This <sup>minor group</sup> ~~organization~~ was called the Saiban-iin (Trial Committee). A good proportion of the members of the Saiban-iin, ~~were~~ having relatives in the stockade, were ardent status quo supporters and Resegregationists. From the scant data available it appears that the Resegregationist leaders initiated the organization although Tsuda certainly worked with the relatives also for a period.

Mr. Yamashita, one of the most influential leaders of the Resegregation Group exerted himself in an attempt to get Tsuda to come in with the Resegregationists. Tsuda, however, was not to be lured by Yamashita's promises of "great power" and, to make matters worse, refused to sign the Akashi petition. Both sides continued to make a pretense of friendliness, but rapport grew steadily worse. By the middle of June, 1944, this appearance of friendliness was abandoned and the Resegregation Group began an active campaign to blacken Tsuda and his group with the residents calling them dogs and gamblers, and pointing



~~and gamblers, and pointing~~ to the fact that Tsuda called on Mr. Best frequently as proof that he was working with Best against the people and against the stockade detainees. Tsuda, according to his account, saw Mr. Best as often as he could ~~taxing~~ in an attempt to get some action on the stockade issue. In any case, the dog propaganda gained wide acceptance, coming as it did, at the height of the wave of inu hate.

After the opening of this gossip campaign, it appears that the Saiban in fell almost completely under the domination of the Resegregationist leaders. Coincident with the break with Tsuda, the Saiban in, under the leadership of Kiyoshi Okamoto decided to appeal to the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of the nisei detainees. Mr. Besig ~~of the ACLU~~ the attorney from the ACLU arrived at Tule Lake most unpropitiously <sup>shortly</sup> ~~on Friday~~ after Hitomi was murdered.

(In the first part of Chpt. V. it will be made clear that the failure of the administration's attempts to form a new Representative Body had an important effect on peoples' attitudes, i. e., many people became convinced or said they were convinced ~~that~~ that the only way to bring the camp back to order was to release the men from the stockade. This was in late May of 1944.) There was no noticeable change in this attitude through June. Nor was any particular interest shown in the activities of the Saiban in, the Resegregation Group or the Tsuda faction. Besides people were too busy talking about the inu, the latest beatings, and, in July, about the Hitomi murder, to be too concerned over the stockade.

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that the only way to bring the camp back to order was to release the men from the stockade. This was in late May of 1944. There was no noticeable change in this attitude ~~and was only particular interest shown in the carbon in~~ through June. Besides people were too busy talking about the inu and relating the latest beatings ~~to talk much~~

#### The Hunger Strike

*In mid July,*  
Shortly after Besgg left the project, the detainees went into a hunger strike in a final desperate attempt to get release. This is of interest chiefly because of the attitude of the residents. Sympathy and identification with the imprisoned men increased. The pressure group ~~then made dire threats of what~~ *and the relatives* made dire threats of what "the people" would do. However, all informants not in the pressure group made no bones about saying that the "people" were not going to make any overt demonstration over the hunger strike. In fact, most non-Resegregationist residents implied that the strikers were damn fools. When, however, the Resegregation Group circulated a petition near the end of the strike, almost everyone signed it.

#### Initial Disappointment of Resegregation Group when Kai and Kuratomi ~~would~~ Refused to take Active Part.

As has been mentioned several times (or damn well most be) the Resegregation Group leaders stated ~~xxxx~~ repeatedly ~~that they were waiting for the men~~ through the spring and summer of 1944 that they were only waiting for the release of the detainees to begin their activities *on a grand scale.* ~~in a big way.~~  
(~~They started the Young Men's Organization without them,~~  
on August 8, however.) In any case, when the last 13 men, *who were the most active in the ON army,* were released at the end of August Yamashita sent emissaries to

*Karl K. ...*



gained wide acceptance in camp, coming as it did, at the height of the wave of inu hate.

### The Saiban in

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Sometime between March and ~~June~~ <sup>May</sup> (have written K. for accurated ate) the relatives of the internees formed an organization to work cooperatively for the release of the detainees. <sup>the</sup> From <sup>scant data</sup> <sup>as alake</sup> it appears that the Resegregationist leaders initiated the organization although Tsuda certainly worked with ~~it~~ <sup>the relatives</sup> ~~for some period~~ also for a period. After Yamashita broke with Tsuda it appears that the Saiban in fell almost completely under the domination of the Resegregationist leaders. ~~It should be remembered that many of the~~ <sup>proportion</sup> a good number of the people with relatives and friends in the stockade were ardent status quo supporters and Resegregationists. <sup>much of the Saiban in leaders</sup>

Tsuda says he thought of getting a lawyer to get the boys out of the stockade but was discouraged by Yamashita and Kira. Okamoto, an evacuee from Heart Mountain, who was later tried and sentenced for sedition, ~~was~~ finally took the initiative in this matter and appealed to the ACLU. Besig arrived <sup>at July Lake</sup> most unpropitiously a few days after Hhtomi was murdered.

### Attitude of the Residents toward the Stockade Issue.

(Considerable discussion of ~~general attitudes~~ general attitudes toward the stockade detainees must of necessity go into the first part of Chpt. V - preceding the rise of inu hate. It will be made clear there that the failure of the administration's attempts to form a new Representative Body had an important effect on peoples' attitudes, i. e., many people became convinced, or said they were convinced



The strike was broken August 12 and shortly thereafter all of the detainees were released.

~~From many months the Resegregation Group leaders had been reiterating that~~

Through the spring and summer of 1944, the Resegregation Group leaders had been reiterating that they were waiting only for the release of the detainees to begin their activities on a grand scale. When the last 13 men, among Kai and Kuratomi an other of whom were/the most influential leaders of the October-November 1943 uprising were released, Yamashita sent emissaries to

Initial Hostility Between Tsuda-Kimura-Mori group and  
Resegregation Group Leaders

Adequate data on this business has been very hard to get. I've got some from Tsuda and the Resegregationists - have written to Kuratomi for accurate details.

After Tsuda's release from the stockade in April 1944 he joined with Kimura, Mori (also/detainees and Daihyo Shamen) in an unceasing campaign to get Kai, Kuratomi and the remaining detainees out of the stockade. This, of course, conflicted with the pressure groups aims, since the pressure group also coveted the prestige which they hoped to get if they succeeded in getting the men released. The pressure group had been making attempts for release since late December of 1943. Tsuda started his campaign in April. At first, according to Tsuda, Yamashita tried to get Tsuda to come in on his side. Tsuda, however, was not to be drawn into the Resegregation Group by Yamashita's promises of "great power" and even refused to sign the Akashi petition. Relations, which were at least outwardly friendly while the two groups were fencing with each other and Yamashita was still attempting to win Tsuda over to his side, got steadily worse. By the end of May (not sure of this date) the appearance of friendliness was abandoned and the Resegregation Group began an active campaign to blacken Tsuda as his group, calling them dogs, and pointing to the fact that Tsuda contacted Mr. Best frequently as proof that he was working with Best. Tsuda, according to his account, saw Mr. Best as often as he could to argue about the stockade issue. In any case, the dog propaganda became

~~widely~~



A.

