

Changes in Family Life in Tule Lake Project

Living in the project, we have seen great changes take place in the family life and inter family relations of our people. These changes were brought about by the war and evacuation, of course, but more specifically there are numerous conditions existing here which are the real causes of these changes.

First of all, the project being under government control and being maintained on a limited budget, has not provided fully for the keeping up of at least the physical aspect of normal family life. Everything coming under this heading simply cannot be helped.

Turning to the mental changes, there is a definite feeling of unrest, of everything being temporary. People are half prepared to move on to some other place. Then there is the problem of where to go from here, of actual relocation. Most people are wondering how they will be treated on the outside later on.

These and other problems are having serious effects upon the family and the community as a whole. Many people are just marking time, wondering and hoping for the future. Others have resigned themselves to just following the crowd. Others are working, thinking, preparing for the post-war period, when the long-term future of the Japanese Americans will be decided.

A very important break in the life of the Japanese American family is just taking place. Heretofore, the Issei have been working hard, bringing up their children. Now that they have lost their earning power, they are not likely to be able to start all over after the war. Instead, the Nisei will tend to take the leading role, and when they do, the social and

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cultural assimilation which will make our people members in good standing, accepted Americans, a necessary part of America, will really begin.

Social Life in Tule Lake

- A. Types of people in camp
 - 1. people from the cities
 - a. concentrated
 - b. scattered
 - 2. people from the country
 - a. concentrated
 - b. scattered
- B. Social change
 - 1. It was great
 - a. complete
 - b. sudden
 - 2. from homes to apartments in barracks
 - a. several rooms to one
 - b. freedom of travel to one of restrictions
- C. Economic Status
 - 1. Wealth doesn't count
 - a. everyone is on an equal bases
 - b. standardized wage
 - 2. Life is all the same
 - a. eat same things at same place
 - b. do things in a cooperative manner
- D. Problems created by life here
 - 1. Child welfare
 - a. adequate facilities to occupy the child
 - b. the loss of opportunities that are found on the outside
 - 2. Education for just out of high school students

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- a. prepare for post-war and relocation
- b. keep mind from getting dull

E. Colony Government

1. Importance of it
 - a. whatever develops depends on the people

F. Peoples thoughts

1. What they think
 - a. What after the war

Social Life in Tule Lake

People of one race make up the social life of the colony here at Tule Lake. A group of people forced here by military law and war conditions; families from all sections of the Pacific Coast, from the cities and from farms of the country. These families either lived in highly concentrated Japanese farm sections, concentrated sections of the cities but many were scattered in large cities and throughout large sections of farming regions.

Social change for these people was abrupt and very complete. They gave up the well-established routine home life and jobs for an apartment in a barrack in which the whole family stays. The conditions in these apartments are at about the same level of a bedroom of many of their former homes. Surrounding the barrack are hundreds of others with families living under the same circumstances in one certain area.

Wealth matters little now; many of these people may be well-to-do, very poor or just average, but it doesn't make much difference now because everyone is on the same economic level. Wage scale is all standardized and those working should take the attitude that whatever they may be doing,

is for the benefit of all and should do his or her best at it. The well-to-do person is no better than the rest in all other conditions. They have to eat the same food in a mess hall which seats around three hundred a meal. Wash their belongings in the same laundry and use the same showers which the other members of the block use.

Colony life has created many family problems. The young boy and girl below twelve run around outside without adequate facilities to occupy themselves. They haven't the opportunity to mix with children of other races which is important in life in America. Another problem is to create classes for the people out of high school age, so they may further prepare themselves for the post-war conditions or when they are relocated.

One of the greatest problems for the colonists is to set their own type of Democratic Government. This matter of self-government is of the utmost importance because whatever step they take, it will bear fully upon themselves.

In coherence with thinking of the problems of the camp, people are thinking of what lies ahead. Most of these people do their daily tasks with a smile and with cheerful looks to keep up the morale of the other people, but deep down they realize the dark and hard days have yet to come. What lies in the future and what after the war?

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(Male)

Family Life in Tule Lake

- I. Adjustments which had to be undergone
- II. Family life in Tule Lake
 - A. Tendency to drift apart
 1. Eating in mess halls
 2. Participating in the numerous activities
 - B. Problems in rearing children

The change from the ordinary quiet life which colonists of Tule Lake were living to the altogether different phase of life which they are living today, has been tremendous. The effect it produced naturally affected the lives of every colonist to a great degree.

The family life of the colonists have been altered to a great extent. One of the changes which I have observed undergoing today in this camp, is the gradual drifting apart of the family. Eating in the mess halls, the members of the family are scattered all over the mess hall, usually eating on different tables. Numerous activities such as flower making and arranging, sewing, and adult English classes take mother and big sisters out of the home. Big brother works in construction department. Little brother goes to school. These factors tend slowly to alienate the members to each other.

