

INFORMAL MEETING OF THE DIVISIONAL RESPONSIBLE MEN AND THE
PROJECT DIRECTOR AND COLONEL AUSTIN

January 17, 1944

DATE: January 17, 1944

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

PLACE: Project Director's office

Attendance: Director Best, Colonel Austin, Lt. Forbes, Dr. Opler, L. Huycke,
N. MacNeil, G. Yamatani, J. Naito, J. Okamoto, Il Namekawa,
B. Akitsuki, B. Mayeda, J. Nakao, and M. Shimada

Mr. Yamatani was first called upon to explain the details of the informal interviews held with the stockade detainees on January 13th and 14th. Colonel was questioned whether the story concerning thefts of many articles, such as tobaccos, money, watches, fountain pens, etc. by the soldiers during the Army's search of the stockade barracks recently was factual. The Colonel admitted that "lots of things were taken, but many were returned. Theft of money? I question money. I doubt whether people ever leave money in their barracks. I don't question watches or tobaccos." Mr. Yamatani apologized for the Committee's negligence in not consulting the Advisory Council previous to the interviews held with the detainees. He then went on to say that only with the cooperation and co-ordination of the Army and WRA, the Co-ordinating Committee will be able to solve and settle this incident amicably and successfully. He also mentioned the fact that Mr. Katayama, one of the internees interviewed, had inferred that the detainees really desired liquidation of status quo; nevertheless, due to some great pressure from the 'big bosses' of the headquarters, such feelings could not be expressed so outwardly. Mr. Naito added that according to Mr. Kawamura, who was recently discharged, some 170 detainees opposed status quo and about 30 favored it; that is, it appeared so.

Mr. R. Best, Project Director, suggested that the greatest 'good' should be done to the people in the Center, where larger portion of people is involved, and where the most good could be done. Attempt for the Committee's effort in getting the release of the detainees should be secondary. Momentarily, Mr. Akitsuki requested that a statement be printed by the Army and the WRA whereby the standing of the Committee's efforts in securing the release of the detainees (justifiable), which was incidentally one of the so-called 'planks' of the Committee's platform, could be cleared, in order to avoid any doubts or accusations from the Colony. Mr. Best approved of the above request suggested and stated that the wording may be follows: Proper recognition will be given to all the people in the stockade and those that meet the requirements for the return will be given consideration. In this way, Mr. Best felt that making of commitments may be avoided. He further went on to suggest that we should proceed full steam ahead in getting the Center back to its normal condition by going back to work, having schools, etc. and at the same time, work hand in hand with the release of the detainees. The detainees have already been interviewed; however, process of rehearing will be continued upon the Committee's recommendations, which may or may not be considered depending upon the recommended person's WRA or Army records.

Upon question raised by B. Akitsuki as to the extent of correspondence within and without the stockade, Colonel Austin stated that such are not prohibited, although such are subject to scrutiny and censorship of the Army.

Discussion arose in regard to the Mess Halls. Mr. Best clarified it by mentioning that immediately upon Chief Steward Hayward's return from San Francisco, Mess Halls will be worked on block by block on the basis of cleanliness and food. Committee requested that the mess hours be strictly regulated, in order to give ample time for workers to have their meals; to which the Project Director gave approval.

Pertaining to clothing allowances, Mr. Best thought that if an employee be ins work on the 17th, it can be considered legitimate half a work month; therefore, the employee is entitled to receive his clothing allowance.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Byron Akitsuki
Executive Secretary