

THE FIRST MONTH AT TANFORAN

A preliminary report by:

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## OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

Controlling purpose: The controlling purpose of this report is to survey briefly the life in the Tanforan Assembly Center for Japanese evacuees, covering the administrative system, social organization, and disorganization.

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THE FIRST MONTH AT THE TANFORAN  
ASSEMBLY CENTER FOR JAPANESE EVACUEES

I. Introduction

As mankind, supposedly the wisest of the Animalia, engages in its titanic course of destruction after lining up in opposing camps supposedly differentiated by some imaginary identifying mark, the repercussions of the struggle have been felt in the everyday lives of men in all civilized nations. All Americans have been asked to make sacrifices -- sugar, automobile tires, new models, and numerous other items -- and yet the one element of the population in the United States that has been asked to yield the most is the group of Japanese descent. As their part in the national defense program they have been asked to sever the associations that they have had, to give up the way of living which they had enjoyed, to leave the houses and industries that they had spent years building. Their very lives have been uprooted, and the Japanese, with their sons and daughters of American citizenship, have been sent to Assembly Centers and Relocation Centers throughout the West.

An Assembly Center has been defined as "a convenient gathering point, within the military area, where evacuees live temporarily while waiting the opportunity for orderly, planned movement to a Relocation Center outside of the military area."<sup>1/</sup> The Relocation Center has been defined as "a pioneer community, with basic housing and protective services provided by the Federal Government, for occupancy by evacuees for the duration of the war."<sup>2/</sup> Tanforan is an Assembly Center.

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<sup>1/</sup> The War Relocation Work Corps, The War Relocation Authority, Washington, D.C., 1942, p. 2.

<sup>2/</sup> Ibid.

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Tanforan has been used for varied purposes. During the racing seasons jockeys matched wits while thoroughbreds matched strides; during the remainder of the year it had been used for flower shows and other functions. Beginning on April 28, 1942, however, it became the Assembly Center for Japanese evacuees. Putting aside the traditional American euphonism one might call it the internment camp for those who had been evacuated for the national defense. Others looked upon it as a concentration camp for "prisoners of war."

On the 28th of April a few hundred advance workers came into the camp to prepare it for those to follow from San Francisco and Berkeley. By the end of the week there were over 3,000 people in the camp, and by the end of the following week, when the evacuees from Oakland and its vicinity came in, the population had been doubled. Since that time, virtually all Japanese, except the group from San Francisco that had been sent to Santa Anita, in the entire San Francisco Bay Region were in the confines of Tanforan. On May 20, when the immigration to the camp ceased, there were 7,796 residents. 3/

Situated in San Mateo County, near the town of San Bruno, Tanforan is but a half hour's drive from San Francisco. Since the region is exposed to the ocean, it is windy almost every day. Dust is abundant and the difficulties involved in keeping the camp clean became apparent after the first few days. During the summer months rain is sparse, and in general the climate is temperate. Perhaps of all the Centers chosen for the Japanese evacuees Tanforan is situated at one of the most ideal spaces. At least the residents of the Center have been of that opinion. Except for the daily wind and occasional rains that turn the camp into a quagmire there are no complaints about the weather.

Tanforan Assembly Center is peculiar in that it resembles no American institution. In a sense it seems like a prison, for it is surrounded by armed guards and no one is allowed to leave the camp except those with special



permission from the Army. However, the camp administration encourages the residents to take the initiative and to have self-rule as far as possible. Outgoing mail is not censored, although incoming packages are all carefully examined for contraband. Visitors are allowed daily at specified hours and are allowed to bring their friends anything besides contraband. The administration is staffed by W.P.A. men and the set-up is typically W.P.A. -- even to its inefficiency! In the midst of a prison atmosphere there are many privileges seldom accorded to prisoners; and yet the rights of citizens are restricted. Indeed the situation is odd and without precedent.

Within the barbed wire fences, the Japanese have had to make their adjustments. There have been important reactions and problems of sociological significance, and in this report we are interested primarily in the social organizations and disorganizations of the Japanese in Tanforan. However, a general picture of the camp life must precede such a discussion so that the entire picture can be seen in a better perspective. Our objective, then, is to describe briefly what went on during the first month in the Tanforan Assembly Center.

The Center, if filled to capacity, could hold 8,582 people. There are 180 buildings -- 26 converted horse stalls and 154 new barracks. Of these, however, buildings 1, 11, 12, 15, and 17 have been condemned and are not in use. Building 104 is used as a recreation headquarters and another barrack is being used for the library. <sup>4/</sup> A few days after the camp opened, there were 24 latrines in the camp -- 12 for men and 12 for women. Each sex had 6 toilets with accommodations for 16 people and 6 with bowls for only 8. All male toilets were equipped with two urinals. In the club houses there were accommodations for 13 women, and in the men's latrine there were 33 toilets and 36 urinals. This total had to serve the camp for the month of May. <sup>5/</sup> However, by the end of the month other latrines were under construction; in fact, the number was doubled to 21 latrines for the men

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<sup>4/</sup> Figures taken from files in the Housing Headquarters at Tanforan.

<sup>5/</sup> Memorandum of W. Speares, Director of Housing at Tanforan.

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and 21 for the women. The number of showers was also doubled to 42 (21 men and 21 women), and the number of laundry buildings available was increased from three to six. It was indeed unfortunate that these sanitation facilities were not ready when the evacuees came to camp, for the lack of preparation has caused considerable grief.

The living quarters are of varied sizes. All of the newer barracks are of the same size. They have either 5 apartments for 6 persons each or else 10 apartments for 3 persons each. The larger rooms have four windows each; while the smaller ones have two. Every effort has been made to keep families together, and except in the case of the unmarried men no one has been forced to live with anyone he or she did not know. In the converted horse stalls the situations is a bit different. Here there are various sizes and arrangements. For example, building 6 has four apartments for six people and 30 apartments holding four people each for a total of 144; building 14 has 102 rooms for 3 people each and four end rooms for 6 people for a total of 330. All of the converted stalls have two rooms -- about 7 by 9 feet and about 12 by 10 feet. There are two windows in the front rooms and the back rooms have openings near the roof about three feet high connecting it to the next room. These openings, while reducing the privacy of the residents, serve to facilitate ventilation. Some of the stalls had ceilings, but most of them did not. Some of the stalls had linoleum floors, but some of them had to be contented with boards. The construction is not too good, and the wind easily seeps through the openings in the walls.

Each evacuee is provided with an Army spring cot and either a cotton mattress or a straw tick. Cotton mattresses are given to those living in the converted horse stalls as a compensation for having inferior living quarters. Blankets are supplied by the W.C.F.A. if they are badly needed. Soap and toilet paper are also supplied, although the warehouse is usually empty when one needs these articles. By the middle of May hot water was available in most shower rooms and laundry rooms. Laundry ironing boards came into camp in the last week of May; until they came, the women used all sorts of makeshift boards.



The single men were housed in the filthiest quarters in the camp, and the men's dormitory rapidly became the hotbed of strife in the camp. Finally the administration concluded that it was too unsanitary and moved the bachelors during the last week of May into some of the outlying barracks. At first, an effort was made to keep these single men away from married couples "for moral purposes" but apparently someone had to change his mind.

Food -- Army "A" and "B" rations -- is served in the main mess hall and eleven outlying messes. The outlying messes opened one by one and the last one is scheduled to open in the first part of June. The food is supposedly the same throughout the camp, but since the cooks take individual pride in their cooking, the preparation is somewhat different in the different kitchens. The main mess hall had the reputation of being the filthiest, the most unsanitary, and the least desirable eating place of all. The other kitchens competed with each other for honors.

At the end of May there were 11 mess halls (including the main one) in operation; three laundry buildings were ready and three more were under construction; most of the 42 new latrines were finished. The converted horse stalls had a total capacity of 3,747 people; while the newer barracks had room for 4,050. In the grandstand there was room for 440 men and 275 unmarried women but these rooms were cleared and used for other purposes. By the end of May everyone was living in the barracks or in a horse stall.

All in all the living accommodations in Tanforan were atrocious for those who had enjoyed a relatively high standard of living in the city, but the place was paradise for those from the rural regions who had never before had so many conveniences. Compared to the other Assembly Centers Tanforan may have seemed to be paradise, but this of course is not a fair basis for comparison. The significant point is: the living conditions had standards at Tanforan, no matter how high it may rate in comparison to other camps, are much lower than the standards



which most of the evacuees had before they came to camp.

It was in this physical set-up that the Japanese evacuees made their adjustment to the life at Tanforan.



## II. A General Survey of Camp Organization

The administrative pattern in Tanforan is relatively simple. The organization is divided into five sections: (1) the Administrative Division, (2) the Works and Maintenance Division, (3) the Finance and Records Division, (4) the Mess and Lodging Division, and (5) the Service Division.

The Administrative Division consists of Mr. W.R. Lawson, the camp manager, his assistants, and his immediate staff of Caucasian and Nisei stenographers and receptionists. This office is responsible for the general administrative control of all phases of Center activities, and nothing goes on in Tanforan without the approval of Mr. Lawson. The newspaper in the camp is thoroughly censored by this office as is every other activity of the residents. Working directly under this division are the Internal Police and the Supply Section. <sup>6/</sup>

The Supply Section is responsible for the purchase, receipt, storage, issuing and documenting of all materials and supplies except subsistence stores; the maintenance of stock records; the issuance to various divisions of materials from the warehouse; and the cutting of stencils and the performing of all mimeographing work for the Center. The Section is under the direction of a Caucasian "boss" with Nisei assistants. It has long been the source of difficulties and has often been charged with favoritism and "graft."

The Works and Maintenance Division, under the direction of Mr. Estes, was for a long time one of the most inefficient groups in the camp. However, toward the end of the month, the group was organized under a Japanese foreman and began to function unusually well; in fact, they kept the grounds looking reasonably decent. Specifically the duties of this department are: the maintenance of all physical facilities within the Center -- repairs to electric, water, and sewer systems, buildings, mess hall tables, and other physical facilities within the Center; the construction

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<sup>6/</sup> The information on the administrative organization was taken from Administrative Bulletin No. 1, Tanforan Assembly Center, May 7, 1942.

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of any new physical facilities within the Center; the general grounds maintenance work, including cleanup and burning of refuse; fire control and prevention; and engineering, planning and preparation of maps and charts as required by the workers.

The third administrative division is the Mess and Lodging under the direction of Mr. Cooper. Working under Mr. Cooper are Mr. Speares in charge of Housing and Mr. Faugharty in charge of the mess halls. There had been another man who had been in charge of the food who was so incompetent that he was dismissed after the first few weeks. Unfortunately, before he left, he had ordered all the food for the months of May and June in such short rations that for a while everyone in camp was not getting enough to eat. As Mr. Faugherty went to work, however, the entire mess situation began to improve, and by the end of the month the food was tolerably good.

This Division was responsible for the housing and feeding of all persons within the Center; the receiving, storing and issuing of subsistence stores; and the operation of physical facilities for mess and lodging, including the requisition and distribution of supplies, such as coal, oil, laundry supplies, and other materials needed in mess and lodging operations. Further responsibilities were given to this Division when the policing, cleaning, and furnishing of supplies for laundries, washrooms, showers, and latrines also came under this section. 7/

The mess halls are supposed to serve food valued at a maximum of \$.50 a day to all residents; however, because of the shortage of food resulting from the short order that was sent to the Army Quartermaster Corps the meals were probably worth much less. However, outsiders using the camp mess halls were assessed considerably more. Only employees in the camp and authorized visitors were allowed to eat with the residents, and they were charged \$.25 per meal or \$15.00 a month for their food. Lodgings were to be had for \$7.50 a month or \$.25 a night. The opinion of many residents was that neither was worth the charge. 8/

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7/ Notice of change in responsibility, May 19, 1942, in files of the Housing Headquarters.

8/ Administrative Bulletin No. 3, Tanforan Assembly Center, 1942.

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No doubt one of the most important groups of Japanese working in the camp was that of the House Managers. This group, composed of representatives from each stall and every five or ten barracks, probably knew more about what was going on in camp than any other group. They constituted the Liaison between the Caucasian administration and the residents of the center. All complaints had to go through the House Manager; supplies to the residents are issued only at the request of the House Manager; and many announcements could be had only through this representative. The Manager was in charge of the barrack or the stall and within his very wide jurisdiction he settled whatever difficulties that arose.

In the middle of the second week there were 25 House Managers officially approved by Mr. Lawson working under the direction of Mr. Speares in the Housing Headquarters. By the third week there were 35 such men and by the end of the month the group had grown to 45 -- including two women. 9/

Besides his general duty of Liaison man between the residents and the administration, the House Managers had the following specific duties:

1. To take necessary action to assure that all residents of his building or buildings are provided with the necessary cots, mattresses or ticks and blankets where required.
2. To take such steps as are necessary to insure the cleanliness of the grounds around the house, the proper cleaning and maintenance of laundries, bathrooms and washrooms adjacent to his house. This will be carried out in cooperation with other house managers whose residents use these same facilities.
3. To be responsible for custody of all tools used in the cleaning and maintenance of the houses and for the proper inventory and return of these tools to the housing headquarters.
4. To be responsible for recruiting necessary labor among the residents of his house for voluntary community work and in times of emergency.
5. To report to the Superintendent of Housing all necessary repairs to buildings and appertinent facilities.

9/ The House-Managers as a social group will be analyzed in more detail below.



6. To attend scheduled meetings of the housing section at times and places prescribed by the Supervisor of Housing.
7. To maintain a bulletin board and to be responsible for advising residents of his building or buildings as to all rules and regulations as may be issued from time to time.
8. To assist the Internal Police Department in inspection of the buildings and personal effects and to cooperate with the Internal Police in the maintenance of order within the Center.
9. To report to the Supervisor of Housing any violation of established rules and regulations that come to their attention.
10. To perform other duties as may be delegated to him by the Supervisor of Housing. 10/

These and other miscellaneous duties that came up from time to time whenever some resident had some peculiar whim made the life of the House Manager a hectic one. All of the functions in the camp in many ways centered on this one group. It cooperated with all other departments of the Center to make life easier for their people.

The fourth administrative division was the Finance and Records. It like the other groups consisted of Caucasian supervisors and Japanese workers. It was responsible for the following duties: the keeping of all accounts and records; the establishment of a Personnel Records Sections for registration and assignment to quarters during induction, assignment of necessary work personnel, and the maintenance of necessary personnel folders; the timekeeping of personnel employed within the Center; the acting as the Office Manager of the Administrative Office; and other minor duties.

Without question the busiest section in the Administrative staff is the Service Division under Mr. Greene. Specifically, this Division is responsible for: the planning and operation of a recreation program within the Center; the management of the Center Infirmary (although the technical direction is the responsibility of the United States

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Information Bulletin No. 2, Tanforan Assembly Center, May 6, 1942.



Department of Public Health); the development of a welfare program in accordance with announced policies; the coordination of the educational activities within the Center in close cooperation with the State Board of Education; and the operation of the Center Exchange. Some of these duties have been performed; others have been sadly neglected.

In the entire Service Division perhaps the one point where the complaints fell most heavily was in regard to the Employment Office. Here the procedure was entirely disorganized. Individuals with absolutely no experience or training were given responsible positions while men who had worked in the United States Employment Office were working as junior interviewers. The entire procedure was inadequate to meet the immediate needs that arose in the camp. As things were just being started men to do work had to be had and had to be recruited immediately. There was much work to be done. However, since the Employment Office was staffed by such incompetent workers, it was very difficult if not impossible to get a job through it. Furthermore, the man appointed to take charge of the office did not arrive until two weeks had passed. By that time things were almost out of hand.

On May 11, Mr. Greene announced to the other Division heads that if they needed workers they had to fill out a W.P.A. work form 401 in which the name and identification number, the date reported for work, the classification, and the location of the project in which the worker was taking part was included. In this way, the Division heads could select their own men and then put them on the payroll. This procedure was necessary under the circumstances for the Employment Office was in no position to send out workers.

The situation was indeed a sad one. Men who held responsible positions showed favoritism and put their friends and relatives in important posts. Everything went on a basis of first come first serve and quite often those who came to camp later were unable to get desirable jobs. Men with qualifications were working in jobs in which they had no training when they could have been doing work along their own lines much more efficiently. Men with years of experience as truck drivers were working in the road crew while high school boys drove the trucks through the mud; accountants<sup>nts</sup> were



working as kitchen help; and public administration students were working in information bureaus. Indeed the residents in the Center had a just cause for complaint.