Kai and Kuratomi and asked that they call on him. What Kai did is not known, ~~but~~ Kuratomi called on Yamashita and was offered an important position ~~in the~~ as an officer in the contemplated Resegregationist organization. (Both Kai and Kuratomi were offered positions of prestige, said several Resegregationist informants.) They both ~~declined~~ declined politely. As a result, the Resegregation Group's plans to gain complete control of the camp by merging with the Negotiating Committee ~~fell flat~~. <sup>Yoshiyama and Uchida and two other men were the only stockade detainees, <sup>who joined the</sup> ~~joined~~ into their organization.</sup> The remaining members of the Negotiating Committee either followed Kai and Kuratomi or quietly slipped out of politics.

The Resegregation Group's leaders were by no means pleased with this outcome. <sup>I saw as in the case of Mr. Tsuda,</sup> ~~Diplomatic relations,~~ <sup>outwardly friendly relations</sup> however, ~~were~~ maintained until early September when the ~~authorities~~ Modoc County authorities threatened to indict some of the leaders of both factions for conspiracy to murder Hitomi. Among the threatened men was Tsuda. Kuratomi proposed writing to Besig of the ACLU for help and composed a letter. He got all of the threatened men to sign the letter. However, after thinking the matter over for a night, the threatened Resegregationists came to the conclusion that they could on no account put their names on the same piece of paper with the notorious Mr. Tsuda, who, ironically, they had been stigmatizing as a dog for many months. They called on Mr. Kuratomi and asked him to tear up the letter and give him a copy so that they could write to Mr. Besig

separately. Kuratomi did this and the next day they returned, asking him to sign his letter - without Tsuda. Kuratomi became angry and said he wasn't fool enough to sign a copy of his own letter. He and Kai stuck with Tsuda and an open warfare of gossip began between the two factions. Kai and Kuratomi were accused of ingratitude to the Resegregationists and the Saiban iin "Who had worked so hard to get them out of the stockade". They were accused of having selfishly led the people into trouble and misery in October-November 1943. They were called gangsters, gamblers and drinkers and Communists. The Kai-Kuratomi faction retaliated with gossip that the Resegregationist leaders were fighting among themselves which, on several occasions, was shown to be ~~xxx~~ true. ~~This state of affairs continued until open hostilities broke out in late October 1944. The incident is described on the next page.~~

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until the end of ~~October~~ November when open hostilities broke out and violence and gang warfare appeared imminent. ~~This~~  
~~however~~ The account of this developement, however, must be postponed until the ~~the~~ next chapter.



## CHAPTER VII - THE DEVELOPMENT OF FACTIONALISM

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#### THE INITIAL HOSTILITY BETWEEN TSUDA AND THE RESEGREGATION GROUP

By April of 1944, the Resegregation Group although ~~still~~ still carrying on most of its activities underground was the most powerful organized group in the camp. Though one of its chief expressed <sup>aims</sup> ~~motivations~~ was the release of the stockade detainees and <sup>although</sup> the leaders reiterated constantly that they were awaiting the release of the ~~Reseg~~ Negotiating Committee before embarking on their "plan" , 1/ a new factor had entered the picture. Men like Yamashita and Kira were feeling themselves well established and realized that if they could not win the important October-November 1943 leaders over to their side, these <sup>leaders</sup> ~~men~~ still bearing the aura of their past prestige, would make dangerous rivals.

In April, Mr. Tsuda, <sup>who was</sup> one of Mr. Kuratomi's best friends ~~and an strong~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~man~~ who had worked side-by side with <sup>him</sup> ~~Kuratomi~~ in the November difficulties was released from the stockade. He joined ~~forces~~ forces with Mr.

Kimura, ~~also~~ who had a friendship with Kuratomi dating ~~back to the Jerome Center~~ <sup>and who had been released from the stockade sometime previously</sup> and initiated a campaign to work on Mr. Best unceasingly in an effort to get Kai,

They initiated a campaign to →

Kuratomi and Sugimoto out of the stockade. Yamashita and his group ~~were~~ realized immediately the threat to their prestige which Tsuda's efforts implied. If Tsuda could be won over to their group and if they could effect the release

1/ As Mrs. Matsuda put it: "We are waiting ~~fall~~ the boys get out of the stockade. Then we'll start our plan. Then the fireworks will begin." R. Hankey, Notes, Aug. 16, 1944, p. 1.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF FACTIONALISM - RESEGREGATION GROUP V. KAI\*~~KUM~~ KURATOMI-TSUDA GROUP



together, the chances of winning Kai and Kuratomi to the side of the Resegregation Group would be greatly enhanced. The rivals would be absorbed and their potential danger mitigated. Tsuda, however, caused the Resegregation Group immediate concern because he refused to sign the Akashi petition. 1/ Nor, it appears, did he make any effort to contact Yamashita and discuss matters with him. Therefore in May, Yamashita, using the usual go-between method, sent emissaries to Tsuda and asked him to call at his home. Tsuda complied and according to the account he gave, Yamashita held out the bait as follows:

"Mr. Yamashita asked me why I didn't join the Resegregation Group. He said, 'We have 9000 people here now and great power. 2/ If you should belong to a power like that, you can do yourself very nice.'" ~~W~~

~~What he said was~~

Tsuda, however, refused to be lured into the Resegregation Group by the promises of "great power". What excuses he gave Yamashita are not known. He told the writer that he ~~was against~~ did not join because "I figured the group didn't represent the whole Center as the Negotiating Committee did." Moreover, he did not approve of the exclusive policy of the Resegregation Group, cutting themselves off arbitrarily from all the other residents on the criterion that they and they alone wished to repatriate or ~~expatriate immediately~~ <sup>because they alone were "true Japanese"</sup>. Tsuda also had a ~~son who wanted to~~

~~son who wanted to~~ <sup>Consequently, by joining the Reseg. G., Tsuda would cut himself off from</sup> ~~sansei, a fourth generation son~~ (third generation) son, who did not wish to expatriate. 3/ Tsuda's

- expressed idealistic reasons must be taken with a grain of
1. Kai and Kuratomi on the other hand were members of the Resegregation Group in name, since close relatives had signed their names to the Akashi petition.
  2. This is a gross exaggeration. The petition had 6500 signers and many of these ~~names~~ were minors and infants.
  3. ibid., Mar. 6, 1945, pp. 5, 6-7.



salt. Commonly ~~be~~puted to be the ~~gambler~~<sup>gambler</sup> Centers vice king~~s~~ and owner of the biggest gambling joints, ~~he was~~ a nisei, ~~at~~ in his late forties, ~~and~~/a very realistic individual. Possibly he realized that Yamashita ~~was~~, ~~with~~ his delusions of future grandeur~~x~~ in Tule Lake and in Japan was riding for a fall. Moreover, there is no evidence to indicate that Tsuda's loyalty and friendship for Kuratomi was not entirely sincere. In any case, though outwardly cordial relations were maintained between Tsuda and his followers and Yamashita and the Resegregation Group until the month of June, the Resegregationists were not happy over the situation.

