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WHAT ABOUT OUR JAPANESE-AMERICANS?

By Carey McWilliams

AMERICAN COUNCIL, INSTITUTE OF PACIFIC RELATIONS

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IN THE spring of 1942, we in the United States placed some 110,000 persons of Japanese descent in protective custody. Two out of every three of these were American citizens by birth; one-third were aliens forbidden by law to be citizens. Included were three generations: Issei, or first-generation immigrants (aliens); Nisei, or second-generation (American-born citizens); and Sansei, or third-generation (American-born children of American-born parents). Within three months after removal from the west coast had been ordered, this entire group of men,

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women, and children had been lodged in temporary assembly centers, under military guard, awaiting transfer from the area. No charges had been filed against these people nor had any hearing been held. Evacuation was on racial, or, perhaps more accurately, on ancestral grounds. Germans and other enemy aliens were not removed. Nor were Chinese and Koreans, who belong to the same race as the Japanese. But all persons having any Japanese blood, however slight, were forced out.

In the excitement of the moment, the evacuation of the Japanese seemed merely a minor incident of the war. But as the shock of finding ourselves at war gradually abated, the nation began to be uneasy about many aspects of the evacuation. They began to ask whether it squared with our democratic ideals. If the issues were unclear at the outset, they became increasingly involved with each new step of the program. As the danger of an invasion of the west coast receded, measures were taken which no one had urged at the height of the excitement. Internment, for example, had not been planned originally by the authorities: merely removal from the area. And rather to our amazement, we discovered that after every person of Japanese ancestry had been removed from the west coast and placed in protective custody, agitation against them increased instead of subsided. The evacuation was seized upon as proof of disloyalty and used to justify further measures against the west-coast Japanese group. Each step in the program began to involve entirely unforeseen consequences. Now in the third year of war, it is possible to review the entire proceeding and to ask a number of questions, such as: Why were these people removed from the west coast? Are the measures which have been taken against them actually related to the reasons advanced for their removal? What has happened to this group of 100,000 men, women, and children? What are the likely consequences of this program?

BEFORE PEARL HARBOR

THE Japanese were a late immigrant group. They arrived, for the most part, in the years between 1900 and 1910. Most of the early immigrants were single men who married fairly late in life, so that the second-generation group did not appear in large numbers until after 1920. In 1940, the average age of the Issei, or alien group, was around fifty years of age; that of the Nisei, or citizen group, around nineteen or twenty years of age. The Issei had lived in the United States, on an average, for thirty-five years. Of 126,947 Japanese in this country in 1940, 112,353 lived in the three west-coast states. Nearly 80 per cent were in California. Unlike some immigrant groups, the Japanese did not do much spreading out. They were more densely concentrated on December 7, 1941, than they had been twenty years previously. Their concentration was not merely geographical but occupational: 43 per cent of the gainfully employed west-coast Japanese were in agriculture, more particularly, in the production of fresh vegetables and small fruits for the large urban west-coast markets. An additional 26 per cent were to be found in the wholesale and retail trade, which was largely confined to the distribution of Japanese-grown produce. Both external and internal pressures had intended to set the Little Tokyo settlements apart from the larger communities of which they were a part. Many of these settlements, both rural and urban, were located near important strategic areas.

employed . . . in the production of fresh vegetables

Within this rather narrow orbit, the Japanese had done reasonably well. Their farm lands and buildings, in California alone, were valued at $65,781,000. In 1941, the Japanese turned out 42 per cent of the truck crops raised in California, and their production was valued at $30,000,000. In the same year, the thousand or more Japanese-operated fruit and vegetable stores in Los Angeles employed nearly five thousand people (mostly Japanese) and did an annual business of about $25,000,000.

Unlike Other Immigrant Groups

Not only were the Japanese a late immigrant group, but they were racially different from the others and were also set apart by sharp cultural differences. Noting that the rate of assimilation for the Japanese was somewhat slower than for other immigrant groups, west-coast residents hastily concluded that the cultural difference was to be accounted for in terms of race. It must be remembered, however, that the American-born or Nisei generation had not, by December 7, 1941, assumed the leadership of the Japanese communities, although they would clearly have done so in another decade. In 1930, slightly more than half of the Japanese in America were foreign-born; but in 1940 the ratio had declined to slightly more than one-third. In other words, the war struck the west-coast communities just at the moment when the American-born and American-educated generation was beginning to displace the alien generation in positions of social and economic leadership.

Thus there existed on the west coast, on December 7, 1941, a deep fissure in the social structure of the region. This fissure separated the relatively small Japanese minority from the rest of the population. Like the earthquake fissures that run along the Pacific Coast, this particular fissure was deeper in some areas than in others; it had been dormant for some years, but it was still potentially

active. As fifty years of prior social history had shown, almost any jar or shock was capable of disturbing it. The attack on Pearl Harbor was more than a jar; it was a thunderous blow, an earthquake, that sent tremors throughout the area in which the fissure existed. The resident Japanese were the victims of this social earthquake. This is the root-fact, the basic social fact, which precipitated the mass evacuation of the west-coast Japanese —which has been accurately described as "the largest single forced migration in American history."

