

RESETTLEMENT BULLETIN

June 1943

NEW YORK

Vol. I. No. 3

"Having visited the camps and talked with the evacuees, I speak with all my sincerity and strength...."

TWO VIEWS: TWO ALTERNATIVES

By George E. Rundquist

Life is filled with perplexities, doubts, and fears in the ten relocation centers where approximately 100,000 people, the majority of them American citizens, evacuated from the West Coast in the spring of 1942, are facing the future through a dark cloud of uncertainty brought upon them by the war. They had no voice in the decision that compelled them to leave their former homes and move into the centers, but now many of them are asked to decide for themselves whether to remain there, or to seek new employment and new homes in other sections of the country.

"Why should we resettle?" "What are the prospects of returning to our homes on the coast?" "What will happen to us when the war is over?" These questions, and many others, were put to me again and again during a recent visit to five of the centers. It seems to me that it is now imperative to examine sincerely and realistically the problem which is of vital importance to the future of the evacuees.

There are two ways to look at it. From the short-range point of view, life in the centers has some apparent advantages. The immediate necessities of life are provided by the government. Friendly neighbors, sports, and dramatics help to break the monotony of the day-to-day existence.

Most of all, the centers offer the only tangible security left to the evacuees, and the older people, more especially, fear the thought of losing it. These people, industrious, law-abiding, and thrifty, with plans for the future, like any other American families, were shocked by the evacuation;

their faith in democracy undermined.

They went to the relocation centers expecting to remain there for the duration of the war. They settled -- bedded down. Then they began to hear about the plan to resettle them in outside communities. It has confused and bewildered them. In the relocation centers they have lost all contact with the changing world outside. Frightened by the costs of wartime living, they wonder if they could earn enough money to support themselves and their families. They have heard about the difficulty of obtaining places to live. They worry about the attitudes of people on the outside toward them.

Certainly the discouragements confronting the evacuees when they consider the problem of resettlement are very real.

There is, however, a long-range point of view which encompasses the fate of all Americans of Japanese ancestry, recognizing that temporary hardships may be necessary for some individuals in the struggle to win a better tomorrow.

One project newspaper has sounded a warning that "Right now, it appears as if resettlement is our only salvation from prolonged 'reservation' existence." I do not know, of course, that the United States would ever establish reservations for Japanese-Americans, as it has for the Indians, but the longer the centers remain in operation, the harder will become the task of erasing them from the map of American life. They sap the initiative and self-reliance of the people living in them, making more difficult the problem of taking up again the struggle for existence.

Another unwholesome influence of the relocation centers is the effect that they have on public sentiment. They provide a focus for attacks, and the longer they continue to exist the greater will be the difficulty of winning public support on issues that may become vitally important in the days to come.

It is highly important for the evacuees to begin making as many friends as possible right now; it may be too late after the war is over. The only way that evacuees can make friends outside the centers is by coming in contact with the general public. The churches can preach, and liberal Americans can talk about civil rights for evacuees, but no amount of preaching and talking will be as effective as getting them into the everyday life of communities where other people live.

Every evacuee who leaves a center, and makes good in the community to which he goes, is an ambassador of good will. I know a number of young people who, by the way they have conducted themselves, have made many friends for the evacuees, and made it possible for others to follow them. The public seems generally to like them and to be willing to give them an opportunity to live a normal life.

There is very little prejudice in the Middle West against people of Japanese ancestry and virtually no organized antagonism to them. The evacuees are fearful, however, that they will be followed by the discrimination that seems to them to prevail throughout the West. Living in the centers makes them abnormally sensitive to indications of unfriendliness. It is difficult for some of them to believe that there are friendly people almost everywhere -- people concerned about seeing that democracy works for all Americans, regardless of race or creed. They read antagonistic statements in certain Western papers, but overlook the many friendly editorials in Middle Western and Eastern newspapers. When they hear of opposition to the employment of evacuees, they neglect to inquire whether it represents the majority of the people in the community, or just one small segment of it.

Just after the news of the execution of American flyers by Tokyo was made public the sheriff of McHenry County, Illinois, ordered several Nisei, working on a farm near

Marengo, to leave the community. Some of the townspeople were disturbed by his action, and several local ministers called a public meeting to bring forth all the facts. In a ballot taken at this meeting almost three-quarters of the people voted to have the Nisei remain, and further expressed the opinion that the employer of the Nisei should have no hesitation about employing other Nisei from the relocation centers.

