

## TANFORAN

### Population and Its Composition

"In the words of the Race Tracks Joke, There is just one race at Tanforan--the Japanese Race." \*

Tanforan, a city which was built and populated within a few short months, was composed of over 7,000 people of the Japanese Race. Both citizens and aliens were included. The first group of Japanese was moved in on April 28, 1942 and when induction was completed in the early part of May, there were 7,759 residents living in the Tanforan Assembly Center, an area of 118 acres. The residents of this Center came from different parts of the San Francisco Bay Area including the following cities: San Francisco, San Mateo, Oakland, Belmont, Palo Alto, Alameda, Vallejo, San Jose, San Leandro, Eden, Berkeley, Richmond, Centerville, Hayward, Irvington, Warm Springs, Newark and a few other small towns. Of the nearly 8,000 people at Tanforan, there were more than 60 per cent who were citizens and the median age groups fell in the late teens. There were approximately 60 per cent Protestant, 30 per cent Buddhist and 10 per cent without any special religion. 10% farmers - Rest Urbanites, laborers, merchants, professional.

During the four months stay at Tanforan a number of babies were born and a number of persons have died which balanced the account quite evenly. A few of the families and members of the families were transferred either through order by the WCCA, such as in professional cases, while a number were transferred through the request of the transferring parties to other Assembly Centers of other Relocation Centers.

\* Taken from San Francisco News, August 21, 1942



A few of the men who were interned by the FBI prior to the evacuation were released and returned to the Assembly Centers. This group was very small. Fourteen of the men left to work in the Sugar Beet Fields on work furloughs. These men were promised that they would be able to rejoin their families at the termination of their work or to be given the choice of any relocation center when they wished to join the main groups.

### Ecology *Surroundings, Environment*

The Tanforan Assembly Center was a Race Track converted into an emergency concentration camp. There was a barbed wire fence built on the perimeter of the Race Track Proper with Guard Towers placed at convenient distances with armed military police on guard 24 hours a day. The military police camp was adjacent to the Administration Offices on the outside of the Assembly Center and was located at the Southwest corner of the Race Tracks. On the western boundary, the highway, El Camino Real, ran parallel to the fence and the passing autoists would slow down and watch with curiosity, the assembled Japanese residents. On the northern boundary lies the vacant lots which had been formally used for grazing and some construction work. On the eastern side were the railroad tracks and the street car line on which the San Francisco <sup>San Mateo</sup> Commuter ran a number of times daily reminding the residents of their normal community life on the outside. (Many San Franciscans have sighed with the remark, "So close and yet so far") On the southern side of the Race Tracks were the residential homes of the caucasian population of San Bruno and San Bruno, a small off-the-highway town.



The official postoffice of the Assembly Center was at San Bruno. Part of the housing facilities were converted horse stables and in addition to the horse stables there were 135 barracks, all uniform in size and appearance, each 20' x 100'. These converted horse stables and new barracks were partitioned into rooms for each family unit. There were 19 mess halls, 18 shower buildings, 16 latrines (men and women separate), 3 laundry buildings and 5 infirmary buildings which were used for the hospital--clinic, optometry, dental, maternity and warehouse for hospital supplies. One of the hospital buildings was used as an infirmary to house bed-ridden patients. The stables were converted into so-called, 2-room "apartments", finished inside with a coat of white wash which did not cover the entire walls and ceilings and the unanimous complaint of those that had to live in the converted stables, was that it "smelled." Those that resided in the new barracks had ply wood partitions which were about 8' high but which did not reach to the roof, leaving an open space between each partitioned room which prevented privacy and noise for the individual families. A light in the end room would disturb the whole barrack, since there were 5 rooms in each barrack.

Those evacuees who arrived in the few last groups had to live in very crowded quarters, for the new barracks which were 100' long were partitioned into 10 apartments because of lack of housing facilities. This meant that some families were so crowded that it became almost impossible to live normally or to have any sort of home life.

Towards the end of the 4 month's period a number of vacancies



occurred because a number of families were transferred or students left for schools, or because of men going out into private employment in the free zone.

The Tanforan Assembly Center was picturesque because in the center of the race track there was a large lake with a fountain in the middle. Around this lake were constructed baseball diamonds, golf course, and a resemblance of a formal garden with shrubberies and flowers.

The Administration area had the club house where jockeys slept in the former facing days, and huge dining hall and bar which were converted into an auditorium and office for the statistical department, respectively. The offices of the Tanforan Race Tracks were used as the Administration offices which were occupied by the Center Manager and his staff. Next to the offices was a huge grandstand capable of seating 10,000 people. Under the grand stand was a huge hall which was used during the first month as the men's dormitory for bachelors. This was formally the game room where people placed their bets. The unsanitary conditions arising from crowding over 400 men in a single hall without proper ventilation caused the San Mateo County Health Inspectors to condemn it for further dormitory use. It was converted into a high school, which was at its very best, a make-shift affair because of its openness and unhealthful atmosphere. The ground floor of the Grandstand was converted into the main mess hall in which the residents were fed during the first few weeks.