THE EVACUATION

BEFORE discussing *why* evacuation was ordered, it may help to give a brief log-of-events. On December 11, 1941, the Western Defense Command was established and the west coast was declared a theater of war. General J. L. DeWitt was designated as military commander of the area. On December 7 and 8, 1941, the Department of Justice arrested, on presidential warrants, all known "dangerous enemy aliens." Subsequently, by a series of orders, the Department of Justice ordered the removal of all "enemy aliens" from certain designated zones or so-called "spot" strategic installations, such as harbors, airports, and power lines. The deadline fixed for this "dress rehearsal" of the larger evacuation to follow was February 24, 1942. Following the appearance of the Roberts Report on Pearl Harbor, the public temper on the west coast noticeably changed and by the end of January, 1942, a considerable press demand appeared for the evacuation of all Japanese. In the excitement of the moment, it was not generally noted that the Roberts Report referred to *espionage* activities in Hawaii but was silent on the question of *sabotage*. For months after the release of the Roberts Report it was generally assumed, on the west coast, that acts of

sabotage had been committed in Hawaii, despite absolutely conclusive proof from the most authoritative sources that no such acts had been committed.

Executive Order No. 9066

The moment this press campaign for evacuation was launched, the west-coast delegation in Congress held a meeting in the offices of Senator Hiram Johnson and, on February 13, 1942, recommended to the President "the immediate evacuation *of all persons of Japanese lineage.*" The report suggested that this might be accomplished without the necessity of a declaration of martial law such as had been proclaimed in Hawaii on December 7. On February 19, the President signed Executive Order No. 9066 authorizing the War Department to set up military areas and to exclude any or all persons from these areas. The next day Mr. Stimson delegated this responsibility to General DeWitt. On March 2, General DeWitt, by proclamation, established Military Areas Nos. 1 and 2, and on March 27 he prohibited all persons of Japanese ancestry from leaving these areas.

Then by a series of 108 separate orders, General DeWitt ordered all Japanese removed from Military Areas No. 1 and No. 2 (embracing all of Washington, Oregon, and California, and a portion of Arizona). By June 5, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry had been removed from Military Area No. 1 (the coastal area), and by August 7, 1942, Military Area No. 2 (the eastern part of the three west-coast states) had likewise been cleared of all Japanese. It will be noted that it was General DeWitt and the west-coast congressional delegation who recommended mass evacuation. The President and the Secretary of War naturally relied upon General DeWitt's appraisal of the situation. In the last analysis, it was General DeWitt who had to make the decision since the responsibility generally was vested in him. Now *why* did he order mass evacuation?

"Military Necessity"

The explanation given at the time was that mass evacuation was ordered "as a matter of military necessity." The nature of the military necessity itself was not defined. With the issuance of General DeWitt's final report on evacuation (dated July 19, 1943, but not released until January, 1944), it now becomes possible to grasp rather clearly what was embraced within the catch-all phrase, "military necessity." First of all, the report establishes that the west coast was in imminent danger of invasion after Pearl Harbor. Guam was captured on December 13; Hongkong fell on December 24; Manila on January 2; Singapore in February. Our fleet had been badly crippled at Pearl Harbor, and for a time the disposition of the enemy's fleet was not known. On February 23, 1942, a Japanese submarine shelled the California coast near Santa Barbara. Unquestionably, the risk was serious, and General DeWitt's responsibility was certainly great.

Military commanders must make quick decisions. They have to act on the basis of possibilities as well as probabilities; they cannot weigh considerations with the nicety of a scientist working in a laboratory. General DeWitt must have been haunted by the specters of Admiral Kimmel and General Short, who had been charged with neglect of duty in Hawaii. Yet after making all of these allowances, it is now apparent that the conclusions drawn by General DeWitt were not justified by the evidence.

The Threat of Sabotage

In his final report, General DeWitt stresses the danger of sabotage and espionage. But by February 14, 1942, he knew that *no acts of sabotage* had occurred in Hawaii. And General DeWitt even goes so far as to cite the absence of sabotage as "confirming indication that such action will be taken." While the risk of spies was real enough,

this risk is not related to the presence of Japanese-Americans on the west coast. Who are some of the individuals who have been arrested either for espionage activities in behalf of Japan or for being unregistered agents of Japan? They are all native-born white Americans: John Farnsworth, Harry Thomas Thompson, Vincent Williams, David Warren Ryder, Arthur Clifford Reed, Heizer Wright, Ralph Townsend, and Joseph Hilton Smyth. For some years prior to Pearl Harbor, a Los Angeles police captain had received money, from time to time, from the local Japanese consul, in payment for his services in spying on local Japanese-Americans who were distrusted by the consul! Moreover, it has been pointed out that, after Pearl Harbor, Japan relied almost entirely on non-Japanese agents, and for obvious reasons.* On June 14, 1943, the Office of War Information revealed that the persons who did the actual signaling at Pearl Harbor were Nazi agents. *No Japanese-Americans, either in Hawaii or on the mainland, have been convicted of either sabotage or espionage.* This itself is strong proof that the General was looking in the wrong corner for agents.

