

REPORT ON COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

January 1, 1944 to June 30, 1944

Community Government has been the organization through which the community has been able to present its views and needs to the administration, to discuss policy and problems, and to plan and coordinate for community betterment. Government has contributed to community stability. It has given leadership for crystallizing opinion on critical issues. It has given to many thousands their first opportunity to learn and participate in the democratic process.

Eight of the nine relocation centers have adopted a constitution or charter and elected a Community Council. The Councils have enacted law and order codes and established Judicial Commissions to apply penalties to violators of community law. The health, education, food, employment, production, and public relation problems of the community have been handled through committees composed of Council members. Many Councils have also established a number of commissions of a permanent nature to which non-Council members have been appointed. The Relocation Planning Commission has been established at all Centers and is playing an active and significant part in stimulating resettlement. Other groups include Health, and School Boards, Manpower Commissions, Juvenile Commissions, Police Commission and Cemetery Boards. Selective Service and segregation committees have been established at many Centers to handle these special problems.

The responsible role of Community Government during the sometimes heated discussions over the reinstatement of selective service was demonstrated at every Center. Most Councils either sponsored or transmitted petitions from citizen groups welcoming selective service but requesting clarification of citizenship rights for all nisei. The Councils at Heart Mountain, Minidoka, and Central Utah, sponsored the visit of Sgt. Ben Kuroki, the nisei war hero. Departing inductees have been honored by Councils at all Centers.

The Councils have contributed to the internal stability of the Centers by negotiating labor disputes, improving labor relations, and meeting critical shortages of workers. Manpower Commissions have been established at several Centers to work with the Administration in determining job priorities and allocating the available labor supply. Councils have also resolved many intra-community disputes between individuals or groups.

A national meeting of Council representatives was given additional study. It was finally decided that it was advisable to postpone planning for such a conference until later in the year. Recommendations for the establishment of a joint staff Council Manpower Commission to meet the increasingly critical labor shortage were transmitted to the Projects in June.

Through the Judicial Commission, the residents have assumed a responsibility for maintaining law and order. Violators of Council regulations are cited to the Commission for hearing and sentence. One hundred thirty-six cases in all were docketed during the first five months of the year. Nearly half of these were for gambling and a quarter for traffic violations. A table showing number and type of cases is given below.

Offenses Heard by Judicial Commission by Center
January to June 1944

Center	Assault	Disturbing the Peace	Gam- bling	Intoxica- tion	Theft or Larceny	Tres- Traffic passing	Misc.	Total
Central Utah					2	19	1	22
Colorado River	2	5	23		1	1	3	35
Gila River	6	3	37			11	5	66
Granada Heart				4				4
Mountain	4						1	5
Jerome	2			1			1	4
Rohwer								0
Minidoka								0
Total	14	8	60	5	3	31	5	136

Community Government has had an important role in preparing the evacuees for a return to normal life, promoting good public relations, and maintaining a constructive attitude among Center population.

COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT AT THE CENTERS

COLORADO RIVER

The Community Council and the three local Councils of the Colorado River Center continued to have a significant role in the affairs of the community and in administration through collaboration with the staff.

The Council requested cooperation of the community in the drive to raise money for the prevention of infantile paralysis. It developed and circulated a questionnaire on relocation and assisted the visiting relocation team. It discussed the establishment of a cleaning service and a barber shop in the hospital with Community Enterprises. It prepared plans for holding memorial services for deceased soldiers. It approved and assisted in the construction of a log shade for tubercular patients and arranged for the purchase and distribution of literature on tuberculosis. It recommended that such patients be allowed to return home only after discharge by medical authorities.

The Community Council called to the attention of the Project Director a request for the purchase of uniforms for the police department and for an increase in the number of policemen. It presented a petition representing the viewpoint of the nisei on the reinstatement of Selective Service and the restoration of rights of American citizens. It recommended the establishment of a bakery and suggested changes in the handling and distribution of ice, meat, rice and bread. It recommended that negotiations be carried on for the release of interned doctors at Santa Fe.