The Race track which had been <sup>damaged</sup> confirmed to be imported from Kentucky was kept intact and an effort was made to keep it protected. On warm clear evenings, the race track serves as 'Lovers' Lane' for many romantic minded nisei and issei as well. In the early



mornings, the athletically inclined individuals exercised by running around the tracks. This activity became one of the most popular past times for Tanforanites who wished to get a little exercise.

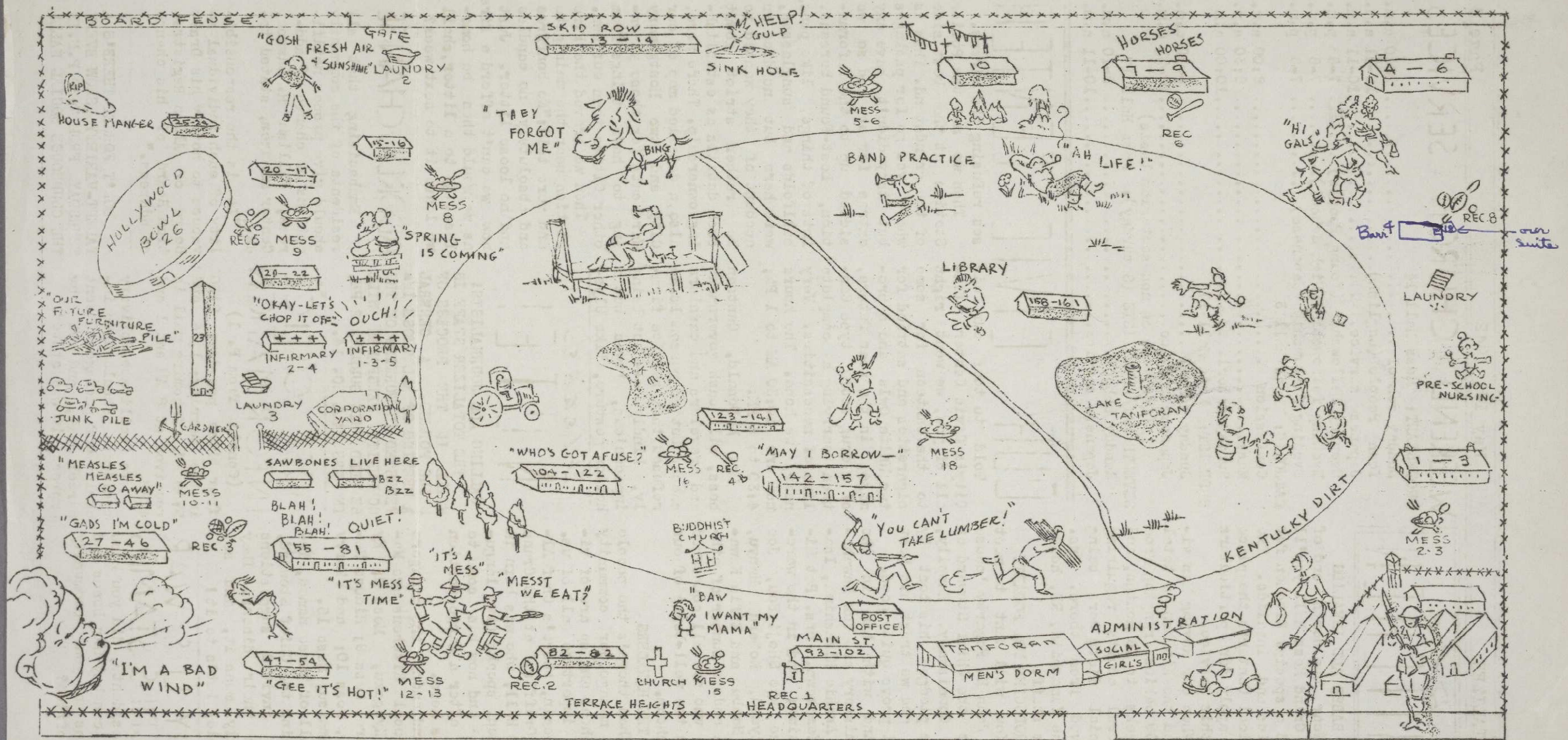
General description of the entire Tanforan Assembly Center from the cartoonist's point of view will be attached.

Additional note on population: On May 29, the population of Tanforan was officially released as 7,796\* by George A Greene, Chief, of the Service Section. At the end there was a population of 7,759\*.

\*7,796--Totalizer, Tanforan, No. 2 Page 1 May 23.

\*7,759--San Francisco News, August 21, 1942.





UNOFFICIAL MAP of Tanforan ASSEMBLY CENTER



## The KITCHEN

### FOR BABES AND INVALIDS

Near the north end of the Grand Mess Hall you'll find a special Kitchen for babies and invalids. The Medical Center's the place to apply for particulars on this service.

When our Roving Man visited the Kitchen, a total of 99 babies, ranging from 2 weeks to 18 months, and several adults requiring special diets were being served from there. Mrs. Harue Yamashita, RN, heads this staff.

### INTRODUCING MR. FOGARTY

You will want to meet Mr. John E. Fogarty 'cause he's the Chief Steward of our Commissary. Happily, he's pledged his best by us; and we trust his best will prove quite good.

