

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

HEART MOUNTAIN RELOCATION PROJECT  
Heart Mountain, Wyoming

M E M O R A N D U M

April 13, 1944

TO: Mr. Joe Carroll  
Relocation Program Officer

FROM: Relocation Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Recommendations to Program Officers' Conference--  
Chicago, Illinois

FOREWORD

The enclosed recommendations are matters pertinent to the relocation of family and family groups. They were taken up at two special Relocation Planning Commission meetings in order that the most comprehensive light from the evacuee leaders might be presented to the WRA. These are the attempts on the part of Issei leaders to bridge the gap of understanding of mutual problems, so that further planning might be more effective and actively participated by the evacuees themselves. The initiation on any type of planning must come from the evacuees themselves.

We believe that these suggestions merit discussion by the Program Officers and judged for what value they might bring on the future course of action by the WRA.

## I. Liberalizing Egress and Ingress to the Centers for the Evacuees

The Commission recommends that, with the reinstatement of Selective Service and completion of segregation, liberalization of regulation should be effected so that movements to and from the Center would be more free. After all, this is the prime factor and proof, that is readily observed by the evacuees at large, that the WRA is sincere in its attempts to foster and encourage relocation.

People who return to the Center on visits should be allowed to do so since there is no loss to the WRA, either financially or otherwise. In fact, the more freedom evacuees have to go on the outside the more he intends to see and experience the outside situation. This would encourage more people to go on the outside; and we have found that, beyond doubt, once an individual goes to the outside, very rarely does he desire to stay within the centers. With the interviews of more than half of the reinducted individuals who were on indefinite leave, it is the unanimous feeling that they do not care to stay within the Center.

Regulating seasonal leaves by the other government agencies--i.e., W.P.A.--it is possible for us to concentrate upon stimulating thinking in terms of family relocation. By ever limiting and restricting regulations upon the evacuee, it tends to make him feel that confinement and restrictions are the emphasis rather than relocation. This psychological factor is proven by simply living in any of the centers. The feeling of isolation, being away from wartime conditions, encourages bigoted, biased, and prejudiced thinking. WRA does not gain any worthwhile advance or progress in its policy when they begin to present limitations upon their expanding and revitalized program of having evacuees go out.

Consider this important factor and you will realize that with little observation how anyone can expect to react if it is the desire of the WRA to relocate evacuees; "emphasis must be on liberalization and practical application thereof, rather than upon limitations and restrictions."

Therefore, even the leave procedures become unnecessary and should be abolished. This is a step to return to the American way.



## II. Increase of Subsistence Allowances or Grants

Before the regulations on subsistence allowance or grant of \$25 per individual were released, individuals of a family who were relocating were given \$50 if not relocating to the same destination. This meant that although the dependents received \$25 with a hundred-dollar limit per family, the wife and husband received a total of \$75, while the relocating children who were of age received \$50 a piece. Of course, this interpretation was received through the definition of a family (WRA).

We recommend that individuals should be given \$50 each; and if family heads relocate, they may be given a hundred dollars.

This is necessitated because of higher cost of living, need of suitable clothing other than camp style, higher rents, higher transportation, etc. Dozens of letters received by the Relocation Office designate the necessity of increasing the grants so that better headway might be made for success and permanency in relocation. The psychological effect upon the relocation program within the Center would be tremendously advantageous for the WRA.

The only liberality of the present instructions is that everybody would receive \$25. But if the recommendation given by this Commission is to be considered and acted upon, the confidence, good will, and sincerity of the WRA would be acknowledged by the people, who will think that everything possible is being done from the budget standpoint. The increase in the numbers for relocation would substantiate the increase in cost and justify the increase by a long range savings by the WRA.

### III. Community Adjustment Advisor Should Work Hand in Hand With an Evacuee Staff Member.

The Commission realizes that many of the implementation of the national policies with social agencies, family institutions, governmental agencies, etc., require the experience and skill of a Caucasian personnel. But in order to make his work effective for the relocatees, in the same token, an evacuee staff member is necessary to breach this gap. People of Japanese ancestry, from isolation within a relocation center, requires a peculiar knowledge of the psychology of method to present any factor that would help relocatees adjust themselves to normal community life. Unless this is understood, the work of the Community Adjustment Advisor will go for naught.