Finally, toward the end of the month a partial solution was found. It was announced that all employable residents between the ages of 16 and 60 had been classified from their induction records according to USES ratings and that all workers would be requisitioned by the various departments and assigned to jobs according to their skills, ability and experience. However, this did not solve the problem. Many of those who had been working could not be dismissed, and there were only a few jobs left. In fact, all new jobs had to be created out of the initiative of the individual. Furthermore, the records on the induction cards merely stated what the person happened to be doing just prior to the evacuation and did not have any information on his training, which may have been along different lines. However, as inadequate as the system may be, it had to serve; and certainly it was a great improvement over the system that existed during the first week of May. By the third week it was announced that 1,300 work orders had been issued by the Employment Office.<sup>11/</sup>

Perhaps one of the best organized sections in the Service Division was the recreation department. Under the direction of Mr. LeRoy Thompson, formerly recreational director of the W.P.A. in Solano County, a very ambitious group of Nisei organized a very comprehensive program mapped to cater to the needs of people of all age groups. Indeed the recreation division's activities touched almost everyone in camp in one way or another.

Early in May several Nisei who had been interested in recreational work, which without doubt was needed since many people had nothing to do, got together and planned some programs. However, when Mr. Thompson came in, some changes had to be made because there were others in the camp who had had actual experience in such work who were much better qualified. Some of the men in the former nucleus and the new men formed the basis for the entire program. The general policy was to run the system on a community center basis with geographical units and not the



number of people as the units. In Tanforan, seven districts were mapped out and the key men selected some person in each to act as the community center recreational director.

Among the activities fostered by this department were: the pre-school nursery under the direction of two Mills College graduates who had specialized in child training; a music program including training and presentation; an artists group under the direction of a University of California instructor in art; weekly dances; talent shows weekly; a library in the middle of the field; and various community activities in sports including ping-pong, softball, bridge, social dancing classes, badminton, volley ball. In some centers boys' clubs, a girls' group, and teams to play have been organized.

The equipment for the program have come from several sources. The W.C.C.A. provided six buildings and some equipment. Many items were contributed by the Y.M.C.A. and some came from the American Friends Service Committee. Other sources included the Buddhist Church and some Christian groups and several individual donations were made. Another source was the Oakland J.A.C.L. which is supposed to have contributed \$100.

In sports softball seems to be taking the spotlight. In order to counteract the tendency for children to break into small cliques, it was decided that in each of the seven centers teams will be selected for the various age-groups to play in an intra-community tournament. Then all-star teams could be selected in each section to compete in a camp-wide playoff. Furthermore, a Twilight League has been organized to meet the needs of those who work all day. Works crews could organize their own teams and play against each other for the camp championship. It is believed that this general pattern would be followed in all competitive sports.

The music and the art program are organized somewhat along similar patterns; they include both presentation to the public and training. In music there is a Music Hour weekly in the social hall open to the public; while at the same time there are classes conducted by those who have had more experience. Artists, with their



headquarters at Mess Hall 6, opened their "studio" daily from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. offering courses in figure drawing and composition, still life, pencil drawing, landscape, sculpturing, cartoon, commercial art, fashion design, interior decorating and oriental freehand brush work. Lectures are given Tuesday evenings at 7. 12/

The talent shows have been a great success. Every Thursday evening for a hour and a half the residents enjoy the efforts of their fellow evacuees. Songs, violin solos, a preponderance of harmonica players, and other talent is heard. It was originally held in the social hall, but the audience grew to such proportions that the setting was transferred to the grandstand. This is an indication of the popularity of this attraction.

The dances have been held in the social hall weekly and have been the source of many complaints. After the first dance was held on May 9 several mothers complained that their 13 and 14 year old daughters had been out long after the dance was over and expressed their bitter opinions. Dancing to the music coming from a phonograph, the people rarely observed rules of etiquette. Dressed in everything from jeans and T-shirts to suits and slacks to high-heels, the participants jived and waltzed. All dances were tag, and men were cutting in even during the last dance. The age-groups attending ranged from about 12 or 13 to about 45. Several Issei mothers stood at the side waiting for their daughters to make sure that they went straight home. Indeed the Saturday night dances were a source of headaches to many.

Besides the regular dances, official and unsanctioned parties are often held in the various laundry rooms. Some individual would get together a group of friends and with or without the permission of the Center staff would have a shin-dig. These have also been the source of complaints on the part of the older people.

The library consists of an empty barrack with eight mess hall benches and a few

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Tanforan Totalizer, May 30, 1942.

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wall shelves. There are but a few books and plenty of magazines. One hundred seventy-five of this book supply came from Mills College, and 60 were donated by the Y.M.C.A. Residents are allowed to take out books for three days and magazines go out overnight, and renewals can be made as often as necessary unless someone asks for the book. Books are divided into sections: children, biography, miscellaneous, religion, history, dictionary. Two Nisei girls worked as librarians; the room was full of "Quiet Please!" signs that were never observed; and daily the building was full of children browsing through the magazines. This inadequate situation in many ways fills the need of the camp, for those who are more intellectually inclined have brought their own books and usually trade them with each other.

Beginning in the middle of the month the pre-school nursery opened for children from 2 to 5 years of age. Daily, except Sunday, these children attend school from 9 to 11:30 a.m. <sup>13/</sup> At two of the recreation centers a staff of six Nisei girls take over 90 children in their care. The mothers bring the children and then come after them after school. The daily schedule consists of inspection, free play, wash routine, toilet routine, milk lunch, rest, outdoor activity and creative work. The nursery schools unfortunately do not have adequate facilities nor are they well staffed. There are too many children in a small room. The teachers do not play with the children and do not try to handle them, and their backgrounds do not always live up to their responsibilities. However, they are doing their best and can be commended for their work.

In viewing the entire recreational set-up one is impressed by all the work that has been done with limited facilities. One of the directors commented that much has been accomplished but that so much was there to be done that it didn't require much effort on the part of the workers to put the program through. He pointed out that incompetent people were in charge of heavy responsibilities, that jealousy exists among the leaders, and that the program has not hit the adult group

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<sup>13/</sup> Ibid.

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sufficiently. He optimistically stated that present facilities have been improvised and the real program has just begun to roll. Indeed, all in all the recreation department seems to have done one of the best jobs in the Center.

One of the very definite functions of the Service Divisions that has been virtually ignored is social welfare work. The director of the Division apparently has a strong prejudice against welfare workers and when qualified workers approach him on the matter they were turned down on the grounds that there was no necessity for such a system. The need for welfare work is quite apparent, but since the administrative heads do not see the point such a set up has not been established. Needy people do without and instances of disorganization are punished but no steps are taken to remedy the situation.

A rather comprehensive educational program is now being contemplated at Tanforan but unless a more competent staff is selected or imported it seems to be doomed to failure. The ideas underlying the program was first presented by an optometrist with no educational background who had been kicked out of the maintenance division of the recreational staff because of his inability. He and a Reverend worked out a program and when the Caucasian director, Mr. Kilpatrick -- former director of visual education in the Oakland W.P.S. -- came in they pounced on him and presented it to him. Inasmuch as Mr. Kilpatrick had no ideas of his own when he came in he listened to all suggestions very carefully. The resulting program was a modification of the original presented by the two Japanese.

The educational division took over the art classes begun in the recreational division; music lessons were also taken over. First aid classes were organized. On May 25, a registration of all school children between the ages of 6 to 18 took place, and on the following day four Nisei who held teaching credentials began classes. The set-up was obviously inadequate in as much as the personnel was not sufficiently trained and the other facilities were lacking. A program of Americanization was also considered but nothing came of this suggestion.

When those who had had some experience in educational work heard of what was going on they rose in arms and stormed Mr. Kilpatrick's office with ideas. Some, realizing that their stay in Tanforan was an ephemeral one, suggested a make-shift



program to fit the situation. Some suggested that certain basic objectives such as the dissemination of the tenets of a democratic theory and to aid the solution of problems of everyday camp life. However, these suggestions came too late or else were not carefully considered. <sup>14/</sup>

One phase of the educational program that attracted camp-wide attention was the Town Hall Series. <sup>15/</sup> It was supposedly initiated for the purpose of providing an enjoyable time, educating the Nisei in regard to vital issues facing him in the future, and to perpetuate the practice of democratic ideals in the camp. The first meeting was held on May 27 on the innocuous topic of "How Can we Cooperate to Improve Tanforan?" The reason for selecting the topics were many but one was that something harmless had to be selected in order to pass the camp censorship and in order to sell the idea of a Town Hall to the administrative heads. In as much as all public gatherings are closely supervised and all speeches are censored, the Town Hall committee had a difficult time getting the program through. Most intelligent Nisei asked: "What good is a Town Hall if there is a censorship?" Apparently Mr. Lawson's office were so afraid of something that they were willing to go so far as to kill the Town Hall.

Thus we find that the Service Division, through its activities in the employment office, the hospital, recreation, and education had more contact with the residents of the Center than perhaps any other division. On top of these duties Mr. Greene was assisting in the housing during the first month; his office was indeed one of the busiest in the camp.

There are other features of the Tanforan Assembly Center that are sufficiently important to merit attention. One of these features is the postal service. There is one post office in the Center staffed by two civil service men. On May 4 the letters that came in were delivered to residents for the first time, until that time

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<sup>14/</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15/</sup> Tanforan Totalizer, May 23, 1942.

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each individual had to call at the post office for his mail. With everyone coming in for that and asking all sorts of questions on alien registration and draft boards that required notification of change of address, the two men working in the Tanforan office had more than their share of work. Gradually, when the residents complained to their friends of inadequate facilities and began to send for things either through Caucasian friends or through mail-order houses, packages came in such numbers that they could not all be handled. During the second and third weeks, the office was handling over 6,000 pieces of mail daily. <sup>16/</sup>

As the packages (with brooms, wash tubs, food, and tools) came in in large numbers they were sent to the police station for inspection for contraband. All incoming packages had to be opened for inspection. Finally the police station was so crowded that it was decided that all packages would be delivered. <sup>17/</sup> All residents were asked to sign a petition permitting postal orderlies to open and inspect packages without their presence so that they could be delivered directly from the receiving station. Unfortunately the petition read that the undersigned would permit authorities to open "packages and mail" and many of the more clear minded individuals refused to sign.

All in all the postal facilities are very overcrowded and the postmaster is much too overworked. As the clerk remarked, "We handle more mail here in Tanforan than they do in the town of San Bruno itself." No doubt if the facilities in the Center itself were more adequate the number of packages coming in would be much smaller. If the laundries had the ironing boards as they were supposed to, if the mess halls served edible food, if everything were the way that the Army command had promised it would be, then the evacuees would not have to send for so many things that they expected to find in camp.

As the various problems faced by the individual evacuees began to mount, a Personal Aid Bureau was established under the education department unofficially. <sup>18/</sup>

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<sup>16/</sup> Tanforan Totalizer, May 15, 1942.

<sup>17/</sup> Tanforan Totalizer, May 30, 1942.

<sup>18/</sup> Ibid.

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The purpose was to give counsel and assistance to those unable to read and write English or to those who had complex financial problems. Affidavit, power of attorney, notary, and other powers were centralized in this Bureau. A former patent attorney of Washington, D.C. was appointed to take charge. This group was unofficial, however; and on the day after the group began its activities it was announced by the administration that a Mr. Byron from the Federal Reserve Bank would be in camp every morning to handle such problems. To date, however, nothing has come of the latter promise.

In the entire camp of Tanforan there are but three telephones. This without question handicaps the work of the fire department and the medical staff. The telephones are for the use of the administrative personnel only and no resident in the camp is allowed to phone outside no matter how urgent the matter may be. The telephones are located at the main gate, the south gate, and in the corporation yard. The phone in the corporation yard can be used by the hospital staff, in case of emergency -- providing the yard is not locked up. Telegrams can be received but no one is allowed to send telegrams out.

There is one newspaper in Tanforan, although news is disseminated in other ways. There is a regular bulletin board that sends out Information Bulletins. Boards are posted at conspicuous spots throughout the camp, and at these points announcements are posted -- both in English and in Japanese. Everything that goes out in a bulletin is carefully censored by Mr. Lawson himself, and the Y.M.C.A. group had their mimeograph machine confiscated for putting out an announcement without permission. Actually there was nothing objectionable in the bulletin itself, but the idea that they had sent it out without permission was apparently repugnant to the administration. Because of this strict censorship it usually takes a half a week to get out any news.

Quite often the fastest way in which news goes out is through the house managers. Since the managers meet every morning from 8:30 to 10:30, all announcements can be made there to be relayed to the residents. Sometimes



announcements are made through the mess halls.

The one newspaper in Tanforan is the Tanforan Totalizer, which came out for the first time on May 15. It is a weekly sheet of four to six pages of mimeographed legal size paper. Perhaps the Totalizer is censored more carefully than anything else in camp, partly because only official news can be disseminated and partly for other reasons. It is interesting to go into the background of the organization.

When a small staff of experienced newspapermen gathered to organize the Totalizer, objections came against the personnel from some of the more reactionary elements in the camp. One not-too-intelligent J.A.C.L. man from Berkeley -- whom even the J.A.C.L. men disown and whom a number of others despise -- had wormed his way into Mr. Lawson's confidence through his activities in the so-called advisory council. This individual began to redbait his enemies and charged that the newspaper was controlled by a clique of communists. Naturally, the camp manager, being totally ignorant of the internal intrigues within the Japanese community, took his report seriously, and for over a week the newspaper was held up by this squabble. Finally, when the paper came through after some divisions which made the staff more incompetent it was completely censored. In fact, even the mimeographing itself was kept out of the hands of the staff. Actually, the Totalizer is nothing more than a weekly bulletin reporting on what is going on in the camp -- about a week late. It is indeed a sad commentary to the caliber of the residents and the administrative staff in Tanforan that a free press does not exist in the Center.

For the convenience of the residents an Information and a Lost and Found Bureau was started during the second week. By the following week over 200 lost articles had accumulated there. The clerks, both University of California graduates, are prepared either to answer questions or to direct people to places where the answer could be had. All sorts of unanswerable questions such as how long will we be in Tanforan or how can we deal with "Peeping Toms" arise, but by in large the questions are about the whereabouts of certain individuals in the camp. <sup>19/</sup>



One of the major problems in the camp is policing. The Internal Police are officially a part of the Administrative Division and specifically have the following responsibilities; to search persons and baggage during induction; to insure that no contraband enters the Center at any time; to maintain order within the grounds at all times; to insure the safety and security of the administrative quarters; to control visitors in accordance with established policy; to train and supervise orderlies; to control traffic, of both persons and vehicles, to protect the life and property within the Center; to perform other special duties prescribed by the Center Manager. <sup>20/</sup>

The first police chief was obviously incompetent. He asked one of the Nisei who had expressed a willingness to work to be his assistant and allowed the Nisei to choose the personnel. In as much as the Nisei worker had no experience in police work, he naturally did not know what to do. However, he selected his staff and did his best. Complaints began to flow in as soon as the men began their beats, however, because the young men took advantage of their position to eat wherever they chose and to get into any place that they wanted. They did not patrol the beats as they were supposed to for it was very cold and their friends along the way were always available for bull sessions. Finally, the complaints grew so vociferous that the Caucasian director took many of the men off the payroll. There were still grumbles, however, and finally the Nisei assistant resigned in indignation. Toward the end of May, the chief was replaced by a much more competent man from the Berkeley Police Force.

The new police chief, Mr. Estabrook, was without question a more competent and intelligent man. He was responsible directly to Major Ashby of the Fourth Army and had to follow the regulations sent in from the Army. Within his jurisdiction, however, he began to reorganize the force. Apparently Major Ashby had heard complaints



from several Centers concerning the Japanese orderlies and ruled that Caucasian officers must be selected for the Internal Police. In spite of the objections of the residents to a Caucasian patrol, in as much as the order had come from above, there was not much that Mr. Estabrook could do. It was finally decided that only the quarantine officers and the messenger boys and guides would be Japanese and that the 13 patrolmen would be Caucasian. Four men were on the patrol every hour in the day and on the average every point was covered every half hour.