And with him in the Commissary are Yuk Kawahara, Archie Hirashima, Isamu Yamakawa, Mrs. Pat Hirashima; and in the warehouse are Shoji Bou, Joe Ichiyasu, Noboru Hanyu, Sim Nambu and Effie Kawahara and a number of others who are all concerned with the well-being of our Kitchens.

### AND THE MANAGERS

Then there's the people who manage our community Kitchens and so are of vital import to all of us. To begin, there's Chef Alvin Griffis, at the Grand Mess Hall, who was born in Sweden, speaks five languages and now has come to look after a large portion of us here.

And among the managers of local Kitchens are Marri Kyogoku, Mess 8; Ky Nomura, Mess 9; Hideso Neishi, Mess 10; and Harry Korematsu, Mess 15.

All of those named, including the Chief Steward, have invited suggestions from their diners. They really mean it, and so, people, let's do it!

## BUY U.S. WAR BONDS STAMPS

Residents, did you know you can buy War Bonds and stamps at your community postoffice?

## WEEKEND CHURCH SERVICES

### PROTESTANT: Mess Hall 14

Sunday school..... 9-10 a.m.  
Young People (English)..... 10-11 a.m.  
Japanese service..... 10-11 a.m.  
Evening fellowship (Young People)..... 7-8 p.m.  
Evening fellowship (High School)..... 7-8 p.m.  
Evening fellowship (Japanese)..... 7-8 p.m.

### CATHOLIC: Mess Hall 3

Confession..... 8:00 a.m.  
Mass..... 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday school..... 10:00 a.m.

### BUDDHIST: Mess Hall 17

Sunday school..... 9-10 a.m.  
Japanese service..... 10-11 a.m.  
(Services on non-sectarian basis)

### SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS (Saturday): Mess Hall 17

Sunday school..... 9-10 a.m.  
Japanese service..... 10-11 a.m.

## OUR CIVIC CENTER

Told to tour our fair City's Civic Center, like all of you, we went right to the Canteen for some cigarettes and settled for two White Owls and a promise, in the near future, of a drug store type Canteen carrying a complete line of necessities. Very near, we hope. The hours now are 10:30 AM to 1 PM; 4:30 to 6 PM.

Mr. McDonald, Canteen boss, will cash government and travelers and cashiers checks but no personals. We refused this service firmly, kindly --- but being impecunious, 'twas but a hollow gesture, like Ulys-

ses refusing the sirens.

Then we met the Police Station at the best side of the grandstand. This is where you go for packages but they didn't have any extras for us and so we sidled up to the Information, Lost-Found bureaus. Lots of things, like pens, billfolds and sunglasses, were here but no dice on account of they wanted to be rather strict about such details as establishing ownership. There were, also, a detailed map of our City and two Montgomery Ward cats for those yearning to have things from other Cities than our own.

Then we braved the Fire Station near the main gate and were told: "No bonfires and absolutely no candles and no loose litter. Just now we can't afford a fire as we would then be homeless. As to a litter, shall we leave it to next week?"

## ADDRESS CHANGE

Emphasizing that all residents of the community should give proper notifications of change of address, William R. Lawson, Center manager, stated today:

"It is the responsibility of each individual evacuee to notify his Draft Board or Alien Registration Board of his change of address."

DON'T FORGET THERE'S A TALENT-VARIETY SHOW EVERY THURSDAY FROM 7:30 P.M. IN THE CLUBHOUSE SOCIAL HALL!

## PLEASE NOTE!

CALLING ALL JOURNALISTS! THE TOTALIZER STAFF IS STILL IN THE PROCESS OF BEING FORMED. A GENERAL MEETING OF ALL THOSE INTERESTED IN WORKING ON THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER WILL BE HELD THIS SUNDAY, 2 PM, IN MESS HALL NO. 14.

## POST OFFICE INFORMATION

(Cont'd. from P. 1)

four times per day: 8:30 in the morning; 1, 4 and 5:30 PM. Incoming mail is received at 8 AM and 1 and 4 PM.

To facilitate delivery residents should have incoming COD packages sent parcel post, and not by express, it was stated.



## TANFORAN ADMINISTRATION

Formal Organization and the Functions of  
Various Divisions

The head of the Tanforan Assembly Center is normally the center manager. Under the Center Manager the following five main divisions comprise the administrative organization:

1. Service
2. Works and Maintenance
3. Mess and Lodging
4. Finance
5. Supply

Service

In the Service Division falls the various services which directly concern the residents of the Center as the following:

- a. The Hospital
- b. Recreation
- c. Religious Activities
- d. Social Welfare
- e. Legal Aid
- f. Education
- g. Housing Adjustments (in the first few weeks prior to the organization of the Housing Headquarters)
- h. Information
1. Lost and Found
- j. Special Permits to leave the Center and to receive visitors
- k. Postal Service



- 1. Newspaper
- m. Basic Clothing

Works and Maintenance

- a. Janitorial Service
- b. Plumbing
- c. Corporation Yard
- d. Fire Department
- e. Police Department
- f. Trucks and Motor Cars
- g. Street Cleaning
- h. Garbage Detail
- i. Public Works such as:
  - 1. Landscaping
  - 2. Construction
  - 3. Carpentry
  - 4. Drafting
  - 5. Gardening
  - 6. Street Repairing

