

W E E K L Y P R E S S R E V I E W

No. 8

Week ending March 9, 1943.

For the Use of the WRA Staff Only - Not for Publication

SUMMARY

Press interest in WRA was definitely less last week than in the immediate past. Chief source of news was the series of arrests at Tule Lake. Press items on this were in the form of short wire service dispatches on the actual events. Although these were printed here and there in newspapers throughout the country, West Coast papers were primarily interested.

Senator Chandler's first statement to the press after the commencement of his investigation tour came as something of a bombshell. He remarked that he had found 60 percent of the evacuees at an unnamed relocation center disloyal and attached in their thinking to the Emperor of Japan. This was picked up by AP. How widely it was published is not known yet as clippings from other than Washington, D. C. papers have not been received.

Several anti-Japanese resolutions were presented in Congress. Only new subject called for cessation of pottery manufacture at relocation centers. Pressure for this apparently originated with a potters' union.

Most items on employment appearing in Middle West newspapers were favorably slanted toward WRA's resettlement efforts. Editorial position of Chicago Tribune was particularly good. Public attitudes toward farm labor in the Mountain States, as revealed by the press, continued contradictory. But prominent officials seem to be trying to line up favorable farmer attitudes.

West Coast papers devoted considerably less space than in recent weeks to evacuee property matters.

Secretary Knox's statement to a Congressional committee that, despite his wishes, additional Japanese have not been evacuated from Hawaii, drew only one news story and no editorial comment.

The Attorney General of Arkansas held that recent anti-evacuee land ownership acts were unconstitutional. Only the Arkansas Democrat reported this opinion in its news columns.

Various additional Southern California citizens organizations passed anti-Japanese resolutions, chiefly on the post-war land ownership and deportation angles; some were also against student relocation and military service.

Nine papers carried editorials concerned with Japanese-American matters. All were favorable to the work of the WRA.

Student relocation of evacuees at Mason City, Iowa, Junior College was opposed by the local A. F. of L. council.

Pushing back of the Arizona exclusion area by General DeWitt's proclamation was reported only in the New York Times. By next week items from West Coast and Arizona newspapers should have been received.

ADMINISTRATIVE --

WRA's efforts to open Civil Service appointments to evacuees was mentioned by Jerry Klutz in his column "9 to 4:30", Washington News, 2/26/43.

AGRICULTURAL AND ENGINEERING --

Withdrawals of priorities for grade schools at Central Utah and Minidoka were reported in Twin Falls Times News, 2/28/43. The Salt Lake City Tribune (2/28/43) pointed out that school will continue to be held in barracks.

CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS --

Senate Investigation: In his first statement to the press since the start of his investigation tour, Senator Chandler stated that he had found 60 percent of the evacuees disloyal at one camp. According to the Senator, the disloyal Japanese stand ready to commit "almost any act for their Emperor...There is no question in my mind that thousands of these fellows were armed and prepared to help Japanese troops invade the West Coast right after Pearl Harbor, but thanks to the fine work of the FBI they were rounded up immediately." Washington Post, AP. 3/9/43.

Items from the Congressional Record: Representative Rankin asked all Members of Congress to note a resolution of the Sacramento Parlor, No. 3, Native Sons of the Golden West, protesting "the formation of a Japanese unit of the United States Army." "Extension of Remarks Section", 2/16/43.

Representative Schiffler of W. Va. introduced a resolution "directing the WRA to cease and desist" pottery manufacture. Referred to Committee on Military Affairs, 2/23/43.

Representative Mansfield of Montana inserted in the "Extension of Remarks" section a resolution of the Montana legislature asking Congress to prohibit dual citizenship. 2/23/43.

The above resolution was introduced by the Vice-President and referred to the Committee on Immigration, 2/25/43.

Daily Press Items:

Senate investigation was the subject of a signed article by Walter Trohan in the Chicago Tribune (2/22/43). According to this article, the congressional committee is examining "conflicting reports that the prisoners are being treated harshly and that they are being pampered.