The Saiban iin - Jealousy over Getting Credit for Stockade Releases

Sometime in the spring of 1944 (exact date requested from Kuratomi) the relatives of the interned men formed an organization in order to work cooperatively for their release. ~~Exactly what they did at first or who initiated the organization is not known. (This data is requested.)~~ This organization was called the Saiban iin (The Trial Committee.) <sup>1/</sup> ~~Exactly what they did at first or who initiated the organization is not known.~~ <sup>or what their first activities were</sup> (This data also requested.) Since, however, the great proportion of the membership~~s~~ were ardent Resegregationists, it is probably that they were under considerable influence from the Resegregation Group leaders. Nevertheless, Tsuda also worked with them~~x~~ and meetings were held occasionally to make plans to help the detainees.

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1/ According to Nishimoto this name is peculiar. I've asked for info. on this point also.



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2/ <sup>1944.</sup> R. Hankey, Notes, June 24, 1944, p. 1.



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"Now the boys in the stockade are getting mad at Mr. Tsuda. When Mr. Tsuda came out of the stockade they thought he would be able to do something for them. But he hasn't been able to do a thing. So they're getting mad at him now." 1/

This flood of rumors found wide acceptance in the camp. Oishi, <sup>although he</sup> ~~who~~ disliked the ~~mass movement group~~ Resegregation Group cordially, believed it. He hinted at a "new crop of dogs" growing up and later, when asked specifically for names, stated:

Jy-31-2.

"The men I referred to were Tsuda, Mori and Kimura. We don't know whether they are working for the people or for the administration. If it is found that they are working for the administration it will go with them just as it has gone with the dogs." 2/

~~Resegregationist propaganda proved so potent that~~

Tsuda, of course, soon found out what was going on. He stated that he called on Yamashita and told him that <sup>he would take violent measures against Yamashita.</sup> if this, ~~dog name calling~~ <sup>sneer campaign</sup> did not stop <sup>it would be too bad</sup> for Yamashita. Yamashita denied any knowledge of the <sup>gossip</sup> ~~the~~ ~~sneer campaign~~. The propaganda of the Resegregation Group proved so potent, coming as it did when the residents were pathologically excited over the dogs, that Tsuda was forced to withdraw from overt political activities. He retired to his mysterious activities which he himself described as "gambling and drinking" and patiently awaited the release of Kai and Kuratomi. Since he had a powerful following and a sufficiency of bodyguards, nobody attempted to beat him up. His reputation, as far as the camp residents were concerned, was <sup>irreparably damaged</sup> ~~quite~~ ruined. He was a n inu.

#### The Appeal to the America Civil Liberties Union.

As has already been mentioned briefly, Kiyoshi Okamoto

- 1/ ibid., June 19, 1944, p. 1.  
2. ibid., July 31, 1944, p. 2.



together, the chances of winning Kai and Kuratomi to the side of the Resegregation Group ~~xxxxxx~~ would be greatly enhanced. Therefore, Yamashita began an immediate campaign to get Tsuda to come in with him. Using the usual go-between method, he sent amissaries to Tsuda and asked him to call on him. According to the account given by Tsuda, Yamashita held out the bait:

"Mr. Yamashita asked me why I didn't

7.

took over the responsibility of appealing to the ACLU  
to take action in behalf of the nisei detainees.



(8)

PART VI

ACLU - SECOND HUNGER STRIKE

STOCKADE DETAINEES RELATIVES CALL AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION --  
THE STOCKADE HUNGER STRIKE.

As has been explained in chapter IV<sup>1</sup> the stockade internees had formed an organization to work for the release of the detainees in April. Both the Tsuda faction and the leaders of the underground Resegregation Group had been active in assisting them and giving them advice. However, the initiative in the matter of calling the ACLU was taken by Kiyoshi Okamoto, a transferee from Heart Mountain who had become noted in that center for his agitation against Selective Service.<sup>2</sup> Under his guidance the relatives (Sanban in) raised funds and called upon the ACLU in San Francisco for assistance. According to the accounts of detainees, they themselves did not take much part in this preliminary action, since they were confined and their mail strictly censored. They gave their consent, however. Mr. Sugimoto stated:

"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.

"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.

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<sup>1</sup>This has not been explained, but it damn well will be. I just got the data within the past few months. As I recall, I discuss this matter in far too much detail in Chapter VII - and will have to move much of it to Chapter IV.

<sup>2</sup>He was arrested and sentenced for sedition in the fall of 1944.



(9)

"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."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Kuratomi stated:

"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 outside~~."

"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."<sup>2</sup> (Negotiating)

#### FIRST VISIT OF MR. BESIG

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 a great inconvenience to the administration which was ~~busily~~ engaged in the attempt to solve the Hitomi murder.

Mr. Besig's first action was to interview the relatives of the detainees, and some of the released detainees. These meetings were arranged by Mr. Okamoto. Besig then wished to interview the men in the stockade. He was given permission by Mr. Best providing he carry on the interview in the presence of a member of the WRA Internal Security. This angered Mr. Besig exceedingly. According th Caucasian informants he quarrelled

<sup>1</sup>R; Hankey, Notes, Sept. 18, 1944, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>ibid., p. 10.

violently



with Mr. Best and with Mr. Leckliter, the Project Attorney over this matter and the day after his arrival was asked to leave the project.<sup>1</sup>

On the evening of July 12, the day Mr. Besig left, Mr. Leckliter met with the relatives of the detained men. Mr. Okamoto presided at this meeting. Okamoto asked Mr. Leckliter to explain why Mr. Besig had been "kicked out." Leckliter explained that Besig had not been kicked out but had been asked to leave since the administration could not allow anyone to interfere with the investigation of the murder.<sup>2</sup>

This visit of Mr. Besig's caused surprisingly little stir among the residents in general. ~~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."~~<sup>3</sup> ~~Mr. Oishi~~ however, ~~probably expressed a mere 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."

