

3. Makes it difficult for Niseis in post-war society
- B. Loyalty to United States affected
- C. Health problems
- D. Tendency for children and young people to spent too much time outside of homes

V. Conclusion

Family Life on the Tule Lake Project

What significant aspect is there about family life in the Tule Lake Project or in any similar relocation center in the United States?

It is known to all of us that sociologists are going to have their hands full in dealing with the many social welfare and economic difficulties which are bound to occur during the post-war reconstruction period. We also know that among these problems will be found the paramount one in so far as we Japanese and Japanese-Americans are concerned. This is the problem of the resettlement of thousands of evacuees now in relocation centers and who must later find their places in the post-war world. The adjustments are going to be acute. The attitudes of the country at large toward the evacuees is going to be changed, in many cases to the worse. How are the evacuees, the Nisei in particular, going to fit into this changed society?

The answer to this question lies solely in the personality, attitudes, and ambition of each and every Nisei. It is a proven fact that the personality, the total self, is molded through family life. This is where the family life in the relocation center, namely the Tule Lake project, enters the picture. Let us consider the family life in the Tule Lake Project.

In this case as in all cases there are two distinct divisions, the advantages and the disadvantages. We will consider the advantages first. The children in the relocation centers occupy an important position in relation to our problem because in all probability are going to be faced with this problem. In the cases of the very young children there are several advantages to family life in Tule Lake. First, they are less apt to become "spoiled" here than in leading normal lives in a community outside because the means of "spoiling" children in the camps are very limited. The over privileges which parents are liable to grant their children are few because of the condition of the camp. Similarly the dangers of juvenile delinquency are not ever present as in cities. Second, children, through living in such a close community will learn the values of being able to get along with others. This is a personality asset which will prove invaluable in later social contacts with the Caucasians. Thirdly, the living condition in the camp is such that, except in the cases of large families, all the family members are crowded into one room. This brings about closer relations between children and parents and a greater sense of understanding and security prevails. These qualities will promote a harmonious family life which will in turn lead to the shaping of better personality of the children.

As for the young people of junior and senior high school age, the advantages are few. The above facts with the exception of the first can be applied to them but in a more limited sense for young people unlike children are not so easily impressed by such factors as the above. The reason for this is that people of high school age are at a stage where they normally would be having the best times in their lives, and being in this type of place makes them restless, giving them the feeling that they are

f-4

missing everything; thus what advantages there are may be missed.

How far do the advantages go in regard to our parents, the Issei? Well, as far as the Issei life in the centers go, there are no particular advantages or disadvantages. They feel that for the most part, since the war is between their native land and this country it is unavoidable fact that they are in camps and they have resigned themselves to a routine daily life.

Now let us look at the darker side of the picture, the disadvantages, or disastrous effects to our personality, attitudes, and ambitions which our lives in the project are going to have. The most outstanding disadvantage is the collapse of ambition among the young people. Life in the camp has made them resign themselves to their present confined state, turned them cynical toward society, and robbed them of any ambition toward success in professions, careers, etc. Instead of making an attempt to leave centers and continuing education or getting a job too many young people are saying, "Oh, what the heck! They've put us in here and we can't do anything about it, so let's just take it easy and let the government support us." This is the sort of tragic attitude everyone should avoid. When the war ends and it is time for the Nisei to take his place in society he will find that this attitude and lack of ambition has made it impossible for him to do so. In the like way people who have been used to luxuries which they cannot obtain at present, people who hate the barracks in which they live and the food they are forced to eat, may lose their loyalty to the United States. This is another tragic result which should be fought against.

There is also the health problem. In a place such as this where everything is done on a community basis, washing, bathing, eating, the

f-5

spread of germs and sicknesses is likely to rise unless much precaution is taken. There is also another major problem. In the project, if a person wishes to do so he can arise in the morning, eat breakfast, attend school, eat lunch at the mess hall where the "gang's" mess hall, spend the better part of the evening there, and then come "home" and go to sleep.

This does not make a home life at all. The child, youth or whoever it is does not spend enough time at home to call it a home. This will cause a situation where the parents and children drift apart and will cause a rift in family life which will greatly influence the personality of both parents and children.

There are many more points which one could find but I believe that the preceding illustrations have made my point clear. And that is that every factor of center family life, be it advantageous or disadvantageous, is going to influence our future personalities, attitudes, and ambitions to such an extent that will prove a vital aspect in the post-war social world.

Every single Nisei now in a relocation center should consider his position as an individual challenge and, instead of letting camp life discourage him, should let it act as an incentive toward a greater effort to fulfill his destiny--that of gaining his rightful place in the post-war democracy.

Family Life in Tule Lake Project

I. Family Life

- A. Before
- B. Today
- C. Problem
- D. What you should do

We, the citizens of Tule Lake Project, are now undergoing a new kind of life. There were many adjustments which we were required to make to meet the necessary adjustments. One thing positively affected is our family life. Moreover, it is the most important thing. Before we moved into Tule Lake the individual family enjoyed a rather normal routine life. It was neither too hard nor too loose. The family enjoyed the daily luxuries of going to work in a car, or a street car. Mother washes the family's clothes in a washing machine, and cooks her own food for the family. On weekends and holidays the family gets together and can go to church, or to the movies or for a week-end drive to the country.

Now we are experiencing a different kind of a life, where we are stripped of many luxuries we crave so much, such as movies, a system of transportation, and individual privacy. One incident concerning individual privacy comes to my mind at this moment. There is a family of girls with one boy. Everytime these girls want to either dress or undress they have to practically kick him out. This situation is true of many families throughout the camp. We now lead more of a loose life. There isn't much responsibilities. The food is prepared and served to you at the mess halls. At the ringing of the bells you just rush to any seat and eat your food hastily. Not the usual atmosphere you would receive at home with your own family.