The reaction of the Japanese to the coming of Caucasian patrolmen was rather interesting to watch. The Issei apparently did not care a great deal who did the patrolling so long as the job was done efficiently; but they apparently did not trust Caucasians and objected to Caucasian men speaking to Japanese women. On the other hand, many of the Nisei objected on the grounds that they had not been given adequate opportunity at self-government before a stringent order was issued and that it was not their fault if the former police chief had been a dope.

Perhaps the most important center for the residents in Tanforan and perhaps the least prepared division is the medical center. Tanforan probably has a better staff of doctors, dentists, optometrists, and nurses than any other Assembly Center, but the facilities are so inadequate that the staff cannot possibly give the service that they wish to give. All the members of the medical staff are certainly overworked because the poor conditions in the camp are not conducive to good health. Drugs are not to be had, cotton mattresses are not available for weeks, and there is actually no hospital -- only a clinic -- in the camp. The entire set-up is atrocious, and one cannot blame the doctors for being furious. Indeed the hospital (or the excuse for the hospital) is a pitiful sight.

Because of the large staff of trained medical men and women a fairly comprehensive program was mapped out. The staff worked under the direction of a Mr. Woelfen and was under the technical direction of the United States Department of Public Health. One of the major tasks of the staff was the immunization of the residents of Tanforan against smallpox and typhoid fever before they left for the Relocation Centers. It was announced that such shots would be given on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 to 11 a.m.



throughout the month of May. However, the lines were so long (sometimes over 200 yards long in the wind) that many got disgusted and left. To take care of the stragglers the staff had to work overtime. The conditions were atrocious. After waiting for over an hour in line while the wind and the dust gush all over the waiters one finds that in the mass production many mistakes are made -- needles broken, an overdose given, and several other mishaps occur.

The hospital staff was given the extra task of signing requisitions for all necessary equipment. For example, if a hayfever or asthmatic patient could not stand a straw tick he had to get the O.K. of the medical staff before he could get a cotton mattress. All people with high blood pressure had to have the prescription of the doctor before they could get milk. Diabetics received no care unless the doctor specified that the individual was diabetic. Everything pertaining to health had to go through the clinic and one can well imagine the difficult and busy time that the staff had. Furthermore, baby formulas came under the medical jurisdiction.

As the mess halls served terrible food and since there were not adequate facilities for washing dishes, many cases of diarrhea occurred; in fact, in one night there were over 30 cases in one barrack. Doctors and internes had to keep an all-night vigil to care for these patients.

More than ten babies have been born in Tanforan. Some were sent out to the San Mateo County Hospital but many were born in the camp. When one looks at the wooden boxes improvised to keep the children and the bare room in which these children are kept, he immediately feels repugnant toward the entire set-up. The "hospital" in which the mothers are kept is no more than an empty barrack with no partitions whatsoever where the beds are lined up one next to the other. This physical set-up is so atrocious that many prospective mothers (43 expected in June) have become very fearful of what is to happen to them. There are no drugs, no convenient facilities to deal with emergencies. On May 31, one baby was born prematurely and when his life was in danger the medical staff attempted to get him to an oxygen tent in a County Hospital. However, it took hours to clear up the red tape involved in getting out of camp, and by the time the baby arrived



at the hospital it was too late. His death was announced to an indignant pub.  
on June 1.

The medical staff has attempted to handle all emergencies through clinics. In as much as the entire staff has but five barracks the various sections had to share their rooms and open at different hours. There are the Well Baby Clinic, the Prenatal Clinic, the Post Partem Clinic, the Chest Clinic, the Diabetic Clinic, the Dental Clinic (for emergency only), and the Optometric Clinic. All of these clinics operated about two hours a day and were seriously handicapped in their work by lack of equipment. For example, the dentists had to use those tools that they happened to bring themselves, for the Army has provided them with absolutely nothing, not even a chair. Optometrists can do nothing besides examine and send out glasses for repair.

The infirmary is kept open 24 hours a day for emergencies, and with conditions what they are in camp it is busy most of the time. The personnel on the medical staff can be commended for their hard and earnest work, but the lack of adequate medical facilities, the lack of drugs and medicine, the lack of cooperation on the part of the administrative officers is unexcusable. Many members of the staff have expressed a desire to resign rather than to work under these conditions, and others have expressed an indignance over the attitude of the Caucasian supervisors who apparently are not medical men and do not know much about medical work. Indeed the medical situation is bad, and the direct blame can be laid -- not on the Japanese staff working day and night -- but upon the Caucasian directors and administrators who apparently do not have the welfare of the evacuees sufficiently at heart to take the trouble to cut all the red-tape and the "proper channels" through which all Army orders must come.

One other very important feature of the camp cannot be ignored -- the mess halls and the diets. For the first week and a half all evacuees had to eat in the main mess hall, a huge room over 150 yards long with rows upon rows of tables. Here they were served, in cafeteria style (with no choice of food naturally), lima beans, canned food, cold tea, stale bread, and sometimes jello. The food was not fit for



human consumption, and many refused to eat. However, gradually one by one the outlying mess halls opened up, and there the food became a bit more decent.

Some of the outlying mess halls opened relatively soon because of the initiative of the people living there. Some interested worker with the cooperation of the various house-managers in the vicinity could organize a crew and started a kitchen. Since everyone was disgusted with the food in the main kitchen most people gladly chipped in and helped. The mess manager did all the organizing and directing of the kitchen -- except in regard to the actual cooking. The chief cook was directly responsible to the Caucasian director of the cooking.

The first man in charge of the mess apparently was more incompetent than many people thought. He came to Tanforan highly recommended and before anyone could stop him, he sent in all the requisitions for the food for the months of May and June to the Army Quartermaster Corps. The man apparently knew absolutely nothing about the Japanese diet and soon there were complaints concerning the nature of the food served as well as on the filth and the poor cooking. The man apparently did not know that rice and fish were enjoyed by many of the older Japanese and ordered such items as chili con carne and sauerkraut instead. Needless to say he was replaced before long by Mr. Faugherty a much more competent man. Mr. Faugherty did his best to change the orders and to get more bulk, for his predecessor had not ordered enough food to serve almost 8,000 people. The residents of Tanforan were told, however, that they would have to wait until July if they want better food for the orders were already in.

When the new kitchens opened, however, meat and fresh vegetables once or twice a week became possible and in comparison to what had formerly been served it was so good that the complaints died down.

Various problems arose in connection with the kitchens. First of all, the Japanese had never been too strict about time. However, they learned in Tanforan before long that if they didn't arrive at the mess hall in time they just simply did not eat. It is surprising how promptly they arrived; in fact, at the main mess hall the lines formed at 4:15 for a 5 o'clock meal. Just as in anything else



in Tanforan, people had to stand in lines to get their food. Only two of the kitchens served food family style and those were in the disfavor of the administration for disobeying orders. However, those eating in the kitchens agree that family style is the best, for people do not have to stand in line in the cold wind three times a day.

As the various kitchens opened, more of them had an adequate supply of food except one -- whose manager was a friend of the director of the commissary. Since this was the case, many young men roamed from one kitchen to another eating two or three times to get their full. In order to stop this, since others were not getting enough either, house managers had to stand at the doors to make sure that no one who did not belong at a particular kitchen ate there. Finally, after much red-tape, tickets of different colors were issued and each kitchen admitted only those with tickets of a certain color.

When it was found that each kitchen had to feed more people than it had room for, the serving had to be made in shifts. The first shift ate at 7:00 a.m., 12 m., and 5 p.m.: while the second shift ate 45 minutes later. Complaints came from those who were not too strict on time that the Nisei were too fresh in imposing such stringent rules. Furthermore, it was objected that the second shift got more food than the first because they were given anything that was left. Actually this complaint was not justified, but to calm the populace some kitchens shifted the hours weekly. Those who were in the first shift during one week were put in the second shift on the following week.

Another problem that arose in connection with the kitchens was in connection with the cooking of rice. The steel bowls with <sup>which</sup> the Army had provided the cooks were not suitable for boiling rice. The only type of bowl in which rice could be cooked in large quantities were the bowls used by the Chinese. Many Japanese organizations represented in the camp owned such bowls and offered to donate them to the administration, but the red tape once again held up the matter. Three weeks have passed and the matter is still unsettled, and the people are still eating untasty rice.

Without question of the factors conditioning morale, food is one of the most



important. The meal served during the day often determines the way a person feels throughout the day. The food for the first week was without doubt not fit for ordinary human consumption. Furthermore the kitchen was filthy and one could see left over food still on the supposedly washed dishes and utensils. If an individual brought his own things there was nowhere to wash them when he finished eating. However, as the new kitchen opened, food improved and cleanliness also began to prevail. The following is an analysis of the food served in kitchen No. 8, one of the best in the Center.

The following menus have been taken at random from those of kitchen 8 from May 5 to 25. On May 5, for lunch the residents were served miso soup (a Japanese soup), chili con carne, stewed corn, and jello. There was bread and cocoa for all and milk for children under seven years of age only. Breakfast for May 10 consisted of dried prunes, oatmeal, creamed salmon, bread, jam, and coffee, with milk for small children. Dinner on May 15 consisted of spiced beet salad, sukuyaki (Japanese stew), stewed prunes, rice, bread, and tea. On May 20, potato salad, cold ham, vanilla corn-starch pudding, bread, and tea were served. Breakfast on May 25 consisted of one half an orange, hot cereal, toast, jam, and coffee. Throughout the month, milk was given only to children under seven. However, since there were many instances of theft (one woman took a thermos bottle full of it for herself) sometimes the children had to do without. Older children could not get milk without a doctor's order certifying that the individual's health would be ruined without it. Other than the children under seven only the diabetic, the pregnant, those with ulcers or tuberculosis (if certified by the staff doctor) can get milk.

Looking over all the menus for the twenty days in questions we notice many deficiencies and shortcomings. To begin with the menus are planned only one day ahead of time, and there is poor selection and not enough variety. Among the foodstuffs that are deficient are milk, butter (there is absolutely no butter or any substitute on the table), and eggs.

More specifically, there are deficiencies in specific nutrients. The content



of calories is very low because there are very few fats and sweets; most people make this up by eating purchased candies or other things brought in by their friends. The amount of proteins is probably sufficient because of the supply of meat, beans, and fish. The protein is not of good quality for easy digestion, and there are no cheses and very little eggs. Probably there is not enough for growing children.

The supply of calcium is very deficient for those who do not get milk, for there is no substitute for milk offered. In iron there is a slight deficiency for young children and adults and a great deficiency for growing children and pregnant women. Rolled oats, beans, prunes, meats, and some vegetables are good sources, but they are not sufficiently rich. Not enough liver or eggs are served.

In vitamins there is a deficiency of Vitamin A because there is no butter. Carrots have vitamin A, but it is cooked in water and since the vitamin is soluble much of it is wasted. Only in stew is it preserved.

There is a deficiency in Vitamin B<sub>1</sub> (thiamin) because white bread is served instead of brown bread. Furthermore there are no whole grain cereals except rolled oats, nor is pork served. Vitamin B (riboflavin) is also deficient because there is no milk, not much eggs, and not enough spinach.

There is a heavy deficiency of Vitamin C because only small portions of citrus fruit are served occasionally. This may account for the fact that so many people seem to have perpetual colds in Tanforan. Furthermore, the vegetables are cooked too much or left to oxidize.

Certain changes have been made that may make the nutritive value of the diet even worse. Now that more white rice is being served after Issei complained and the supply of potatoes has been cut down, there will probably be more deficiency in all the nutrients. The use of miso for soup instead of vegetables will probably cause a deficiency in minerals and soluble vitamins since miso has very little food value.

There are several dangers in following such an inadequate diet. First of all, there may be a change in the growth of children. Diarrhea may occur from the poor food and the poor cooking, and unless better facilities are provided for



washing the dishes this danger is very great. Colds are very common because of the windy climate and partly because of the weakened condition of the individuals. It would be very difficult to get rid of a cold once a person catches one because of the severe deficiency in Vitamin C. The generally low energy level and the fatigue caused by the camplife likewise do not help to maintain a high health standard.

Superficial rules for sanitation serve their purpose but there are more basic problems in camp as far as health is concerned. The inadequate facilities with which the medical staff has to work and the diet which has so many deficiencies -- in fact, deficient for everything except proteins -- are not conducive to good health. It is indeed unfortunate that more competent individuals are not placed in positions with the responsibility of preserving human lives. The addition of more milk in itself would be a great boon, and diets should be planned by the week so that it could be balanced.

Thus we have a general picture of the administration and the special features of Tanforan. There are many inadequacies that are inexcusable even if the thing has to be done on a trial and error basis. A bit more foresight and planning may have prevented many of the heartbreaks that have occurred. Some departments have done a good job and are to be commended for their work -- especially the recreation department and the house managers group. The medical staff have tried their best but have not had the cooperation of their superiors. Since reorganization the maintenance crew have been doing an excellent job. The employment situation is still at a standstill. All in all the lack of efficiency, the placing of incompetent and untrained persons in responsible positions, and the lack of cooperation have hampered the efforts of everyone.

Before we go further in our description of camp life we must survey briefly the economic system in Tanforan. Money is the accepted medium for exchange, the W.C.C.A. scripts books are honored in the canteen, but since they are not transferable they cannot be used for exchange. Most individuals had been advised by the Federal Reserve Bank at the Control stations that they should bring their money in travellers' checks and for some time these individuals had to do without cash.



As we have already seen, the employment office was a mess. Workers were quite often selected on the basis of "pull" and not ability or training. Among the occupations that were open were: cleaning latrines, mess hall help, maintenance work, and a few other odds and ends. By the end of May there were virtually no jobs open other than that of cleaning latrines, and since no one wanted that job even when they were threatened with reprisals by the administration, latrines were cleaned in rotation. While the employment office was still in its strife, all labor was recruited by divisional heads or by the house managers.

On May 13, the W.C.C.A. announced the wage scale for workers in the Assembly Centers. The general wage level announced was \$8.00 a month for unskilled work, \$12.00 a month for skilled work, and \$16.00 a month for professional and technical work. Within the camp itself some further regulations were made. No one younger than 16 years of age was allowed to remain on the payroll. Although the W.C.C.A. announced that workers would put in 44 hours a week some people had to work much more while others did not work as long.

The following occupations were listed as unskilled work, although many of these jobs did not exist in the Center: health service attendant, book cleaner, canner, charwoman, cloth cutter, driver, fireman, form setter, gardener, garment presser, helper in construction work, housekeeping aide, janitor, junior clerk, junior typist, laboratory helper, laborer, laundry worker, maid, messenger, nursery helper, nursery school attendant, recreation attendant, school attendant, seamstress, watchman, woodcutter. Of this list only the driver, fireman, janitor, junior clerk and typist, laborer, messenger, nursery school helper and attendant, and recreation attendant were the jobs open in the Center.

Among the occupations listed as skilled were: accounting clerk, acetylene cutter, assembler, assistant teacher (adult education and nursery school), automotive mechanic, baker, barber, beautician, blacksmith, bricklayer, bulldozer operator, butcher, cabinet maker, carpenter, cement finisher, cement gum operator, supervising clerk, cloth cutter, cloth marker, community leader, concrete finishing machine



operator, concrete mixer operator, cook, cost and material clerk, designer, draftsman, electrician, engineering recorder, equipment inspector, grade B foreman, garment inspector, garment presser, glazier, graduate nurse, instrument man, junior accountant, laboratory assistant, library assistant, machinist, material inspector, mechanic, motion picture operator, music copyist, music teacher, musician, painter, paper hanger, pattern maker, plasterer, plumber, recreation leader, reporter, research assistant, rodman-chainman, roofer, saw filer, senior clerk, senior typist, sewing-machine repairman, shoe repairer, sign writer, stenographer, steward, stock clerk, storekeeper, telephone operator, teletype operator, timekeeper, tool repairman, tree surgeon, truck driver, welder. Of this list of skilled workers, in Tanforan there were a few accountants, a few teachers, a butcher, carpenters, clerks, cooks, electricians, nurses, library assistant, music teachers, painters, recreation leaders, reporters, senior clerks and typists, stenographers, stock clerks, storekeepers, timekeepers and some truckdrivers. Most of the occupations listed in the regulations did not exist in the camp.