~~Mr.~~ <sup>Oishi</sup> added, that even if the facts were made known, <sup>(Besig)</sup> probably most Americans would not be influenced. A few, perhaps, might be.<sup>4</sup>

When, however, several weeks later, the ACLU publication (get name) appeared with its sensational denunciation of the administration at Tule Lake, entitled "Tyranny at Tule Lake," it produced an understandable reaction of appreciation and satisfaction. ~~Mr.~~ <sup>Oishi</sup> said:

<sup>1</sup> ibid., July 12, 1944, pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> ibid., July 14, 1944, pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> ibid., July 17, 1944, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> ibid., July 20, 1944, p. 1.



"The people are very much rejoiced over the American Civil Liberties Union which wrote up the strong article regarding the tyranny at Tule Lake."<sup>1</sup>

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."<sup>2</sup>

#### THE SECOND HUNGER STRIKE

On July 19, the 14 detainees remaining in the stockade went on a hunger strike.

On initiating the hunger strike, Mr. Kato 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.<sup>3</sup>
- 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.

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<sup>1</sup>ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>ibid., Aug. 17, 1944, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Mr. Kato perhaps means 'infamy' here.



- 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

When the detainees themselves were questioned as to the reasons for the strike they expressed themselves rather incoherently. Kato stated, "In the first place we wanted to know the reason why we were being held. They didn't even give us a hearing. . . (Also) 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." Both Kato and Uchida also stated that the detainees were angry because food was no longer delivered directly to the stockade but to the Internal Security office, which, they claimed, damaged the food and "it also meant we had to walk to the Internal Security Office with and Internal Security Guard to get the food." Moreover, said both of these men, the WRA was holding back <sup>their</sup> ~~there~~ mail from the colony.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Large sections of beaver or plaster board were placed around the stockade fence immediately after the Hitomi murder so that the detainees could not signal to the colony.

<sup>2</sup>R. Hankey, Notes, Sept. 15, 1944, pp. 8-9.



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Kuratom1, however, stated later that he had not been in favor of the strike, but that the majority opinion in the stockade favored some action "to let the administration realize. . . that it was about time that something should be done and the more forceful way we demonstrated it, the better it would be. I had to stay with it (concur)." Kuratom1 explained that the men had been detained so long with no hope of eventual release in sight and that the impulse to put an end to it, once and for all, was stronger than any of the specific reasons expressed in Kato's statement.<sup>1</sup>

*Mrs. Motomides brother,*

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."

Meanwhile, the hunger strike had caused considerable tension and anxiety among the appointed personnel. On the evening of July 25, Mr. Black addressed the meeting of the Community Management Division and released some information on the strike. He

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 21, 1945, pp. 2-3.



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, <sup>he stated</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> The administration, he said, was extremely anxious to release the men under conditions when they could make a favorable contribution to the population. Such a time has never come for a moment since their ~~were-on-~~ 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.<sup>2</sup>

On July 26th three more men asked to be taken to the hospital but were returned to the stockade after treatment. It was also alleged by Mr. Robertson that Washington had given Mr. Best carte blanche in handling the strike.<sup>3</sup>

On July 28th some of the relatives of the detainees, who after ten days of nervous strain were quite frantic, came to Mr. Leckliter's 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.<sup>4</sup>

#### Hunger Strike Stopped Temporarily

On July 29th all of the fasters went to the hospital and the news that the hunger strike had been broken spread rapidly

<sup>1</sup>With one exception, this was the first time any of the detainees had seen their wives or relatives since their incarceration in November and December of 1943.

<sup>2</sup>R. Hankey, Notes, July 25, 1944, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., July 26, 1944, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., July 31, 1944, p. 4.



15  
through the administrative area. Why the men broke their fast was never adequately explained either by the administration or the detainees themselves. While the strike was in progress the Japanese doctors held frequent meetings 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 they feared would bring them much unpopularity. It should also be mentioned that during the strike the members of the Internal Security continued to state that the stockade was full of food on which the strikers were secretly feeding. When the detainees were examined, however, Dr. Sleath stated that they showed symptoms of starvation.<sup>1</sup>

#### Attitude of the Camp Residents

"While the hunger strike caused great excitement among the members of the pressure group and great anxiety among the relatives, the people in general disapproved of it as a foolish and useless gesture. On the other hand, sympathy with the men because they had been interned so long was very strong. On July 30, <sup>Quinn</sup> 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."<sup>2</sup>

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

<sup>1</sup> ibid., July 25, 1944, p. 5. *no such notes*

<sup>2</sup> ibid., July 30, 1944, p. 7.



The pressure group's attempt to agitate the people by circulating this petition aroused the ire of Mr. Oishi, a very influential Japanese. Oishi was well acquainted with the violence Kira had stirred up in Manzanar Center and probably feared that if he, ~~and~~ Yamashita and the other leaders tried hard enough, they might be able to swing the people to a demonstration or ~~violence~~ violence which would cause the residents in general great hardship. Oishi became so concerned that he visited Mr. Best and obtained Mr. Best's promise that the internees would be released within a month. Oishi 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 <sup>Oishi's</sup> ~~Kira's~~ efforts were the determining factor or whether some other reason caused the instigators of the petition to change their minds is not known.

<sup>Oishi</sup> ~~Kira~~ 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."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>Oishi</sup> <sup>the persuasion</sup>  
<sup>skip sp</sup> About a week later, ~~the~~ <sup>the persuasion</sup> gave his frank opinion of ~~this pressure~~ <sup>the persuasion</sup> group. Incidentally, this was the first severe criticism of the under-cover pressure group expressed by an informant. Later, as the group gained more power, it became increasingly unpopular.

"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 (Kira) 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.

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<sup>1</sup> ibid., July 31, 1944, p. 2.



Although Oishi would not yet mention ~~Kira~~ Kira's name he now admitted that it was this "leader of the Resegregation Group" who had ~~threatened~~ made a "threat of very serious nature" after the Okamoto shooting. 1/

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1/ ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, p. 3. It was not until three months later that ~~Kira~~ Oishi admitted that the man who made the threat was Kira and that ~~he~~ had threatened to kill a Caucasian if the sentry who shot Okamoto was acquitted.

*Kira*

INSERTION ON PAGE 19

Abe added that he had heard that the petition was withdrawn because presenting ~~it was an admission~~ was an admission that the detained men were guilty. 1/ This sounds suspiciously like a cooked-up explanation from the Resegregation Group.

