

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS SECTION

Mr. Best RRB

Mr Schmidt

COMMUNITY ANALYST'S NOTE

(The Community Analysis Department is attempting to collect some autobiographical data in the form of diaries. The attached set of notes is from only one such diary and involves some interesting comments on center life. The coverage we have selected on Co-op, Art exhibit, the food situation, and repatriation exchange, refers to the month of March.)

United States
Department of Interior
War Relocation Authority
Newell, California
April 20, 1944

F. O. Diary.....3-9-44 (Sunday)

Food situation

Casually dropped in the manager's office of Block No. 4; met Mr. X. The following conversation ensued between him and this worker.

"Where are you working now, Mr. X.?"

"I am not employed at present. I quit my job in the Menu Department at the end of the last month."

"Why?"

"I was afraid that some one may come around and beat me. You know, our stock of food here is very low. There is not enough reserve to cover one week, possibly just 3 or 4 days. Consequently it is extremely hard to make menu. For instance such material as corned beef should be used once in a while, probably once or twice a week. But on account of shortage of materials for making adequate variety of menu, we have had to use it 3 or 4 days on stretch. I have often brought this matter up to the Mess Management, but no use."

"Well, this is war time."

"Yes, but some people don't consider the situation as you do. They think that even in war time there must be means to make situation tolerable. Knowing this center as I do, I was afraid that I might be beaten, if and when such people become enraged by a certain provocation. So I quit the job for good."

Mr. X. is about 28 years in age, an evacuee from Middle California, and is a kibel. Up to the time of Registration Disturbance, he was chef of Mess Hall No. 4. He was involved in the disturbance and was taken to Leuppe, but was returned to this center in December, 1943. It was noticeable that he became very mild toward the Administration after he came back from Leuppe. He is single.

Art Exhibition

I fell in the long ^{line} ~~cue~~ waiting for admittance into the Art, or rather Handicraft, Exhibition held in 1408 sponsored by Artificial Florists. One sweeping glance up and down the ^{line} ~~cue~~ revealed at once that there ~~were~~ very few persons above 40 years in age. It comprised mostly of men and women between 20 and 30. Two or three fathers carried baby on arm. Probably there was one female against two to three males.

After 28 minutes I gained entrance into the hall. At the information desk it was learned that the admittance of the previous day amounted to 3,500 persons, which is about 23 percent of the population of 15,000.

F. O. Diary.....3-9-44 (continued) -2-

The exhibition ranged from a collection of sea-shells, dolls, crochet, knitting works of sweater and socks, to paintings in oil and water color. There were very fine wood carvings, especially canes with animal figures carved, such as dragon and tiger, utilizing gnarls and knots of the original material.

But more interesting than the exhibition itself was the attitude of persons, especially young boys and girls, who were looking on the exhibition. They were expressing deep interest in almost each one of the articles exhibited, appreciating and appraising quality of handicraft. A group of four or five young men, seemingly Hawaiian kibeis, were noticeable in that they were expressing serious interest or criticism on almost every article on the exhibit. They had quite a serious talk on such articles, as noshi or mizuhiki, articles attached on a present which probably corresponds with the decorous tying of red and white ribbons on Christmas presents.

F. O. Diary.....3-30-44 (Thursday)

Last night I dropped in Mr. M.'s apt. to have a chat over a cup of tea. A well built man about 50 years in age, he lives with his wife and 3 grown up children. The following conversation ensued. Said Mr. M.,

"Have you heard something about the next exchange boat?"

"No, I haven't heard anything about it."

"The news I have gathered from several friends as follows. It may be just a rumor, but all who have given me the news believe it. The Japanese government is going to call back her diplomatic corps in Argentine. So the third exchange boat shall pick up those in Argentine who are in the priority list, and then come to New York and take some who are in the waiting list. Already, the news says, a list of 51 repatriates for the coming exchange boat has reached the administration office in Tule Lake."

"Well, that's news to me, but I will first tap some reliable parties and check up the news."

The M family composed of 5 persons were among those who were refused embarkation on SS "GRIPSHOLM" at New York, Sept., 1943, and transferred to this center through Rowher. The conversation shifted to some features of the center life here. He was asked.

"Do you prefer to have this center under the Army instead of WRA as some of the residents here would? Is there much talk about this topic among your friends or co-workers?"

He pondered a few minutes and said,

"I have neither talked with, nor heard anything from my friends and acquaintances. But personally I have no objection against being under

the Army's control. For instance about Co-op here. As it seems to me, the more Co-op furnishes better meat, fish and vegetables, the less variety of food WRA gives to the residents. You know I was first interned at Fort Missoula, Montana. There the director told the internees that as the government will not furnish a canteen, the internees may furnish one if they wanted to. So each internee put up about 3 dollars for initial stock, and a canteen was opened. Of course those who worked for the canteen had no pay. Before I and some others were ordered to move to Lordsburg, N. M., each person had received more than \$5 as dividend besides about \$3 having been refunded. Since we entered this center in Sept., 1943, we haven't received a single cent for patronage refund. This I say to let you know that even in an internment camp there was possibility to open a canteen by the internees themselves.

"As for the food, I can say this through experience as an internee that it became better after we were shifted from Department of Justice to the Army. Also things we needed were furnished more promptly. For instance when we went to Lordsburg, N. M. we had to live in a tent for a while. The first night we had rains and storm which was almost a cloudburst. The tent in which I slept with three other internees was an old one, and the rain water came down like through a sieve. Next day we took the matter up to an officer, and a brand new tent was promptly furnished."

After a few minutes silence he added,

"Probably it was possible for the Army as the number of the internees was not so large as the evacuees. With such a large population as we have here, I am not quite sure whether or not the Army shall treat us just same as they did with the internees. The total amount of the internees in all the internment camps was probably a little over five thousand."

Special Comment of Staff Worker

A remark on Paragraph 2, Page 7, of Project Analysis Report No. 4

There is another cause that produced Group I, in old Tule Lake politics. That is that there has been so many changes in WRA's policy and that the directions of those changes were "centripetal" and "centrifugal" in alternate. It was a pattern of WRA's policy, at least so it appeared to a group of evacuees well experienced in life - first to suggest or advise the residents to organize a social-political body, and then when it was organized and was going to make a fair start, it brought in, or created, a situation that will eventually disorganize the body. For instance, the organizing of ^{the} Planning Board was first suggested by WRA. When it was organized and the first meeting of its representatives was held, the local administration made its representation at the meeting in ^{the} person of

Vice-director who disclosed like a thunderbolt from the clear skies, that WRA was intending to relocate the Tuleans, so that there shall not be a single Japanese left in this center by the end April, 1943. (The above mentioned meeting was held early in November, 1942.)

This writer once expressed his opinion to a resident doctor's wife - a well educated nisei - to the effect that WRA was waging a psychological war on the evacuees by creating such a situation as to make them mentally disturbed and upset almost to the point of insanity. To this she promptly responded that she, too, was in the same belief.