

INFORMATION DIGEST

Nos. 34 and 35

February 6, 1943

For the Use of the WRA Staff Only - Not for Publication

PRESS FAVORS COMBAT UNIT --

Ten days after Secretary Stimson's announcement of the formation of a nisei combat unit all indications point toward widespread public acceptance of the War Department's decision. Editorial comment in eastern and middle western newspapers is being carefully watched by the War Department, and the report is that it is uniformly favorable.

War Department teams left Washington on February 2 for the projects. Each team consists of three sergeants, one a Japanese-American from the Military Intelligence Language School at Savage, Minnesota, and one commissioned officer as Captain of the team. Their departure followed a training program at the War Department which opened on January 25 and was participated in by members of the WRA staff from the ten projects and the Washington office. Registration will start at all projects no later than February 10.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER --

Following Secretary Stimson's announcement and President Roosevelt's return from Africa, the President addressed a letter to the Secretary of War, the text of which is of great significance to all concerned. The President wrote:

"February 1, 1943

"My dear Mr. Secretary:

"The proposal of the War Department to organize a combat team consisting of loyal American citizens of Japanese descent has my full approval. The new combat team will add to the nearly five thousand loyal Americans of Japanese ancestry who are already serving in the armed forces of our country.

"This is a natural and logical step toward the reinstitution of the Selective Service procedures which were temporarily disrupted by the evacuation from the West Coast.

"No loyal citizen of the United States should be denied the democratic right to exercise the responsibilities of his citizenship, regardless of his ancestry. The principle on which this country was founded and by which it has always been governed is that Americanism is a matter of the mind and heart; Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry. A good American is one who is loyal to this country and to our creed of liberty and democracy. Every loyal American citizen should be

given the opportunity to serve this country wherever his skills will make the greatest contribution --whether it be in the ranks of our armed forces, war production, agriculture, government service, or other work essential to the war effort.

"I am glad to observe that the War Department, the Navy Department, the War Manpower Commission, the Department of Justice, and the War Relocation Authority are collaborating in a program which will assure the opportunity for all loyal Americans, including Americans of Japanese ancestry, to serve their country at a time when the fullest and wisest use of our manpower is all-important to the war effort.

"Very sincerely yours,

"/s/ FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT"

COMMITTEE HEARS GREW --

Former United States Ambassador to Japan, Joseph C. Grew, testified before the Senate Military Affairs sub-committee investigating the WRA on January 21. The committee has also called Tokio Slocum, former resident of Manzanar, Bernard Guffler, State Department representative who has visited several projects on repatriation matters, and a Japanese-American United States Army sergeant.

SCHOOLS DISAPPROVED --

WRA has received notice that the War Production Board has withdrawn approval for two elementary schools at both Granada and Heart Mountain. Negotiations with the contractor to effect the change have not yet been completed.

WPB has also refused to permit the construction of a fire hose tower at Gila River and at Central Utah, coal storage bunkers at both Tule Lake and Minidoka, and a spur track and a coal unloading hopper at Tule Lake.

SURPLUS CLOTHING APPRAISED --

Examination is being made in the Washington office of the appraisal values on surplus clothing sent in by the different projects. Fair and standard values are to be established on surplus clothing prior to its issue for sale to the evacuees. Instructions will be issued within a few days.

PARENT-TEACHERS ASSOCIATIONS RECOGNIZED --

The national executive committee of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers recently voted to give relocation center groups affiliation with the National Congress. Exact methods for effecting this are now being worked out, according to Mrs. William Klotzer, national president of the PTA, who conferred with community activities staff members in Washington.

PD-408 FORMS APPROVED --

Project estimates for operating, maintenance, and repairs priorities required during the January-March quarter have been approved by WPB and mailed to the field. Projects have been requested to have their PD-408's for the next quarter in Washington by February 15.

INCREASE FOR TRAVEL SOUGHT --

Hearings are expected to be held any day on WRA's request for a budget adjustment which will increase the travel allowance from \$216,500 to \$500,000.

1944 BUDGET ESTIMATES REQUESTED --

A memorandum has gone to the projects requesting budget estimates for the 1944 fiscal year to be in the Washington office by March 1. Each division in Washington will shortly be asked for estimates for the same period.

WRA must submit its budget estimates to the Bureau of the Budget by March 15. Hearings will be held later.

EVACUEES RATIONED --

Evacuees are now conforming to a compulsory meat rationing program, and stewards have been instructed not to purchase any more ham or bacon. Weekly meat rations--including bones and fat--are 3/4 lb. for children under 6 years; 1-1/2 lbs. for children 6 to 12 years; and 2-1/2 lbs. for children over 12 years and adults.

Oleomargarine has been substituted for butter at all projects. Coffee rations conform to those of civilians, and sugar is 1/2 lb. per month less than the civilian rationing allowance. Fluid milk consumption has been curtailed--milk for drinking is provided only to infants, small children, pregnant women, nursing mothers, hospital and special diet cases.

Since evacuees who are fed in mess halls are not entitled to Ration Book I, some method is to be worked out to provide them with their shoe ration. This problem is under discussion at the present time.

Evacuees leaving the centers on indefinite leave will be given the necessary ration books.

SERIOUS HOUSING CONGESTION FOUND--

Reports from all projects show grave over-crowding and lack of privacy in the barracks. Most serious condition was found at Manzanar, where an average of 4.85 persons occupy each room, as compared with an average of 3.96 for all projects. To relieve this so far as is possible within the framework of existing physical facilities, a set of housing standards is now being prepared by the Welfare Section.