Protection Against Mob Violence

General DeWitt also said that he acted to protect the west-coast Japanese from mob violence. He notes, however, that most of the reports of attacks against them, upon investigation, "either were unverified or were found to be cumulative." Actually, there are only two reported instances of violence. On December 27, 1941, a fight occurred between Filipinos and local Japanese in Stockton, California; and on January 1, 1942, unknown persons fired several shots at a Japanese in Gilroy. Despite the shock of the attack on Pearl Harbor, there was *no hysteria* on the west coast. Such experienced observers as Chester Rowell, Dr. Eric Bellquist of the University of California, Selden Menefee, and the reporters for *Time, Life,* and *Fortune* have all testified to this fact. Some of the west-coast papers made the same admission. If there was a real danger of mob violence, then why did the military authorities on the west coast take no steps to allay hysteria —such steps, for example, as were taken in Hawaii—and why were no authoritative statements issued to disprove the widely spread rumors of sabotage in Hawaii? These rumors still circulate on the west coast.

* See *Sabotage!* by Sayers and Kahn. New York, L. Gleason.

Disloyal Japanese Known

Undeniably there were dangerous individuals among the resident west-coast Japanese. But these individuals were well known to the authorities. They were promptly arrested on December 7 both in Hawaii and on the west coast. For over five years there had been a constant check on both the Issei and the Nisei. Our intelligence services were fully informed. The fact that the military authorities had never contemplated mass evacuation until public agitation began to develop in favor of the idea indicates that they did not regard the risk as serious. In an article that appeared in *Harper's Magazine,* a Naval Intelligence officer in Southern California declared that in his opinion mass evacuation was not necessary and that the overwhelming majority of the people were loyal.

Racial Considerations

General DeWitt's report makes it clear that his interpretation of "military necessity" involved a judgment on sociological grounds. "The continued presence," writes General DeWitt, "of a large, unassimilated, tightly-knit racial group, bound to the enemy by strong ties of race, culture, custom, and religion, constituted a menace which had to be dealt with." There is at least some question as to whether the task of weighing these "ethnic affiliations" was a proper assignment for a military commander. Soci-

ologists, who had been studying the problem for years, have drawn an entirely different conclusion from the same facts. The prompt arrest of all "dangerous enemy aliens" and the fact of war itself had served to cut whatever ties had bound the west-coast Japanese communities to their homeland. If these "ethnic affiliations" were deemed so dangerous on the west coast, why were the same affiliations in Hawaii regarded as unimportant? There has been no mass evacuation of the Japanese in Hawaii, where they constitute 37 per cent of the entire population, and all the authorities agree that, there, the local Japanese have conclusively demonstrated their loyalty.

Racial considerations were evidently regarded as part of the "military necessity" requiring mass evacuation. "The Japanese race," states General DeWitt in his report, "is an enemy race, and while many second- and third-generation Japanese born on United States soil, possessed of United States citizenship, have become 'Americanized,' the racial strains are undiluted. . . ."

Testifying on April 13, 1943, before the House Naval Affairs Subcommittee, he also volunteered this remark:

> . . . [The Japanese-Americans] are a dangerous element, whether loyal or not. There is no way to determine their loyalty . . . it makes no difference whether he is an American; theoretically, he is still a Japanese and you can't change him. . . . You can't change him by giving him a piece of paper.

This reference to citizenship as "a piece of paper" and the frank admission that "loyalty" was not even a factor certainly indicate that the racial consideration was uppermost in General DeWitt's mind. This same consideration was uppermost in the minds of the influential public officials who were mobilizing a public opinion in favor of mass evacuation and who were bringing pressure to bear directly upon General DeWitt. Governor Earl Warren of California (then Attorney-General) told the Tolan Committee early in 1942 "that when we are dealing with *the Caucasian race* we have methods that will test the loyalty of them," but that no such determination could be made in the case of the Japanese. The many demonstrations of the loyalty of the west-coast Japanese were apparently regarded as an immaterial consideration. Racial distrust was the chief factor prompting mass evacuation.