Mess and Lodging

- a. Commissary
- b. Butcher
- c. Mess Halls
- d. Delivery of Foodstuffs
- e. Housing and Toilet Supplies
- f. Chefs



g. House Managers

Finance

a. Requisitioning

b. Accounting

c. Inventory

d. Auditing\*

e. Purchasing

f. Payrolls

Supply

The entire stock of supplies used by departments and sections must be first received by the Supply Department and any new requisitions for supplies must be approved by this division.

a. Warehouse

b. Mimeographing - bulletins, reports, information sheets,  
weekly newspaper

Most of the employees of the Tanforan Assembly Center who were members of the Caucasian Administrative Staff were from the W.P.A. and the system used as far as classification of jobs, was under the W.P.A. setup. Heading each one of these above mentioned divisions and their sub-divisions was a Caucasian-appointed staff member. Those that actually did the work were Japanese evacuees, both citizens and aliens, who were employed by the W.C.C.A. under the direct supervision of the Caucasian Administrators respectively.

\* The officers from the W.C.C.A. Headquarters in San Francisco supervised and performed the auditing of all Center accounts.



In other words, the skeleton administrative personnel was comprised of Caucasian members employed by the W.C.C.A. with good salaries. The evacuees were also employed by the W.C.C.A., but their rate of pay for the work performed was under three classifications: namely,

Unskilled	at	\$ 8.00
Skilled	at	\$12.00
Professional and Technical	at	\$16.00 monthly

The Caucasian Administrative Staff was not complete at the beginning of the Tanforan Assembly Center, The Recreation Head and the Education Head as well as the Employment Head did not join the Staff until two or three weeks after the Center had started. A number of changes did occur during the four months' stay in the Administrative Staff. Some were pulled away by more lucrative offers, some were unsatisfactory and were ousted for inefficiency and incompetency, and some were transferred for reasons unknown.

Note: The functions of the Administrative divisions are outlined in the preliminary report of the first month at Tanforan by Shibutani, Najima, and Shibutani.

#### Administrative Personalities

Mr. William R. Lawson, who was the State Administrator of the W.P.A. of Northern California, was the first Center Manager. He was an elderly gentleman in his late fifties who was well known for his political activities and for his leadership in the W.P.A. program. It was said of him that he was a practical and tactful politician. He was a mild-mannered individual with a willing <sup>ear</sup> ~~air~~ to suggestions and criticisms which made him rather well-liked by both Caucasian and Evacuee employees. He did not step on anyone's toes



but rather tried to please everyone which resulted in lack of efficiency and lack of forcefulness in his policies. He was the Center Manager until June 4 at which time he was called back to his former position as W.P.A. head in San Francisco.

Mr. Frank E. Davis was the Assistant Manager and took his place as Center Manager. Frank E. Davis was a man in his 50's who had a very solemn appearance at all times. He was a gruff individual with no showmanship nor desire for popularity. It was claimed of him that neither Caucasian employees nor Japanese evacuees liked him. Mr. Davis was the butt of much criticism for his uncooperative attitude and for his indifference, and apathetic interest towards the evacuees. Since June 4 up until September, Mr. Davis held only one Administrative Staff meeting. In contrast to Mr. Davis, the first Center Manager, Mr. Lawson held an Administrative Staff meeting every single day except Saturday and Sunday at 5:00 P.M. which brought about better relationship between the different divisions and between the staff workers. It seemed that no one intimately got to know Mr. Davis for he kept to himself most of the time and all his Administrative relationships with his employees were in a very businesslike manner. To put it mildly an appropriate phrase often said about Mr. Davis was "He's a Rat". Mr. Davis was a good one for passing-the-buck whenever things weren't running smoothly and there was much dissatisfaction regarding his executive ability.

Mr. Jack Estes came to Tanforan as the head of the Works and Maintenance Division, but when Mr. Davis was promoted to the Center Managership, Mr. Estes became the Assistant Manager under Mr. Davis. Mr. Estes was well-liked and was spoken well of by both the Caucasian coworkers and the Japanese evacuees. He was a very elderly



person past 60 years but very diplomatic and just in his dealings with other divisions and with his employees. Mr. Estes was made a stooge a number of times for Mr. Davis and took the responsibility for Mr. Davis's failings.

Replacing Mr. Estes when he vacated the Works and Maintenance Office, Mr. Beck took his place. Mr. Beck was also in his 60's with a rich background of experience in the W. P. A. work. The job did not call for any executive abilities so he was able to manage fairly well. He was rather officious and tended to irritate a few of the Caucasian Division heads.

Mr. Gush was Assistant to the Head of the Works and Maintenance and he was the night superintendent with the power of Center Manager during the absence of Mr. Davis. Mr. Gush was one of the best liked Caucasian persons on the staff for his sincere interest and understanding for the Japanese problems and the abnormal situations. He did many favors for the Residents which was done on the sly because it was forbidden by regulations officially. Of all the administrative staff members, Mr. Gush seemed to have one of the most sane and logic heads <sup>of them all.</sup> ~~on him.~~ Mr. Gush was the supervisor of plumbing and relating types of maintenance work.

