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A REPORT TO
THE BROTHERS SERVICE COMMITTEE UPON JAPANESE AMERICAN RELATIONS
April 21, 1942

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MANZANAR--The living conditions are far from satisfactory. The buildings are similar to those at the Pomona Fair Grounds and Santa Anita race track. The seams in the walls allow the strong Manzanar winds to come right through. High boots are a necessity due to several inches of loose dust and dirt about the premises and many persons wear gauze masks for protection. Each room is equipped with an oil heater. Many of the dwellings are overcrowded. In the bachelor quarters the normal complement is 40 men to a room. Other quarters contain 10 to a room. In several instances different families of mixed company have had to occupy the same room. Although dwellings were put up at the rate of one every 10 minutes, many persons had to sleep in unheated store rooms upon arriving at the camp. Bathing facilities were quite inadequate, running water was late in being made available and two weeks elapsed before hot water was available.

The food situation likewise can be improved upon although it is somewhat more satisfactory. Although the Japanese prepare their food well--they do most all of the work themselves--the Friends thought they should have a larger diet of rice and vegetables. An offer was made but the Superintendent, Mr. Triggs, rebuffed it with the statement that there were plenty of vegetables and rice. Incidentally rice had been served only once up to that time--a few weeks period.

On the whole the Japanese have not objected to their treatment by the government. Relations are not particularly friendly however between the paid caucasian secretaries of the camp and the unpaid Japanese ones. There are reports that the caucasian girls snub the Japanese.

Under army supervision, the construction of housing facilities for families, dining halls, sanitary units, recreational centers, hospital facilities, etc., has been rushed to completion for the reception of the 10,000 evacuees from the coastal area.

SANTA ANITA--On the hot, paved parking lot at the Santa Anita race tracks, thousands of Japanese and Japanese Americans are living in frame buildings while they are being registered, examined and cared for pending removal to the larger inland camps such as Owens Valley camp.

Although the W.P.A. has been designated to carry on recreational activities, no program has been initiated as yet. No caucasians are allowed to enter without special permission. It appears as if this and other similar camps are merely concentration camps and differ from the German variety in that there has been no brutality.

Living conditions and the general morale are both very bad here. Although the first two days were the worst there is still much room for improvement. The first arrivals were forced to use stables for sleeping quarters. Many of the stables had been inadequately hosed out and the stench was quite general. Internees were given empty ticks and told to fill them with straw for mattresses. Thus they were bedded down. Some army cots were provided in addition. One electric light bulb was provided to a stable.

New arrivals--some with tags about their necks reading "Examined and tagged for Santa Anita"--are given a property examination and a superficial medical examination. Although most of the children were properly fed the bottle babies went hungry for a short time. No recreation facilities are available and no internees may leave the grounds for recreation. The only outside assistance has been that of Gene Booth who assisted the camp doctor examine new-comers.

NEW PRONOUNCEMENTS--On Friday, March 27, curfew went into effect, restricting movements of all enemy aliens to an area within a radius of five miles from their homes, excepting as they must go to and fro to business, school, church or Federal buildings. None may be outside their homes between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

On Sunday, March 29, all voluntary evacuation was revoked by the army order freezing the movements of enemy aliens. From then on all evacuation must be strictly under army order.

On March 31 Japanese farmers and their families--237 souls--were registered, finger printed, tagged and evacuated under army escort, from strategic Bainbridge Island in Puget Sound and taken by special train to the Manzanar camp. They had worked in the strawberries and peas up to the last moment in order to help save the crops for "national defense". There was no apparent bitterness in their grief at leaving their homes and the land they loved. Friends in this area have worked closely with this group--especially the students.

EXEMPTIONS--By proclamation of General DeWitt, the following classes of Axis nationals and American-born Japanese will be subject to exemption from future exclusion orders:

1. German and Italian aliens of 70 or over.
2. Members of family and dependents of German and Italian officers, enlisted men or commissioned nurses on active duty in the U.S. Army or Navy; or
3. Members of family and dependents of German and Italian officers who on or before December 7, 1941, died in line of duty with the armed services of the U.S.
4. Germans and Italians who had filed naturalization papers and paid filing fee on or before December 7, 1941.
5. Those too ill or incapacitated to be moved without danger to life.
6. Inmates of orphanages and the totally deaf, dumb or blind.