The Law and Order Code was expanded to include regulations on cats and dogs, a school code, additions to the traffic regulations, a procedure for eviction of residents, a rabbit and poultry regulation, and a regulation covering disturbance of the peace. The Judicial Commission heard 35 cases during the first five months. A resolution of appreciation to Mr. Wade Head was passed upon the announcement of his departure from Poston.

The new Council was elected and installed in April. Offices for the Council officials were established in the administration building. The Council made plans for the establishment of a trading post to permit residents to sell or exchange articles for which they had no additional use. The trading posts were to be under the supervision of the local Councils.

Due to the shortage of workers, an emergency Manpower Commission was established in May. This Commission had as its function the determination of essential labor needs, the establishment of priorities and the formulation of rules and regulations governing employment and transfers. The Commission made its first report in June.

The continued assumption of responsibilities is an indication of the progress of Community Government. A report states "Much time and effort, with no financial benefit, is rendered by some of the evacuee members. On the whole, the evacuee Community Government seems to be developing a feeling of responsibility and a fitness in public affairs, together with a feeling of being a real part of community life here."

Central Utah

A number of internal problems affecting the welfare of the community consumed much of the time and energy of the Council during the six month period. These problems included the dispute between the cooperative and the credit union, a consideration of the demands of various organizations to solicit funds from the residents, and food and labor problems.

The Council discussed with the Project Director questions affecting employment quotas, public assistance grants, food in the hospital, establishment of a Junior College, the extension of the sewer pipe line, the issuance of privilege cards for members of the enlisted reserve, and the adequacy of recreational facilities.

The Project Director discussed with the Community Council the transfer of the WRA to the Department of Interior, the establishment of vocational training courses, the establishment of policy governing the use of the civic auditorium, and the closing of two dining halls.

The community problems which arose and which were considered by the Council included the reinstatement of Selective Service for nisei, voluntary donations to hospital workers, distribution of articles received from the Japanese Red Cross, voluntary blood donors, the establishment of a central diet kitchen, requests for food from various groups, and the establishment of a community fund.

Regulations prohibiting gambling and establishing procedure for resignation from the Council were enacted. Resolutions were passed granting full power to the Judicial Commission. The Council appointed a Mediation Board to negotiate the dispute between Business Enterprises and the Credit Union and appointed committees to consider the establishment of a community fund, and one on public safety.

The new Project Director, Mr. Luther T. Hoffman, was introduced to the Council in June. A public reception sponsored jointly by the Council and block managers was held in the civic auditorium. Elections for the new Council held in June, resulted in fewer than half of the old members being reelected.

GILA RIVER

Community Government at Gila River was faced with a number of important problems during the half-year period. These included an investigation of the functions and organization of the Internal Security Section, the establishment of a recreation commission and plan of recreation for the community, reorganization of the Council, relations with the block managers, juvenile delinquency, and the welcoming of the new residents from Jerome.

The Council enacted a code of offenses, a traffic code and a regulation prohibiting private enterprise. The Butte Council passed a resolution condemning the Japanese atrocities against American prisoners of war, recommended the retention of Dr. Jack Sleath as Chief Health Officer, established an executive board of seven members, established a recreation association, issued a formal welcome to the incoming people from Jerome and recommended the establishment of optical service by Business Enterprises.

The Council discussed, with the Project Director, a number of problems. Major among these was the presentation of a petition requesting the restoration of civil rights to the nisei following the announcement of reinstatement of Selective Service. It also recommended that a notary be appointed for the Canal community.

Problems of community concern included the investigation of the Internal Security Section, a report of the Public Health Committee on optometry services, block sanitation and blood typing for emergencies. It supervised the distribution of a shipment of goods received from the Japanese Red Cross and conducted a relocation survey. It called to the attention of the block residents the impending visit of the Spanish Consul to discuss problems of Japanese Nationals, a proposed juvenile code, the establishment of family eating in the mess halls, welcoming of Jerome residents and the forthcoming June election.