Mr. George A. Greene was the head of the Service Division. He had one of the toughest jobs in the Center. The work which was involved in the Service Division was really too much for any single person to handle, however, Mr. Greene had a very sincere interest in the evacuees and their problems and it can be fairly stated that he tried his best although he did not satisfy many of the residents. There was much to be desired in the manner in which he handled a



number of Japanese problems and the Administrative details. He was a man close to his 60's who lived at San Jose about 45 miles away to which he commuted daily. To give a glimpse of the interest he had in the Japanese and statements made by him to the residents in the final issue of the Tanforan Totalizer follows:

TO THE RESIDENTS:

With the closing of Tanforan Center and the moving to a relocation center near at hand, the residents can look back on a difficult job well done.

Too much credit cannot be given to the residents for their full cooperation and assistance in making the past four months at Tanforan the success we believe it to have been.

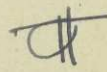
Because of the many activities of the Service Division, space will not permit, with one exception, the naming of individuals who have been of such great assistance to this division. However, I take this means to express my appreciation and thanks to each and all.

To Mrs. Mary Koba, who worked expertly with me as my secretary, I am most grateful--for long hours and volume of work, without a complaint and always a smile.

I am certain the same spirit shown in this Center by the residents will carry them through in the relocation center, and to all I wish good luck.

GEORGE A. GREENE  
Supervisor, Service Division

It can be said that what Mr. George Greene states is sincere whereas the same cannot be said of the Center Manager, Mr. Davis.

 Mr. Cooper was the head of the Mess and Lodging. He was a very efficient person and had his department well organized. He had



resident accountants and bookkeepers working under him. Under Mr. Cooper was Captain Speares who was one of the most popular Caucasian Administrators among the evacuees although he was not too well liked because of envy by his fellow caucasian workers. Captain Speares commuted from Berkeley daily and he was another Caucasian person who got in hot water for doing favors for the residents which was not normally permitted. Captain Speares was the supervisor of the House Managers and the flow of Center life was centered in his office, because there was no other administrative arm which contacted the residents except through the Housing Division; therefore, all complaints, all information, all activities passed through the House Managers' hands and they were the instruments for the Administration.

Enough information about the other Division Heads is not available so we shall get a glimpse into the personalities of other Caucasian Administrative Staff Officers whom we know.

Mr. Leroy Thompson, a young man in his late twenties, unmarried, living with his parents, commuting from Berkeley daily, became one of the well-liked and respected members of the Administrative Staff. He arrived a few weeks after the Tanforan Center had opened, but his work proved him to be very efficient. He knew what needed to be done and did it. Starting without any facilities whatsoever, Mr. Thompson had built a recreational program which was considered on professional level and commended by visiting W.C.C.A. and W. R. A. supervisors to be the best of all the other W.C.C.A. or W.R.A. Centers. It can be said of Mr. Thompson that he had never showed favoritism to anyone and that he was very just and fair in all his relationships. He stood for the highest in his recreational program, and the fact that it was

*Former  
Rec. Supervisor of  
Center West County.*



deeply appreciated by parents and youngsters both, proved that the contribution that he had made was most worthwhile. He endeavored to keep the minds, interests, and hands of the residents busy and occupied during their stay at Tanforan. In this way he was very successful, since it was not an easy job to maintain camp life. The recreational program, in its broader sense, was the only activity <sup>with</sup> ~~in~~ which the residents could occupy themselves.

Mr. Kilpatrick, a young father of two children, a graduate of Boalt Hall, band leader, was the Tanforan Head of the Education Department. He was immaculate and well-groomed in his six-foot two stature and was a very gifted musician. Prior to taking his responsibility as Head of the Education Department at Tanforan, Mr. Kilpatrick was teaching night school and leading a band and even while during his stay at Tanforan he continued his band leadership. Like the Recreation Department, the Education Department had to start from scratch with only a few qualified teachers to be appointed from the residents. Mr. Kilpatrick built a very well-organized education system for the residents. This included elementary, junior high, high school, and adult education. A full Americanization program and special classes in Red Cross First Aid training and cooperative study groups and art school and music school were launched under his guidance. A report on the education system will be given elsewhere in this report.



At the Tanforan Assembly Center there were no such organizations as the Cooperative Enterprises in its true sense for the people had no share or voice in the management or in the setting up of the policies. There were services which were cheap enough to be called cost services such as the Barbershop and the Shoe Repairing Shop.

#### Barbershop:

A tonsorial parlor in which hair cutting in any style desired was established under the direction of the WCCA officials on July 15th, 1942. A nisei barber from San Francisco was put into charge of the establishment. 15 barbers were on the staff to serve the Tanforanites. Price of hair cuts was 20¢ per head which was payable only with scrips. The script was purchased from the Center Cashier for 2.50 per book of coupons with 10¢, 5¢, and 1¢ denominations.

No mirrors or other trimmings of a barbershop was available, but there were revolving chairs, electric clippers, and hot running water. Lotions, tonics shampoo, shave was not included because of lack of supply and lack of facilities. The chief gripe of the barbers is the customer who mounts the chair for hair-cut without first washing his hair.