Among the established occupations listed as professional and technical were: accountant, architect, artist, chief of party, Councilman, dentist, supervising draftsman, editor, engineer, grade A foreman, house manager librarian, music arranger, music director, nutritionist, pharmacist, physician, registered nurse, secretary, senior timekeeper, adult education teacher, nursery school teacher, translator, and writer. Most of these professions were represented in Tanforan. The architect, chief of party, and draftsman were the only ones absent. <sup>21/</sup>

Thus we can see that there were not too many jobs in Tanforan. The Center consisted largely of urban people and many were skilled or professional workers. For some jobs there are many applicants; other jobs have no comers. When the very low wage scales were announced, many who were working expressed a desire to quit.



One question that almost involuntarily arises is: where can the residents spend their money? If one has a Montgomery Ward or a Sears Roebuch catalogue, and hundreds of them poured into camp during the month, he can buy almost anything for the money is honored at the post office for money orders. In the camp itself one can buy things through friends on the outside or through the Caucasian workers who come in to help. The one place within the camp where one should be able to buy things -- the Center Store -- or the canteen, has long been the center of attention and dissatisfaction.

The canteen was open when the evacuees first came to camp, but the supplies of candy and soda water and tobacco went so fast that there usually was nothing left for people to buy. Toward the middle of the month there was no tobacco of any kind to be had except "roll you own" Bull Durham. Candy was always gone and people began buying them in large quantities whenever they were so fortunate as to find candy that they immediately bought out everything.

Finally, after many complaints from the populace, a new Center Store was opened in a large 120 foot room under the grandstand. It was open daily except Sunday from 9 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4:30 p.m., on Sundays it was open only in the mornings and only newspapers were sold. <sup>22/</sup> It was announced that as soon as stock were available the following items would be sold: candies, cigarettes, cigars, comic books, drug sundries, fresh fruits, fresh milk, magazines, matches, newspapers, pipes, smoking tobaccos, soda water, frozen ice cream novelties, items for personal hygiene (sanitary napkins, shaving necessities, toothpastes, toothbrushes, etc.), and limited list of clothing items including infants' wear. The announcement sounds very encouraging but to date we have seen nothing besides newspapers, cheap cigarettes, comic books, candy (if one is fortunate), soda water (if one is fortunate), and ice cream (if one is unusually fortunate). Other items have been promised but not yet delivered. <sup>23/</sup>

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<sup>22/</sup> Tanforan Totalizer, May 23, 1942.

<sup>23/</sup> Information Bulletin No. 9, Tanforan Assembly Center, May 19, 1942.

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As the new canteen began to operate some of the more intelligent of the Nisei began to ask where the enormous profits of the canteen went. All of the Nisei workers in the canteen were not allowed to see the books or to handle the money since all purchases had to be in script sold at another office. When the house-managers' special committee to investigate canteen profits approached Mr. McDonald, they received vague replies that meant nothing. When the assistant director of the camp, Mr. Davis, was approached on the matter he claimed that there were no profits -- that the canteen bought the candy for five cents and sold it for five cents. That last reply was ridiculous, and aroused the suspicions of many Nisei in the Center. Finally, Mr. Speares announced to the house managers that he had heard from his superiors that the profits from the canteen would be used to offset the cost of the free script books to be issued to every family. This naturally touched off the fireworks because the house managers were well aware of the fact that the W.C.C.A. was supposed to provide scripts valued at \$2.50 per person or a maximum of \$7.50 per family with \$4.00 per month for each couple. The question arose naturally: what happened to the money sent over by the W.C.C.A.? Suspicions of graft in the camp on the part of the administration were not alleviated by Mr. Davis' refusal to talk over the matter. Secret committees were organized to look into the matter and the matter was still in the air at the end of the month.

Thus, we can see that the economic system in Tanforan is restricted. Money is still the basic medium of exchange, but unless one has a mail order catalogue it is not worth very much. The pay rate at the Center is very low but perhaps it is just as well, for there is not much a person can do with the money.

Before we end our general survey of the camp organization we must give attention to the general rules and regulations set down by federal and local officials. All federal, Army, state, and county laws apply to the residents at Tanforan. Of the federal laws the notification of change of address to the draft board and to the alien registration headquarters was the center of attention for a long time. At first Mr. Lawson indicated that since the Japanese were interned by the government, the government officials should know where the individuals were without being notified.



He thought that the W.C.C.A. should take care of the matter anyway. However, an announcement to the contrary came out soon: "It is the responsibility of each individual evacuee to notify his Draft Board or Alien Registration Board of his change of address." 24/

Another rule that was applied in Tanforan and perhaps to other centers was in regard to movements from center to center. Frank E. Davis, assistant director, made the following ruling on the matter, "Families who were not living together as a single family unit prior to induction will not be permitted transfers between Centers except where there is a special problem involving physical or mental dependency." 25/

The first general set of rules and regulations came out on May 7, 1942, and the more specific set of rules are still in San Francisco awaiting the approval of the Army. The following is the first set of rules:

1. Residents of the Center should consult with the House Manager and discuss their problems with him.....
2. A Lost and Found Department has been established at the Housing Headquarters and all persons finding any material .....should immediately take them to this department where they can be claimed by the owner.
3. The borrowing or purloining of light globes, fuses, dishes, or any other utensils from unoccupied buildings, mess halls, washrooms, or other places must be discouraged as this only adds to the inconvenience of the persons who use these facilities.
4. Certain particular buildings and areas have been designated as quarantine areas and the residents of the Center should not enter those areas as this would only tend to spread diseases to other persons.....
5. Persons will not be allowed to move from the quarantine areas without the approval of the hospital manager.
6. The present supply of cotton mattresses is limited and persons now using

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24/ Tanforan Totalizer, May 15, 1942.

25/ Tanforan Totalizer, May 23, 1942.

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straw ticks will not be permitted to exchange them for cotton mattresses without prior approval through the Hospital Manager. The exchanges will be made only in cases of illness or for medical reasons.

7. When blackouts occur all lights should be immediately extinguished. It is requested that all persons remain in their quarters during the blackout in order that unnecessary confusion will not exist. Any light which is visible from outside the building will not be permitted.
8. All residents of the Center are requested to remain away from the outside fence.
9. The use of electric heating stoves, cooking utensils, irons, etc., in individual apartments should be discouraged as this places a heavy load upon the electric lines and causes fuses to blow out, thereby disrupting electric facilities for the entire building.
10. A limited number of oil stoves are available for families with babies and younger children and older persons, or in case of illness in the apartments. Application by eligible families should be made to the House Manager. 26/

In regard to visiting the following rules and regulations were laid down after some difficulties had been met:

1. Visiting and other contacts must be made between the hours of 10 a.m. to 12 m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. daily.
2. Visitors will not be allowed to accompany residents around the grounds, into living quarters or mess halls.
3. Visiting at the fences or in the grounds between the main buildings and the front fence will not be permitted.
4. All packages or parcels brought to the Center by visitors will be subject to inspection before delivery to the Center resident.
5. Visitors arriving at the Center must secure a Visitor's pass from the Internal Police Headquarters adjacent to the main gate. The visitor



will then be conducted directly to the reception parlor where an attendant will be available to arrange to call the person or persons to be contacted to the parlor.

6. Upon the conclusion of a visit or other contact, the receptionist will request the visitor to go directly to the main gate where the Visitor's Pass must be surrendered upon leaving the grounds. Visitors will be requested to leave the grounds promptly at the end of the established visiting hours.
7. Visitors and persons making other contacts will not be permitted to drive their private automobiles into the grounds. 27/

The following rules and regulations in regard to fire prevention and control were issued:

1. All fires observed by any resident shall be reported immediately to the Fire Department by the fastest possible means. This may include telephone, runner, oral signals or other means.
2. Immediately upon a fire siren call, all residents shall clear all roadways in order not to hamper the movement of equipment.
3. All residents except regular or volunteer firemen shall remain away from all fires so that firemen and equipment can work efficiently.
4. Burning of all rubbish, waste paper and other debris shall be done under the supervision of the Fire Department. No open fires will be permitted.
5. No candles shall be used by the occupants of dwellings for illumination.
6. All heaters, stoves or electric appliances shall be inspected by the Fire Department before being used in the dwellings, recreational halls, and other buildings.
7. No dry grass, rubbish, scrap wood, or other inflammable waste material shall be allowed to accumulate or be stored under, within or near any dwelling, halls, or other buildings.



8. No person shall remove or cause to be moved, any Fire Department extinguishers, hose carts or other equipment except for use at a time of fire, unless granted permission by the Fire Department.
9. No person shall place or cause to be placed any pennies or other metal objects behind blown out fuse plugs.
10. All entrances and exits to all buildings, fire houses and equipment shall be kept clear at all times.
11. All coals from kitchen stoves shall be emptied in steel or metal drums.
12. All garbage, waste paper, and other wastes from kitchens shall be stored in garbage cans, cartons or barrels until removed by collectors.
13. No smoking allowed in mess halls, recreation halls or any place where the public meets.
14. No burning matches or tobacco shall be thrown in or near any combustible material.
15. No cleaning fluids or other combustible or explosive liquids will be allowed in the dwellings.
16. No smoking shall be allowed in or near any buildings where fuel oil or other highly combustible materials are stored or kept.
17. No clothes or other combustible materials shall be hung in or near any heater, boiler, or fire.
18. The Fire Department shall be notified in advance of meetings and other functions where crowds may gather. 28/

In regard to health and sanitation these general notices were posted:

1. The health and welfare of every member of this community depends on the cleanliness and sanitary conditions in the grounds and facilities within the Center. It is necessary for every resident to do everything possible to keep the Center clean. Refuse should be deposited in garbage cans and other receptacles for that purpose.

2. In order to maintain the necessary sanitary standards a great amount of

-----work is required. This necessary labor must be supplied by the residents



of the Center. Crews are being organized at the present time, and it is hoped that no trouble will be experienced in getting sufficient men.

3. If necessary, penalties will be imposed on those who refuse to work, or who do not maintain proper sanitary practices. 29/

In regard to these general regulations it might be said that very few people actually took the trouble to read them and consequently they were very seldom followed in toto. However, the house rules determined by the House Managers and explained to everyone in both English and Japanese were usually more closely observed. Among the rules, which varied from house to house, were: All rooms must be kept clean at all times; toilets and showers adjacent to the barrack are to be cleaned in rotation by every able-bodied individual not engaged in full-time work; cooking in the apartments is prohibited except for those who must warm baby milk; no unnecessary noise should be made after 9:30 p.m.

In general the residents of the camp were law-abiding, but sometimes they did not know what the law was. Quite often it depended largely upon the ability of the House Manager to clarify points of doubt.



### III. The Social Organization

One of the bases for contention on the part of the more vociferous elements of the Japanese population in Tanforan, however these factions may otherwise differ from each other, has been that the camp facilities were not ready when the evacuation order had been put into effect. These individuals recalled that General DeWitt, commanding officer of the Fourth Army, had promised that no one would be evacuated until all the necessary facilities had been installed. Unfortunately, however, nothing apparently had been completed even on May 1, when the entire group affected by the first evacuation order to Tanforan came in. Many of the latrines were not ready; in fact, some of them are still in construction at the end of the month. Only one of the shower rooms was completed and none of them had hot water until the middle of the week following their arrival. Laundry facilities were not completed until the last week of May, and inadequate kitchen facilities had to be used for weeks. Even the houses were not ready until the week after the first arrivals came; consequently, much moving was involved after the barracks had been completed in the middle of the month. For the first few days the food was almost inedible, and many refused to go to the kitchens to eat. As far as the camp life was concerned, nothing was organized; everything seemed to be a mess. No doubt this condition rendered difficult the initial adjustment of the evacuees to camp life. Many were demoralized and bitterness was common. As the things slowly began to improve, however, many changed their minds, and before long, most people were cooperating to make Tanforan the best Assembly Center on the Coast.

The first main group to come to Tanforan came on April 30 and May 1. April 30 was a horrible day for it rained in torrents. All the baggage that had been left outside the Control Stations had been soaked wet and the people had to sleep in soggy clothes and blankets. Furthermore, some of the baggage was held up when the Bekins Storage bus was delayed for some reason or another and many people did not get their things until 10 or 11 o'clock at night. May 1 was not rainy but the conditions were not much better. Mud was to be found throughout the Center, and everything was filthy.

The evacuees were transferred from the Control Station in their respective



communities to the Assembly Center in Greyhound Busses. Once they arrived within the gates they had to sit in the bus for a half hour to wait for their turn to get out. During the induction all men were searched for contraband and all hand baggage was inspected. All intoxicating liquor, knives, and short-wave radios were confiscated. After the search the evacuees were asked to submit to a "medical examination" which consisted of taking off part of one's clothing so that a Navy doctor could look at one's skin near the abdomen in the search for signs of venereal diseases. Some of the women were quite indignant over the comments made by these men in regard to their physique. After the scant "examination" everyone had to stand in line for another half hour to register for a room. The heads of the families signed with the Japanese registrars working under Caucasian supervision. A guide, who apparently knew very little about the whereabouts of the barracks then took the individuals to their "apartments."

The apartments consisted of nothing more than an empty barrack or a converted horse stall within nothing besides a folded army cot. Many did not even have their straw mattresses. There were no brooms available to sweep out the filthy rooms and no where to put the hand luggage because the floor was so dirty. The bedding and the other baggage that was supposed to come soon after the evacuees arrived sometimes did not arrive until late in the afternoon and many had nothing with them. When the baggage finally arrived, some Nisei volunteer workmen sorted them out and delivered them in trucks through the slush and mud. The only kitchen that was open was the main mess hall, built for 1,500 people. Since over 3,000 were eating there, one had to go early if he wanted something to eat. Many had to go without food for the first day. Perhaps it was just as well for the food was so atrocious that many refused to eat anyway and those who did were quite often constipated for several days. For almost everyone that came in the first day and night was a nightmare and morale in the camp was very low. There was nothing but complaints although some tried their best to adjust themselves to the new situation.

Gradually, however, the morale began to rise. It became quite apparent that



there was much work in the camp to be done and unless the evacuees got together and did the work, their discomforts would have to be enlongated. Those who had the foresight to bring hammers and saws lent them to their neighbors and those with brooms shared them too. Before long, the evacuees began to make furniture out of the scrap lumber which had been left in huge piles by the carpenters who had built the barracks. Tables, chairs, wall shelves, and cabinets were soon in construction. Hand mops were improvised out of rags tied to a pole, and everyone began to fill in the holes in the walls through which the wind gushed in with the heavy cardboard in which the beds had been covered. Electrical extensions were soon connected and before long radios were blasting away. Ingenious devices were constructed to solve various problems. When it was discovered that no one could hear a knock on his door when the wind was blowing some began to put knobs of all kinds on their doors. Some tied a rock to a rope so that one could pick up the rock and knock hard; others drilled a hole through the door, extended a rope through it and tied an empty tin can on the other side so that when the rope was pulled the can would make enough racket to attract attention. The women objected to the open toilets and brought in wash cloths and boards to make partitions of their own. In many other ways the immediate problems were solved.

There was considerable cooperation among the residents even though they had never seen each other before. When a clothesline had to be put up the men nearby got together and borrowed a shovel and tools from the house-manager or some friends. One man dug the holes while another hauled water in a bucket from the shower room to make the ground softer. Someone else cut the wood and all together fixed up the line. This spirit of cooperation was especially common among the older people -- especially the first generation Japanese immigrants.

One might say in general that the Issei made a much better adjustment than the Nisei. Perhaps this was because the Issei were accustomed to a lower living standard, but perhaps the fact that many of them considered themselves prisoners of war and were thankful for their very lives may be more significant. Many of the Issei expressed



their contentedness; while the Nisei did most of the complaining.

Among the Nisei there were various attitudes taken. One rabid anti-fascist student remarked, "What the hell is this anyway? They herd us in here like a bunch of prisoners and then tell us that we're citizens of the United States. If we're citizens we have a right to get more decent stuff even if we did move for national defense!" Another Nisei was very bitter. When asked to work, he remarked, "Sure I'll work. I don't want my room and board for nothing. When I get out of here I don't want to owe the government a damn thing."