PERSONNEL AND FISCAL MEETINGS --

Project administrative officers will attend a personnel meeting in Denver on February 27 and 28. Beginning on March 1 and continuing for most of the week fiscal officers and cost accountants will hold meetings to discuss the revised accounting manual which is being drawn up and other general questions relating to fiscal policy and procedures. Members of the Washington staff will also be in Denver for the meetings.

HEALTH PROGRAM TO BE BROADENED --

Technically trained dieticians and medical social workers are now being recruited for every project hospital. Dieticians will plan and direct the preparation of special diets, and medical social workers will augment the regular welfare case work. Project public welfare staffs universally recognize the need for specialized medical social case work.

Inequitable distribution among the centers of medical personnel--both evacuee and appointive--is being remedied by inter-project shifts. It is expected that a number of additional transfers of physicians and nurses will be required before all project hospitals are staffed equitably.

CO-OP BUILDING RENTAL DISCUSSED --

Discussions are now being held by the fiscal and community enterprises staffs to determine whether or not a reduction in rent of the buildings occupied by cooperatives on the projects is in order at this time. The problem will be clarified within a few days and instructions issued to the field.

A total of 109 separate community enterprises has been established. These include general stores, grocery stores, shoe repair shops, dry cleaning establishments, motion picture shows, watch repair, newspapers, and optical services. Of these 55 are branches of cooperative enterprises which have been incorporated.

RECREATIONAL GROUPS COOPERATE --

Representatives of the YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts, Boys Clubs of America and the USO have indicated their willingness to cooperate further with WRA to increase evacuee participation in community activities.

Edward Marks conferred recently in New York with members of these organizations on (1) the organization of affiliated groups at the projects, (2) development of activities where groups are already organized, and (3) transfer of the youth of families granted indefinite leave to chapters in communities where they will reside.

1943 CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM MAPPED OUT --

A total of 198 construction projects for the 1943 calendar year has been proposed. To date, WPB has approved priorities for 31 projects, and has promised early consideration to agricultural and irrigation projects so that land development essential to crop production this year may be started. Only irrigation project approved by WPB so far is a distribution system for 620 acres of subsistence crop lands at Manzanar.

Proposed projects include, in part, schools, staff housing, ice houses, factories, slaughter houses, drainage systems, access roads, churches, electric lines, and mess halls. They are distributed among the centers as follows: Central Utah, 23; Tule Lake, 25; Rohwer, 17; Minidoka, 19; Manzanar, 21; Jerome, 17; Heart Mountain, 18; Granada, 18; Gila River, 20; Colorado River, 20. Evacuee labor, assisted by some skilled and technical personnel, is to be used in all cases except the Granada and Heart Mountain schools.

DAIRY CATTLE TO GILA RIVER --

On January 30, 31 head of dairy cattle, including 18 milch cows, were transferred to Gila River from Granada. It is expected that this will relieve the milk shortage at Gila somewhat and will serve as the nucleus of a dairy herd should it be necessary to increase project subsistence milk production.

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED --

The following Administrative Instructions have been issued since January 23:

- No. 80 Rationing. January 29.
- No. 78 Storage and Transportation of Household Goods, Personal Effects, and Commercial Property of Evacuees. January 23.
- No. 77 Property of Evacuees. January 23.
- No. 46 Supplement 1. Travel of Evacuees. January 29.
- No. 44 (Revised). Industrial Enterprises in Relocation Centers. January 26.
- No. 41 Supplement 8. Accounting Control Records. January 28.
- No. 41 Supplement 7. Overtime Compensation. February 2.
- No. 37 (Revised). Priorities for Project Purchases. January 23.
- No. 33 (Revised) Project Mess Operations. January 29.
- No. 22 Supplement 3. Issuance for Leave for Departure from a Relocation Center. January 30.
- No. 21 Supplement 1. Purchases from Army Depots and Market Centers. February 3.

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION ON AGRICULTURE PROJECTED --

An Administrative Instruction dealing with WRA agricultural policies is being prepared. This instruction will cover such matters as the formulation of agricultural programs at the Centers, the procedure by which inter-project shipment of food crops is determined, etc.

TYPEWRITERS ON WAY ---

Treasury Procurement Division has advised WRA that typewriters are being purchased for projects and that shipment will be made from Elmira, New York, in the very near future.

CULLUM ON DETAIL ---

Robert Cullum, supervisor in charge of the individual exclusion program in the New York area, is being detailed to the Employment Division for several weeks to work in the mid-western states. During his absence, Roger Clapp will be in charge of both the New York and Boston offices.

LIBRARY NOTES --

The Japanese, a pamphlet written by John Embree of the Reports Division staff, has been published by the Smithsonian Institution as Number 7 in its "War Background Studies" series. This pamphlet is available in the Library in Washington and has been distributed to the projects.

Reprints of "Democracy in Relocation", Director Myers' Common Ground article, have been secured and are being distributed to the projects. Copies are available to Washington personnel in the Library.

The Library now has Federal Writers Project state guides for Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming. "Idaho" is out of print.

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY UNDERWAY --

An inventory of farm and automotive equipment owned by evacuees is now being taken at the Centers. After the data are collected, evacuees who wish to do so will be assisted by the WRA in disposing of inventoried property.