There must be a concentration of propaganda or rather favorable relocation material in translated Japanese, rather than in English, since the majority of family relocation planning will involve Issai family heads. It is regrettable, but this is true. The most effective means of communicating and educating the evacuees is through the Japanese language to the parents. The most adventuresome and knowing relocatees have been the Nisei by far. The record of any leave of absence of any center will substantiate proof in this direction. The bulk of the relocation work lies with the Issai evacuees who are still residing in the centers.

Although a great amount of work in public relations has been made on the outside, this public relation has fallen upon stony grounds the accomplishments on the outside. In order to prevent future misunderstanding, the WRA ought to realize the use of the Japanese language, spoken and written, is the most important weapon or tool that WRA can use to promote the relocation program within the projects. Also, on the project level all background material or public relations and activities that have been the ground works of voluntary organizations to clear and make community acceptance possible should be propagandized in Japanese to the center residents.

The problems during segregation, Selective Service, employed reductions within centers, etc., might have been avoided if the aforementioned method and suggestions were used to its advantage by the project.

WRA ought to realize that the most effective means of carrying their program within the Center in the same tempo of the outside field offices is to acknowledge this fact and encourage evacuees to help themselves; and in like manner, WRA's work itself will become more efficient.

In this manner by having the evacuees participate more cooperatively with understanding, to aid the hand that is doing the feeding, the WRA will have a like result in its program of relocation.



#### IV. Evacuee Public Relation's Officer

The Commission recommends that an evacuee, who is qualified and, at the same time, acceptable to the evacuees themselves, be employed to bridge the gap between centers and the Area WRA Offices. In recommendation No. III, we have suggested that an evacuee work with the Community Adjustment Advisor. In like manner, we need one who is well-versed in the area supervisorial office work to bring back to the centers the results of all the activities and work that is accomplished in the areas where relocation is acceptable by the public.

Good will, confidence, and active participation by the evacuees will thus be encouraged and be possible. The realization and the proof of this contention lie in the activities of our present Relocation Planning Commission and those who have participated in this program.

There are people in the Heart Mountain Relocation Commission who have felt this right along and have unselfishly devoted their time, influence, and money to make this contention prove to be true. There is no question of doubt that if steps are taken in this direction and become a reality, greater understanding and participation of evacuees in the resettlement program will ensue. We note that a few Relocation Officers in the Areas have accepted this fact, and we should like to be on record that we too would substantiate the same fact.

## V. Open West Coast Areas

One of the biggest problems of the relocating evacuees is the problem of property and household effects on the West Coast. Because of lack of time, many people did not have the time to dispose their personal property and real estate.

The Commission recommends that Western Defense Command clearance be given to a qualified and investigated evacuee so that he might be able to dispose of his chief worry that prevents him and his family from relocating. He can identify household articles that are mixed with other evacuees' or gather property that is left in his Caucasian neighbors building, or sell his house, business place, etc. In many respects, it is almost impossible for anyone other than the owner to make a final disposition of his property. This arrangement can be made if WDA would deeply consider the reasons why so many people within the Centers are reluctant to move, hoping that the ties that these properties offer are great enough to have them shipped back after the war is over.

It seems that some arrangement can be made to carry out this course of action. The proposed work of the WDA Evacuee Property program will still be ineffective even though they decide to pick up all the property on the West Coast. A lot of property is not kept by itself but by Caucasian friends with their stored things. After all, they too have evacuated to better jobs leaving personal effects behind. Consider this angle.

The Commission feels that the West Coast should be made open to those who have sons in the Armed Forces of the United States. Of course, this depends upon the trend of the war. Although, this is an ultimate hope, we do realize that many of us will be unable to go back to the West Coast, and many of us do not desire to go back where we might be unwelcomed. But in terms of justice, equality, and fair play, an attempt by the WDA in this direction will tend to foster the growing of confidence of the evacuees for the WDA.