Representative Henry M. Jackson's resolution for a standing congressional committee on Japan was discussed by Ray Richards in the San Francisco Examiner and Seattle Post Intelligencer (2/24/43), in the San Francisco Call Bulletin, and was the subject of a UP dispatch which appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle (2/24/43). All articles quoted Mr. Jackson on pre-Pearl Harbor Japanese espionage and fifth column activity.

EMPLOYMENT --

Opening of Milwaukee Office: Location and purpose of proposed WRA field office in Milwaukee was described in the Milwaukee Sentinel (3/2/43). Item was favorable, stressing demand by local employers for evacuee employees and loyalty and workmanship of evacuee applicants. An earlier article (2/24/43) in the same paper had pointed out that Wisconsin residents were eager to hire Japanese-American employees.

Other Middle West Employment News:

An article in the Cleveland News (2/24/43) quoted Harold Fistere to the effect that fifty job offers have already been made in the Cleveland area without government solicitation.

Community meeting at West Branch, Iowa, to discuss the proposal to use the Friends' Scattergood Hostel as a temporary relocation center was reported by the Davenport Democrat (2/25/43). According to this paper, "There was some diversity of opinion, but the general attitude was that if the government desires to establish a relocation center here the decision will be accepted and the community co-operate in the fullest measure in the project." The Des Moines Register had an article on March 2, date-lined from Washington, to the effect that a final decision in the controversy was soon to be made. This article pointed out that some of the objection to the resettlement center was actually directed at the Quaker position in the war effort.

Western Farm Labor News:

A telegram from Project Director Ernst answering Governor Carville's reservations about the danger of sabotage if evacuees were used for the tomato crop in the Maopa Valley was quoted in a UP dispatch, "...We feel you need have no worries on this score. Our concern is the protection of the evacuees." Salt Lake City Tribune, Sacramento Bee, Nevada State Journal, 2/28/43.

Speaking at an Idaho state chamber of commerce meeting, A. Clair Barrett predicted a local farm labor shortage. He said, according to the Boise Statesman (3/1/43), "To make up the difference, it is going to be necessary to use Japanese from relocation camps. For this to be successful, we must in some way educate the public to accept Japanese as citizens."

On March 1, the Standard Examiner (UP), the Salt Lake Tribune and Desert News carried Governor Maw's appeal for cooperation in obtaining Japanese evacuee labor. This appeal, directed at both prospective employers and city-bred evacuees, asked them to forget their prejudices and personal tastes and pitch in to win the war on the food front.

EVACUEE PROPERTY --

The California Beo papers carried two more items (2/16 and 26/43) on the legislative committee investigation of stored evacuee property. The earlier article left the impression that OPA officials had found numerous caches of subversive equipment, tires, and automobiles among the belongings of evacuated Japanese. The second reported the committee's plans for a series of hearings.

An organization called Farm Management, Inc., has "taken over about 650 acres" of land formerly farmed by Japanese in the Puyallup Valley. Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 2/27/43.

HAWAII --

Secretary Knox told the House Appropriations Committee that he had been pressing for the removal of certain Japanese from the Hawaiian Island of Oahua but that his proposal is not being followed "to as great an extent as I would like to see it done." Washington Times-Herald, 2/3/43.

General Delos Emmons' statement that no mass removal of Japanese from Hawaii is contemplated was reported in the Los Angeles Times (2/22/43) and the New Orleans Times-Picayune (2/23/43). Emmons was quoted as saying that while certain elements among the Japanese population are definitely a menace, ample troops are available to protect the islands. He went on to say, "My confidence in them is being justified by the enlistment applications...This indicates that the Japanese-Americans are anxious to prove their loyalty and assume a share in the war."

INDIVIDUAL EXCLUSION --

Henry Beach, a Portland mechanic, who has been required to appear twice before exclusion boards, filed suit in the United States District Court on February 13 on the grounds that he had been deprived of his rights and liberties as an American citizen. Seattle Times, 2/14/43, UP.