The Project Director discussed with the Council the need for cleaning irrigation drainage, the prohibition of private enterprise and the need for improvement of sanitary conditions within the Center.

GHANADA

The Community Council had an active role in discussions on the citizenship rights of nisei and the preparation of a petition on this subject. Problems of community concern included the reduction in employment under the quota for the third quarter, distribution of goods received from the Japanese Red Cross, compensation for accumulated overtime and the provision of incentive wages to workers in the slaughterhouse.

The Council called to the attention of the Project Director a request for reclassifying the position of Nurse's Aide to \$19.00, the distribution of clothing allowances on a monthly instead of quarterly basis and a request of expedite the leave procedure for boys called for physical examination for the Army. A request to send a delegate to the staff meetings was denied.

The Project Director informed the Council of agricultural plans for the present year and requested assistance in solving labor shortages by recruitment of additional workers. He also suggested to the Council the extension of a formal invitation to residents of Jerome coming to the Center and inclusion in the Council body of members of the Jerome Council. The Council at Granada continued to have a preponderance of nisei members.

HEART MOUNTAIN

The Heart Mountain Community Council was concerned with one major and several minor community problems. Following the announcement of the reopening of Selective Service for nisei, strong agitation developed under the leadership of a Fair Play Committee which threatened to influence large numbers of citizens to ignore their calls for pre-induction physicals and induction into the Army. The Community Council in an attempt to give perspective to members of the community and to emphasize the responsibility of the citizens prepared and circulated a petition for transmission to the President. The Council also requested and sponsored a visit of Sgt. Ben Kuroki. Sgt. Kuroki was at the project for several days, was honored by a banquet sponsored by the Council, and made several public addresses to the community. Members of the Council speak at ceremonies held for the young men who depart for Army service.

Other problems of community interest included representing members of the janitorial service in the labor reduction of the third quarter labor quota. The Council sponsored the distribution of Red Cross gifts, discussed the establishment of a scholarship fund, recommended that evacuee doctors be given Civil Service status, sponsored the establishment of a local unit of the USO, discussed the advisability of establishing cooperative business enterprises outside the Center, presented the purchase of uniforms for the police force to the blocks and investigated a labor dispute in the poultry section.

The Council discussed with the Project Director several problems in connection with relocation and urged that certain time-consuming procedures be modified to ease the departure of those leaving the Center. It presented requests for urgently needed repair and maintenance. It favored the establishment of a Junior College, of a manufacturing plant to produce miso, the construction of wind breaks at the hospital clinic and laundry rooms, the distribution of free soap and washboards, and additional medical assistance. The Project Director called to the attention of the Council a number of problems in relation to relocation and asked Council sponsorship of the fourth and fifth War Loan Drives. The Council communicated with a number of Centers on a national meeting of representatives from all Centers.

Regulations governing the keeping of pets and fowl were enacted and the criminal code amended. Resolutions were passed making Council action binding on all Council members, requested the WRA purchase of uniforms for the police department and prohibiting the use of food for any special group or party.

ROHWER

The Community Council, through its various committees, maintained a close working partnership with the Administration. The committees that were particularly active were those concerned with relocation, segregation, employment and reception of incoming residents from Jerome.

The Council sponsored the visit of Hibutsi Murai, a specialist in mid-western farming. Mr. Murai gave a series of lectures on agricultural possibilities in the mid-west. The segregation committee handled a major share of the burden in connection with the movement of segregants to Tule Lake. The labor committee had a number of problems involving minor disputes, employment, hours of work and the like. The committee for the reception of the Jerome residents worked on details of cleaning vacant apartments, providing adequate housing space and formally welcoming Jeronites as they arrived on the Project.