The average number of customers per day ranges from 80 to 90 haircuts daily. 112 haircuts for one day <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ the most sheared for 8 hours. About 5% of the customers were women with men comprising most of the clientele. About 60% of the men and boys request the "Tanforan Trim" which is a close pompadour mostly resembling a modified "butch" haircut. The barbershop was usually full all day and it was often necessary to make appointments one day ahead to get service.

#### SHOE REPAIR

After much delay the WCCA finally was able to obtain a shoe repair machinery to repair the shoes. Those who were working and others who didn't have extra shoes to wear were nearly at their wits end to know how to become barefooted since their shoes were in need of repairs badly.



Many refused to work without new shoes or free shoe repair services. So, when the repair machinery arrived, the working men got first service which was done gratis by the WCCA. For those who were not working in Works and Maintenance Division, the repair services were given at cost of the goods. The employees were all residents and they were paid \$16.00 per month allowance while the foreman got \$19.00. This same wage rate applied to the Barbershop employees also.

Because of lack of materials for repair, the shoe shop had to close their doors and refuse to accept any more shoes for repairs until they were able to get more repairing supplies and also until they had more time to catch up with their work. They were so flooded with repair work that it was impossible to find room to keep them all. This caused many of the financially able residents to buy new shoes on their own from outside or from mail order houses such as Sears and Roebuck and Montgomery Ward Co. or have it repaired on the outside through their friends who came to visit them.

When the doors of the shoe repair shop was closed in order to give the workers time to catch up with the repair work, there were many persons who were able to get their shoes repaired since they knew some of the workers in the repair shop. This was done on the sly and caused more delay for the opening of the doors to the general public.

#### WATCH REPAIR:

One man who was formerly a watch repairer in San Francisco, Jerry Mizuki was appointed as official Tanforan Watch Repair man and he was paid \$16.00 per month. He was supposed to charge for only the cost of the materials used and not for labor. He had lots of watches to repair and was kept busy day and night.

#### RADIO AND TYPEWRITER

Three persons were appointed and hired by the WCCA for \$16/ \$16.00 to do radio and typewriter repair at cost of the parts only.

No Private Enterprises permitted on premises.



Private enterprises

Virtually no private enterprises of any kind was allowed or established at Tanforan. However, there were few exceptional cases in which a modified form of private enterprises was carried on. One was a barter system in which a man who wanted a haircut from a former barber would make 'getas' or do some favor or leave a tip for the services of a haircut. Another form was paying for services such as hair cut, watch repair, or having furniture made by giving gifts such as food stuff and buying tobacco or cigarettes from the Canteen. There wasn't enough of this to become a organized pattern so one can truthfully say that there were no private enterprises at Tanforan.

OUTSIDE ECONOMIC GROUPS

Diablo Grocery A sign in the post office posted by the Diablo Grocery read that they would gladly bring in any orders for grocery to Tanforan. We don't know how successful this particular form of advertisement was to bring business, but we do know that much ordering and purchasing was conducted at the Visitors Plaza. Agents of stores would come in to visit the residents and take orders on certain days of the week. This continued for few weeks when the administration frowned upon the practice and asked that certain type of perishable goods will not be allowed. This cut down on the orders to some extent, but there were other ways of smuggling foodstuff into the Center. Many of the sympathetic caucasian employees bought lots of foodstuff for the residents and brought them in their autos without the WCCA big shots at Tanforan finding out about them. A man from San Bruno also came from a grocery store there and took orders, only he requested cash in advance and many of the residents were wary of this procedure until some of the satisfied customers spread the word that it was safe, but by this time, the ruling that no perishable foodstuff could be permitted into the camp either as purchases or gifts stymied the grocery store businesses.



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TANFORAN ASSEMBLY CENTER  
ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

ORGANIZATION OF THE CANTEEN:

At Tanforan, there were ~~no~~ such thing as the people's canteen. There <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ no means or medium from which money could be spent at Tanforan Assembly Center, so the people through their representatives such as the council-man, house managers, and influential persons asked that a canteen be set up from which necessary goods and miscellaneous items can be purchased. The center manager through his representative of the Community Service, Mr. Greene, stated that the canteen will be organized and managed by the Army. However, they promised to do all they were able to in bringing about the wishes and desires of the people.

During this time of camp organization which <sup>was</sup> as in the first few weeks, a person was designated as the manager of the canteen. He was asked to select a crew of workers to help him. These men were to be selected from the evacuation personnel, and to be paid by the WCCA as skilled workers at \$12.00, and unskilled workers at \$8.00. The manager himself was to be given professional rating at \$16.00.

This canteen was set up as a temporary store while a larger canteen with more items for sale was to be established later on when things got more settled.

A small space in the middle of the main dining hall under the grand stand was utilized as the canteen. Orange-ade in bottles, soft drinks, candies, and newspaper were the only items on the counter for sale. This canteen accepted only cash. There were only six persons employed in the first canteen.