1 ibid, Aug. 8, 1944 p. 1



(19)

"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 must have lost the confidence of the people on account of it."<sup>1</sup>

However, the great bulk of the camp population reacted to the petition very differently than <sup>Gishi</sup> Informants who had called the strike silly and foolish, nevertheless sympathized with the striking men and all admitted signing the petition. In a situation like this no one could refuse to sign without appearing heartless. Mrs. Yamaguchi said:

"They all signed the petition in this block. ~~It came back though.~~"<sup>2</sup>

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.~~"<sup>3</sup>

*Indication  
There*  
~~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."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ~~Mr. Besig~~ was referring to the threat purported to be made by Kira that a Caucasian life would be taken for that of Okamoto. See p. ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> R. Hankey, Notes, Aug. 7, 1944, p. 4; July 31, 1944, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> ibid., Aug. 8, 1944, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> ibid., p. 3.



20.

### Hunger Strike Resumed

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. Kato'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."

Mr. Kuratomi stated that during the time the men were hospitalized none of the Internal Security members came to see them. Schmidt then "picked out four of the weakest and sent them back to the stockade first. These four boys talked to the Internal Security men and got no answer (no hope for release) so they started in to strike again. Those of us who followed had to do the same thing."<sup>1</sup>

The strikers rather dramatically nailed two red handkerchiefs to the sides of their barrack as signals to the <sup>colonists</sup> ~~relatives~~ that the strike was still on.

The administration took great pains to keep the resumption of the strike a secret. The resumption of the strike was not released to the newspapers.<sup>2</sup>

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,

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<sup>1</sup>ibid., Feb. 21, 1945, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Check this.

Talk to Dorothy.



something is going to happen." <sup>the relatives</sup> ~~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.

#### Hunger Strike Breaks

On the night of August 12, the hunger strike broke. None of the strikers was willing to discuss the subject. The only accounts available are from two Caucasians. According to their stories at midnight one of the men in the stockade became so ill that they others thought he might die. Two of the strikers, Kai and Sugimoto,<sup>1</sup> asked the Internal Security to bring a doctor. The doctor found the man in a very serious condition. Kai and Sugimoto attempted to bargain with Schmidt who is reputed to have said: "You're the guys who are keeping that old man from eating. His blood will be on your hands." Thereupon, after another short consultation Kai announced that the men were ready to quit. Four of the men were again hospitalized.<sup>2</sup> 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 <sup>any of</sup> that <sup>except the relatives</sup> the residents ~~in general~~ had the slightest intention of taking violent action in their behalf. Some Japanese believed there might be trouble if one of the men died,<sup>3</sup> but there is no

<sup>1</sup>According to Mr. Kato.

<sup>2</sup>R. Hankey, Notes, Aug. 13, 1944, p. 2; Aug. 12, 1944, pp. 2-3.

<sup>3</sup>ibid., Aug. 11, 1944, p. 1.







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21A

Peculiar Reaction of ~~XXXXX~~ Leaders of Resegregation Group to  
Release of Detainees

Attitude of the Resegregation Group

The release of the detainees was regarded with apprehension by some of the members of the Resegregation Group who anticipated, correctly, that this would render ~~the~~

Mr. Besig's proposed habeus corpus action futile. Mrs. Matsuda, whose brother was in the stockade, stated:

"We didn't think they would be let out one by one like this. Some families are telling their boys not to come out. My brother feels this way - that they could be released and that they could still bring suit. But the families think the boys should remain in the stockade." 1/

She added that the families had been sending registered letters to Mr. Besig since the 8th of August, asking for his advice on this matter but had received no answer.

Probably only some of the more fanatical members of the pressure group wanted the men to remain in the stockade so that the administration might suffer by the suit. Most of the relatives were undoubtedly glad to have their men home again.

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 any of the residents except the relatives of the striking men had the slightest intention of taking violent action in their behalf. Some Japanese believed there might be trouble if one of the men died, 2/ but there is no

1/ ibid.,

2.-ibid., Aug. 11, 1944, p. 1.



The Issue of the Issei Members of the Negotiating Committee  
who were sent to Santa Fe on June 28 (check date)

Another <sup>factor contributed to the problem was</sup> cause of hostility between the two factions, <sup>this</sup> was the jealous rivalry between them to effect the return of the members of the Negotiating Committee who had been sent to Santa Fe. <sup>although</sup> This was another bid for prestige ~~which~~ <sup>but</sup> was explained by members of both factions as a necessary step prior to the resignation of the Negotiating Committee.

(By this time the N. C. was regarded as extinct by everybody but the N. C.) The matter came to nothing, chiefly because many of the internees were being sent to Crystal City to join their families and didn't want to come back to ~~San~~ Tule Lake. <sup>Both factions had been bitterly under each other's feet for some time.</sup> When the families left Tule

Lake, the night of October 20, <sup>on</sup> both factions came out <sup>in full force</sup> in full force to give them an elaborate farewell.

Kimura, a black belt judo man and great friend of Kuratomi's, <sup>chose</sup> picked this occasion to try to pick a fight with Uchida, leader of the Resegregationists Young Men's Organization. <sup>2</sup> Uchida backed down and lost great face.

From this moment on, however, open ~~war~~ hostilities were declared. The ~~Ran~~ homes of the Resegregationist leaders were guarded by groups of Young Men and the Resegregationists in general trembled in their shoes. <sup>Long warfare</sup>

The residents on the whole were quite indifferent on the matter of bringing them back from Santa Fe. ~~Nobody~~ No informant not a member of the pressure group brought up the subject. When asked they would say it was nice if the men could be brought back to T. Lake but implied that it was not their affair.

- 1) A black belt man in uniform the very highest rank. and this man is held by few men.
- 2) This young man organized the whole thing from day 1.

core community  
 I don't know if this is the case



indication that anyone with the <sup>possible</sup> 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."<sup>1</sup>

After the strike had stopped, an intelligent nisei girl stated that nobody had been <sup>excited</sup> ~~much concerned~~ over the hunger strike. If a man had died, the feeling might have been different."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>Oishi</sup> 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~~s~~ but there wouldn't have been a demonstration."

On the threats of the relatives, <sup>Oishi</sup> ~~he~~ 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."<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Fujimoto, a ~~gentle~~ conservative woman, said:

"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."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ibid., Aug. 14, 1944, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>ibid., Aug. 16, 1944, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>ibid., Aug. 14, 1944, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>ibid., Aug. 19, 1944, p. 2.

Does this  
check with  
AF PH?  
not  
explain  
Kai and  
whole thing  
must clear



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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."<sup>1</sup>

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."<sup>2</sup>

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."<sup>3</sup>

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,<sup>4</sup> did not have much effect on the people. The detainees had already lost almost all of their prestige and, except for a <sup>comparatively</sup> small group of loyal supporters, all of their hold as leaders. They had become objects of pity rather than respect. *clear up Casey. Sp.*

#### VISIT OF THE SPANISH CONSUL

On July 28, Captain Antonio Martin, the vice Spanish Consul visited the project. The prospect of his arrival produced scarcely a ripple of interest among the ordinary resident. The people had come to the conclusion that either the Spanish Consul could not help them or did not desire to help them. Informants did not

<sup>1</sup>ibid., p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>ibid., Aug. 24, 1944, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>ibid., Aug. 30, 1944, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>J. Bigelow, "History of Area B at Tule Lake," p. 8.