Evacuation Held Proof of Disloyalty

It would be idle, at this late date, to review the pros and cons of mass evacuation were it not for the fact that mass evacuation has placed the entire resident Japanese-American minority under a cloud of suspicion. The fact that evacuation was ordered, for example, is now being cited as *proof* of the disloyal character of the entire group. Actually, there is no basis whatever in the available evidence for such an inference. It is also interesting to note that some of the groups that were most active in California in urging evacuation of every person of Japanese ancestry from the west coast were, at the same time, strenuously opposed to the evacuation of a single person of Japanese ancestry from Hawaii! Some of these groups, moreover, had a freely acknowledged economic interest in mass evacuation. Immediately after Pearl Harbor, the Shipper-Grower Association of Salinas, California, sent Mr. Austin E. Anson to Washington to lobby for evacuation. "We're charged with wanting to get rid of the Japs for selfish reasons," said Mr. Anson. "We might as well be honest. We do. It's a question of whether the white man lives on the Pacific Coast or the brown man."*

Voluntary Removal Fails

At the outset, it was merely the *removal* of all persons of Japanese ancestry that was contemplated by the authorities. There was no thought, at the time, of *intern-*

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ment. Between February 19 and March 27, 1942, the Japanese were free to depart voluntarily from the area. During this period, 10,231 left Military Area No. 1, but, of this number, 4,825 merely moved into Military Area No. 2. Not only were the Japanese moving too slowly—as viewed by the military—but many of them did not have enough money to leave the area. They did not know where to move, and they were meeting with opposition even while in transit. For example, Governor Payne Ratner of Kansas stated that "Japs are not wanted and not welcome in Kansas" and directed the state police to turn back any Japanese trying to enter the state.

As they sought to retreat eastward, evacuees met with many unpleasant incidents. Signs posted in shops read: "This restaurant poisons rats and Japs"; barber shops carried signs reading "Japs shaved: Not Responsible for Accidents"; signs were placed in automobile windshields reading "Open Season for Japs"; filling stations, restaurants, and hotels refused to serve evacuees. Realizing that some agency would have to be established to assist in evacuation, President Roosevelt, on March 18, 1942, issued Executive Order No. 9102 creating the War Relocation Authority. Early in April, the director of the authority met with the governors of the western states in Salt Lake City. These governors, with one exception, refused to accept responsibility for the maintenance of law and order unless evacuees were placed under military guard. These developments compelled the government to stop further voluntary evacuation and to undertake a program of planned relocation.

The Evacuation Centers

As "E-Day" approached—the date fixed by the Army for removal—the Japanese-Americans reported to civil control stations where they were escorted to hastily improvised "assembly centers"—usually race tracks, parks,

and pavilions. Some of these centers were good-sized communities; there were over 18,000 evacuees in the Santa Anita center. In many instances, the evacuation started before the centers were prepared to house and feed the evacuees. Yet within a period of 137 days over 100,000 people had been moved into the centers, the gates had been locked, and sentries had established their patrols.

vast movement of people

The speed with which this vast movement of people was accomplished is unquestionably a tribute to army efficiency; but it is also a remarkable demonstration of the loyalty of the Japanese-Americans themselves. Secretary Stimson has pointed out that "great credit is due our Japanese population for the manner in which they responded to and complied with the orders for exclusion." In no single instance did they fail to cooperate with the authorities. On the contrary, they helped install most of the facilities in the centers and immediately relieved the authorities of a major share of the administrative burden of providing food and shelter for 100,000 people.

THE RELOCATION CENTERS

THE evacuees were hardly settled in the assembly centers before they were transferred to the ten relocation camps established by the War Relocation Authority (W.R.A.) in Utah, Arizona, California, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and Arkansas. By November 1, 1942, this second major migration had been completed. Some 110,000 were lodged in the relocation centers. These included a small group

from Alaska, some 1,073 Japanese removed from Hawaii, 1,300 Japanese paroled from the internment camps (the so-called "dangerous enemy aliens"), and a few Japanese who, although living outside the western defense command, had voluntarily moved into the centers.

Although the relocation centers are an improvement on the temporary assembly centers, they can hardly be considered as satisfactory living quarters. Evacuees are housed in barracks with one family per room and, in many instances, more than one family is housed in a single room. Community toilets and washrooms have been set up for each block, and evacuees are fed in community messhalls at a cost to the government of between thirty-four and forty-two cents per person per day. No one has starved in these centers, and no one has frozen; but this is about as much as can be said in defense of the centers as housing projects. No fair-minded person who has visited the centers will believe, for one moment, that the evacuees are being "coddled" or "pampered."

Constitutional Rights Maintained

As far as is possible under the circumstances, W.R.A. has sought to maintain the constitutional rights of the evacuees. The citizens among them continue to vote in the areas in which they were formerly residents. There is no censorship of mail. Virtual freedom of religious worship is maintained. Open meetings may be held in the centers, and outspoken newspapers are published by the evacuees in most of the centers. A degree of self-government is also permitted. Obviously, it would be an exaggeration to say that evacuees exercise their constitutional rights in the centers with the same freedom from restraint that prevails outside the centers; but it will be noted that most basic rights have been maintained. Approximately 90 per cent of the employable residents are employed by W.R.A. on various work projects and in the messhalls,

hospitals, farms, etc., in the centers. Evacuees receive a cash allowance of $12, $16, or $19 a month according to the nature of their duties. Food, shelter, and medical care are provided without charge. There are 30,000 Japanese-Americans of school age in the centers for whom educational facilities, from kindergarten through high school, have been provided.