INDUSTRIAL --

The town council of Minerva, Ohio, at the behest of a representative of the local potters' union, passed a resolution asking Congress to prohibit pottery-making at WRA camps. Minerva News and Times (2/25/43).

INTERNAL SECURITY --

First disturbance over registration at Tule Lake and subsequent arrest of 27 men were reported by the AP in four separate dispatches and in original stories in four West Coast papers. AP said that there had been no violence; that "cause for the detentions was not immediately available" but that the FBI was working on the matter. The San Francisco Chronicle (2/23/43) termed the situation "Rebellion at Tule Lake". The San Francisco Examiner's description (2/23/43) of the incident and Coverley's statement was extremely sarcastic.

The February 22 arrest of seven additional evacuees at Tule Lake was responsible for items in the Herald and News on February 22 and 23. The progress of registration was reported in these items, which pointed out that those arrested were members of a small minority group.

All three major wire services carried items on the Tule Lake arrests of 12 evacuees implicated in the February 22 beatings. The situation was described by the AP and UP as "violence over registration" while the INS termed it merely a "disturbance". Removal of twenty-two evacuees from a local jail to "an undisclosed destination" was reported by each wire service.

Removal of 11 evacuees from Manzanar to the Independence County Jail was the subject of a UP dispatch which quoted Robert Brown, Assistant Project Director, to the effect that the arrests were an outgrowth of the December 6 incident. Fresno Bee, 2/20/43. The local Inyo Independent (2/26/43) reported the arrests and subsequent transfer to Moab.

Two youths from Poston were picked up in Los Angeles where they had fled "in a hope of serving in the war, the boy in the army and his sister in a defense plant", according to an item in the Arizona Republic, 2/26/43.

The trial of the assaulters of Saburo Kido at Colorado River was covered fully by the Yuma Daily Sun and the Arizona Sentinel (2/17/43).

LEGAL --

Deportation of all persons of Japanese blood after the war was asked of Congress by the Oregon Senate on February 24. Seattle Times, Des Moines Register, Meriden, Conn. Record, Spokesman-Review, Herald and News, AP, 2/24/43.

The Attorney General of Arkansas held on February 24 that the recent act of the Arkansas legislature prohibiting land-ownership by persons of Japanese blood was unconstitutional. He also held that the state law prohibiting intermarriage of whites and Negroes did not extend to intermarriage of other racial groups. Arkansas Democrat, 2/24/43.

Two proposed constitutional amendments affecting evacuees in Arkansas were still to be considered as the Arkansas legislature entered the final week of its 1943 session, as reported in the Little Rock Gazette, 3/1/43. The amendments are contradictory. S. J. R. No. 5 would ban discrimination between citizens of the United States in the acquisition and ownership of property, and S. J. R. No. 6 would restrict land ownership by evacuees.

MILITARY SERVICE --

The AP, on February 23, said that "1400 Japanese men of army age have registered for the draft" at Manzanar. San Francisco Chronicle Long Beach Press Telegram.

MESS --

"Food ration requirements of persons in War Relocation Centers and alien detention camps will be administered from Washington rather than through local rationing boards, the OPA announced." Little Rock Gazette, 2/28/43.

MISCELLANEOUS --

The Japanese exclusion area in Arizona has been pushed sixty miles south in accordance with a proclamation issued by General DeWitt. New York Times, 3/4/43.

UP picked up an item from the Heart Mountain Sentinel that "good luck" bolts are being stitched by women for their relatives in the American army. Omaha World Herald, UP, 2/25/43.

An article in the Spokesman-Review, 2/28/43, on the Army Japanese language schools did not mention that American-born Japanese were among the instructors.

STUDENT RELOCATION --

Expressing the belief that "internees have been 'educated enough'" the American Legion District 42 in convention at Weed, California passed a resolution against the student relocation program. Sacramento Bee, 2/23/43. A similar resolution was passed by the Kingsburg American Legion Post (Fresno County, California), Fresno Bee, 2/21/43. Visalia Chamber of Commerce members "were surprised to learn that 410 American colleges

are willing to accept these Japanese students" and are expected to pass a resolution against the student placement work, according to the Visalia Times Delta, 2/22/43.