On May 5, many of the people who had been placed in faulty barracks, many who had been ordered moved by the medical staff, and those who were living in rooms too large for them were ordered to move. When the first group of evacuees came, they had to be put in the horse stalls with rooms for families of three and four persons because the newer barracks were not completed. Large families of five and six were put into two or three of these small rooms. When the second group came, all the smaller rooms were filled, and regardless of the size of the family they had to be put in the newer barracks with rooms for families of five to eight. Naturally some readjustment had to be made and this was done on May 5 and 6. When some individuals found that their friends had to move they became frantic. Rumors were ripe especially the one that all couples would have to take in another strange couple to fill up the empty spaces. Actually this move was considered by the administration, but new barracks were built in time to prevent such a move which would no doubt have created considerable commotion in the camp.

The social morphology of Tanforan is somewhat different from that which existed in the San Francisco Bay Region. Cliques that had been well organized remained and many groups formed on the basis of former acquaintances, but there were many new groups and an entirely different status for the individuals in many instances.

The relative status of the younger men rose, for those who were older were not of much use in the camp. Among the more conservative elements, especially those who



were inclined to be more "Japanesey" in their ways, a respect for the opinion of the older remained, but among those who had become considerably Americanized a demand rose that younger and new people take over the responsible posts. The house-managers were as a rule very young, and many of the older individuals objected.

New social groups arose. Those who lived together in the same barrack often formed informal gatherings after they got to know each other; they sat together in the mess halls, and conversed with each other in preference to others. Those in the administrative and the maintenance crews who worked together tended to band together to form groups. They had common responsibilities and they had to work together to get things done. They began to form very definite cliques as the month went on.

The various religious groups maintained their identity and within each group the cliques that had existed before continued to exist. Those from one church tended to stick with those from the same congregation, and were more distant to those of the same denomination that came from a different section of the Bay Region.

The family as usual remained one of the basic social groups in the camp. Without question it is the most stable of the groups in spite of the many conflicts that may arise. The greatest unity here seems to be in those families which have not been very Americanized. In these groups the children seem to accept the rule of their parents, who apparently cannot adjust themselves to the situation where their status is lower than that of their children.

In spite of the new groups that have begun to form, without question the most significant groups are the cliques that had formed before the group was evacuated and which are not perpetuated in Tanforan. The boys in the various athletic clubs throughout the Bay Region tend to band together and to work together in the same crews. The Bay Region J.A.C.L. leaders form a select clique of their own as do the so-called "radical" element. The only group that forms a very definite clique that threatens the others in their quest for prestige and power is the house-managers group, which is a composite of several former group members. <sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> The treatment of stratification here is obviously inadequate; some of these groups will be treated in more detail below.



Among the younger Nisei element, there are cliques of girls who had always "gone around" together, cliques of boys who had played together on various athletic teams. Within each of the larger groups there are factions, and it would be difficult to see the complex organization of these groups in such a short period of time.

There are now some general ways that are observed in Tanforan that are of sufficient uniformity that they can almost be classified as folkways. Some of these ways have been necessitated by rules and regulations set down by the administration. Others are a reaction to problems that were unexpected.

In regard to visitors, having Caucasian friends bring things in to the residents became a vogue after a few weeks had passed. Those who had seldom had contacts with non-Japanese frantically wrote to those whom they knew to ask them to bring things to them. Partly this action was caused by the lack of facilities within the camps, but some had to do this to maintain their pride and prestige. During the ten days between May 14 to 24, 1,135 visitors came to Tanforan.<sup>3/</sup> The visitors were asked to wait in the reception room until their friends were summoned by a messenger boy and in the room and in the adjoining balcony they discussed the terrible conditions of the camp. As the month went by the number of visitors increased to such a number that special regulations had to be put into effect.

The visitors usually brought food more than any other item. There was a pre-dominance of Italians, Chinese, Filipinos, and Negroes among these individuals. Quite often educators and religious people came in to see their friends. Besides food they sometimes brought such items as ironing boards, brooms, wash tubs, toilet paper, coca cola, soap. These items are indicative of the conditions in the camp.

The conversations seemed to center around the gripes about the camp. There were curious questions asked by the visitors and the residents with an air of knowing everything about the camp very patiently answered them and spread rumors.

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<sup>3/</sup> Tanforan Totalizer, May 30, 1942.

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While having visitors cannot be called a folkway, it has in a sense almost become an institution in Tanforan. The pride with which individuals show off and compare the caliber of their visitors is very interesting to note. <sup>32</sup>✓

Certain ways in the mess halls are observed. First of all, the people usually come on time to eat or else they come early and stand in line. This practice was begun early in the month when some individuals were not given anything to eat when they showed up in time. Lines formerly formed in front of the main mess halls almost one hour before the eating time, and now, even if there is plenty of food, many people come early.

In the outlying mess halls, most individuals bring their own plates, cups and utensils. Almost everyone eats with forks or tablespoons and very seldom can anyone be seen eating with chopsticks. No doubt the fact that Tanforan has an urban population has much to do with this lack of chopsticks. Once the groups are seated at the table there is not much conversation unless the people know each other intimately. Otherwise, the group that came together mumbles a few words and eats as fast as possible to get out or to get a second helping if there is anything left. Since many people do not know how to eat correctly with knives and forks the sight is pitiful, but most of the people manage in some way or another. Quite often the older people use the tablespoon to eat with and the fork to shove food on the tablespoon. They, however, are not the only ones who do not know how to eat correctly. The language used at the table is usually Japanese although the Nisei sometimes prefer to use English. Among the more radical elements, which usually sit together, American ways and the English language are stressed.

Families usually sit together but the conflict between the children that would ordinarily occur if home does not come out so often in the mess halls. No doubt the fact that so many different people are present makes the difference. No one dresses

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<sup>32</sup>✓ Perhaps the tacitly accepted subordination to the Caucasian can explain this attitude and reaction. Many of the "Japanesey" individuals think of having Caucasians speak to them as an unusual occurrence. To them, all Caucasians are supercilious. Therefore, if any Caucasian should be friendly enough to take the trouble to come to Tanforan, then they feel very honored.

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up to eat, in fact, most people do not even wash their faces or hands.

In the latrines and showers certain uniform behavior patterns are cropping up. The women with very few exceptions revolted to the idea of mass toilets. Near the hospital there was one latrine for women in which there was only one bowl, and the women preferred to wait in line for twenty minutes to go to that one than to go into the regular latrines with eight or sixteen bowls in a row. Toward the end of the month, the women put up dish towels and tore off the doors in the horse stalls to make their own partitions.

In the shower rooms the men undressed in the washing room and left their clothes there while they went into the showers in the next room, but the women apparently could not think of such a crude procedure. The showers facing the door were always vacant; while those on the other side were always full. The women preferred to go there and undress even at the risk of getting their clothes soaked wet. Some of the older people preferred to take baths in the laundry rooms in the presence of others in the laundry bowls.

All sorts of clothes are worn in Tanforan, but usually the young boys wear jeans, while many of the girls go around in slacks. Very few women wear high-heel shoes although some of them do on Sundays or when they have visitors. Some men also wear their suits on such occasions, but such formal dress is very uncommon in Tanforan. There are some very proud Issei who always wear a coat and hat when they go out, but they are very scarce. Young girls in their "teens and a bit older usually wear their flats and everyday dresses. Searsucker dresses are rather common in Tanforan. Sometimes Issei can be seen walking about in kimonos, but this is not too common.

It is in this setting that the evacuees in Tanforan live their everyday lives. To some it is filled with excitement and new happenings; to others it is nothing more than a boring routine. Those who work have so much to do that they seldom have time for other things.

Actually there are but a few places where people can spend their money even if they worked or had any saved. The canteen is one source of goods, but there is



seldom anything there to be purchased. Therefore, many resort to other sources. The Montgomery Ward and Sears Roebuck catalogues for mail orders are one very important source of goods. Other sources of consumers' goods include friends on the outside who bring things to them; friends who send things; stealing; and organized buying. Theft is rather common in Tanforan in spite of the fact that all evacuees get locks for their doors soon after they arrive. Organized buying started more or less spontaneously in the camp. Some of the evacuees had apparently made friends with their grocers who came down to visit them. When the grocers learned of the difficulties of their friends they offered to bring things to the camp for them provided they bought a reasonable amount of food. Inasmuch as everyone wanted things they got together and made their orders together. By the end of the month, this way had become crystallized, and grocers sent in regular clerks to take orders regularly. When Mr. Greene learned of this, he was furious and threatened all sorts of reprisals but thus far nothing has happened. The administration is fearful that private individuals will take unfair advantage of the evacuees.

Usually those who work in Tanforan are of the younger age-group. There are relatively few Issei who are working. Usually the young man in the household works in some job or another. The old men and women are generally retired. There are several reasons for this. The women of the house must do the wash, which includes the sheets; this takes much time and effort. This is not to say that women do not work; there are many young women who are holding responsible positions. The old men do not work usually because they cannot understand English so well and are too weak to do heavy work. Since Tanforan is somewhat like a frontier community most of the work requires some physical strength, and old men would easily tire.

The beginnings of private enterprise are showing its head in Tanforan, in spite of the administration rule that there is to be no private enterprise within the camp. Part of this is due to the lack of facilities in the camp. The administration promised a barber shop during the first week, but we have yet to see one with



all the sanitary facilities. However, hair grows whether the camp is providing barbers or not, and with several dozen barbers in the camp the temptation of their friends was apparently too great. At first the barbers hesitated to cut hair but when their friends insisted, they obliged. Gradually, rumors went about the camp, and soon a number of individuals began to ask for haircuts. The barbers worked all day in an improvised chair, using the electricity from the barrack, but without sanitation facilities. They insisted that they were not paid for their work, but their friends and others insisted on leaving "tips."

In the showers the floors are filthy with mud, and until the end of the month there were no boards on which the bathers could stand. Therefore, many began to make geta (a Japanese wooden shoe) to walk around the shower rooms. Some were unable to make these shoes and carpenters who made several "gave" them away for "tips,"

When the laundry facilities were inadequate the evacuees were forced to do their own wash -- even sheets. These sheets were very difficult to clean, partly because they are so large but mostly because Tanforan is so dusty. Several men who had worked in laundries and who had outside contacts with the laundries still operating suggested that the evacuees get together to send out the laundry (flat laundry) all at once in order to get a cheaper rate and delivery service. This idea was approved by the administration but with the qualification that all the collecting and marking within the camp was done by those paid by the W.C.C.A.

Thus, we can see that the beginnings of private enterprise in Tanforan cropped up largely out of necessity. Many of those accepting money for their services did not want it to begin with but felt that something had to be done to meet the problems caused by inadequate facilities.

In the absence of a full-fledged money economy, several substitutes crept in. When the men in the Men's Dormitory discovered that they could not spend their money, they gambled with high stakes recklessly. However, more significant was the reaction of the younger element in their quest for prestige.

Before evacuation individuals had competed with each other for money or for



commodities which money could buy. Now there was not much sense in continuing competition on the same basis. The competition centered on prestige. All W.C.C.A. workers are given yellow buttons with the inscription "W.C.C.A. CENTER" and the family number of the individuals. It was not long before those wearing such badges began to show off and to "lord it" over those who were not working. Many people applied for jobs in order to get the buttons, and a constant question haunting all work foremen was, "When do I get my badge?" Furthermore there was competition for jobs that did not require much heavy work. All sorts of dirty tricks were played -- including "red-baiting" in order to get badges and soft jobs.

In Tanforan, as elsewhere, the family remained the basic social unit. There were several things that happened, however, and they were tied up rather closely with the whole issue of the war and evacuation. Especially in regard to parent-child relationships was this issue important.

When the atrocious conditions in the camp became apparent, many of the Nisei were thoroughly disgusted. Not being acquainted with the background of the evacuation and usually not having sufficient interest to study the matter carefully, many became bitter and questioned the existence of democracy in America. Many blamed the whole thing to racial discrimination, and the more intelligent who had read the Tolan Committee hearings objected vociferously to the fact that German and Italian aliens were getting better treatment than American citizens of Japanese ancestry. In this atmosphere many of the Issei felt supreme. They glowed over with the wonders of Japan and many of the Nisei were actually convinced that after the war they may as well return to Japan. When other Nisei, who had been more Americanized, objected, the answer always came back, "If America is so wonderful and democratic, if the Caucasians are our true friends, then why are you in the concentration camp even if you are Americans?" This was one question that could not be answered without beating around the bush.

On the whole the children got along with their parents quite well whether they agreed with their views or not. Some Issei very definitely felt that everyone was a



part of America and many had tears in their eyes at the flag-raising ceremony when their sons and daughters saluted the American flag. They were glad to see their children true and patriotic Americans. On the other hand, there were both Issei and Nisei, and especially the younger Kibei who felt very strongly for Japan. They criticized everything and demanded that they be treated well or the Japanese government would take reprisals. Some were foolish enough to write to the Spanish consulate that was handling Japan's diplomatic problems in behalf of the welfare of the Nisei in the camp! No generalization can be made except that there were so many different attitudes among the Issei and the Nisei that no general statement could be made. Quite often Issei were more American than the Nisei.

There was one group that remained completely American regardless of where the chips may fly. This was the "radical" element. Many of these individuals, perhaps as an overcompensation, absolutely refused to speak Japanese to anyone -- even their own parents. Needless to say, the conflicts within these families were many.

There were other factors in domestic relations, however, besides the opinion concerning the war. The fact that everyone in a family had to live in one room with no partitions made some things very difficult. Some had registered as one family when as a matter of fact they constituted several. Following the patrilocal pattern of Japan, some had in one family the older generation, their children and their wives and the grandchildren. With several married couples in one room, trouble was bound to arise. There was no privacy; in fact, young couples in rooms by themselves had to refrain from their normal practices because everything in one room could be heard clearly in the next. This lack of privacy was one of the major objections in the camp. Some groups hung up blankets and made their own partitions, but many could not afford to use their blankets in that manner when they needed them to stay warm.

Courtship and friendships between the opposite sexes were another basis for contention. Usually courtships that had existed before evacuation were continued in the camp. Some longed for their boy friends in the Army; while others struck up new



friends at the dances and recreation halls. Actually there was not much to do. Almost every night there was some entertainment but not of such high caliber. Boys could not go visiting because the parents of the girl would be in the same room and he would have to restrain himself unduly. When the couple stayed out late in spite of the bitter cold, the parents would complain because there had been rumors over the camp concerning the activity of young couples in the empty barracks. As we have already seen, the dances were also a cause for concern on the part of the parents.

Thus far there have been no marriages in Tanforan even though they have been contemplated for some time. The following announcement was made to the public:

"For those residents contemplating marriage, licenses will be issued by W. H. Augustus, San Mateo County Clerk, who will call at the Center, Geo. A. Greene, director of the service department, announced today, Matrimony-minded couples are asked to advise Mr. Greene of their intentions and arrangements will be made for their licenses." ✓

Several couples who had long been engaged are now laying their plans for marriage.

Religion is the one institution in Tanforan which apparently is not censored. On May 2 several of the Protestant ministers in the camp had a conference with Mr. Lawson as did some Catholic priests who came in from the outside, and on the 3rd, the first Sunday, these two denominations held their services in different mess halls. Since that time other groups have organized their groups, and by the end of the month a fairly comprehensive church program was in progress.

On May 10, the second Sunday, more denominations came in. The Protestants, using Mess Halls 13, 14, and 15, had the following activities: Sunday School, English (Young People's) service, Japanese service, and the evening following program for both young people and adults. That Japanese language services were permitted seemed to be a great concession, for everything else in camp was so strictly censored. The Protestant young people's services were conducted by Nisei students at the Pacific School of Religion.

The Catholics held their Confession, Mass, and Sunday School as usual with priests who came in from the outside. Even when they were in San Francisco the Caucasian priests came weekly to give the services and this practice was continued in Tanforan. The



Catholics met in mess hall 3.

The Buddhists, meeting in mess hall 17, carried on nonsectarian services only in Japanese. They had both Sunday school and their regular services.

On the following Saturday, the Seventh Day Adventists held their first service. It was indeed surprising to see the large representation of Adventists among the Japanese. These very devout people held their Sabbath school and services in Japanese in mess hall 17. <sup>34</sup>✓

Before long, the Buddhists and the Protestants began more comprehensive programs. The Protestants planned besides their worship and broad program for young people including an evening fellowship meeting weekly, singfests, discussions, outdoor meetings, music, and a "Get Acquainted" social. <sup>35</sup>✓

The Buddhists organized under their many reverends and planned an American Buddhism program. Their organization included a number of the younger Nisei leaders who reorganized the Y.M.W.B.A. (Young Men and Women Buddhist Association) which planned to carry on their activities as they had in the past. Their program included devotionals, inspirations, forensic meets, religious studies, and socials. <sup>36</sup>✓

All reverends in the camp agreed on one thing: more people were coming to the worship than before. One Buddhist reverend avered an opinion, "People do not have much to do now and want to have somewhere to go. Also this gives them an excellent opportunity to get together. As far as I am concerned I should like to see them come to church for other reasons but if they come, we shall try to make them good Buddhists and good Americans."