At about the same time Mr. Harold Fistere, who has charge of the relocation office in Cleveland, wrote letters to all resettled evacuees who had been cleared through his office, asking if they had witnessed any change in the attitude of the general public toward them since the news of the Tokyo executions had been released. Not a single one of the evacuees had noted any change in sentiment toward them.

There are many jobs for employable people. Not all of them are the kind of jobs that the center residents have been hoping to obtain; but on the whole, in my opinion, employment opportunities -- especially for the Nisei -- are better in the Middle West today than were ever available to them on the West Coast. Many of the Nisei have made friendly connections with large Caucasian firms, and some of them are better paid than they were ever paid before. Some are getting their first opportunities to do the work that they were educated to do.

Finding a satisfactory place to live, especially in war-boom cities, is more difficult than finding a satisfactory job. But a great many families have been able to find good living quarters, even in overcrowded areas. And wherever they live, there are recreational facilities not available in a relocation center -- beaches, parks, libraries, museums, theaters, and concerts.

I know that many people in the relocation centers are hoping to return some day to their homes on the West Coast. They remember their former home communities, in California, Oregon, and Washington, as those communities were before the war, with friendly neighbors living there. I have, in my office, letters from some of those neighbors -- neighbors whose names were given to me, for reference purposes, by evacuees who believed them to be friendly. Yet some of the writers admit that hatred for the Japanese foe across the water has caused them to fear and distrust

all people of Japanese ancestry.

If the people in the relocation centers were allowed to return to the West Coast tomorrow, or next week, what would they have to return to? A few of them, of course, have farms or businesses that they could take over again, but the great majority would have nothing.

On March 4, 1943, the Western Defense Command announced that the boundary of the exclusion zone in Arizona had been moved southward approximately 60 miles, thereby freeing all Pinal County and considerable areas in Maricopa and Yuma counties. This meant that about 215 people, in the Colorado River and Gila River relocation centers, were at liberty to return to their homes, but only seven or eight took advantage of the opportunity. In my opinion, opening the other exclusion zones at this time would likewise attract only a small percentage of the people in the centers to return to their former homes.

Every week, however, hundreds of evacuees are moving into communities outside the exclusion zones, mainly in the Middle West, showing the same sort of courage and determination that marked the spirit of the Issei when, years ago, they left their homes and parents in Japan to come to a strange land, with strange customs and a language which they did not understand. It was hard then and it will be hard now to begin all over again the struggle for public acceptance. But it will have to be done some time. The sooner they begin, the easier the task will be.

For the Nisei the path ahead will be much easier. They are citizens; they have been educated in our schools; they think the same way that other Americans think. Once they have overcome the feeling of strangeness in other people, who are unfamiliar with Oriental features, I believe they will enjoy many social and employment opportunities that were never available to them on the West Coast.

Those who leave the relocation centers now will be much better prepared to meet post-war problems of employment than those who remain. They will have gained friends in the communities to which they go; they will become proficient in their work; they will be familiar with modern techniques and new developments in industry.

On the other hand, those evacuees who

remain in the centers will be handicapped by bad work habits, by rusty and outdated skills. Like the people on relief during the depression, they will feel inadequate and helpless in coping with the problems of everyday existence. One resident in a center, stirred by the realization of this danger, has described the experience as "soul rotting".

I look forward to the full restoration of civil liberties for Americans of Japanese ancestry, and I believe that these liberties can be gained more quickly by all of us working together, not inside the centers but outside the centers, in normal American communities -- living normal lives, working and playing together, and trusting each other.

An Editorial:

GOOD EXAMPLE FROM IOWA

Citizens of Des Moines have given an object lesson to the country by opening their homes to 50 American-born Japanese while they await employment in the state of Iowa. These are educated young men and women, patriotically devoted to the United States and seeking the double opportunity of proving their devotion and earning a living. Their handicap is the prejudice created against them, first, by the barbarous conduct of the Japanese army and government, and second, by such things as the false and irresponsible remark of Gen. DeWitt that "A Jap is a Jap" regardless of American birth, citizenship, education and loyalty The attitude of the Des Moines community is a happy contrast to that of the self-appointed superpatriots who think race and color govern the right of Americans to love their country and to share in the blessings of citizenship"

-- Chicago Sun, June 5, 1943.

