

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
War Relocation Authority  
461 Market Street  
San Francisco 5, California

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*Providence*  
*Library*

DIGEST OF WEST COAST NEWSPAPER ITEMS

October 8 to November 2, 1945

WRA AND ARMY HEADQUARTERS RELEASES:

127 clippings

Factual

February 1 as the closing date of Tule Lake Segregation Center was announced by War Relocation Authority. Also figures showing the maintenance cost of the center since its opening. These items, together with suggestion and conjecture of the fate of those detained at the center under Department of Justice orders received much space in the news columns and editorially. The withdrawal of the army guard from the camp and taking over by the detail of border guards of the Immigration and Naturalization service of the Department of Justice was given notice also.

Announcement of closing dates, information as to the progress of War Relocation Authority toward that end, and the shutdown of Granada, in Colorado, and Minidoka, in Idaho, was made. The continued work of WRA in helping those leaving the centers to relocate, speaking tours and appearances of WRA officers, efforts toward securing jobs and housing and protection against violence, received frequent mention.

The Klamath Falls Herald and News reported that a group of Japanese at Tule Lake planned legal action to recover their citizenship previously renounced. The newspaper said considerable sums of money were recently transferred from the colony area to outside depositories.

JAPANESE AMERICANS IN THE ARMED SERVICES:

53 clippings

Favorable

The valuable part played by Nisei graduates of the Military Intelligence Service Language School in the South Pacific is receiving more and more notice in the West Coast newspaper as the military is releasing the information. Returning ranking officers of both the Army and Navy have added their praise, and Secretary of Interior Ickes today commended General Joseph W. Stillwell for his suggestion that American soldiers form a "pickax" club to protect Japanese-American veterans from discrimination.

A welcome to Japanese American soldiers who have fought in any branch of the United States armed forces on foreign soil or foreign seas was extended by the 41st Division Post No. 3049 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars at Portland, Oregon. Another post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Waldo Caulfield, at Oregon City, Oregon, condemning the action of one Oregon post for barring Nisei from membership, went on record as maintaining that the record of service of the Nisei soldiers in this war marked them as real American citizens.

In Spokane, the Veterans Committee for Equal Rights took vigorous exception to a reported statement by Mayor Otto A. Dirkes before the city council that "1100 Japanese in Spokane county are too damn many." Spokesman for the veterans pointed out that most of the Japanese there are Nisei who served in World War II.

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Two Nisei are attempting to locate kin displaced by emergencies of war. One, a Nisei veteran of Italian, French and German campaigns, Pfc, Kaiso Uyeoka, re-enlisted in the U.S. Army and volunteered for occupation duty in Japan in an effort to locate his mother, whom he believes was lost somewhere in the rubble of Hiroshima. Uyeoka was born in Bakersfield and served four and a half years with the field artillery, winning three battle stars. Another Nisei, a seaman fresh from a Japanese internment camp, Harry Saksaki, sought the help of the War Relocation Authority in searching for his family, last known to be in an American detention camp.

Among a contingent of returning troops from the Pacific theater were 350 Nisei, headed for further training at the Japanese Language School at Fort Snelling, and then for long term occupational duty in Japan.

Other items of notice, awarding of citations for meritorious service, acceptance in American Legion and Veterans Organizations, and problems of reconversion being met by returning veterans, were given space and prominence.

#### RETURNEES:

55 clippings

Favorable

Reported numbers of returning evacuees and the problems met by them in their own reconversion to home life after several years in the Relocation centers continues to receive mention.

The readiness of school children to accept the returning Japanese as playmates was made manifest in several feature articles with photographs appearing in a number of California newspapers and also in the Seattle Star. Particular attention was given those Japanese who moved into Hunters' Point, San Francisco, whose children became "just some more kids" on the school playground.

In Burbank, California, where controversy continued to rage over the purported use of Army barracks as housing quarters for returning evacuees, one lone supporter was reported by Howard Stites, city manager. T. H. Golay, of Pasadena, one of the principal lot owners at the site of the Army barracks, said "It time to quit kicking U. S. Japanese around".

Efforts on the part of the War Relocation Authority to find housing and jobs for the returning evacuees has met with some censure. Some citizens continue to be annoyed that any help should be given them, or that they should be permitted to relocate "in their community" to compete in business and take jobs and housing. However, in clippings from most communities and in schools and universities, this attitude does not exist and the American Japanese are finding a ready welcome.