Relocation Outside the Centers

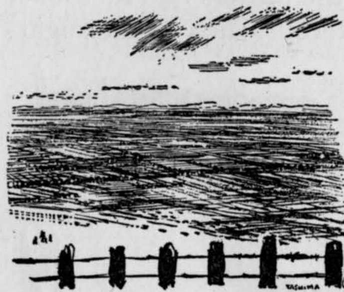
Originally, W.R.A. intended to make these centers genuine relocation projects, but the centers had no sooner been established than outside interests, such as the sugar-beet industry, began to clamor for labor to meet the man-power shortage in agriculture. Naturally desirous of meeting this demand, W.R.A. began, in the summer of 1942, to release evacuees on seasonal permits to work in agricultural areas. By the end of 1942, some 9,000 were working on seasonal permits and were meeting with enthusiastic praise from their employers. This unforeseen development encouraged W.R.A. to devise a permanent release program and to shift its emphasis from relocation within the centers to permanent relocation outside the centers. This shift in policy has led to a cutting-down of work projects in the centers and a definite drive to relocate the evacuees before the end of the war. Early in 1943, W.R.A. opened employment offices throughout the Middle West and began a real campaign to find jobs for the evacuees. By the second anniversary of the W.R.A., some 19,000 evacuees (85 per cent of whom are Nisei) were relocated outside the centers over a wide area of the Middle West, East,

cutting-down of work projects

and South. Chicago alone has 3,500, while fairly large numbers of them have found jobs in such cities as Detroit, St. Paul, Madison, Denver, Salt Lake City, St. Louis, and Cincinnati. The problem now faced by W.R.A. is to persuade more of the evacuees to relocate.

Segregation

The relocation centers are not normal communities. They are institutions and they breed a type of "prison complex." The men, women, and children who were suddenly moved by the thousands into these partially constructed Little Tokyos isolated in mountain desert areas were not in a normal frame of mind on their arrival. They had but recently undergone a profoundly disturbing experience. The vast majority of them regarded evacuation as a wholesale rejection by their fellow Americans. Living in a center is, at best, an extremely irritating experience. Overcrowding is universal; there is no privacy whatever, and people wait in lines to eat, to wash, to be interviewed. In the centers most of the evacuees read the west-coast newspapers and worry incessantly about their future. They are plagued by every imaginable type of fear and anxiety. With much time for gossip and talk, rumors sweep through the centers like wildfire. It must be remembered that *all kinds of persons* are to be found in these centers—old and young, rural and urban, aged farm laborers and sophisticated young artists. There are individuals in the centers who do not look Japanese, do not speak or write Japanese, have never been to Japan, and who had, prior to relocation, never lived among other Japanese. Parental



The isolation of the centers—in time and space—

discipline tends to break down in the centers: the family, as such, is robbed of its traditional functions. There is, also, every conceivable shading of political opinion to be found among the evacuees. The isolation of the centers—in time and in space—is extremely depressing. The barbed-wire fences and the lookout towers and the armed sentries are constant reminders of the hostility of American public opinion. When all of these factors are considered, it is not surprising that minor disturbances, such as those which broke out in the Manzanar, Poston, and Tule centers, should have occurred.

The Loyalty Test

Since these disturbances were clearly the work of a minority of the evacuees, W.R.A. determined to segregate the loyal from the disloyal. While plans for segregation were being considered, the President announced on January 28, 1943, that the Army had decided to form a Japanese-American combat team on a volunteer basis. Since the Army proposed to send a recruiting team to the centers, W.R.A. decided to conduct a general registration of all persons in the centers 17 years of age and older. This registration was conducted in the centers with little or no advance preparation, under the most confused conditions. As part of the registration, evacuees were asked to answer a so-called "loyalty" question. Even the *alien* group was asked Question 28, which read:

> Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and foreswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese Emperor or any other foreign government, power or organization?

It should be remembered that *alien* Japanese are ineligible for citizenship under our naturalization laws. Yet these aliens were asked to answer a question which, if answered affirmatively, would automatically strip them of

the only citizenship they possessed without at the same time making it possible for them to become American citizens. The impossibility of this situation became apparent to W.R.A., and a revised question was finally submitted to the aliens, but only after much damage had been done.

These aliens knew that west-coast groups were conducting a powerful campaign for their deportation at the end of the war. If there was a danger of deportation, then obviously they would be in a difficult position if they renounced Japanese citizenship. Many of the Nisei resented the questionnaire because it assumed that they had a divided loyalty—a proposition which they have never conceded. Demagogic pro-fascist elements in the centers took full advantage of the confusion that prevailed in all of the centers during registration. In some centers, actual violence and intimidation occurred. The effects are shown both in the appeal for enlistment and in the registration itself.

Demagogic pro-fascist elements . . .