There are problems which arise against the family life in Tule Lake. Because of such loose or easy life we may become irresponsible, or maybe we can understand each other if I said we may become lazy. A person may take the "What's the use?" attitude. He may also lose ambition and may not try to better himself not only mentally but physically, socially, and spiritually. Another of the problems a family faces is the living conditions. Since most families have but one room, with as much as six people. This constitutes a living in which everyone must cooperate willingly. In a family either outside or inside, where they are constantly quarreling or arguing, a child reared in a constant atmosphere of mental turmoil is just as handicapped as if he was born defective.

In these trying times, if a family life is to run smoothly, we should look for the social virtues of loyalty, sympathy, kindness, willingness, and cooperation. They should try to make best of what little is offered to us. Take advantage of the adult education and night school, and try to better yourself. Build up a common interest in which the whole family can participate. Then you will have a family life that is more enjoyable. Family life is important. Thus we must see to it that it is not neglected.

(male)

h-1

Family Life in Tulelake

Work and Play

The people here in the Tulelake Project are a hard working, well solidified unit. The issei people busy themselves on such worthwhile occupations as construction laborers, maintenance men, block janitors and such. They know what jobs they have to do and they do it with a care.

Right here in my own block, Block 69, besides its quota for block janitors and carpenters, the majority of the older men are maintenance men. Some are construction laborers and G-men (garbage men). Here work is not a pleasant or extremely pleasing one, but since the job has to be done, these men do it ungrudgingly.

Some people, too old to work, rest happily in the warmth of their apartments dreaming of days gone by, has arguing with other cronies, relating to the great tales of their ancestors and deeds they themselves had done in their father-country.

The women in the colony busy themselves by keeping house as they used to when they were in their own homes. They are lucky in one respect. They do not need to worry about preparing meals for the family. The mess halls take care of that. Their hands are relieved of the children since there are well-established kindergartens and nursery schools.

The young men in the family are also working hard as they would as if they were back home. These boys make up the truck drivers, hard-working coal crews, garbage collectors; some are carpenters, technicians and some are in public service like mess-hall work, administration workers. The older ones hold dependable positions like a warden's work which is a grim, thankless role.

h-2

The young women are able clerks, waitresses and such. A good many are hospital and colony social workers. By "social" I mean such things as kindergarten and nursery school teachers.

The youth go to school, study hard, play hard, in some cases play too hard and "skip" school. A few of the students are employed after school doing jobs like coal crew, garbage collecting, truck driving, mess hall work.

For recreation the olders take to the Issei programs, story-telling, arguing and playing cards. The women have their sewing classes and flower arrangement clubs. A night or two each week is ardently devoted to the church.

Then too, there are go and shogi tournaments for the more intelligent type of men. These games are long since they require a lot of brainwork.

The younger set have their dances, jam sessions and a great variety of sports. The boys have a football league, Senior league for the younger ones. A lot of athletic talent may be found when watching a good game. Many of these players were all-stars back in their schools and colleges.

In the spring baseball games abound. Every available space is put to use and many an interesting ball game may be observed in fair weather.

The girls have their share in baseball too, as their interest shows in the rapid forming of their league.

Basketball is the winter sport now rolling into full swing. The senior league has many fine players, all-stars from many schools, cities and colleges. By the formation of these leagues it teaches the fundamentals of cooperations and good sports, bettering themselves at the game because of high competition.

h-3

After the daylight is gone and twilight comes we see the formation of jam sessions and dances in different recreation halls. The music is furnished by a radio, phonograph or a rare public address system. Here the young people wear themselves out dancing to the latest canned music. These sessions usually last from any time to about 11:30 in the night.

So anyone can see that this is just like back home and everyone is making the most of what could be had.

Family Life of Tule Lake Project

- I. Family as a unit
 - A. Brought closer together
 - 1. Same room
 - 2. Same mess, etc.
 - B. Children
 - 1. Wilder and unrestrained
 - 2. Harder to train
- II Social Life
 - A. Mother
 - 1. Knitting classes, sewing
 - 2. English classes, etc.
 - B. Father
 - 1. Goh, shogi
 - C. Sister
 - 1. School
 - a. three states
 - 2. Dances
 - 3. Clubs (friends)
 - D. Brother
 - 1. Same as sister
 - 2. Sports
- III. Community Life
 - A. Block spirit
 - B. Town spirit

i-2

Family Life of Tule Lake Project

The family of Tule Lake has been suddenly thrown together by the evacuation. They have been put into two or three rooms, thus limited to a certain amount of space. The family has to share the Mess with everyone else, whether that be disagreeable or not. The children will watch the ill-mannered Mess of the old bachelors and copy them. Bathing conditions are not sanitary because all sorts of people go in to one place.

The children form groups or gangs and become rowdy. Being together gives them strength and nerve to do something which otherwise they would not do individually. Mothers have a hard time to train them because they constantly talk back and give reasons that I did it because everyone else does it and I don't see anything wrong with it.

The mother has more leisure time here because she doesn't have to cook and prepare meals and tasks she would otherwise do at home. Therefore she spends her leisure time going to schools learning to knit, crochet, sew, and the like. She meets new people and strikes up acquaintances with many different personalities.

Father has nothing to do, except maybe secure a job. He has no economic worry of rent, food and other miscellaneous things except for clothing. He has lots of leisure time on hand and takes to the Japanese games of Go and Shogi.

Brother and sister go to school. There they meet students from three states. This is very novel and acquaintances are made soon. Dances and clubs help to promote friendship. Brother meets new friends in competitive sports.

Community life is different from before but some in many respects. The people of the same town form clubs and organizations of their own.

i-3

Presidents of the same block try to better the block. There are no racial prejudices here so people live here rather harmoniously and comfortably.