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The lines which waited to get their turn to buy things were so large that it was physically impossible to please everyone. Before the people who waited in line were able to buy the things they wanted from a very limited selection, the store supply usually ran out. This condition caused much <sup>aggravation</sup> ~~aggrevasion~~ and discontent among the evacuees. They clamored for larger and more efficient center stores.

Many questions were raised as to where the money went or the prices of the articles in the first few weeks have gone. So, it became necessary to check into the sources of goods where the money of the purchases went to and who was in charge of the accounting system. This was necessitated by the large amount of money being spent.

After much demands and pressure had been put into the Center managers hands, he promised a well organized canteen and offered to look into the matter of having it on a cooperative basis (non profit). The Caucasian administrative head who was in charge of the Canteen was Mr. John. E. MacDonald. The first canteen did not serve the needs of the people at all. The only thing that it carried was refreshments such as candies, soft drinks, and certain kind of tobacco. The canteen was closed for a short period of time toward the middle of May, in order to reorganize for a good reopening in a larger scale.

On May 23, 1942, the reorganized canteen was opened. After the failure of the abortive attempt to satisfy the people, the center management decided to move the canteen to a larger space which was accessible by everyone. This new location was the former soda fountain counter of the Tanforan race tracks. It was partially opened to the outside open air, and it was an improvement from the former site as far as convenience was concerned by the selection of purchasable items, also in much of an improvement.



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This new locati on was used for a few weeks, but needless to say, there was much to be desired as far as our camp store was concerned. So, it became necessary because of dissatisfaction and apparent lack of space to move into a much larger store quarters.

On May 23, 1942, the center store opened its reorganized and rejuvenated canteen in the north east corner of the grand stand which was formerly being used as the baggage room. Its grand opening announcement read: "Your centar store will carry a complete line of goods including drug sundries, tobacco, papers, candies, soft drinks, etc." as stocks of these items became available. Articles of feminine hygiene are now being disposed. The store hours were announced as follow: 9:00--11:30a.m. and 1:30--4:30 p.m. daily except Sunday which was 9:00--11:30 a.m. for sale of newspapers only.

In this new locati on which was approximately 200 feet long counter with various sections selling drugs, pastries, tobacco, and frozen refreshments respectively, the store was not large enough to accommodate the customers. The people would line in front of the doors block long waiting for the opening hour so that they will not find themselves in a sold out store. The store was not very full and usually before the day was over, the articles and items for sale became exhausted.

Although the announcements with the reopening of the camp store stated that a complete line of goods of various sorts would be carried, it was soon found out that it was an exaggerated announcement. The store was very limited and not much of an improvement from the former status. Few additional drug items plus Langendorff pastries such as cookies, and cup cakes, soft drinks occasionally, frozen nickle, refreshments, and newspapers, plus tobacco and cigarettes were sold.



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No clothing whatsoever or ~~where there~~ any selection as ~~far as~~ candies and refreshments were available.

Personnel, Mr. J. MacDonald, was the Caucasian manager of the canteen. Under him were 2 Japanese secretaries, and one bookkeeper, one Japanese manager and 10 other evacuee clerks working ~~off~~ shifts. Some of them had experience as salesmans in stores or clerks, but most of them were amateurs. Management on the goods were purchased from San Francisco, and San Jose stores and the ordering the requisition and the accounting was done entirely by Mr. MacDonald. When the good arrived, the inventory checking up and the pricing was done entirely by Mr. MacDonald personally. Mr. MacDonald was responsible only to Mr. Frank Davis. Although, it was claimed that all ~~accounts~~ of the canteen should pass through the hands of the Fiscal Department. Upon request and investigation as to the whereabouts of the profits from the sales of the canteen, the accounting and the destination of the profits were not revealed. This caused much suspicion on the part of the evacuees but they were told that unless they did not leave the matter alone, that the privilege of having a center store would be taken away from them. So the matter was dropped. Although, few of the interested individuals threaten to write to San Francisco WCCA office about it. Whether anything came out of it or not was not disclosed. The evacuee members in the canteen did not know anything about the financial set up except that they counted the coupons and made their reports. They helped Mr. MacDonald take inventory once in a while but, besides doing that they had no knowledge as to the financial end of it. Number of suggestions were given to Mr. Mac Donald as to the desires of residents in Taforan,



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but whether it was due to unavailability of the goods desired or whether Mr. MacDonald had personal reasons for not taking the suggestions, no actions were taken on the given suggestions.

One of the biggest gripe of the residents was when Mr. MacDonald continuously refused to order the kind of cigarettes that they wanted. He would order the brand which were <sup>had coupons</sup> redeemable in cash. Although the residents did not particularly care for that type. Before he put them out on the counter, he would take the coupon and keep them, which would amount to a good sum of cash. The canteen workers knew about this and they were disappointed in Mr. MacDonald. The public demanded Luckies, Old Gold, Camels and Chesterfields, but instead the coupons attached brand such as Wings, Avalons, and etc, which were second grade type of cigarettes were sold, against the desire and wishes of the residents.

#### MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE:

In the first few weeks, cash was the medium of exchange for articles sold in the canteen. However, with the reopening of the reorganized center store, all sales were put on coupon basis. Absolutely no cash sales were made. Coupon books which were in denomination of \$2.50 including coupons at 10-15 and 01¢ valuing \$2.50 were sold by the Center cashier. Until the very end of camp at Tanforan, coupons were used as a medium of exchange. Residents could buy a coupon book for \$2.50 or they can wait until their free script which were issued to each individual in Tanforan on the following basis: \$2.50 value for adults, \$4.00 value for couples, and \$1.00 value for any child under 16 years of age.

#### ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS ABOUT THE CENTER CANTEEN:

On the whole the canteen served the people rather well in the last two months of the four months that the residents were at Tanforan. Most of the young kids liked the canteen for they could spend their free script books



for candies and ice-cream. The mothers and parents were able to buy simple refreshments and tobacco, soap, finger-nail polish, adhesive tape, Kotex, hair oil, tooth powder, sunglasses, candies, and few other sundries items were appreciated by the residents. Since no clothing were sold, it caused inconvenience to those desiring new clothes. Ink, and simple stationery were also available. By and large, the residents should have been satisfied.

The only trouble was that the people came from large cities, such as San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, San Jose, and few nearby cities and they were used to the best stores and conveniences which gave them a taste which could not be satisfied by a small limited center store. The services at the canteen was very good considering the inexperienced clerks, for they tried their best to please the resident. The only criticism which seems to have been justified is the lack of cooperation on the part of the Administration, especially Mr. MacDonald, as to policies and fiscal matters.

The residents could not understand why they could not have a store which was non profit making, since, they did not receive prevailing wages and it was difficult to pay retail price when they only received eight to sixteen dollars per month for allowance for working. But,

*such was the situation re. Canteen.*



TANFORAN ASSEMBLY CENTER

JOBS

THE TANFORAN EMPLOYMENT:

The situation at Tanforan regarding employment started out with a mess and ended up with a mess. The reason for this was that nothing definite was organized. No definite policy was set and the personnel handling employment was not competent, to meet the situation of an emergency assembly center life.

The first few days, it was necessary to recruit workers from anywhere years and anyone in order to get the necessary work such as feeding the people and housing the people done. The employment head did not arrive until a few weeks later which added to the confusion. However, after about the second month, it could be noted that those who were irresponsible in important positions were those with college degrees. This observation was invariably true in all the departments. In the first week, those who were before 16 years were employed as kitchen help and messenger boys and when the policies were set, only those between 16 and 60 were employable.

The proper procedure was to have the department heads requisition for certain kind of workers. But in actuality, what happened, was that the department heads or his immediate foreman under him would sign up the workers directly, and then, tell the employment office about it. The employment office was <sup>short-</sup>circuited in this way and there was much ill feelings between the employment office and the department heads.

However, on May 23, 1942, Mr. Wm M. Gunder, head of the employment office stated that there will be no further need for Tanforan residents to apply in person for jobs, ~~over~~



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Since the office had individual records on their files. Hereafter all workers will be requisitioned by the various departments and assigned to jobs equal to their skills, abilities, and exceptions, and work orders will be notified by messengers.

On the surface, this policy of employment seems to give all qualified equal consideration for the work and openings occur. Close to 1600 work orders had been issued by the employment office by the last week of May. Conditions of employment were defined in information bulletin #8 of Tanforan Assembly Center, and was posted throughout the camp on official bulletin boards by Mr. Wm R. Larson, Center Manager.

This policy was not very effective because those who were on the job, would have their friends be put on and in that way the employment office could not carry out its proper procedures. And, so we find that in various departments, former groupings and cliques were in one particular department and this caused a very definite social groupings in the new center life.

Soft ball teams were organized <sup>with in</sup> ~~limited to~~ the work division and parties were held as a department rather than open to the whole center. This caused a good espritdecorps within the departments by a spirited rivalry and competition between the departments.

Since jobs were limited at Tanforan Assembly Center, there being no other work project except the actual maintenance and housing work, those who came on the first contingent on April 20, 1942, got most of the available jobs. Then those that got in put on their friends as new openings occurred. This caused much dissatisfaction and discontent within the members of the later contingent.



Those who were professionally trained, such as doctors, pharmacists, nurses, teachers, plumbers, auto mechanics, newspaper editors, architects, engineers, were assured of their jobs because there were more need for them than there were <sup>common</sup> workers. However, the mess hall workers, for workers in maintenance crews and for housing crews, there was no other qualification except ~~for~~ good health and ability to get along with others and the desire to work. so it was <sup>not</sup> uncommon to find trained business men working as house managers or waiters and qualified insurance men working as common day laborer cleaning the streets. many did not work but those that did work took life easy and looked eager to their so called rate of pay, \$8.00 a month, \$12.00 a month, or \$16.00 a month. The hardest working ~~business~~ <sup>people</sup> for the pay they got were the mess hall workers, the cooks and the dish washers. they only got \$8.00 a month.

The Recreation workers were envied by other workers, because most of them got skilled and professional rating and the work outside seemed all play and no work. Although, they really earned their pay.

There was a certain prestige to the white collar workers and when one looks at the employment situation with a certain amount of rationality and logic, there seems to be grave injustices, but when we realize that it was a temporary and abnormal situation, one just had to accept the situation as it was and try to make the best of it.