Spending leisure time is a major problem in Tanforan. All those who are not working have very little to do all day; while those who do work have nowhere to go or nothing to do when they are off duty. Some spend their time gossiping; others visit their friends; some walk around the yard, while still others lie on the grass. Reading books that individuals had brought along is one pastime; some spend much time reading the Bible or some book that a friend had brought along. Many of the older

<sup>37</sup>✓ Tanforan Totalizer, May 15, 1942.

<sup>38</sup>✓ Tanforan Totalizer, May 30, 1942.

<sup>35</sup>✓ Tanforan Totalizer, May 23, 1942.



people who had worked hard all their lives are bored with their uneventful life and complain that they have nothing to do.

One 59-year-old woman, a Seventh Day Adventist, spends her average day in the following routine. She rises early in the morning and does her daily wash before going to breakfast. After breakfast she reads her Bible for an hour and then visits her neighbors. After the sun comes up she goes across the street and sits on the grass across from her barrack until lunch and chats with her friends. At lunch she sits with her next door neighbors, one of whom brings some Japanese delicacies to eat with the regular food. After lunch, while her husband cleans up the yard, she once again either sits on the grass or stays at home and reads some Japanese scriptures. After supper she retires early. Thus we find that except for Saturday, her sabbath, her days are rather uneventful. She has very few friends on the outside and has visitors very seldom. This perhaps is an unusual case when considering the camp as a whole, but among the older people it is not too uncommon.

In such a place a well-organized recreation program is indispensable. As we have already seen, the recreational program was well planned and perhaps is one of the best departments in the camp. Quite often one sees groups of boys or girls of approximately the same age playing softball in the track under the supervision of one older person -- usually a college graduate.

There are many spontaneous groups that form, however, when one person brings out some equipment. It is interesting to note the change of rules in softball games that have been caused by the nature of the restricted facilities. In the large grounds in the infield all of the regular rules hold, but in the track special rules have been made. If a ball is hit outside the fence it is a foul ball regardless of what direction it had been hit; in other words one could hit a home run and get nowhere. Similar changes have been made in regard to other rules.

The age groups one finds in the track vary all the way from young children from 4 or 5 years of age to those over 25. All young people with interest, even young



mothers, sometimes play. The general recreational setup is good, but it is as yet far from adequate to meet the needs of the camp -- especially the needs of the older people.

Perhaps one of the most interesting points that we might discuss is the political organization within the camp among the Japanese, the leadership that has arisen among the Japanese, and its relationship to the Caucasian administrative heads.

On May 2, Mr. Lawson called in the house managers' group, the only group of Japanese that was representative of the camp that was organized that early, and presented them with some ideas that he had concerning self-government. He outlined a plan whereby he would select five precincts, each of which was to elect a councilman. These were to be in a Council of Five which was to act in advisory capacity. Since all the people were not yet in camp, he asked the house managers to select some councilmen who would act until an election could be held. The managers representing houses from 2 to 13 selected one man from their number; those from 14 to 25 selected one of their men, and so on until there were four councilmen. The fifth representative was to come from the infield, which at that time was empty. This Council of Four actually functioned over a month for the election that was promised "in days" stretched out and the deliberations went on and on until the month of June rolled on. Even then, the plans were not complete.

It was indeed unfortunate that some of the most incompetent men in the camp happened to get into the Council. Most of the councilmen were passive in their personality and seldom had the nerve to stand up for their rights. Actually all they amounted to was a messenger boy who went into the office and got some message for the public. There was one man, however, a former optometrist of Berkeley, who took this responsibility seriously and tried to do his work. Unfortunately he had many enemies. Even though he was a J.A.C.L. man, the J.A.C.L. disowned him because he was so self-centered in his interests. The Oakland Young Democrats despised him because of his "fascistic" leanings and his general incompetence. Others hated him because of his red-baiting tactics.

It was not long before trouble broke out in Tanforan. When a group of professional writers tried to organize a newspaper in camp, this man opposed them on the



grounds that the "proper people" were not in charge and attempted to fill the staff, perhaps unwittingly, with people who had held pro-Japanese views before the outbreak of war. He began red-baiting those on the staff and whispered into Mr. Lawson's ears. Actually, as we shall see, this later gave the administration a powerful weapon.

In the meantime, the house-managers' group became a very powerful group. Inasmuch as the house managers had cared for the physical comforts of those in their charge everyone in the barrack was deeply indebted to them. Also, because there were managers from all parts of the camp, it was the one group that was very representative. Inasmuch as there was no other place where the people could voice their complaints the house managers' group became eventually the central point at which all "gripes" in the camp were aired and handled. Since the managers had no power to remedy obviously inadequate conditions, they always made their requests for action to the Council of Four. However, the Council never got anywhere with Mr. Lawson and finally a break appeared between some of the house managers and the spokesman of the Council, the gentleman from Berkeley.

As the election rolled along, several interesting things occurred. The radical and the liberal elements in the camp were thoroughly disgusted with the slow-thinking and self-centered Council and determined to throw it out. The J.A.C.L. was interested in getting their own men in. Others were more interested in getting in men who were competent to do the work regardless of what group they belonged to.

The J.A.C.L. big-wigs held a closed session among themselves and planned ways and means of taking control of the camp. In direct contact with the national headquarters in Salt Lake City, these leaders took orders from above. Some of the younger members of the J.A.C.L., even those who held important posts, were kept out if they were not ardent followers of the J.A.C.L. "big five." Two men who were responsible for the money held by the San Francisco chapter were kept out of these conferences, even though they had both served faithfully as house managers and had done more than the big-wigs for the welfare of the residents in Tanforan. What transpired at the meeting no one but the few in attendance know, but it is interesting to note that the Town Hall



discussion of the following week practically turned out to be an advertising campaign for the J.A.C.L.

In the meantime the Young Democrats of Oakland held their discussions. Their group had become a center of a group of radicals and liberals in the camp. They had gained considerably in numerical strength and many college students and former J.A.C.L. men were attracted to this group because their proposals and contacts seemed more valuable than the feeble gestures made by the usually vague J.A.C.L.

The Councilman from Berkeley tried to appease both groups but apparently got nowhere. Because of his anti-liberal notions, he naturally leaned more closely toward the J.A.C.L. On May 24, he called together some of the J.A.C.L. leaders and asked them how they might manipulate the election rules so that they could get some individuals in and keep others out. Apparently, Mr. Lawson had ruled that if any election rules are made they would apply to every individual in the camp and that no personal exceptions would be made. The pro-tem Council was then asked to submit a plan for qualifications of the candidates and voters. The problem bothering the gentleman from Berkeley was briefly this: if all Issei were left out of the Councilmen's post, then some valuable friends of his could not get in; on the other hand, if the Issei were eligible, they would control the vote and eliminate him.

During the last week of May and the beginning of June, a minor revolution against the rule of the administration broke out, especially among the house managers and the hospital staff. On May 31, a baby died because of inadequate facilities in the "hospital" and this along with the slowness with which drugs were sent in aroused the ire of the doctors. The house managers who likewise had seen the conditions when their tenants were ill took up the cry and complained bitterly against the administration. At the same time, the whole question of the canteen profits exploded and the house managers began to ask the administration embarrassing questions. It was during this squabble that the final election rules were set down.

During the period of revolt, the gentleman from Berkeley and a young Issei who



who particularly outspoken in his criticism split. One felt that the residents ought to fight for their rights and stop boot-licking the administration and begin demanding things that are rightfully theirs. Furthermore, the fifth councilman who had just been added was too intelligent to follow the orders of the unofficial spokesman.

While there may not have been any bad intentions, it is interesting to note that the qualifications for candidates that finally came out made it impossible for any of the enemies of the Berkeleyan to run for office. The qualification requiring citizenship left out the Issei who had demanded rights and who without question was one of the most competent men in the camp. The age limit of a minimum of 25 years left out the new councilman who had opposed him and a large number of students who without question would have opposed his rule. When these things became known, the residents in the camp were furious and a committee composed of all elements -- radical to reactionary -- was formed to demand a hearing of Mr. Lawson concerning election rules. They objected to the fact that the Council which was only temporary drawing up the rules and they all suspected that they had fixed things to keep themselves in power.

In the meantime, the revolt against the administration came to a head. The administration, irritated by the actions and demands of the house managers, threatened to blacklist those who were outspoken as "agitators" and to send them to a prison camp for the duration of the war. Naturally this shut up those who had been making legitimate demands, especially those who had been warned personally by the chief of police. On June 3, the threat was officially announced in the house managers' meeting. This gave terrible power to the administration. It seemed rather strange that the administration could not take constructive criticism, and the residents suspected that they were trying to cover up something.

On June 4, Mr. Lawson relinquished his position as camp manager and Mr. Davis took over. Those who had objected to atrocious camp conditions were indeed angry because they hated Davis much more than Lawson. Mr. Davis seemed to be a man that accepted as a matter of course the subordination of the Japanese to the Caucasians,



and resented any cries for equal rights. The Councilman from Berkeley had in the meantime wormed his way into the personal good graces of Mr. Davis, as he had done when Mr. Lawson was director, and defended Mr. Davis. Needless to say, the split widened, and many saw the dangers involved. Should the Berkeleyn get so hungry for power in the camp that he whispers "agitator" into Mr. Davis' ears as he whispered "radical" into Mr. Lawson's ears in connection with the newspaper, some men in the camp would be in grave danger. Many realized this and began to harbor their regrets in silence.

At the time of writing the matter stands at this point. The election to come probably will not be entirely democratic. Many of the Issei and Nisei have never voted before and will not be sufficiently interested to make their own choice. The house managers without question will be an interesting and a powerful group, for their tenants will probably vote their way. The internal intrigues, the conflicts between the J.A.C.L. -- between those who want to stress voluntary cooperation and those who wish to stand for their rights -- may lead to "deals" that will make things grossly unfair. <sup>37</sup>✓

It is interesting to note the type of leadership that is coming out in the camp. The leaders are all very definitely younger men -- ranging from about 21 to 40 years in age. They are all fairly aggressive individuals and all of them have a good speaking knowledge of English. Most of the Issei leaders seem to be smart enough to "lay low" and cooperate or plod on their Nisei cronies. While there are some college graduates and some professional men, most of the leaders seem to be practical men who have worked their way up. College men with training are usually given a hearing but unless they can show themselves to be practical and useful, they are usually left out.

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<sup>37</sup>✓ Although the constitution of the J.A.C.L. states that it is not a political organization, it seems to be working in that way. It seems to be working to maintain the power they have at all costs. The leaders and their small clique of "trusted men" in the various camps are working together to keep out the younger elements that are threatening their hold.

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It seems quite obvious that democratic control is not to be had in Tanforan -- neither on the side of the administration nor on the side of the Japanese. Control is from the top down, and among the Japanese personal animosities and internal intrigues are more important factors than ability in the selection of leaders.

In the educational field, in spite of the comprehensive educational program in Tanforan it seems that imitation of the elders and learning at home are the two bases for socialization. It is amazing to find such a large number of people, especially young people, who speak Japanese so fluently and English so poorly. While most Nisei have been considerably Americanized, some of the younger children show a tendency to become more like their parents since their outside contacts have been cut off.

The schools in Tanforan are run by students from San Jose State and San Francisco State. Four of the teachers have credentials but none of them have any experience. Judging from the caliber of the teachers the school is a farce. Attendance apparently is not compulsory although most Issei have enough respect for educational work that they force their children to attend. Besides the basic three "R's" the children are taught "Americanization," which consists of saluting the flag and singing national hymns. While the Town Hall Series was planned for the discussion of deeper aspects of democracy -- deeper than flag-waving -- it is so completely controlled by the administration that a free expression of ideas -- one of the cherished rights of democracy -- is impossible. All in all, the educational program is a mess even though it must be said that those in charge -- an optometrist and some college and high school student assistants -- have tried very hard.

It might be well for us to discuss some of the social groups and cliques that have formed in the camp. The groups that we have chosen are by no means representative nor are they the most important ones in camp. They are the groups for which information was accessible.

The "inner clique" of the J.A.C.L. is an interesting group. It is well known that the J.A.C.L. has left or rather placed "key men" in each of the many camps in order to maintain their power and control. In Tanforan there is a small group of "trusted" men



who had been leaders in the Bay Region. These men meet secretly among themselves and what is planned at their meetings is not known to anyone but those attending.

The group is an exclusive one and even J.A.C.L. members are left out of the discussions. The general age level runs from about 25 to 35 years in age; younger men who have been active are in contact with these men but are left out of the deliberations. These men had in general been in the professional or trained field before evacuation, but in camp they held such posts as mess hall manager and camp dentist. Some did not work at all. Religiously, most of them are Christians, although Buddhists are not necessarily left out. English is used predominantly although most of these leaders have a fairly good speaking knowledge of Japanese; their conversations are sometimes interspersed with Japanese idioms and phrases. Actually, this group may be a very important factor in the political structure of the camp.

The group sticks to the J.A.C.L. party line, regardless of what their personal opinions may be. In regard to the evacuation, the J.A.C.L. had advocated the policy of "voluntary cooperation" at all costs, and in camp these men defend that view even though they are shown to be wrong in that respect. Many, no doubt, realize some of their errors, for when they were asked to defend their view before the Town Hall, they accused the Town Hall committee of attempting to crucify the J.A.C.L. If they had nothing to hide, they would probably have been glad to present their views.

In general, this group has a tendency to be super-patriotic, although their patriotism consists largely of supporting flag raising ceremonies and advocating the singing of national anthems. As far as their own practices go, there is no semblance of democratic rule in the group.

It is interesting to note the reaction of the group to persons whom they do not know. If they find someone unusually active who might threaten their hold, they first suspect him of being a member of the Oakland Young Democrats group and usually suspect him of being a "red hot." Thus far, this group has been fairly inactive and have not resorted to red-baiting as they did when they were in San Francisco before evacuation.



In general it can be said that the men are fairly intelligent, and no doubt better informed than the average man in the camp. Perhaps the fact that they are in constant touch with the national headquarters may account for some of their knowledge. In keeping with their policy of voluntary cooperation, these men on the whole have been very cooperative with the camp administration and have made a fairly good adjustment to camp life.

It is very interesting to note, however, that on the same day that one of these men had a son another child died because of inadequate medical facilities. The reaction of the group was interesting. Perhaps for the first time it struck these men that things were not well in Tanforan, and their resentment was very great. However, no action was taken.

The group has a strong "in-group" feeling and those in the clique can get any information. Those on the outside are completely ignored. Indeed the group has a strong social solidarity.

Among the rituals of the group, as we have already noted is flag waving in the presence of officials, regardless of what they may actually be thinking. Among their taboo ways one interesting one is their taboo on personages. They generally do not tolerate slanderous remarks about the "big five" leaders in Salt Lake City, although sometimes they take insults without fighting back if they know that the weight of argument is against them.

The group has many verbal symbolisms but perhaps the most interesting and perhaps the most significant is "American." Their conception of an American seems to be a person of any race who is so loyal to the United States that he will cooperate with what the Caucasians say regardless of what this cooperation will mean in terms of his democratic rights. All the desirable qualities in terms of Christian ethics are given to this stereotype. The American of this group is conservative, intelligent, and peace-loving. Perhaps the men in this group are too intelligent to fall of what they say, but at least before the public they seem to work with this conception.

Another interesting verbal symbolism is "radical." Actually what they call a



radical is anyone with whom they cannot get along, although Christian and Y.M.C.A. leaders whom they do not like are usually left out of this category. The Oakland Young Democrats are usually classified in this category, although some of these men are becoming a bit more conciliatory toward this group. A "radical" consists of a man who schemes to overthrow the J.A.C.L. by all means possible and who will lead the Japanese people to destruction by their drastic actions. A radical sets a bad example which will leave an unsavory taste in the mouths of Caucasians who will then feel that Japanese are undesirable. Apparently these leaders accept tacitly their subordination to Caucasians.