*Further why? = ?*  
*then the fear of R & G was not correct*

*relation to hunger strike?*



Mr. Oishi 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 (here Oishi refers to the agitation of the pressure group, not to camp-wide agitation or unrest), but there wouldn't have been a demonstration.

~~On the threats of the relatives Oishi 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."~~

Statements from many informants indicate that Oishi had exaggerated the potential trouble which the pressure group attempted to stir up with its petition/ and agitation. He probably realized this himself by this time and said of the threats of the relatives:

"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." 1/

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. The administration deliberately released Kai and Kuratomi first, implying by this that they were men of no importance and hoping that this would diminish their ~~prestige~~ prestige. 2/ This gesture was not necessary, however, for Kai and Kuratomi had already lost almost all of the general prestige they had enjoyed in October and November and the detainees in general had become objects of pity rather than respect. Nevertheless,

*Vibid, Aug 14, 1944, p. 4.*

*2) Y. Bigelow, "History of the Detainees," p. 8.*



they still had a comparatively small group of loyal supporters and were ambitious men. For this reason, they were a potential threat to the Resegregation Group leaders.

VISIT OF THE SPANISH CONSUL

While the first part of the July hunger strike was in progress, Captain Antonio Martin, the vice Spanish Consul visited the project. The prospect of his arrival produced scarcely a ripple of interest among the ordinary residents. The people had come to the conclusion that either the Spanish Consul could not help them or did not desire to help them. Informants did not

voluntarily comment upon his coming. When the subject was introduced into conversations the following attitudes were given:

An intelligent nisei man who took genuine interest in camp affairs, said:

"This is the idea the people have. Up to now the Spanish Consul hasn't been able to do anything. He hasn't been able to help the nisei. The people have lost interest."<sup>1</sup>

*Kino, the reported gang leader*  
Mr. ~~Wakayama~~, an elder nisei said:

"I don't think they have much confidence in him. He is a representative of a small country - especially Spain."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Yamashita said:

"People on the whole are very indifferent."<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Yamashita added that the people had lost confidence in the consul chiefly because he had been unable to do anything about the stockade situation.

In preparation for the visit of the Consul, the administration requested the residents to select delegates to confer with him. Though there was no enthusiasm, most blocks elected the representatives. The general attitude of the colonists is fairly well pictured by the following three statements:

Miss Doi said:

*Add that members of P. G. were not found on the com.*  
"According to a man I know, when they were assigned as representatives to see the Spanish Consul one man said it was probably to try to force some kind of committee (a permanent representative body), since otherwise nobody would want to serve on it. But we really need some kind of a committee here. We need someone who can go to the administration."<sup>4</sup>

*On the people).*  
Mr. ~~Doi~~ *Doi* said:

"It would seem to me that even if they do stay in office, if the people see anything nasty going on, they can demand their resignation."<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Okamoto said:

<sup>1</sup>R. Hankey, Notes, July 30, 1944, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>ibid., p. 10.

<sup>3</sup>ibid., July 28, 1944, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, pp. 1-2.

<sup>5</sup>ibid., p. 3.



The leaders of the pressure group, however, viewed the selection of this committee with great alarm. Had they been able to obtain positions on it and stand as representatives of the Tule Lake residents before the Consul who could forward their statements to the Japanese Government they would have jumped at the chance. Since, however, they had no hope of getting on the representative body, they regarded the body as an obstruction to their plans, a group of men holding positions which the pressure group ought to occupy. ~~Mr. Yamashita~~ Of course, they did not verbalize ~~this~~ this. Instead, Mr. Yamashita stated that the selection of this body to see the Consul was a nefarious plot on the part of the administration to put a representative body ~~over the~~ over the people against their will. He also accused the ex-members of the Coordinating Committee of conniving with the

A4 1-2 administration to bring this about.1/

While the pressure group did all in its power to inhibit the selection of the Spanish Consul Committee, their efforts as a whole had little effect on the residents. The general attitude of the colonists is fairly well pictured in the following three statements:

Miss Doi said:

"One man said it (the administration) was probably trying to force some kind of committee (a permanent representative body). But we really need some kind of a committee here. We need someone who can go to the administration." 2/

Mr. Oishi said:

"It would seem to me that even if they do stay in office, if the people see anything nasty going on, they can demand their resignation." 3/

Mr. Okamoto said:

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1/ ibid., Aug. 4, 1944, pp. 1-2.  
2/ ibid., Aug. 7, 1944, pp. 1-2.  
3/ ibid., p. 3.



"I think almost every block had a representative. We failed at first too. But when we saw that the Consul was really coming, people felt they must have a delegate."<sup>1</sup>

The leaders of the pressure group, however, viewed the selection of this committee with great alarm. Mr. Yamashita stated that it was a nefarious plot on the part of the administration to put a representative body over the people against their will. He also accused the ex-members of the Co-ordinating Committee of conniving with the administration to bring this about.<sup>2</sup> While the pressure group undoubtedly did as much as possible to inhibit the selection of the Spanish Consul Committee, their efforts had little effect on the residents.

When Captain Martin arrived he attempted to plead the cause of the detainees who were then near the end of the July hunger strike. It is said that Mr. Best told the Consul that he could not release the men until the colony was in a normal condition. At that point the striking men went to the hospital and it was believed that the strike was over. Martin left the camp with that impression.<sup>3</sup> A few days later the strike was resumed. As for the other grievances brought to Captain Martin at this time, no informant showed any interest in them. It is probable that the committee compiled the list without much assistance from the block residents. <sup>Martin</sup> He was questioned on the Renunciation of Citizenship Bill and replied that if nisei renounced their American Citizenship they would be regarded as Japanese nationals. The committee complained about the housing facilities, requested improvement in the living conditions and asked his help on the stockade situation.

<sup>1</sup> ibid., Aug. 8, 1944, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> ibid., Aug. 4, 1944, pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> ibid., July 30, 1944, p. 1. Newell Star.

→ This is proper note 3.



Another significant question concerned which authority had the responsibility for the lives of the residents, the WRA, the police force, or the residents themselves.<sup>1</sup> This question was a result of the Hitomi murder.