In Hawaii, the Army called for 2,500 volunteers for the combat team and nearly 10,000 promptly volunteered. In the relocation centers only about 1,200 volunteered. The resentment of the evacuees to the questionnaire was indicated by its peculiar results. Although 87 per cent answered the loyalty questions affirmatively, only 74 per cent of the male *citizen* group answered affirmatively and 96 per cent of the male *alien* group answered favorably. The rather surprising difference in the response of the two groups seems to be due to the resentment which the Nisei felt over the entire evacuation program and to a group of Nisei who were educated in Japan. While segregation was unquestionably desirable, a questionnaire was hardly the way to determine loyalty. A Japanese agent,

for example, would certainly not show his hand by failing to answer the loyalty question satisfactorily.

Tule Lake

Once the registration had been completed, W.R.A. announced that all of the "disloyal" elements would be concentrated in the Tule Lake Center in Northern California. Between September 15 and October 15, 1943, the "loyal" Japanese-Americans were removed from the Tule Lake Center and distributed among the other centers, while all the "segregants" were transferred to Tule Lake. In all, four classifications of evacuees were sent to the Tule Lake Center: (1) all evacuees who had requested repatriation to Japan were automatically sent to Tule Lake; (2) the "no-nos," that is, those who had answered the loyalty questions negatively, were sent to Tule Lake after a hearing at which they had an opportunity to change, modify, or explain their answers; (3) all evacuees regarding whom the various intelligence services had evidence indicating possible disloyal inclinations were sent to Tule Lake; and (4) close relatives of those in the foregoing categories who expressed a desire to remain with the segregants rather than disrupt family ties. After the first major exchange was effected, the number of "disloyal" segregants in Tule Lake was 13,540, divided into the following categories:

Repatriates and expatriates	5,127
Registration segregants	4,222
Other segregants	4,191

The commonly held idea that this group is composed of really disloyal persons is at least open to serious question. Investigation revealed, for instance, that 28 per cent of the evacuees who went to Tule Lake from the Manzanar Center were children under 18 years of age. The

proportion was higher in other centers. These children were not asked to fill out the registration form. In view of the haste with which the registration and segregation programs were conducted and of the widespread confusion that prevailed, the utmost care must be taken if a lasting injustice is not to be committed against the American-born minors in the Tule Lake Center. Segregation cut across family lines and caused the most tragic personal complications in more than one case.

28 per cent . . . were children under 18 years of age

Among the adults, approximately 80 per cent of those who requested repatriation actually answered the loyalty question affirmatively. In most cases, they had requested repatriation solely for family reasons. One, for example, was a widower with four children. Two of his sons are in the United States Army, but his two daughters were sent to Japan to live with relatives after the death of the mother. The father explained that, while feeling complete loyalty to the United States, he nevertheless believes that his primary duty is to be with his minor daughters in Japan.

THE AFTERMATH

MASS evacuation has created a host of problems. Since they were not created by the people but by the government, they must be accepted as a national responsibility. The evacuation program was so uncertain at the outset and so sudden when it came that the evacuees did not have time to dispose of their property in a fair and orderly manner. Altogether, their west-coast holdings were valued at around $200,000,000. While W.R.A. now has established a property division designed to assist the evacuees, a satisfactory system of property custodianship was

lacking when evacuation was ordered. Huge losses were suffered through hasty, forced sales. Since the majority of the evacuees have been cleared of even the suspicion of disloyalty, it would seem only fair for the government to make some compensation. This can probably best be accomplished through the creation of a claims commission in the postwar period to pass upon the thousands of claims that will unquestionably be filed. The volume of litigation that is likely to arise would in itself seem to require the setting up of such an agency.

Was Evacuation Constitutional?

One of the worst features of mass evacuation was that a particular minority was subjected to unusually harsh measures solely on the grounds of race or ancestry. Only those persons having Japanese blood were included within the order; and all were included who had any Japanese blood, however slight. It is apparent that this presents a constitutional problem of the gravest possible character.

On June 21, 1943, the Supreme Court decided the case of *Hirabayashi vs. United States*. Mr. Hirabayashi had been convicted of violating both the curfew order and the evacuation order. While the court held that the curfew order was a valid exercise of the war power, it pointedly refused to pass on the question of the constitutionality of the evacuation order. A study of the several opinions filed in the matter makes it clear that the Supreme Court entertains serious doubts as to the constitutionality of the evacuation procedure so far as the Nisei, or citizens, are concerned. For example, Mr. Justice Murphy said that the curfew order "goes to the very brink of constitutional power"; while Mr. Justice Douglas, in a concurring opinion, wrote the following words: "Detention for reasonable cause is one thing. Detention on account of ancestry is another."

In a later case, *Korematsu vs. United States,* the court has passed directly on the constitutionality of evacuation. A still more serious legal question arises in connection with the Tule Lake segregants. While the Tule Lake evacuees are termed "segregants," it is apparent that they are really prisoners of war. The center is under heavy military guard and censorship. A bill to divest the citizens in this group of their American citizenship met defeat in Congress by a narrow margin.