Under these regulations very few Japanese will be entitled to exemption. One notable exception has been made locally. ^{Nine} ~~the~~ nisei Japanese leaders have been temporarily exempted in order that they might help the government in the evacuation proceedings. *They will join their families at the respective camps later.*

PROFITEERS--One very real problem the Japanese have had to face has been the determination of unprincipled profiteers to take advantage of this emergency situation and make capital of the need of the Japanese to liquidate their assets in a hurry. All up and down the coast Friends have endeavored to prevent this exploitation of the helpless by counsel and advice, but in spite of all efforts there has been a great loss on

the part of many of them. Fear and uncertainty caused them to sell for whatever they could get in numerous cases.

GOVERNMENTAL POLICY--Conferring in San Francisco with Milton Eisenhower, head of the W.C.C.A., Raymond Booth learned that there are to be constructed some dozen or more induction centers, similar to the one at Santa Anita, for the temporary reception of evacuees prior to their definite re-location in inland camps yet to be built. Beginning last April 1, the evacuation will continue daily until all of Japanese birth or ancestry are removed from civilian life for the duration. As outlined by Mr. Eisenhower, the plan of resettlement includes five opportunities;

1. Land subjugation and improvement;
2. Subsistence farming;
3. Public employment, probably in defense work, not conflicting with the labor unions;
4. Private employment, but not serfdom--voluntary, and perhaps in a uniform;
5. Community resettlement without increasing an unfriendly public.

WHAT ARE THE FRIENDS' PLANS--Although the government offered the A.F.S.C. the opportunity of complete direction of one of its reception centers, the Friends refused, saying they wanted no part in the government's crime.

The possibility of community resettlement is the hope of the Friends, who feel it to be the vital point of the whole picture and are bending every effort toward the accomplishment of that aim. In addition, they wish to help counteract a public opinion adverse to minority groups. After the war when these Japanese--perhaps reduced to menials by that time--begin to seek employment at the worst possible time, the Friends hope to intercede with the government in the hope of aiding their assimilation.

Concerning community resettlement, the Friends hope that civilian hearing boards will be set up as now rumored and that internees will be released for farm re-location. They feel that the Japanese are either an agricultural people or have got to be at this time. If such hearing boards would release persons into Friends' custody they hope to put them on mid-western tenant farms in Friends and Brethren communities where possible. Apparently many tenant farm houses are empty because the members have moved to defense industries. Local Quakers and Brethren ought to make a special effort to welcome and help the Japanese. A group of Friends are leaving soon for the east and on the trip they hope to investigate possible sights for such projects; near Manzanar, Parker Dam, in Indian Reservations, in Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, and Utah where the new national office of the Japanese American Citizens League is located and where Senator Thomas is sympathetic. If necessary land will be purchased for such a project or projects where crops may be produced within a year. The army has extended protection to the Barstow farm colony and will likely extend protection to other and future colonies.

The A.F.S.C. hopes to have a work camp this summer to help the Japanese. Boothe believes that it will be possible to have several Japanese work camps in 1943. A work camp this summer could be used especially to train personnel for future assistance and in general to educate work campers upon as to the entire minority problem. Such camps should include members of minority races.

Raymond Booth feels that Milton Eisenhower is sincerely trying to do the best he can with the job at hand, difficult beyond expression, at the best. He is determined to utilize all Federal agencies which are accustomed to doing social work and planning in an effort to make

as humane and reasonable an adjustment as is possible for these unfortunate people, for which we are all truly grateful.

Booth feels that this is America's greatest social and religious problem--one in which we have made refugees of our own people. He also feels that this evacuation is not a military necessity but a request from agricultural interests. Although the induction centers have been designated as "processing" points only for Manzanar and Parker Dam, it is his opinion that they are being constructed for more than temporary shelters. Even though the most recent government pronouncement that the longest period of time any persons will be kept at these centers is six months, he feels that that time limit may be extended indefinitely. The Pomona center has been planned for 10,000 and Santa Anita for 17,000. These will accommodate all the Japanese of Los Angeles county in which reside one-fourth of the Japanese population of the U.S.