SECOND VISIT OF MR. BESIG

2  
Mr. Besig returned to the project in the latter part of July, partly in the capacity of attorney for one of the cases before the Appeals Board<sup>1</sup> and partly to resume his investigation of the stockade situation. The latter issue had, however, lost a great deal of its point since the men were released. On this visit Mr. Besig was accompanied by a member of the Internal Security in all his contacts relating to the stockade. Moreover, he was allowed to visit only those evacuees whom he had talked with on his previous visit.<sup>2</sup>

*This showed  
some anxiety*  
The release of the detainees was regarded with apprehension by some of the members of the pressure group who anticipated, correctly, that this would render the proposed habeas corpus action futile. Mrs. Matsuda stated:

"We didn't think they would be let out one by one like this. Some families are telling their boys not to come out. My brother feels this way - that they could be released and that they could still bring suit. But the families think the boys should remain in the stockade."<sup>3</sup>

She added that the families had been sending registered letters to Mr. Besig since the 8th of August, asking for his advice on this matter but had received no answers. Probably only the pressure group wanted the men to remain in the stockade

<sup>1</sup>The Appeals Board was set up to review the cases of persons who wished to appeal their segregation in Tule Lake. The hearings made very little impression on the residents.

<sup>2</sup>R. Hankey, Notes, July 30, 1944, p. 1; July 31, 1944, p. 1.

at the party," the Japanese replied, "We didn't say anything." 1/

On September 6, George Kuratomi was picked up and questioned. After his questioning he was told to tell Rev. Kai, Messrs. Tsuda, Ono, Oseto and Mrs. <sup>Matsuda</sup> ~~Matsuda~~ and one other man to "get ready to be indicted for conspiracy to murder Hitomi." 2/ This proposed indictment threatened some of the important leaders from both the rivals' factions, Kai, Kuratomi and Tsuda from one side and ~~Ono~~ Ono, Oseto and Mrs. Matsuda from the other.

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1/ R. Hankey, Notes, Sept. 7, 1944, p. 3.  
2/ ibid., Sept. 11, 1944, p. 10.



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On September 6, George Kuratomi was picked up and questioned. After his questioning, he was told to tell Reverend Kai, Messrs. Tsuda, Ono, Oseto, Mrs. Matsuda and one other man to "get ready to be indicted for conspiracy to murder Hitomi."<sup>2</sup> Because of this threatened indictment, a serious disagreement took place between Mr. Kuratomi and the Resegregation Group leaders. Kuratomi decided to initiate action which would bring a lawyer to the aid of the accused. Accordingly, he wrote a letter to Mr. Besig, explaining that indictment was threatened and requesting that Mr. Besig secure the services of the best available criminal lawyer. Kuratomi induced all the threatened people to sign this letter. However, in the threatened group were Ono<sup>3</sup> and several other strong members of the Resegregation Group and Tsuda, toward whom the Resegregation leaders were very hostile. Having signed the letter, the Resegregationists reconsidered and decided that they "wouldn't have their signatures alongside of Mr. Tsuda's." Thereupon, they called upon Mr. Kuratomi and asked him to tear up the letter. Before he tore it up, however, they asked for a copy which they could use to write to Besig and so avoid having their names appear beside Mr. Tsuda's. Kuratomi gave them a copy. Ono had the letter copied and then came back and asked Kuratomi to sign it. Kuratomi became provoked and said, "I may be a fool, but I'm not going to sign that letter that I just typed out." Consequently, the threatened members of the Resegregation Group sent in one letter while Kuratomi, Kai and Tsuda sent another.<sup>4</sup>

1. R. Hankey, Notes, September 7, 1944, p. 3.

2. Ibid., September 11, 1944, p. 10.

3. ~~Ono~~, Ono, a Postonite, ~~I hear~~, also deserves a history. This will come in Part III - but might be briefly reviewed here.

4. Ibid., March 6, 1945, p. 4.



followers. This was done with great secrecy and caution. The Resegregation Group, however, saw to it that rumors of the consolidation of this "dangerous group" reached the ears of the administration. It was supposed to be called the Dai Nippon Seinen-dan and many residents believed in its existence. Mr. <sup>Oishi</sup> said:

"Kai, Kuratomi, Mori and Tsuda are behind the Dai Nippon Seinen-dan. I've been hearing that they've been organizing it. Ten days ago they claimed they had 100 members."<sup>1</sup>

That this group was formally organized is dubious. That Kai and Kuratomi headed a strong informal organization there can be no doubt. It is also very probable that during this period and up to December when the Department of Justice arrived on the scene, the administration looked favorably upon the antipathy between the two groups, hoping that they would inhibit each other and that neither would grow too strong.

No indictments were ever made. Nor was any information released on why the action had been contemplated or why it was suddenly dropped. Kuratomi carried on a correspondence with Mr. Besig and sent him 500 dollars as a retainer. By September 29 the matter was closed, for by that time it was apparent that the authorities did not intend to take any action.

The rumor that the indictments were about to be made did not spread through the camp as rapidly as might be expected. Most informants voiced the opinion that they believed the persons accused had nothing to do with the murder. No one appeared very much disturbed that a possible injustice might be done. A few conservatives, who lived in the same block as one of the accused, seemed

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1. Ibid., October 16, 1944, p. 5.



relieved to think that the authorities had thrown a scare into the leaders of the Resegregation Group. On the other hand, though ~~these~~ Kai and Kuratomi were not popular with the general residents, almost every informant stated that in their opinion, they could have had nothing to do with the murder. Oishi stated:

relieved to think that the authorities had thrown a scare into the Resegregation Group. <sup>Oishi</sup> stated:

"I think they (the authorities) are just trying to get something on somebody. . . . They may use third degree methods if they cannot get information any other way just so they can find somebody and say they did it."<sup>1</sup>

Yamaguchi was quite curious over the rumor of arrests, but stated that the people didn't know what it was all about.<sup>2</sup> Several other informants showed the same reaction, expressed no opinion, but wanted to know the details of the accusation and who was going to be taken. Mr. Okamoto said:

"I don't think that Kai and Kuratomi could have been connected with that murder case."<sup>2-a</sup>

On September 19, when the news had been abroad for almost two weeks, Mr. <sup>Oishi</sup> said:

"The people are paying no attention to it. They are letting it go from one ear to the other. I think they'll make fools of themselves if they arrest those men."<sup>3</sup>

A week later he stated:

"If they (Kai, Kuratomi and Tsuda) are arrested as the ones who engineered the murder, I think the administration will make a laughing stock out of themselves."<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Yamashita, who must have been one of the men who refused Kuratomi the money for an attorney, made the following interesting statement:

"I think Mr. Kuratomi spread out the rumor and everybody got worried very much. I told them if they are indicted they will have plenty of time. First of all, they will be given a summons. Even if they are indicted they will be released immediately. After they are released, they can sue against Laderer (District Attorney of Modoc County) and the administration for indicting innocent people.