Prospects for Relocation

Assuming that W.R.A. is permitted to carry through its present policies, what are the prospects for the future? By March, 1944, some 19,000 evacuees had been released from the centers and relocated outside the western evacuated area. The W.R.A. may succeed in relocating an additional 20,000 by the end of 1944. But even this will still leave in the relocation centers, not including Tule Lake, about 50,000 evacuees. The most energetic, the best trained, and the most highly skilled evacuees have already been relocated. Individual relocation is certain to proceed more slowly after 1944. There will be left in the centers, in any case, a permanent "residue" population, made up of the lame, the halt, and the blind—old Issei bachelors, orphans, aged Issei couples without children. Strong pressures may still be found in most of the centers against relocation. Evacuees fear the "outside." They are uncertain about the type of treatment and reception they will meet. They lack confidence in their ability to succeed in areas with which they are not familiar. Having adjusted to center life, they do not want to face still another dislocation. And, lastly, there is the hope in many minds of an eventual return to the west coast. It is quite likely that most of the evacuees would leave quickly if the ban against return to the west coast were to be lifted.

Return to the West Coast?

Relocation might be speeded up enormously if evacuees could be granted permission to return to the west coast for periods of from thirty to ninety days for the purpose of disposing of such holdings as they still retain and arranging for the shipment of personal belongings to other areas. The changed military situation would seem to justify relaxation. The danger of actual invasion has passed; many of the emergency measures have already been relaxed both on the west coast and in Hawaii; the west coast is no longer a theater of war but a base of operations.

In no case would there be a mass return of the evacuees to the west coast. Many of them have already been relocated elsewhere; others are being relocated every day; and, in many instances, there is nothing for the evacuees to return to on the west coast. Among the Nisei, in particular, there is a strong current of feeling against the west coast, and many of them have no intention whatever of returning permanently. If the ban on the west coast were lifted entirely, it would mean that the last restriction on the rights of the Nisei had been removed. This consideration alone would go far toward improving the morale of all the evacuees who have remained in the relocation camps.

Permanent Camps?

Already W.R.A. has announced that it intends to close one of its Arkansas relocation centers as soon as possible. If relocation proceeds at the 1943 rate, it is possible that other centers can be closed before the war is over. It would also seem feasible to convert one, possibly two, centers into genuine relocation projects which could eventually be turned over, on a cooperative basis, to the evacuees who will not leave the camps.

THE DEMOCRATIC POTENTIAL

WHILE mass evacuation was a harsh measure, it should be recognized that the relocation program does carry democratic possibilities. The concentration of most of the Japanese-Americans on the west coast in ingrown communities was by no means a healthy situation. The American-born Nisei were experiencing great difficulties in finding employment opportunities to which their skills entitled them. They had not succeeded in outgrowing the dominance of their elders or in breaking away from the strong social ties which held them in Little Tokyo.

For many of these younger and more enterprising Nisei, relocation has been a genuinely liberating experience. They have found opportunities in areas outside the west coast for which they had been seeking for years prior to their removal. They have moved out of the narrow, airless world of Little Tokyo into the main stream of American life. The experience they have undergone has shattered some of their illusions, but it has given a new value to such concepts as "liberty" and "freedom." As a group, they are showing a more active and healthy concern with the problems of other racial minorities. In many other fields, they are demonstrating an alert awareness of the kind of world in which they live. To appreciate this development, one must recognize that the Japanese on the west coast, and particularly in California, occupied an economic niche considerably above Negroes, Chinese, Mexicans, and Filipinos. Evacuation was a shock to their pride, but it has not been without its healthy, if unforeseen, consequences. This observation, however, would not be true of the entire group nor even of all the Nisei. For many, evacuation has involved nothing but bitterness and a feeling of frustration.

It may be healthy, moreover, that the "Japanese Problem," which has echoed on the west coast for nearly fifty years, has now ceased to be a local and has become a national problem. It is now definitely related to the problem of the other racial minorities. This is important since it is evident that we shall never solve any of these problems until we have solved all of them.

The All-Japanese Combat Team

The most constructive step taken by the government in dealing with the Japanese-Americans was its decision, in January, 1943, to form an all-Japanese combat team. Previously, the Nisei had been classified as ineligible for military service. Today this stigma has been completely removed. The Nisei now have an opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty, and they are doing so in the most concrete manner. Today there are over 8,000 Japanese-Americans in the Army. They were among the first troops to land on the beaches of Salerno, where their conduct was singled out for special praise by General Mark Clark. Casualties in the 100th Infantry Battalion, made up entirely of Nisei, amounted to more than 40 per cent. In addition, Nisei soldiers are serving as interpreters and as intelligence officers with our units throughout the Pacific and in India. As interpreters, they have played, according to Lieutenant-Colonel Karl Gould, "an indispensable role" in the war. (At the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, there were approximately six hundred people in the United States, not including the Japanese-Americans, who had a workable knowledge of spoken and written

The Nisei now have an opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty . . .

Japanese!) Over two hundred Japanese-Americans are serving in the Merchant Marine and quite a number of Nisei girls have joined the WAC.