WHAT THE FRIENDS HAVE DONE AND ARE DOING--They have set up and conducted three temporary hostels for Terminal Island evacuees. They are caring for a considerable amount of personal property of evacuees from the Los Angeles and San Diego areas. The property has been stored either in churches or available warehouses. Thirdly, they are attempting to temper the attitude and plans of the government through negotiations.

EDUCATIONAL PICTURE--The Friends were represented at the conference of student associations of the Pacific Coast held in Berkeley the week-end of March 21. Many college administrative officials also attended and plans were worked out whereby efforts would be made to ensure the continuance of the education of many of the alien young men and women and so help to save the whole ethnic group.

The State Board of Education has shown a fine cooperative attitude toward the educational problem and Caucasian students have shown a very real interest in their Japanese-American fellow students.

A former Japanese student of Esther Rhoads was assisted by scholarship to leave for Pendle Hill on March 28.

HOSTEL NEWS--Because of government evacuation orders both the Norwalk Hostel and Blue Hills have been vacated and the members interned. Several Japanese and Japanese-American volunteers went to Owens Valley from Forsythe Hostel on Monday, March 23. April 1 and 2 their families joined them there in the homes they helped to build. Although some new families have since moved in, the Forsythe Hostel has only half the number now it had a little over a month ago.

JAPANESE COLONIES--Most Japanese who voluntarily emigrated from their homes were well-to-do. They usually have been open-minded psychologically. Over 200 Japanese settled at Trinidad, Colorado. A large number of them journeyed to Denver, where a considerable colony already existed. There have been reports of a clash between the two groups, the residents feeling that their security has been endangered by the new-comers. A great number of the Palos Verdes Japanese farmers have colonized in Arizona, forming the Japanese Cooperative Farm Inc. The government has announced that 10,000 more will be re-located on farms in the Gila River Indian reservation, 50 miles southeast of Phoenix. At the present time there are 30 persons at the Barstow farm colony.

I asked D.C. Gnagy to visit the Prasier Valley Japanese Settlement eight miles east of Strathmore. He and Chalmer Johnson have submitted the following facts after a recent visit there.

The director is George Takenaga, Box K, Strathmore. The colony consists of 143 persons; mostly women, 12 old people, 45 grammar and high school students, and 15 pre-school children. They have leased 640 acres of rocky but tillable land, from a Caucasian, Mr. Sutto. One hundred acres have already been planted to squash, potatoes and tomatoes. More is being put in as rapidly as Sutto bails the hay which is now on the land. There are 10 buildings in two different locations consisting of dormitories, machine sheds, mess houses, etc. Water pumps for irrigation are installed on the property. The leasees own their own equipment which was transported from their former homes near Los Angeles, where they had been farming 1900 acres as separate families with 40-50 acres per family. They are now living cooperatively.

When Gnagy and Johnson arrived the adults were working in the field and carpentering, while many of the 25 youngsters who have not gone back to school as yet were playing ping pong. Mr. Takenaga welcomed them to return and seemed to greatly appreciate their offer of help and cooperation. He asked for D.C.Gnagy's address.

WHAT THE BRETHERN CAN DO--Although there are a number of things that the Brethren can and should do, both alone and in cooperation with the Friends, I wish here to suggest only three.

1. If possible make scholarships available to McPherson and Manchester Colleges for Japanese student evacuees.
2. Investigate western and mid-western communities for possible relocation settlements; and take steps both with the government and with those communities for the resettlement of small groups if it becomes possible.
3. Investigate the possibilities of placing new teachers and those who have or might lose their jobs, in any new Japanese settlements. This may be done by writing to Washington D.C.

Personnel Dept.

Office of Emergency Management.
Washington

Respectfully submitted by
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Brethren Service Committee Representative to Work with the Friends upon this Problem