The Council brought to the attention of the Project Director a number of problems. It requested that consideration be given to a possible stoppage of work in connection with cutting of fuel. It recommended that clothing allowances and salary payments be made in cash rather than by check. It proposed that a series of conferences be held between committees of the Council and members of the Administrative staff in order to improve relations and understanding of problems. It called to the attention of the Administration the excessive infestation of cockroaches in the mess halls, the need for additional street lighting, the rumor that mental patients of Japanese ancestry at the State Hospital were being mistreated, and the need for an old men's home. It recommended that plans be made for the manufacture of Japanese foods, that operating and maternity rooms in the hospital be air conditioned, that doctors from Jerome be invited to come to Rohwer.

It assisted the Administration in the quarterly population count, in securing compliance with Selective Service regulations and in selecting a site for the old men's home.

Problems of general community concern considered by the Council included the provision of adequate tokens of appreciation to the hospital staff for their services to the community, recruitment of additional nurse's aides and securing voluntary blood donors. In conjunction with the block managers, it sponsored a Center-wide clean-up.

MINIDOKA

Community Government became operative at Minidoka with the election of a seven-man Council and 34 Block Commissioners in February. The immediate problem was that of organization and six committees including education, health, welfare, public relations, education and juvenile were established with the chairman of each committee a representative of the Council and the other members being drawn from the block commissioners. Following the initial meeting of the Council the election of officers and the appointment of committees, the Council was confronted with a number of serious problems. The strike of workers in the warehouse and the subsequent halting of deliveries of food and other essential supplies was called to the attention of the Council in April by the Project Director. The Council appointed a 15 man Fact Finding Committee which conducted hearings and prepared a report for the Project Director on the labor situation. During the period of investigation, the Council assumed responsibility for the operation of those Sections affected by the strike.

A second serious situation arose when a ditch rider from a nearby irrigation area reported that some of the Center residents had set fire to the grass and brush rip-rap along the Canal bank. The Project Director with members of the Community Council inspected the damage caused by the fire and the chairman assumed responsibility for making repairs and recruited 75 volunteer workers.

The Council called to the attention of the Project Director a number of situations within the community. It recommended that a sedan be provided for transporting pregnant women to and from the hospital. This request was granted. It sponsored a public meeting on west coast property problems in conjunction with the legal and property sections. It assumed responsibility for the Red Cross drive which collected over \$2300. It advocated provision of temporary hospital facilities for mental patients. It proposed that facilities be provided for the manufacture of Japanese foods. It assumed responsibility for recruitment of additional nurse's aides.

The organization of Community Government proceeded with the establishment of several civic groups by the Council. A cemetery board was appointed which prepared plans for beautifying the local cemetery. Volunteers provided the labor and Memorial Day services were held at the cemetery site. It established a Judicial Commission, considered a Fair Labor Practice Board and discussed relations with the Relocation Commission. It also appointed a special hospital committee to provide gifts to hospital personnel in appreciation of their services to the community.

MANZANAR

Manzanar continued to be the only relocation center lacking a formally organized Community Government. The Block Managers Assembly composed of one representative from each block acts in the dual capacity of representing the administration and the community. Progress was made in organization and standing committees were appointed for food, public works, welfare, community relations, employment and administrative cabinet. A resolution was presented on the rights of nisei and Selective Service. The Assembly decided that materials for wedding cakes could be supplied from the available quota of foodstuffs and that the keeping of chickens and rabbits should be controlled.

The work of the Block Managers in the segregation program was commendable. Not only did those Block Managers which remained at Manzanar take an active part in making certain that members of their blocks were adequately cared for but several block managers were in the contingent which went to Tule Lake and represented their people at that center.

The block managers and the Administration jointly sponsored a panel discussion on "American in The Making". It also considered problems in connection with relocation, the C.A.C.A., standardization of social life, manpower shortage, food complaints and representations to the Spanish Consul.