Sergeants Kazuo Komoto and Fred Nishitsujii have been cited for gallantry in the Southwest Pacific. Sergeant Ben Kuroki, of Hershey, Nebraska, has taken part in over twenty-five combat flights over Hitler's Europe. He participated in the raid on the Ploesti oil fields and wears the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters. "I want the people to know," he said in a recent interview, "that we're loyal Americans, just like anybody else." As a group, the evacuees in the centers have demonstrated their loyalty by every means available to them. They have purchased war bonds; conducted drives for the Red Cross; organized volunteers-for-victory committees; made radio transcriptions for the O.W.I. and, within the limitations of detention, have done all in their power to further the war effort. When word was released of the execution of the American flyers in Tokyo, the Nisei soldiers in training at Camp Shelby bought $100,000 in war bonds in a single day to demonstrate how they felt about this act of barbarism.

Earning the Right to Citizenship

The magnificent spirit shown by these people, both here and in Hawaii, where they have been very largely responsible for the success of the defense effort, cannot fail to win the admiration of the American people. Faced with such conclusive proof of loyalty—all the more remarkable in view of the evacuation program itself—the agitation currently being fostered on the west coast for the deportation of the parents of these soldiers seems unfair. In the days, weeks, and months to follow, the Nisei will be steadily earning the right to fair treatment, to full citizenship, just as the loyal Issei will be establishing, by their excellent conduct under the most trying circum-

stances, a right to the chance to become American citizens after the war.

If the relocation program is ended at an early date with most of the evacuees relocated outside the centers, the program itself will show constructive results despite the hardships, expense, and needless suffering which it has involved. It may be justified as an extension of democracy and not merely defended as "a harsh but necessary" impairment of the democratic process. We need not apologize for the program as a "detour from democracy," for it has a strong democratic potential as many of the Nisei themselves now recognize. The bitterness and resentment that it has provoked can be wiped out —the Nisei themselves are anxious to forget the entire experience—provided only that we insist that the program serve a genuinely democratic purpose. If, on the other hand, race bigotry gets the upper hand in this program, it can spell disaster. Already there is a dangerous tendency to regard the war in the Pacific as a racial war. Acts of reprisal toward the evacuees, harsh measures taken against them, only aid Japan in furthering its contention that this is a racial war. Already Japan has made effective use of the evacuation program throughout the Far East, where it is constantly being cited as proof of racial bigotry in America. As long as the relocation centers are full of evacuees, we, as a nation, will be in a strange position: attempting to instill a respect for democracy behind barbed-wire fences; advocating principles that we fear to trust in action; trying to administer democratically a program that produces, in the centers themselves, antidemocratic crosscurrents and tendencies.

A Challenge to America

Many of the basic issues of the war and of the peace to follow are bound up in the ten relocation centers, from California to Arkansas, in which some 80,000 people of

Japanese ancestry are living today. "If," as John Embree has said, "administrative problems involving a hundred thousand people can not be intelligently and democratically solved, how are we to solve the complex postwar problems of, say, Southeast Asia with its mixed population of a hundred million?" The welfare of the center residents actually becomes of minor importance when measured against the vastly greater issues that are involved in this seemingly unimportant wartime "episode."

"It is doubtful," writes Dr. Robert Redfield, "if any deprivation of civil rights so sweeping and categoric as this has ever been performed under the war powers and justified by the courts." The very center of the problem, he points out, "lies in the fact that the evacuation and confinement were done on a racial basis." The ultimate effects of this action will be felt outside our country —in Asia, in the Pacific, throughout the vast area around the rim of the Pacific where a new world is emerging from this war. Whether we are to save these "young Americans with Asiatic faces" for the democratic way of life involves the vastly more important question of whether we are to extend and deepen this same way of life throughout the Pacific. For our relations with this small group of 80,000 American citizens are, in miniature, a sketch or blueprint of our relations with all of the peoples in the Pacific area. It is the key to the complex problem of our relations with the people of a postwar Japan.

President Roosevelt's message to Congress of September 14, 1943, may be regarded as an official statement of federal policy on the relocation program:

> With the segregation of the disloyal evacuees in a separate center, the War Relocation Authority proposes now to redouble its efforts to accomplish the relocation into normal homes and jobs in communities throughout the United States, but outside the evacuated area, of those Americans of Japanese ancestry whose loyalty to this country has remained unshaken through the hardships of the evacuation which military necessity made unavoidable. We shall restore to the loyal evacuees the right to return to the evacuated area as soon as the military situation will make such restoration feasible. Americans of Japanese ancestry, like those of many other ancestries, have shown that they can, and want to, accept our institutions and work loyally with the rest of us, making their own valuable contribution to the national wealth and well-being. In vindication of the very ideals for which we are fighting this war, it is important to us to maintain a high standard of fair, considerate, and equal treatment for the people of this minority, as of all other minorities.

This statement should be construed, not as a mere statement of policy by this administration, but as a solemn pledge spoken by the President in the name of the American people.

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