At Mason City, Iowa, the local Trades and Labor Assembly (A.F. of L.) went on record against admitting evacuee students to Mason City junior college. Mason City Globe-Gazette, 2/26/43.

REPATRIATION --

A Vichy radio broadcast that the Japanese and U. S. governments had entered into further negotiations, through the Red Cross, for an exchange of nationals, was reported by the Associated Press from London on February 27.

Permission to visit Japanese prison camps has been given to the War Prisoners Aid Committee, according to an item in the San Francisco News, 2/27/43.

PUBLIC ATTITUDES --

Feature articles:

A series of articles by Anne Swensson is appearing in the Seattle Times. First article (2/23/43) was based on an interview with Robert W. O'Brien, formerly with the Student Relocation Council. After quoting O'Brien directly, "These Nisei--American born Japanese--know that they are not winning the war by staying in relocation camps", Miss Swensson went on to describe actual case histories of outside student adjustments and to tell of the loyalty of the younger generation.

The Jerome North Side News (2/25/43) printed a condensation of the third of Mel Arnold's series of favorable articles which originally ran in the Portland Oregonian.

Miscellaneous:

A Superior Court "injunction to forestall the counting of ballots cast by Seattle Japanese in evacuation camps" because "their citizenship is in doubt" is a plank in the platform of James F. Kelly, candidate for the Seattle City Council. Seattle Times, 2/21/43.

"Condemning state legislature memorials", which advised deportation of those of Japanese ancestry and barring them from military service, "as 'unchristian, un-American, undemocratic and an insult to the intelligence of the citizens of Oregon'", the Oregon Council of Church Women drafted a formal letter of protest to the members of the state legislature. Klamath Falls Herald and News. AP, 2/27/43.

Resolutions for the transfer of WRA centers to military control and against the release of evacuees "for any purpose whatsoever" were approved by the boards of trustees of Yuba Junior College and Marysville Union High School. Sacramento Doc, 3/1/43.

Two young people of Japanese ancestry spoke at a youth rally of church people in Utica. They said that camp life was "not too good and not too bad". Hardest to bear were barbed wire fences and sentries. Speakers suggested that some effort be made by the young people at the gathering to obtain "the relocation of some of the Japanese internees to farms in this area." Utica Observer-Dispatch, 2/11/43.

An interview between Justice Raymond Kelly of Seattle and a young evacuee recently released from an Idaho center was reported in the Spokesman-Review (2/28/43). According to the newspaper story, the evacuee told Kelly that the evacuation order was proper because "There are many in the camp who should be interned." He declared that California evacuees are "tough"--"I don't wonder the people of California tried to run them out of the state."

Testifying before the California legislative committee on un-Americanism, a former electrician in Hawaii made charges against Japanese "so startling they could not be released for publication." Washington Star, 3/2/43.

Release of evacuees "only for agricultural work under strict Army supervision and only in areas outside the strategic zone" was recommended by the 23rd District of the American Legion, made up of 25 Los Angeles County Legion posts. Los Angeles Examiner, 2/26/43.

Letters to newspapers:

A letter to the Arkansas Gazette (2/17/43) from F. J. Genter of Stuttgart, Arkansas, a World War I soldier, condemned as un-Christian those who advocate harsh treatment of Japanese.

The Rev. William A. Brown of Cave Junction, Oregon, proposed a barrage of press and radio publicity as a means for obtaining favorable sentiment for evacuees' accommodation in outside communities. Arizonian, 2/23/43.

A letter from Mrs. C. R. McCormick thanks the Portland Oregonian for its sympathetic feature articles on evacuees in Idaho and proposes a similar series of articles on Negro problems.

Miller Freeman, whose views on the post-war Japanese questions were presented in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer (reviewed last week) wrote to the Christian Science Monitor on the same subject.