The Project Director brought a number of problems to the attention of the assembly. These included the movement of segregants to Tule Lake, reinstatement of Selective Service, the future of Manzanar, a report on the Washington Conference of Project Directors, housing problems and problems of seasonal and indefinite leave.

TULE LAKE

The problem of establishing a responsible representative group among the residents at Tule Lake was not satisfactorily solved during this period. The confusion and disorganization which resulted in the November incident continued to have its effect. Some progress was made but a final solution has not yet been reached.

A center-wide vote on the question of continuing or ending the status quo was held on January 11. Those favoring the ending of the impasse won by a small majority. Following this vote, a coordinating committee was appointed from the Division of Responsible Men. This committee working in conjunction with an advisory committee of seven from the project staff tackled a number of problems facing the Center. These included reemployment of several thousand workers, the release of persons held in the stockade, the lifting of the curfew and the

modification of Army control. Within a short time, the back-to-work movement had assumed considerable proportions and before the end of the month over 3800 workers were again employed.

During February, the committee recommended the lifting of the curfew and appointed an Arrangements Committee which was to develop a plan of community organization. It also recommended the names of six individuals to act as Police Commissioners as advisors to the Colonial Police. Three of these men were appointed in that capacity. It also assisted the Administration by recommending appointments to key supervisory positions. It called to the attention of the Administration petitions recommending the release of members of persons from the stockade. It distributed the shoyu and also received from the Japanese Red Cross.

The Coordinating Committee continued its work during the month of March. It became apparent, however, that there was an increasing loss of confidence on the part of the residents because of the failure of the committee to secure the release of more persons from the stockade. The Coordinating Committee sensing the loss of prestige offered its resignation to the Project Director on April 5. The Project Director requested the committee to continue its work until policy for the establishment of a representative system could be announced by Washington. The announcement of policy was made April 22 and the resignation of the Coordinating Committee was accepted as of April 29.

The new policy provided "The residents of the segregation center will be invited to establish a Representative Committee. The membership of this Representative Committee shall be selected by orderly, representative, elective procedures. The members shall be selected on a geographical basis to represent residential areas within the Center, shall be selected for fixed periods of time and the total membership of the committee shall not be greater than 12 persons.

"The function of the Representative Committee shall be that of acting as the official representative of the residents of the Center in communicating to the Project Director its viewpoint, attitudes and requests of the residents, in conveying to the residents information concerning WRA regulations and determinations affecting them and in advising with the Project Director on matters as to which collaboration between the Administration and the residents is needed."

Following the announcement, plans were made for the election of delegates to an arrangements committee. It was proposed that each block send two delegates and that block delegates convening by wards would select one member of the arrangements committee. The arrangements committee had as its function developing a plan of government and supervising the elections of persons to a representative committee.

Responsibility for conducting the elections was given to Civic organizations. The block elections were scheduled for May 18 but because relatively few blocks elected delegates, it was decided that further attempts to establish a Representative Committee would be postponed until there was an indication of a definite interest on the part of the residents.

The Police Commissioners appointed by the Coordinating Committee also resigned and gave as their explanation the fact that since the group responsible for their appointment had dissolved they had no further obligation to act in that capacity. The attempt to secure the election of Police Commissioners to replace the former body failed.

The situation at Tule Lake has many complications which will influence the eventual establishment of a Representative Committee. The block managers group under the leadership of Civic Organizations has in the past been concerned with political questions. There is a tendency for this group to retain their present vested position as the primary channel of communication and negotiation with the administration. Their position is strengthened by the attitude of the fairly large Manzanar contingent. The stockade is an additional factor. The sentiment is prevalent that until the stockade problem is solved the residents are not interested in establishing any type of group to work with the Administration. The opinion has been expressed that such a group would be powerless and that in the event of trouble the members would be subject to immediate incarceration.

It is apparent that until additional understandings are reached between the Administration and the residents at Tule Lake that no organized form of community representation is possible.