The limits of acceptability consist of following the party line. Sometimes when local conditions demand it they turn somersaults and make very inconsistent remarks to justify their stand. Any man who deviates from this pattern is left out of the group although they may stay on a personally friendly basis. Many young J.A.C.L. men from the Bay Region who had questioned the wisdom of the party stand and who had revolted against the "big five" have been left out of the group -- the "inner sanctum."

In spite of the split within the J.A.C.L. over policy this group will no doubt play an important role in the days to come. It is unfortunate that democratic control does not exist in the national organization. It seems to be organizing along lines that were followed by labor groups and even Hitler when they were in their formative stages. The inner clique of the "elite" do the planning for the "masses" who are to follow. The inner clique is exclusive, and all questionable men are kept out. ✓

Another interesting group in Tanforan is the so-called "radical" element. The central core of this group is the Oakland Young Democrats, although there are many outsiders in the group -- including some J.A.C.L. men. There are a few -- one or two -- actual Communist party line men, but they have thus far been inactive. The leadership has been taken by those who are "democratic" in the sense that they are violently anti-fascist. There are several factions in the group, each with its own ideas and each with its separate contacts on the outside.

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38 ✓ This is not to mean that the J.A.C.L. has any sympathy for Hitler; they probably hate him as much as any other American group.

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The group is scattered throughout the camp, but they usually gather in a laundry room every night to cook something and to have their "bull sessions." Very few of these individuals are working in Tanforan, although some of them do hold important posts in the employment office and in the newspaper. Some of them are working in the educational department and some are working in recreation. Before coming to Tanforan they worked as W.P.A. workers, gardeners, and other occupations in the skilled class and some had "white collar" jobs. Most of the "radicals" are high school graduates who had educated themselves with their own reading. Most of the members are acquainted with the writings of Marx and Lenin although very few have the background to understand the literature they claim to read. By no means are they Marxian, and they usually use Marxian concepts to make fun of each other. There are a few Brilliant college graduates in the group, but they are not the leaders. The New Republic is the fountain of knowledge for the milder elements while the New Masses or the People's World is the standby for those who are farther along in their thoughts.

Taken as a whole, the group is younger than the J.A.C.L. group, in fact the age runs between 20 to 25 years. On the whole, they seem to be more alert than the J.A.C.L. and are better acquainted with the basic issues involved in the war. Their interpretation of the evacuation is interesting. In the world today there is a struggle between the fascistic and the democratic forces. The conflict is not only international but it also exists within the United States. Democratic forces tried to hold off the evacuation, but the fascists in California pushed it through.

In language an interesting reaction has taken place. There is strong objection in the group to the use of Japanese phrases and idioms. Most of the members cannot speak Japanese anyway, and some, even if they can speak, refuse to address their parents in Japanese.

Upon arriving at Tanforan, they perhaps more than anyone else were maladjusted. They complained about the terrible conditions vociferously and demanded that things be done. However, they did not take the attitude that they should help the others who were doing their best to improve the conditions. They merely stood by, jeering the "suckers" who worked and seldom lent a hand. Their activities were usually restricted



to complaining. When the wage scales were announced, many of them wrote to their friends in the unions outside. They refused to work for four cents an hour. Some went into work for contacts and to indoctrinate the "fools" who needed a "democratic" education.

Within the group the sexes mingle freely, and the morals concerning sex are not too strict. The group as a whole is "open-minded" on the matter of sex relations. Several of the members are married, but few have children. Weddings between members of the group had in the past been very simple and rituals were held at a minimum; in other words, the group did not think much of "bourgeois" conventions and rituals.

This group is not quite so exclusive as the J.A.C.L. inner clique. As a matter of fact, all new members are welcomed and everyone attempts to convert the newcomer by showering him with attention. It is interesting to note that during the last week of May and the beginning of June some of the J.A.C.L. men who had been ostracized for standing up and demanding their rights as citizens instead of cooperating came over to the Young Democrats and their friends. They were indeed welcomed by the milder element and the groups worked together to get some reforms within the camp.

It is interesting to note some of the factions within the group. There are two different party-line followers and several of the milder factions. Some of the party-line men feel that they should cooperate with the government and then seek concessions from the government; whereas others feel that they should stand up for their rights. These individuals subscribe to the People's World and are in contact with the Union leaders on the coast -- especially the C.I.O. men.

There is another faction within this group that does not follow the Communist Party; in fact, the majority of the group are not Communists. These individuals call themselves "liberals" as do the others, and read the New Republic almost as though it were a Bible. They are constantly demanded free speech, democratic rule, and their rights as citizens of the United States. They contact the American Civil Liberties Union and many University men on the outside. This group attempts to use their influential



Caucasian friends in their attempt to get over the J.A.C.L. element that is in control of the camp.

Another faction is composed by those who tend to be more "intellectual." This faction does not mix too much with the "radical" group and is composed largely of University graduates. Of the entire group, they are the most conservative and have amicable contacts with even the J.A.C.L. This group is much more cooperative and is willing to look at all sides of the question. They do not follow Marxian ideas even though they may be acquainted with his theory. To them, Marx is another social philosopher. This group mixes with the "radical" element largely because they share some views in common, especially in regard to civil liberties. This group is on good terms with most people personally although as a group they have sometimes been labeled "radical" by the J.A.C.L. Their contacts on the outside are many, for before evacuation they made many Caucasian friends. The one thing that all these factions have in common is that they dislike the rule of the J.A.C.L. "big five."

This entire group is not free from name-calling: in fact, they resort to labelling almost as much as the J.A.C.L. To them, anything they do not agree with is a "fascist element." The J.A.C.L. is fascist, the administration in Tanforan is fascist, the Army is fascist, the pressure groups are fascist, anyone they dislike is fascist. In fact anyone who speaks Japanese may be labelled fascist. "Fascist" is in a sense of stereotype -- a person who is scheming to get himself into power. Anyone who had once said something favorable about Japan -- or Japanese culture -- is a fascist.

The solidarity of the group is not too firm. The members are not definite and come in and out of the group at will. There is a small nucleus of members, but the others, especially the more mild element is on good terms with the other but not always members. There is no strong in-group feeling except among the nucleus and there is no exclusiveness in the group.

This group may turn out to be a very important element in Tanforan. With the election coming soon the "radicals" are laying their plans and lining up their support. With so much dissatisfaction against the J.A.C.L. prevalent in Tanforan this group may



well take advantage of the split and take more offices than most people expect. During the course of the war they may play a very significant role especially because of their numerous Caucasian contacts..

One other of the many social groups in Tanforan that we might discuss is the house managers' group. As we have already seen, this group is perhaps the most representative in the camp. There are men from all parts of the camp and from all areas of the Bay Region. There are J.A.C.L. men and "radicals"; there are Issei and Nisei; there are two women and over forty men. As far as background is concerned, they are indeed a motely group. Practically all religions are represented and the age runs from 19 to over 50 years. All members have a good speaking knowledge of English and usually of Japanese as well. Bilingualism is almost essential to a house manager.

Most of the house managers were men who were willing to take a responsible position and perform their work well. They as a whole were kind-hearted and cooperative and were willing to work all night -- as some did -- if residents got into trouble. When the low wages scale were announced no house manager resigned in complaint; in fact, the wages paid had virtually nothing to do with his work. Some house managers were not humanitarian but had ulterior interests -- political aspirations among other things -- but they do perform their duties.

Most of the house managers are married but very few have children. The job takes up too much time for men with children. Perhaps the most important role taken by the house manager is in connection with the community organization. All house managers are required to attend meetings every morning -- even Sundays if necessary -- at 8:30 to get all the new announcements and to discuss problems common to the group.

As persisting problems came up over and over special committees were formed to investigate them. A committee was organized to get information concerning the War Relocation Authority set-up when the residents continued to ask questions about it; when it became apparent that the hospital facilities were not adequate a committee investigated that; when everyone was dissatisfied with the explanation given about canteen profits a committee was organized to investigate that; and when the mess halls had some trouble



a committee was formed jointly with the messhall managers to settle problems. The house managers had to take this active role because there was no other organized group to get the complaints from the people to present to the administration.

The men at the meeting seemed to have the welfare of their people in mind and when anything was wrong they objected vociferously. Finally, one practice was instituted to solve some problems; the heads of the various departments were called in to answer questions at the regular meetings. After the first few divisional heads had gone through this experience, others, especially Mr. McDonald the canteen manager, refused to come.

The group toward the end of May became hungry for cleaning up graft, and the various committees asked so many embarrassing questions that the administration officially threatened to "blacklist" some of its leaders. When it became quite apparent that they could get nowhere with the administration, many were contemplating writing to Hotel Whitcomb in San Francisco and appeal to the Army for justice.

Various factions sprang up within the house managers' group. Those living in barracks which were located close-by had to work together quite often in cleaning the latrines and in keeping the grounds clean. Gradually they began to work together in a number of things, sat together at meetings, and began to form cliques.

There are other groups that might be discussed, but for the time being these are the three most important as far as political control is concerned. The leadership in the camp will no doubt come from these three groups. There have been other groups such as territorial groups and the family, but they have been omitted because of insufficient data.

The interaction between these groups is interesting to note. Personally, the members of all factions know each other and treat each other cordially, but it is well known that personal as well as group animosities exist. Name calling is prevalent in Tanforan. Cliques tend to stay more among themselves and complain bitterly about the activities of others. Suspicion is rife, and everyone seems to be trying to boot-lick the administration no matter how much they may hate it. The more conservative elements are accused of being too Japanesey while the others are considered "radical." Whispering



campaigns are common, and in spite of the amicable "front" it is no secret that people do not like each other. In their competition for control each group feels that the camp and their cause is doomed if the other takes over.

These Nisei groups have varying relationships with the Issei. The J.A.C.L. has a tendency to be more sympathetic to the welfare of the Issei. Their leaders speak Japanese more fluently and have more Issei friends of influence. Even in their customs, the J.A.C.L. men are more "Japanesque." This the others find objectionable and "fascistic." The "radical" elements dislike anything Japanese and react violently even before their own parents. Needless to say the older people dislike "radicals." 39/

It is interesting also that with the exception of the "radical" element, all the Japanese in the camp accept without question their subordination to Caucasians. They feel that the great hakujin (white person) is right although some hate Caucasians bitterly and call them keto (derogatory term for a Caucasian). Behind their backs all sorts of comments are made but before their faces, all Caucasians are given a higher place in status. 40/ The "radical" elements alone demands equality and looks upon Caucasians as one of their kind. This subordination to the Caucasian may lead to serious problems of adjustment in the post-war period.

Many rituals are observed in Tanforan. Many people say their grace before meals, and other rituals are common. Some rituals of a patriotic nature are held on a camp wide scale.

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39/ The dislike of the "radicals" by the Issei goes much further than just trivial family matters. During the period preceding the time when the immigrants came to America, Prussianism was popular in Japan and since that time the Immigrants have disliked anything that opposed Germany. Since the Russo-Japanese war of 1904 many tales of the terrible Russians have been spread and recently anti-Communist propaganda has been common in Japan. Since most Issei read only Japanese newspapers, they naturally took this attitude.

40/ Caucasians had usually been employers before evacuation, and this may account for the outwardly meek attitude of an inwardly proud people.

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On May 10, a Mothers' Day Service was held at Lake Tanforan, a mud hole in the infield (within the tracks). The service was led by a Protestant reverend and consisted of the following: First "America" was sung by the audience; this was followed by greetings by Mr. Lawson; tributes to mothers were given both in English and in Japanese; there was a presentation of flowers to the ten oldest mothers in camp; this was followed by a choir selection and an instrumental selection. This was the first camp-wide ceremony, but it was not too well attended because so few people knew about it.

On May 24, there was a camp wide flag raising ceremony and the official opening of Tanforan. When this was announced many were disturbed. Many of the younger people went about joking that they should sing "Kimigayo" (the Japanese national anthem instead of "God Bless America;" and others felt that they should say "Heil Hitler" since the administration was so fascistic. Many were disturbed because they felt that if they were expected to be true Americans they should be given rights rather than be asked to salute the flag.

Actually, the affair, which was in the charge of a J.A.C.L. man turned out to be a farce, even though the camp officials were impressed. As the flag went up in the midst of bugle blasts people did not even know what was going on and continued to mill around. Very few stood at attention except those who saw what was happening. As the evacuees were pledging allegiance to the flag a truck with Caucasian repair men went through the crowd to fix something and distracted the attention of everyone. After the "Star Spangled Banner" had been sung, a reverend got up and gave a flag-waving opening prayer -- in fact there was more flag waving than religion in the prayer. This was to be expected since everything was censored. Since Mr. Lawson was away to Washington on business, Mr. Davis gave the greetings. When he was introduced, rasberries greeted him. He gave a brief talk in which he pleaded with the audience to keep the grounds clean and stated that he hoped that everyone would be out free "under that flag" soon. His talk was very brief and not too impressive. This was followed by a speech by an Issei in English and a talk on the history of the flag by a young Buddhist girl. It was so windy that by this time most people were thinking of their physical comforts. When the chairman declared, "Look at that flag. Doesn't it give you a thrill?" no one moved or showed any emotion. The program ended with the singing of "God Bless America."



in which the voices of a few girls in the audience were audible. <sup>41/</sup>

Actually this ceremony left some bad taste in the minds of the residents. To be sure there were many, especially the younger people and some J.A.C.L. men who thought that such ceremonies were just the thing to prove one's patriotism. However, there were too many people in camp with sufficient intelligence to see through the hypocrisy and who questioned the democratic procedures involved in the entire evacuation program. It seemed to many that there were ways more concrete than flag-waving whereby one could prove his loyalty.

The third camp wide ceremony was held on Memorial Day. This program was a bit more impressive although it met with the disapproval of the administration. It began with the raising of the flag and then lowering to half mast. The "Star Spangled Banner" was sung by a woman, and then four reverends, two Buddhist and two Christians, addressed the audience one each in Japanese and one in English. Actually they all gave flag-waving speeches. The members of the American Legion who were in camp and the Boy Scouts were then asked to come to the front and stand at attention as a wreath was presented. There was a moment of silence before the program was ended with taps. <sup>42/</sup>

There were several occurrences of interest that caused considerable excitement in Tanforan. The first came on May 13, when Clarence Sadamune a half-Japanese youth from Oakland escaped from camp to go <sup>to</sup> the recruiting office in San Francisco to volunteer to the Army. When he was refused, he attempted to commit suicide. By Wednesday he was brought back to Tanforan, and by the end of the week he was sent with part of his family to Arizona. Rumors concerning how he has escaped from camp were numerous, and many joked that they would get out too. There was some indignation, however, for if Nisei were not allowed to serve in the Army, it meant that they could not have any of the rights of citizens. The whole matter blew over in a week. <sup>43/</sup>

On May 25, all lights in Tanforan were out until 9:25 p.m. There were several candles lit but the house managers went around enforcing the rules against it. Apparently an Army plane had crashed into the power lines which had supplied electricity

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<sup>41/</sup> Tanforan Totalizer, May 23, 1942.

<sup>42/</sup> Tanforan Totalizer, May 30, 1942.

<sup>43/</sup> San Francisco Chronicle, May 13, 1942.

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to the camp. <sup>44/</sup> It was indeed inconvenient for there was no hot water -- the boilers do not work without electricity. Many with small children were indeed handicapped. There was some commotion. Some of those who were thoroughly disgusted with the camp and who had been pro-Japan clapped their hands in glee, but most of the residents said nothing. Some of the younger people regreted that that plane could not go over to bomb Tokyo anymore. Some arguments actually broke out over this point.

On June 2, two things happened that caused considerable commotion in Tanforan. In the morning, a Mr. Howland came in from the WRA to recruit Japanese labor for sugar beets. A large number attended the meeting which was not announced except at breakfast in the mess halls, but very few volunteered. Although Mr. Howland painted a very rose picture of the life in freedom and even tried to tempt the people with the idea that they could get liquor, very few responded. A few signed up but not more than ten actually wanted to go. As the week wore on, the number leaving dwindled, and on June 4, when the man was seeking 30 volunteers he could not get more than 15.