## VI. More Comprehensive Issei Public Relation Program Within the Center

Beyond a doubt the greatest factor that is an obstacle to the general WRA program within the Center is the lack of factual information pertinent to relocation to the evacuees. The lack is not due to negligence nor inconsideration but primarily due to unorganized, unstudied steering committee that must be employed by the WRA, using the Japanese language as an instrument of education.

We must realize that the greatest propaganda force within the Center is not yet tapped and is still in need of careful organization. By encouraging an educational bureau on relocation to be organized by the evacuees themselves, this will be the natural course of action for evacuees to follow. Of course, its work direction and supervision will have to be under a trusted individual, preferably an evacuee. Voluntary activities are not enough to push the relocation program within the Center. WRA must gear itself to meet the progressive application of relocation theory with an active, organized, and paid staff group. This group would work in close coordination with the Reports, Relocation Division, Community Council, Block Managers, and the Project Director. Please take this suggestion for what it merits.

## VII. Status of Relocation Center Business Enterprise.

The WRA should encourage the development of a present center business enterprise on a productive basis for relocation. The encouragement should include the establishment of an education director within the business enterprise to encourage cooperative activities and information, cooperative organization, credit unions, business opportunities, etc. Establishment of a private banking institution will be the natural desire of the evacuees if such a comprehensive educational program is fostered and sponsored by the business enterprise of the centers. The great problem of financial assistance for successful businessmen, farmers, fishermen, industrialists, etc., will then be realized. Tapping the financial resources of the present setup will tend to have the evacuees carefully consider all types of relocation planning. Hence, an alert group of people will be the resulting factor and successful in the light of evacuee participation to promote personal relocation plans.

WRA can find within itself many plans that might fit economically sound business situations. As a departmental member of the State Department, the facilities, equipment, and personnel with considerable background can be available for this type of relocation plan. WRA should stimulate thinking in this direction among the evacuee leaders. The evacuees have a possibility of turning evacuation in a blessing by concentrating their thoughts in providing the means for a sound basis of an economic future. Whatever may be said, we have within the Center, the available public money, manpower, business acumen, and experience, skills, etc. What more can one ask in order to make relocation successful and permanent with all these equipment?

The WRA should develop this new field of action not through regulations and instructions but through the evacuees themselves who would in the near future present such workable plans. The WRA should be aware of this and begin to make studies along these lines.



### VIII. Business Information Office.

The Reports Office in Washington should disseminate information concerning business opportunities through their Reports Representative in each area offices. The family heads at the present time are not interested in getting menial employment but rather opportunities, that would involve after relocation, opportunities for self-employment and operation. Issei with backgrounds are especially able and qualified to present an adequate view of what is offered in each area. Employment of evacuee help within the WRA structure should be no problem for the WRA -- i.e., Tule Lake emergency.

The Commission recommends that the WRA establish offices within every WRA area for business information.

At the present, work dockets or referral forms are necessary and sent out for each prospective relocatee; but in order to make plans a reality, an Issei prospective relocatee needs to have available data where such and such opportunities exist for him and his family. This is true with the farmers, fishermen, merchants, etc. Unless WRA considers this point of view now, you will have to eventually anyway.

Active participation by evacuees is necessary in any type of a relocation program of the WRA. This is the underlined motivation of this Commission to extend to the WRA this perspective and, at the same time, give you with soundness and reason, logical and possible recommendations. There are others that were suggested, but these suggestions are in the minds of the Commission as most important and are the unanimous feeling of all evacuee family heads. We feel that the consideration and acceptance of any of these suggestions is certainly a step forward to the final realization of successful relocation planning by the WRA, participated by evacuees.

We would, as a Commission, want to know the effectiveness of its work by asking you to let us know what has been decided by the Relocation Program Officers so that our contributions were not in vain. With this in mind we hope that we might maintain the same harmonious and cooperative relationship in our mutual program and problems.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Y. Kodama, Executive Sec'y.  
Relocation Planning Commission