Editorials:

The Arkansas Gazette (2/18/43) declared that "The desirability of passing anti-Japanese legislation at this time is questionable", but deplored that certain people argued against such legislation on the grounds that it would "constitute 'an unnecessary blow to the pride of a proud race' and would therefore be 'deeply resented' by the Japanese."

The Idaho Daily Standard (2/25/43) applauded what they considered a recent change toward tolerance in America's temper toward Japanese-Americans.

The Salem, Oregon Journal criticized recent anti-Japanese actions of the Oregon State legislature and referred to the actions as "demagogic appeals to racial prejudices" and "foolish and futile resolutions."

The Minneapolis Star-Journal (2/27/43) recapitulated anti-Japanese legislation proposed since Pearl Harbor and stated: "It is dangerous and damnable business to be using the war, or to let it be used, as a pretext to strip one group of American citizens of basic civil and economic rights for the benefit of other Americans."

Malcolm Epley's column, "Today's Roundup", in the Klamath Falls Herald and News (2/22/43) considered that the Tule Lake difficulty over registration was proof that "pro-Japanese agitators are constantly at work" and should be segregated as soon as possible, which is "what the WRA is attempting."

The Hartford, Connecticut, Times (2/27/43) attacked the attempt of the Native Sons "to disfranchise 70,000 American native-born citizens whose ancestors were born in Japan" as un-American racial prejudice.

The Chicago Defender (Negro) applauded the formation of an Army unit of Japanese-Americans on the basis that it was one answer to Tojo's racial propaganda. 3/6/43.

The Chicago Tribune (2/25/43) contrasted treatment of Japanese in Hawaii and the United States, attacked evacuation from the West Coast as smelling of "lynch law or vigilantism" because it did not apply equally to Hawaiian and continental Japanese.

The Chicago Tribune (2/25/43) was "distressed" at a recent state legislature resolution protesting "student relocation". Said the Tribune, "Since when did we so completely cease to be a democracy that we began judging a person's patriotism by his 'racial extraction'." WRA in its resettlement program is trying to permit evacuees to "live and feel like DECENT, UPRIGHT AMERICAN CITIZENS again."

MAGAZINE ARTICLES --

The Commission (a Baptist journal), "Americans of Japanese Ancestry", by Marjorie E. Moore, March, 1943.

Miss Moore visited Jerome and Rohwer early in February to investigate the missionary opportunities in the centers. Her article, describing life therein--primarily from the religious approach--is very favorable in tone. She points out the distinction between "evacuees" and "internees".

Common Ground, "What Happened at Manzanar", Spring, 1943. By Common Ground staff, based on WRA sources.

This is a complete, accurate, and factual account of the December 6 outbreak at Manzanar, including the causes therefor and WRA's method of handling. The article points out that, contrary to press labeling, the incident was not a simple "pro-Axis" demonstration. Prior to December 6, a number of influences combined to make the community extremely volatile. Ueno's arrest was the spark which set it off. Colonists feel that the root causes of the riot were: Discrimination against Issei in favor of the younger, less experienced Nisei in administrative positions and also in the community government; pre-evacuation quarrels and factional disputes; delays in payment of wages and clothing allowances; variations in quality of food between mess halls; the pro-administration and pro-government policy of the center newspaper; the separation of many families from their breadwinners held in internment camps; trial of evacuees by civil courts outside the relocation centers; uncertainty about the future in this country; financial loss in disposing of property at the time of evacuation; an unfriendly press outside the relocation centers." In handling those involved in the incident, WRA took the first step "toward segregation", which the article seems to feel is a desirable policy.

The same issue of Common Ground contains a copy of a personal letter from Ralph Merritt to one of his relatives about Manzanar on Christmas Day. Describing the temper of the center at Christmas--two weeks after the riot--Mr. Merritt concludes: "So we greet this Christmas morning. Shall the problems of keeping this peace and good will be solved by the military--or by being overtrustful of this show of goodness--or is there some safe middle course through which the ideals of peace and good will can mingle with the realities of race tolerance? If there is an answer, it will be the cornerstone upon which a future peace of the world will rest."

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