The rearing of the children in the family is a great problem which must be carefully met by the parents. This camp life with many different companions for the children, some bad and some good, tend to make them wild and careless. This harmful effect should be corrected by choosing the right kind of companions for them.

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(Female)

Family Life in Tule Lake Project

- I. Undergo Severe Social Changes
- II. Good Points of Family Life
 - A. Communal Living
 - B. Cooperative Spirit
- III. Bad Points
 - A. Too Much Outside Interests
 - B. Family Scattered
 - C. Miss the Training of Parents

Ever since the evacuation the families of Japanese extraction (together with other minority groups disfavored by the general public) have had to undergo severe social changes. We have had to abandon our homes and have been relocated into government camps.

These changes could not and cannot take place without affecting the lives of everyone concerned. In the light of all this, I think we have survived through ordeal quite well.

Family life in Tule Lake has developed considerably since our arrival in this project. The family has had to make unusual changes and sacrifices--the housewife no longer needs to go through the tedious task of worrying over and preparing the meals, in some cases she only has one room to clean, little or no privacy is afforded to anyone, the washing and bathing has to be done in community fashion. The better point develops the communal life and the cooperative spirit of the people.

These and many other factors have thrown the family closer together. Each person has to lean upon the other for moral support. Each problem

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that arises from day to day should be discussed and ironed out. In this way, the family becomes a closer unit; thus, forming a better and more understandable relationship among themselves.

Because of the close living conditions, those with bad dispositions have had to overcome their faults and become more courteous and more friendly. Consequently, they become better persons (outwardly) and also become more bearable to live with.

Counterbalancing the good points, there are also the ever-present bad points.

Members of a family, although living together in the same quarters, have found interests outside the home which take up so much of their time that they hardly see each other except in the mornings and at night. The fact that most mess halls do not have family tables also prevents the family from seeing and associating with each other more often.

Some families don't even live together any more. The children having found friends with thoughts and interests similar to their own decide to live together. This is especially prevalent in the male sex. The younger boys who have banded together in this fashion have become boisterous even to a point called "rowdyism."

These boys who live away from their parents will miss the necessary discipline and guidance that everyone needs--especially those of high-school age

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(Male)

- I. Family Life in Tule Lake
- II. The Dual System of Family Life
 - A. The Family Itself
 - 1. The advantages and disadvantages
 - B. The Whole Block as a Family
 - 1. The advantages and disadvantages
- III. The Educational Facilities
- IV. Recreation

The family life in Tule Lake is divided into two separate parts. We may call it the dual system of family life. First, it concerns the family only. Each family is assigned to one or two or three apartments as is required for the number of persons in the family. The family is itself only in the apartments. That is, the only time that all the members of the family are together is in the evenings. It is then, only that there is an atmosphere of homelife, discussing the various events of the day, both locally and without the colony, that brings the members of the family into closer relation with each other.

This crowding of the family in one large room has many disadvantages, although it is true it has its advantages, too. Each member of the family deprives himself of the many privacies which he has accustomed to prior to his evacuation. Not only that but sanitary conditions must be remedied also. It is hard on one member to sleep with the lights burning while the other members are either studying or working into the night. At any rate this closer relationship of each member of the family creates a feeling of cooperation, and brings each member into closer contact with each other.

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The second part in this dual system of family life concerns the whole block. Since the whole block partakes in utilizing the same mess halls, the laundry and the washrooms, the block itself may be considered as one large family. The aims of this large family is to create a sense of responsibility on every person, and cooperation for the welfare of the block. Sanitary conditions must not be overlooked in the block also. Again the problems of privacy in the washrooms arise, but this matter is but a trifle compared to the many other problems that arise.

The education program is being expanded with plans for a separate school building sometimes in the near future. At present it is being well handled by the conscientious work of the Caucasian staff with the able assistance of the colonists.

In a camp of this sort it is the morale of the people which is carrying on the good work without a squabble. The recreational facilities are very limited but the department is making a go of it with the best it has. Competitive sports program for both boys and girls have been set up, and is running along smoothly. Dances on a Saturday night is not a rare sight with the establishment of two dance orchestras. Programs of various kinds have been put on also. The forming of clubs is encouraged for the individuals own benefit.

All in all, the life here is not so bad. The colonists have accustomed themselves to the weather, the environment and are satisfied with its conditions.

