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The War Relocation Authority is currently engaged in a two fold program, to segregate in a single center at Tule Lake, California, those persons of Japanese ancestry under WRA jurisdiction who might still hold an allegiance to Japan and to restore the others, most of them United States citizens, to the American way of life.

The program marks a new phase in efforts to relocate the evacuees, uprooted a year ago from established homes and occupations on the Pacific coast by the exigencies of wartime security.

Since that time, the bulk of these people have been residing in the temporary structures of the war relocation centers as wards of the government. There are ten of these centers in the western and midwestern United States, two of them almost equal distance from Ogden, at Topaz, in Millard county, Utah, and at Minidoka, near Jerome, Idaho.

The centers were designed as temporary stopovers for those evacuees loyal to the United States. As a matter of fact, the evacuation was originally planned without these way stations until it became apparent that the hasty and unplanned resettlement of a 112,000 people would cause insurmountable difficulties in the areas in which they settled.

The relocation program has since been carried forward in an orderly manner with a great number of center residents who have proven their loyalty to the United States obtaining leave to reestablish themselves in the normal way of life. Now, however, relocation efforts are to be redoubled with the ultimate aim of restoring traditional American rights and privileges to the bulk of the people in the centers.



A striking example of the importance of the relocation program, from the standpoint of war production, is present right here in the Salt Lake and Utah valleys where war industries, military installations and the farms are all competing for a limited labor supply.

Hundreds of residents of WRA centers have received seasonal leave for work on the farms and in the food processing plants while others, on indefinite leave, are working in essential civilian industries, particularly the service trades which were threatened by a complete breakdown because of lack of help.

Here as elsewhere in the United States, there has not been a single reportable instance of sabotage or other threat to the war effort from these evacuees.

However, in keeping with the authority's policy of discouraging any major concentration of persons of Japanese ancestry, few referrals for permanent positions in the Utah war industry area are now being made to center residents. A further influx would only aggravate the present critical housing situation and WRA officials believe that because of the prewar colony of persons of Japanese ancestry and the settlement of voluntary evacuees in this area, further permanent relocation by center evacuees should not be encouraged. This does not apply to seasonal labor for agriculture, however, and all efforts will be made to fill requisitions for these workers.

In relocation efforts anywhere, safeguards must be maintained against unscrupulous exploitation of evacuees which will disturb established labor markets and practices to the eventual disadvantage of employer and employee alike. Likewise the evacuee, who has been living in cramped, close quarters for more than a year, with little outside contact, is entitled to know the exact conditions of the job offer he is considering.



Personal interviews are usually impracticable and placements without them are often difficult and unsatisfactory. Therefore the WRA requires that potential employers submit an offer to the evacuee, setting forth all the conditions of employment and the available housing if any. The authority does not insist on certain job requirements or housing standards other than that the prevailing wage scale be maintained.

It does however, ask that the proposition be clearly defined so that misunderstandings which may occur after the arrival of the evacuee be held to a minimum.

A recent order relaxed requirements that prospective employers of farm labor provide transportation from and returning to the centers. Hereafter, it will be strictly a matter of mutual arrangement between the employer and evacuee.

After these facts are presented, then it is the evacuee's privilege, as it is the privilege of any resident of the United States to accept or reject any work offer.

The entire WRA employment policy is aimed at placing the evacuee's relationship with his employer on as nearly the same basis as other employees as possible. When the center resident receives an indefinite leave he is on his own, subject to the same laws, the same codes of conduct as govern other free Americans. He is of course, subject to the stabilization program of the War Manpower Commission which affects all workers in most war and essential civilian industries. Only additional restriction is that he must keep the government informed of his whereabouts.

Examinations preparatory to segregation of disloyal evacuees for transfer to Tule Lake are now in progress at all the centers and movement is expected to start early in September. Records of federal intelligence agencies are



being utilized and, together with the evacuee's personal expression and his actions while in the project, are determining factors in segregation.

Methods of appeal consistent with American ideals of justice and equality will be available to those who are removed to the segregation center at Tule Lake, just as they have been available in the past to those denied leave from any of the centers.

Advantages of the War Relocation Authority program may be readily analyzed. The planned liquidation of all centers except that at Tule Lake will be a tremendous saving to the government in the face of mounting war costs. Release of the evacuees will also provide a large pool of labor, so critically needed in the war effort.

But even more than these two concrete, immediate advantages, there are other psychological reasons for this policy. Suppression or discrimination of the people now in relocation centers gives weight to the enemy's argument that the United Nations are waging a race war. Japanese propagandists may use it to advantage with the people of the conquered Pacific areas and others whose collaboration with the United Nations can help speed the day of victory. Similarly repressive or discriminatory measures may be used by Japanese militarists as a pretext for reprisals against American prisoners of war and American civilians held by the Japanese government.

Finally, there is a dangerous implication on the home front. Evacuees and other persons of Japanese ancestry form one of the nation's minority groups. Discrimination with this group might easily establish a precedent, a yardstick for action against other groups. Fair treatment for all is in keeping with long established principles on which the government was founded and which have made the nation the success it is to day.