The reaction in camp seemed to be uniform. The argument was: if the Japanese had not been evacuated then there would not be such a shortage of labor. Since the Japanese were evacuated, it was too late. If they realized the necessity of the Japanese labor supply now, let them suffer. The consensus of opinion seemed to be that the other camps, which were full of "fools" would supply the labor anyway; therefore, why should anyone leave Tanforan? Tanforan did not have agricultural people anyway. In general, the people were resentful and fearful of what would happen. No armed guards had been guaranteed and contracts were offered on a monthly basis. By this time Tanforan residents were distrustful of all Caucasians and did not want to take chances.

Another shock struck Tanforan on June 2. Telegrams came from the State Department asking five residents whether they cared to return to Japan with the diplomatic staff. Apparently some relative in Japan had asked for the repatriation of these individuals. News of this travelled throughout the camp, and by the following morning those who had received telegrams were flooded with callers. These individuals wanted to know how



they could get similar notices or wanted to ask that they contact some relative in Japan to give them the message that they were all right. Many of the old timers expressed a desire to go. Many were tired of Tanforan.

And so we can see that the Japanese went through hardships and excitement in Tanforan. The group which had been split into factions continued to be split even though the lines of these factions changed to some extent. New associations were made, but the old ones were not forgotten and formed the basis of splitting factions.

During the period of the initial adjustment the physical facilities were not ready and this added to the new conditions lowered the morale considerably. It was not long, however, before the morale went up again and most people cooperated to make conditions livable. Games started up spontaneously and various groups began to function.

Toward the end of the month, Tanforan was the center of political intrigues and complaints. The foul condition of the medical center and the question of canteen profits served as the trigger to set off the long growing discontent, and the administration resorted to Hitler tactics to maintain control.

Changes were noticeable in some of the social institutions but they did not seem to be of much significance. Most of these changes were forced by the limited facilities in the camp.

On the whole, the Japanese seemed to accept their subordination to the Caucasian as a matter of course. There were many conflicts between the Japanese immigrants and their children, in fact, almost as much conflict here as in regard to the struggle for political control.

A few occurrences served to add excitement to the daily routine of the residents. Taken as a whole, the Japanese seemed to have made a good adjustment to camp life. It is only the younger and more intelligent groups that are dissatisfied, as might be expected, and they have been threatened by the administration in no uncertain terms. The effect of all this on post-war reconstruction will no doubt be considerable.



#### IV. Maladjustments

As in any society, as in any place with an aggregation of individuals, Tanforan has its share of difficulties. Because of the peculiar situation existing in camp one might find more than usual in the line of maladjustments. On the surface there does not seem to be much difficulty but a more careful examination reveals that much is happening.

Perhaps one of the basic difficulties in Tanforan is due to conflicting values. This is especially true in regard to parent-child relationships. The Nisei have taken over leadership in Tanforan and they have found adjustment to the physical facilities easier because the camp is run by Caucasians who do not know Japanese standards. All of the rules and regulations are made in terms of the American value system and the Issei are being forced to conform with a standard which to them may be foreign. Conformity to the American values is enforced by community opinion, and this renders difficult the activity of the Issei in the mess halls, latrines, and other places where large groups use the same facilities.

We cannot say, however, that this conflict exists for Issei and not for Nisei for there are some Issei who are more at home in American culture than the Nisei. It seems that the degree of assimilation to American culture is the crucial point. Those who are not accustomed to American ways, those who do not see things the way that the administrators naturally see them are naturally more maladjusted and uncomfortable. An attempt is being made to unconsciously inculcate Japanese ideals and these ideals are actually practiced, but when the younger people revolt there is not much that can be done.

One of the major social problems facing Tanforan was that of the single,



unmarried men. They were all put into the Men's Dormitory which soon became the center of trouble. The Dormitory presented an appalling sight. It was a huge room over 100 yards long with beds about 18 inches to 2 feet apart. Men, sloppily dressed and unshaven, browsed around with nothing particular to do. Ropes stretched between steel supports and cabinets were nailed to the walls. In the middle rows of beds where there were no walls things were nailed to the floors. In these cabinets were toilet articles and other minor personal belongings. Radios were playing in sections and hammering by people could be heard. Card games and hana (Japanese card game) were numerous as were the crap games. Young and old alike were in this hell hole, many sitting on their beds and staring at the passers-by. Many Nisei complained that they could not speak English because the house manager would scold them if they did. A huge American flag was hung by some Nisei at the end of the hall, but the Issei would say baka-tare (a derogatory Japanese term) when they walked by. Baggage was stuffed under the beds. Women occasionally walked in to see their friends but they were indeed a rare sight. Young men cluttered around in their own groups and jabbered usually in Japanese. Laundry was hung on the walls everywhere. Groups of men cluttered around the various games that were going on. Indeed, it seemed that all the scum in Tanforan had been brought together in the black hole. It was a terrible surrounding for the young men who lived there.

On May 7, the police department was informed that prostitution was being practiced in the dormitory. Apparently the women waited in the main mess hall below and as the men went downstairs to go to the latrine they met. Special police were detailed to patrol the area. It was well known that gambling was common in the Dorm, and during the middle of the month several men, including the house manager, were taken to the San Mateo jail charged



with the violation of state gambling laws. Even after this arrest, stud poker went on--with chips instead of money on the table to evade the letter of the law.

Finally, the administration, disgusted with the unsanitary and unwholesome conditions there decided to move the men out to the barracks. An inventory of all the empty rooms was taken and in the last week of May the men were moved out. When the residents in the barracks heard of the action, they immediately boarded up the openings in their walls and covered the openings between the walls and the ceilings with cardboard. The women took special precautions and put special boards before the latrine seat nearest the door. Women were psychologically affected and they became very fearful of going out alone in the night. Actually the men were not so lustful, but their reputation was such that this reaction was a natural one.

The apprehensions of the women, however, was not without cause. During the last week of May two attack cases were reported to the police in the vicinity of barrack 10 where many of these men were moved. Neither succeeded, but the attempts were made. It was just at the time when the police force was being organized and no one was on the beat.

Sex offences and sex difficulties would seem natural in an environment like Tanforan. When there is nothing to do, there is one recreation that is always available--sex. There are grave dangers, however, for no contraceptives of any kind are sold in Tanforan--not even at the hospital. As time goes on, we can see how true the rumors are concerning the activities of young couples in the empty barracks after dances and dates.

Besides the prostitution that we have already mentioned, the sex problem that is most discussed is voyeurism. Young men peek in at the women who must go to the latrines and showers which are open to public view. In the



middle of May the administration took vain action by painting the bottoms of the shower windows of the women's shower rooms. They closed up some of the side holes in the latrines, but the complaints kept pouring in anyway. Tanforan is indeed a terrible environment for young adolescents to grow up in, for all the opportunities for delinquency are present.

Petty theft was quite common in Tanforan for the first part of the month, especially while the facilities were inadequate. Clothes hung out on the laundry line were stolen; electrical appliances were stolen from the empty barracks, latrines, and laundry buildings. The major problem came with the stealing of toilet paper. This was the center of discussion in the house-managers' meetings for weeks. Paper was stolen because it usually ran out. Some one who had suffered from lack of toilet paper once probably stole some the next time if he found any in the latrines so that he would not be caught short again. The next person who came would then find no paper and would steal the following time to play safe. It was a vicious cycle and it went on until almost everyone had a roll; then toilet paper ceased to be a major problem.

In the kitchen stealing went on as matter of course. Since there was not enough food served, people had their friends send in or bring in food. However, salt and pepper and especially bread had to be had every day. Therefore, these items disappeared daily. No one even felt guilty about taking bread. It became so common that people did it as a part of their daily routine.

Among the other problems that arose were those of intermarriages. There were several Japanese in camp who had married Caucasians or Filipinos. Some were separated from their families while others came to live with the Japanese. Some Caucasian women and Filipino men live in Tanforan. Filipinos are visitors almost daily--to visit their wives. The unfortunate individuals are ostracized by the Japanese and sometimes stay among them-



selves or stayed isolated. They perhaps constituted one of the maladjusted groups in the camp. It is indeed unfortunate that the Japanese who claim to be champions of racial equality look askance at those who disregard their morals concerning intermarriage.

Another problem is that of the destitute. It was discovered by the Service Division that some men came in with just their clothes and nothing else--just the clothes they were wearing. These individuals were taken care of by the W.C.C.A. relief fund, but they probably had to suffer for days until their things came in.

Thus far, there have been no major offences committed in Tanforan, but rowdiness has begun. People are being beaten up. No cases of major personality disorders have been reported by the hospital although there were many rumors current to the effect that men had gone berserk and had tried to escape. Many minor personality problems were common, however, especially among those who were not accepted within the Japanese community in full status.

Nothing serious has occurred as yet, but this does not mean that nothing will happen. Discontent is seething under the surface and something is bound to happen before long. No one anticipates bloodshed, but it is entirely within the limits of possibility. The minor discontents can and probably will mount; the minor disorders now can become major ones as time goes on. Tanforan may yet have an incident that will not be forgotten.



## V. Conclusions

Viewing the first month in Tanforan as a whole there are certain general points that we cannot help but note, both in regard to the administration and in regard to the adjustment made by the residents. There seems to have been an unusually good adjustment to adverse conditions on the part of most residents although the more intelligent are concerned over the inadequate facilities and unfulfilled promises.

As far as the administration is concerned we can say that while the intentions might have been good and sympathetic, there was so much inefficiency and lack of coordination that things did not run too well. Perhaps part of the blame rests upon the Army for not delivering promptly the goods that were ordered. Perhaps the fact that troops were being sent abroad that needed the same equipment may have accounted for the lack in Tanforan. One thing that must be noted, however, is that all the Caucasian officials attempted to "pass the buck" whenever a touchy situation arose, and they were all so afraid of their superiors that they seldom took the initiative to do anything. Typical W.P.A. inefficiency pervaded the camp, and it took days to accomplish anything.

There was a lack of coordination between the divisions. When the house-managers were asked to get a list of all the sick and invalid in the camp so that these figures could be used to order milk and to provide cotton mattresses, the managers finished their work in two hours, but the mattresses did not come for three weeks and the milk has not come yet. Furthermore, there is incompetence among the Nisei who are holding responsible positions. Civil service stenographers are lying idle while high school girls take office jobs. There is much favoritism among the Nisei as far as jobs are concerned. These



incompetent individuals actually slow up the improvement of the camps and sometimes make improvements impossible because of their lack of foresight and training. It is indeed <sup>un</sup>fortunate that a better employment system was not instituted at once.

In their social adjustment the Japanese, both the Issei and Nisei, seem to accept their subordination to the Caucasian as a matter of course. Anything that the great Caucasian says goes through unquestioned. There is one exception, however: the "radical" element that continues to cry for equality. Actually the "radicals" seem to be the most maladjusted group in the camp. The morale for the others seems to be very high--except for the day on which they arrived in Tanforan. The accommodation made with the tacitly accepted subordination apparently leaves the largest number of parties satisfied.

Among the problems that have arisen perhaps the basic one is the conflicting value of standards. This, however, will no doubt be worked out in the course of time when the Japanese become accustomed to the new values. There are two practical problems that concern many in the camp. One is the "Japanization" of the Nisei and the second is the fate of the children who grow up in the camp.

Most Nisei have been considerably Americanized and have at least a few American contacts. However, in camp they are constantly in the company of their Japanese parents and Kibei with Japanese sympathies. With conditions in the camp the way they are it is a relatively easy matter to alienate the Nisei from the American cause. Many Nisei have already begun to feel that they should go back to Japan after the war, and unless positive steps (besides flag waving ceremonies which are inconsequential) are taken this number will no doubt increase. Furthermore, many Nisei are beginning to use the Japanese language more and are adopting many of the Japanese customs. The Nisei who



have been Americanized will gradually slide back to their parents' culture unless something is done soon.

What of the infants and small children who have no idea of what the outside world is like? What type of personalities will they have? How will they make their adjustment to the post-war world if they do not know what a street car is like, if they do not know how to eat respectably, if they have no idea of what anything outside is like. Those who are older can at least have some idea of what things are like but to those who have never seen anything the post-war period will be a heartbreaking one.

Another problem of importance is the "blacklisting" of "agitators." This gives the administration--who seem to be third-rate W.P.A. men--a terrible weapon to hold over the heads of the residents. Since all the residents are at the mercy of the administration, they can get away with anything so long as they can threaten those who object with blacklisting. Anyone intelligent enough to question the motives of someone in the administration can be sent to a prison camp. This is highly undemocratic and cannot be justified even under military rule. Even the military has courts, but Tanforan has none.

In this connection we might note what the camps are supposed to be like. In a memorandum to the assistant secretary of war, General DeWitt wrote the following on April 28, 1942: (all italics are mine)

"... An organization structure to provide representation of the evacuees with the management has been established on the following basis: each group of 300 or 400 evacuees is entitled to one representative of their own selection. These representatives will, in turn, select the council of not to exceed 5 members to deal with the management of the centers in working out their routine for the innumerable problems that will come up daily. The management staff is very limited in number and is responsible for the over-all direction of all phases of assembly and reception-center activities. The evacuees themselves are used to perform all phases of the work necessary in the operation of the centers. They perform all maintenance work and such additional construction as is necessary, all



accounting and record keeping, do all the cooking and cleaning in connection with lodging and mess, staff the hospital and recreational programs and in general they operate the center under the direction and management of the administrative staff. . . .

The hospitalization and general health and sanitary facilities of these centers are under the technical direction of the United States Public Health Service. A fully equipped hospital has been provided in all centers where local hospital facilities are inadequate to properly care for the evacuees. A center exchange is being developed that will make available to the evacuees those incidental services compatible with health and sanitation, such as center canteen supplies for men, women, and children, barber shops, beauty shops, shoe-repair shops; tailor shops, etc. The food preparation for evacuees is based on menus which have been prepared by the best dietitians available. The food is simple and well-balanced and special diets are provided for young children and babies. . . . .45/

Judging by the criteria given by General DeWitt, Tanforan seems to be on the way, but has a long ways to go before arriving. In fact, it seems that the center will be just perfect by the time the evacuees leave for the relocation centers. Self-government is on the way; work is being done by the evacuees as directed; the hospital is under the technical direction of the Health Service although the supplies are not coming in; there is not<sup>a</sup> hospital in Tanforan but one is available in San Mateo--even though it does take hours for emergency cases to get out of the gate; a center exchange "is being developed," though rather slowly and plans have been made for barbers and beauticians. The food, however, has not been planned by first class dietitians, in fact, there is no dietitian in Tanforan except for the Nisei girl preparing baby food. Tanforan is coming along slowly; in fact, it should be ready by the time someone else comes in to use the Center.

The treatment of the evacuees is of great concern to those who are sincerely fighting the war for the preservation of democratic ways. Any injustices committed or any undemocratic acts such as the "blacklisting" of

.45/ Fourth Interim Report, Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration, 77th Congress, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1942.



"agitators" without trial sets a dangerous precedent which can be turned against any group. As the Tolan Committee recommended: "If the nation believes as the committee does that we must live with these people as loyal citizens when the war is over, then every consideration should be given to the question: What is to become of these people after they enter the reception center?" <sup>46/</sup> Further, "the maintenance of all Japanese, alien and citizen, in enforced idleness will prove not only a costly waste of the taxpayers' money, but it automatically implies deportation, since we cannot expect this group to be loyal to our government or sympathetic to our way of life thereafter." <sup>47/</sup> These passages leave much food for thought.

The attitude which the Nisei will probably have for the duration of the war and after may be determined by what happens during his initial adjustment to the life in an Assembly Center. It is indeed unfortunate that a democratic nation could not have prepared adequate facilities and staffed these centers with more competent men, for the results of this error might some day prove costly. Many who would have been loyal citizens willing to give their lives to defend democracy are now being alienated--becoming convinced that there is no democracy here. They are powerless to argue when they are asked by their parents, "If you are an American, what are you doing here?" Unless the War Relocation Authority can improve conditions in the Relocation Centers drastically, one very valuable and potentially desirable element of the American population will bear a scar that may never be erased. The Nisei may remain convinced of the fundamental humanity and decency of democracy, but they may find it difficult to believe that that spirit exists here. No doubt many of the shortcomings in Tanforan are unavoidable, but it would be difficult to explain that with those who are suffering.

<sup>46/</sup> Preliminary Report. Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration, 77th Congress, Government Printing Office, 1942. p. 16.

<sup>47/</sup> Ibid.