To help the lot of returning Nisei, particularly those families of veterans of both the European and Pacific campaigns, two army officers, Lieut. Col. Wallace M. Moore, and Lieut. Roger Smith, have been touring the West Coast, speaking before civic groups on behalf of the evacuees, that the valiant record of Nisei soldiers might eradicate some of the prejudice still held against them.

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HOUSING:

37 clippings  
30 Favorable  
8 Unfavorable

The practice of making war housing units and unused army barracks temporary quarters for returnees continues, although in some communities, such as Burbank, Camp Kohler, Sacramento, and Los Angeles, it has met with considerable criticism. Many citizens feel the units should be turned over to families of Caucasian veterans, although in most instances where the housing is of the more desirable type, it is made available to "veterans" and only those who are kin of Nisei veterans have been favored. The army barracks type of quarters is being opened up for the Japanese because the closing dates on the Relocation Centers are a "must", and some provision is necessary if the centers are to meet their closing dates. Sympathetic groups to the Japanese American problem have been active with the War Relocation Authority to help out the evacuees.

INCIDENTS:

65 clippings  
Factual

Federal Court jury cleared James E. Watson and his brother, Claude Watson, of charges of illegal possession of dynamite. It was the first case of Federal action against suspected perpetrators of acts of terrorism against returning Japanese Americans. The Watsons had previously been cleared, although admitting their guilt, by local courts of charges of arson and dynamiting of Sumio Doi home.

A \$40,000 fire destroyed a Belvedere lumber yard and the home of two Japanese families recently returned here from relocation camps.

Criminal action is proceeding in Oakland against Robert F. Hailey on a charge of assault with a deadly weapon, growing out of an act of terrorism against the American Japanese in Centerville. Charles Custom, 41-year-old Negro garage worker, who drove the car in which Hailey is alleged to have done the shooting, was cleared of all charges. An additional indictment of attempted murder against Hailey was also dropped, who is now out on \$3,000 bail.

Two deaths of recent returnees, one a suicide and the other suspected murder were reported. The first was a 23-year-old Nisei who last summer returned to the Coast. The youth, Robert Onizuka, former University of California student, reported despondent over being separated from his wife, living in Minneapolis, took an overdose of sleeping pills. The murder victim is believed to be N. Kurisu, 61, and a first degree charge of murder has been filed against Floyd Poushon, 18. The suspect, arrested at Dalhart, Tex., on an auto theft charge, was found to be carrying Kurisu's personal effects.

Eighteen Japanese railroad employees and their families, evacuees returned from Tule Lake, were removed by the Southern Pacific from Shingle Spring to avoid incident, after protest by the Placerville American Legion Post to the railroad company. Sheriff Lowell West questioned the Legionaire who made the protest to the company, but took no further action because "We've heretofore gotten along without Japanese and we feel we can go on forever without them. They definitely are not wanted here, and the Legion stated the attitude of the community".

These, together with a number of fires, hurling of bricks and malicious vandalism, in attempts to terrorize returning Japanese, received much space and favorable comment in the press.

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ACTIVITIES OF ANTI-JAPANESE GROUPS:

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| 21 clippings<br>Unfavorable | Citizens groups antagonistic to the presence of Japanese on the West Coast are still active to discourage their return. Moves to prevent them from securing housing, jobs and other facilities necessary for living have been made. |
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ACTIVITIES OF PRO-EVACUEE GROUPS:

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| 31 clippings<br>Favorable | Other organizations sympathetic are also active to secure returnees a chance to reestablish themselves on the West Coast. In addition to helping them secure housing and the means of a livelihood, the American Civil Liberties Union plans two suits in behalf of Japanese who formerly lived in California. One suit is intended to test the authority of the military command to exclude individual Japanese born in this country from the Coast after military necessity no longer existed. Another suit will test procedure at Tule Lake center under which some 5500 Japanese renounced American citizenship, which they claimed was under duress. |
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NEWS CONCERNING EVACUEES STILL IN CENTERS:

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| 25 clippings<br>Factual | A visit by Nick Bourne of the United Press to Tule Lake brought forth a number of feature stories under his by-line, though factual in content, contained an undercurrent of criticism of the fact that the evacuees had succeeded in adjusting themselves as well as they had to the kind of life forced upon them in the evacuation measures. The articles took issue with the fact that those in the centers were having babies at government expense, seemed to level criticism that they were living at government expense; and in tone were generally unsympathetic to the evacuees. |
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JAPANESE PRISONERS OF WAR AS HARVEST HANDS:

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| 15 clippings<br>Favorable | The use of Japanese prisoners of war as harvest hands brought forth a heated controversy by groups interested in the American Japanese question as destined to increase any antagonism against the Nisei. The issue reached the State Capital and brought forth from Governor Warren a complete denial that he had asked that the prisoners be brought in to help with the harvest, and further went on record as being entirely opposed to and had vigorously protected their being used. Prisoners are being worked by the farmers. |
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EDITORIAL COMMENT:

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| 59 clippings<br>44 Favorable<br>13 Unfavorable<br>2 Factual | More and more the press swings over to a favorable attitude to the American Japanese question. A few newspapers still cling to their antagonistic point of view, but they are far outweighed by those who see in the question a forerunner of similar discrimination against other groups if permitted to be continued against one minority. |
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DIGEST OF WEST COAST NEWSPAPER ITEMS -- 5

The chief subject now being weighed by the press editorially is the fate of the detainees at Tule Lake and what disposition the Department of Justice plans to make of their cases.

The controversy about bringing in war prisoners was also given wide comment editorially, and while admittedly there was a problem in securing the necessary hands for the harvest season, almost all editorials maintained the use of war prisoners was not the solution.

Most notable has been the position of columnists, writers and cartoonists of national prominence, which is nearly unanimously favorable to the evacuee cause.

LETTERS-TO-THE-EDITOR:

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| <p>41 clippings<br/>28 Favorable<br/>13 Unfavorable</p> | <p>The public continues to voice its sentiments on the American Japanese problem through the "Letters-to-the-Editor" column, and the majority plead for a fair chance for the Nisei, particularly in view of the splendid record of their soldiers on battlefronts. However, a few still holding an unfavorable stand, censure the help given them to secure housing, want the Nisei sent back to Japan, if only to convert the nationals to an American way of life. One woman also wrote in, prompted by the articles written by Nick Bourne regarding the increasing birth rate, and felt WRA should do something to put a stop to it.</p> |
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MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS:

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| <p>63 clippings<br/>51 Favorable<br/>12 Unfavorable</p> | <p>The activity of the F.B.I. in guarding the Seattle Area in regard to the Japanese before and during the war was the subject of a feature article recently in the Seattle Times.</p> <p>The Stockton Record carried a lengthy story of a veteran of part Japanese origin, who took legal action to have his name changed to the maiden name of his Spanish mother, in an effort to combat the prejudice he had met with because of his Japanese ancestry. Believed to be the first case of his kind on record, Takeshi Miyasaki, now Taki Saiz, pleaded he hoped the change would give him "an even chance".</p> |
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The Baptist Church of Auburn is collecting funds to rebuild the home of the Cosmo Sakamoto family in Rocklin, which was destroyed by fire the day before the family was to return home from a relocation center. "Too much notice has been given the destructive forces working against these people, and not enough has been said of the other side of the picture," said Pastor George E. Harms. A check for \$100 came from the daughter of the late Orrin J. Lowell, Auburn attorney, who made the request for the gift before his death, and funds have been pouring from a number of people in that community who desire to extend good will to loyal Japanese-Americans seeking to return to their homes. Auburn and its neighboring communities has been the seat of much anti-Japanese feeling.

Other miscellaneous newspaper clippings contain stories on the talk given by Robert B. Cozzons before the California Peace Officers Conference; the efforts by Congress to cut the WRA appropriation; efforts of the Bay Cities Baptist Union and

State Blind Aid to secure a seeing-eye dog for a 23-year-old blind returnee girl student at the University of California; the fate of Nisei caught in Japan by the war; the identification of the Japanese sword wielder in the brutal public execution of an allied prisoner widely publicized by pictures throughout American publications by Nisei soldiers detailed to duty in the Pacific; and notations of births and ~~de~~ deaths and other happenings among the American Japanese since their return.

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