1. Ibid., September 8, 1944, p. 2.
2. Ibid., September 11, 1944, p. 7.
- 2-a. Ibid., September 15, 1944, p. 2.
3. Ibid., September 19, 1944, p. 1.
4. Ibid., September 25, 1944, p. 2.



"If I were in their position I would not have hired a lawyer because I know from my wise thinking that they will not send out a summons."<sup>1</sup>

The Project to Return the Issei Negotiating Committee Members from Santa Fe

On the release of the nisei stockade detainees, in late August, their first expressed path of action was to obtain the return of those stockade detainees accused of agitation in the November, 1943 incident who had been sent to Santa Fe in July of 1944. Having thus brought back all the members of the Negotiating Committee to Tule Lake, the entire body, nisei and issei, would then proceed to resign. By this time the Negotiating Committee was regarded as an extinct body by most of the colonists. The men who composed the body, however, took themselves very seriously and regarded, or preferred to regard this matter of formal resignation ~~very seriously~~ as a matter of great importance. Their chief contention was that since they, as nisei, had been released unconditionally, the internment of the issei members of the Negotiating Committee implied that they had committed a wrong for which they were being punished. The nisei members remaining in Tule Lake could not resign without completely clearing the names of the interned issei. To do so would be to show a reprehensible lack of obligation or giri.

In this matter, however, two groups competed against each other: on the one hand, Kai and Kuratomi and Sugimoto<sup>2</sup> worked as a committee, and Kato worked separately as a representative of the Resegregation Group. Kuratomi announced his intention of devoting himself to this cause soon after his release from the stockade, stating that

1. Ibid., September 21, 1944, p. 3.

2. Sugimoto gets his description in Part I.

is described



the people in camp were very anxious to have the men brought back from Santa Fe.

"Our (Nisei) release is unconditional. They (Issei) were sent to Santa Fe just because they were aliens.

"The people have a very firm idea that the issei sent to Santa Fe are just as innocent as the nisei released outright."

Kuratomi ended by saying that if this matter were not cleared up there would be no peace in camp.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Kato, who was now an enthusiastic member of the Resegregation Group expressed similar sentiments:

*Des. the Kato members*  
"We (Negotiating Committee) will not resign even if we go back to Japan unless the 26 men are returned from Santa Fe. If they return our job is over and we will present our mass resignation at once. If we resign now the people will regard us as cowards and our name will be dirt.<sup>2</sup>

"If Mr. Best does not see me (on this matter) the camp will be in an uproar."<sup>2</sup>

~~Both Kato and Kuratomi greatly exaggerated the desire of the residents to have the men returned from Santa Fe.~~

Both the Kuratomi faction and the Resegregation Group faction, represented by Kato, had several meetings with Mr. Best in which *achieve the return. They made inquiries to Mr. Best upon the matter.* they attempted to get him to return the issei members of the Negotiating Committee to Tule Lake. However, the *Issei* internees did not wish to return to Tule Lake, having been promised reunion with their families in Crystal City, the Department of Justice Internment camp for families. Consequently, the efforts of the two factions were expended in vain. Preparations for the family reunions went forward despite letters written by Kato to the Santa Fe detainees pointing out their responsibility to come back to Tule Lake "because the Negotiating Committee can't resign until this matter is settled."

1. Ibid., September 18, 1944, pp. 7-8.

2. Ibid., September 29, 1944, p. 4.



*I think  
not this  
Sooner  
later  
yes!*

It should be mentioned that at one of the conferences Kato had with Mr. Best, Mr. Best allegedly told him that the Department of Justice was going to take over the camp in 60 days and that his group might as well give up their agitation since they would soon be under Justice and possess the internee status they had so long desired. Kato carried this information back to the Resegregation Group, where it was received with much satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> The Resegregation Group thereupon eagerly anticipated the advent of the Department of Justice. On several occasions, its leaders remarked that they were postponing certain of their plans until Justice took over.

#### Attitude of the People Regarding the Return of the Internees

In spite of the contentions of both interested factions, the residents did not particularly care whether the internees were brought back or not. Many informants did not even know that the effort was being carried on. When asked, informants usually stated that they thought it was right to try to bring them back. Still, none of them would have taken any action. Mr. Yamaguchi said:

"We all sympathize with the families of those people. But I don't think the people will support (effort to get them back) by demonstrating."<sup>2</sup>

When the families finally left for Crystal City on the night of November 20, their leavetaking was accompanied by an extremely interesting incident which will be described later.

#### Attitudes toward Renunciation of Citizenship - Sept. 19 to Oct. 5.

Throughout this period, the prospect of renunciation of

1. Ibid., October 16, 1944, pp. 1-2.

2. Ibid., October 27, 1944, p. 5.



Group strengthened by addition of experienced agitators

In March, this comparatively small group of extremely disgruntled persons was augmented and greatly strengthened by the addition of a number of men who entered the camp with the Manzanar segregees and by a number of parolees released from Santa Fe. 1 > ~~The~~ One of these men was Mr. Yamashita, a parolee from Santa Fe, who is reputed to ~~have~~ ~~introduced~~ ~~into~~ ~~the~~ ~~group~~ ~~a~~ ~~clique~~ ~~of~~ ~~segregates~~ ~~from~~ ~~Poston~~ ~~who~~ ~~had~~ ~~assisted~~ ~~Yamashita~~ ~~in~~ ~~his~~ ~~agitating~~ ~~activities~~ ~~in~~ ~~that~~ ~~center~~. Another leader, who, however, kept himself well in the background was Mr. Kira from Manzanar.

(Give Yamashita case history here.) ?

(Give Kira case history here.) ?

Mr. Kira took a very active part in stirring up the violence during the Manzanar riot which culminated in the shooting ~~of~~ ~~two~~ ~~evacuees~~ and death of two (?) evacuees by the military. His complicity in this agitation never became known to the authorities. ~~He~~ An excellent informant stated that Kira had been leader of a ~~gang~~ ~~of~~ ~~toughs~~ in Terminal and Island before evacuation, that he had maintained a similar gang in Manzanar. There are numerous implications that he established the same type of terroristic organization in Tule Lake.

These new leaders of the underground group may be termed experienced agitators. In the Assembly Centers and Relocation Centers where these men had previously resided, they had become noted for their ~~radicalism~~, for their violent anti-American sentiments and for their consummate ability to involve themselves in any agitating movement. They were welcomed with open arms by the pressure group and soon assumed a powerful behind-the

*1. Department A Justice Admin Internment Camp*



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for the very good reason that the Washinton authorities  
were themselves not able to agree on a policy for the canter.