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Family Life of Tule Lake Project

- I. Good brought to family
 - A. Wives are getting socially minded
 - B. Peoples are getting sociable
- II. Evils brought to family
 - A. Further friction between younger generation and older people
 - B. Some begin to enjoy something else than his family life
 - C. Difficulties in readjustments
- III. Improvements which can be brought about
 - A. Go back to normal life

Due to the excitements and the worries of the evacuation, we have undergone a radical change, both physically and mentally. This change brought us some good, but also many evils entered our family life.

Despite the rapid changes in our society, evacuees tried desperately to readjust themselves to this new type of society. Wives are spending their leisure time for further education and crafts, which were unable during the pre-war days. They begin to associate with more people and also with many kinds of people; thus they are beginning to learn some art of society. This, I believe, does not limit only to the wives but also to the young people as well as old.

We always had a serious problem from long before, but this camp life has made it more serious than ever. We, the younger generations, were always educated in American ways of living, and our parents in most cases have their original customs. This difference in customs and opinions always caused some frictions between the younger generations and the older generations. This problem was always in our family life but since we

entered this camp life, it became more serious than ever. This might eventually cause some broken homes or something of this sort.

Another problem which rises in family life of Tule Lake Project is that more and more people are beginning to enjoy something else rather than family life. They began to think that a family life is a dry thing. Since there are many places to visit, they prefer to go where they can enjoy themselves more than their home. Some just come home to sleep; therefore, does not have time to enjoy with his family. These facts will lead to the lack of cooperation in the family.

When we were still back home, many people were used to gay and colorful life. Then suddenly they were thrown into this misery, without any means of recreation which they use to have. They will begin to seek for some new excitement and this might conclude to gambling or some kind of crime.

We are now facing many serious problems in this camp. We should and we must solve these problems. In my opinion these problems will be solved only when we return to our normal life.

Family Life of Tule Lake Project

- I. Climate
 - A. Weather of the year
 - 1. Summer--Winter
- II. Educational Facilities
 - A. General Education
 - 1. Elementary
 - 2. High School
 - 3. Adult Education
 - (a) Variety of courses
 - B. Religious Education
- III. Family
 - A. Daily Life
 - 1. For men, women, children
 - 2. My work
 - B. Food
 - 1. Best time for us
 - 2. Time to get together
- IV. Recreational Facilities
 - A. No theater and inadequate entertainment
 - 1. Talent show
 - 2. International Cafe
- V. As for me
 - A. Gives me the chance to meditate
 - 1. I do not care for entertainment

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2. I'm too indifferent to my own affairs
 3. Changes in my manner of thinking
- B. The things that I intend to carry out

Family Life in Tule Lake Project

The climate is terrible throughout the year. I don't like the weather. Summer is very hot and dusty; the autumn is almost like summer--windy, dusty--and it snows in winter; wind is so strong and cold rain. Now it is getting colder and worse.

There are two grade schools and one high school. Both have good equipments. It is rather simple ones which attract my attentions deeply, which means that I like to study in such school than well-equipped city schools.

We also have so many of adult education classes. These classes are instructed by highly qualified teachers. They are English classes, trigonometry, geometry, science, typing, shorthand, and others for young people. And for our parents it is provided with their favorite lessons in sewing, flower making, knitting, and so on. This helps very much in training them in so many courses.

We, too, have nice system of religious education for both Buddhist and Christians. There are a number of good preachers who are willing to lead us. Children are welcomed to attend any Sunday schools. Besides there are established many young people's organizations such as W.B.A. or Y.M.C.A.

Now for our daily life; it is so simple and peaceful. Old men and young ones work on farms and made quite a good crops. These people sup-

plied us with so many fresh vegetables. We are thankful to them. Others work as painters, carpenters, garages or kitchens. Old bachelors are congregated around the corners to talk on small matters.

I have a job of a kitchen helper that provides me with eight dollars a month. It is a very rare job, for I work from nine to one in the evening. I'm getting along fine with it these days. I am contented.

We eat to live. The foods are not bad or good. It's the only time for us to get together to enjoy the dinner and to chat. We feel that we who live in the same block are brothers and sisters.

We have a little entertainment for there is no theater and recreation system. Talent shows and International Cafe are the chief entertainments that we can enjoy.

As for me, I think that I'm destined to be in this camp. This makes me contented with this circumstances in Tule Lake Project. I do not care for any entertainment or other recreation. I have seen so many pictures before I was forced to fence in here. I was too indifferent to my own affairs until few months ago. It greatly changed my manner of thinking from time to time.

Anyway this is a good challenge for us to develop our social life in this country. It gave me a plenty of chances to think over and over about myself.

I am not worried about post-war for I believe that there is a way for all who has a will to do something. I like this place as much as my home town.