A NEW PAMPHLET ON THE WAY

Realizing the need for a new pamphlet, the Committee on Resettlement is preparing "RESETTLEMENT OF JAPANESE AMERICANS", an enlargement of the "COMMUNITY PREPARATION FOR RESETTLEMENT OF JAPANESE AMERICANS", with new material. It will be ready by the middle of July. Orders placed now will be filled upon publication.

Because Denver and St. Louis present an interesting contrast in the resettlement picture -- one as a "center of resettlement" and the other as a "new frontier" -- we are especially pleased to include the following reports in this issue.....Editor.

By C. P. Garman
Colorado Council of Churches
Japanese Service

Denver is the center of the resettlement program for the state of Colorado and even for a much wider area. Naturally, this is shared in by the Relocation Center at Amache in the southeastern part of the state. Probably Salt Lake City is the only resettlement center with problems like those of Denver. Both have pre-war Japanese populations of considerable size. Both had these groups enlarged by an influx of "voluntary evacuees" in the early spring of 1942. Both have relocation centers within the state. And both have seasonal labor groups from centers outside as well as inside the state.

Many of the beet harvesters were able to secure employment and remained at the close of the season. Others secured permanent work to which they returned in the spring, bringing their families with them. Where this employment proved temporary or unsatisfactory, the employees tend to drift into Denver, to increase the already overcrowded population. Many of the young men found employment as bus boys, hotel boys, and the like. Young women went into household service. Here the demand has greatly exceeded the supply, though as in the case of the young men just mentioned, many were employed whose training and experience was along entirely different lines.

One of the important features of resettlement has been to get those who had taken any sort of position to secure exit from the centers placed in positions for which they were trained. Placement of the highly skilled and professionally trained has been very slow in this section, though numbers have been going east. In recent weeks secretarial, accountancy, and nursing positions have opened up. The agricultural field is quite open and families are being located in different parts of the state.

As in many other cities with large defense industries, the housing situation in Denver was serious even without any influx of Japanese. At present, there are probably 2,000 persons of Japanese ancestry in Denver, and about 5,000 in the state. There is a serious overcrowding of Japanese in a section of Denver which should by all means be relieved, but to date the solution has not been found.

Another matter which is causing considerable anxiety is that of providing recreation and proper social life for the young nisei. Limited attempts toward the solution of this are being made by the Y.W.C.A. and the F.O.R., in connection with several churches. Racial cooperation rather than racial segregation is featured in the proposed solution, but prevailing patterns make this a difficult problem to deal with. Other localities where persons of Japanese race are settling for the first time, or where previously there have been but few, should certainly exert themselves to welcome the new-comers into existing religious and social activities, so that new racial groupings are unnecessary.

Those in Denver and throughout the state who are assisting in resettlement and other problems dealing with the Japanese have the cooperation of the Colorado Council of Churches. This group has become a committee of the Council, with one member elected to a position on the Council staff. In response to a local newspaper campaign largely made up of error and distortion, a mimeographed sheet was circulated under the title "Hate is Moral Poison." Repeated requests kept coming in until the few hundred originally struck off had run up to about 8,000.

By Clarence Gillett
 Congregational Christian Committee for
 Work with Japanese American Evacuees.

At the present time there are in St. Louis about 150 Pacific Coast evacuees, with about half of them in school, mostly at Washington University, and the other half employed. About one-third of those employed are in agricultural work, with others in offices, mechanical work, and household work. Housing here in St. Louis is not easy, but it is not impossible to find rooms, or even apartments. This particular season of the year is said to be one of the best for finding such accommodations, because many people are leaving or moving. Rooms as a rule are not too attractive and run in price for one person from about five to eight dollars a week, and for two persons, from about three to six dollars per person. Light housekeeping rooms are somewhat higher. Furnished apartments run to \$35 or more a month, even for one or two-room apartments. In some cases, rather attractive four or five-room apartments can be found for about \$50 or \$55. Furnished apartments are naturally somewhat higher.

Work opportunities are about the same as in other sections. Both wages and cost of living are perhaps a little lower in the Chicago area, for example. As in other places, there are plenty of openings for household work and for couples, where the husband will do gardening and act as a butler. Also, there are attractive openings for those who want to go to school and work for their board and room. In industry, the local WRA office, of which Mr. E. G. Kennedy is the head, and we, believe that it is better not to try for defense industries so much as for other work in good industries of about the same wage standards. The beginning level of wages is about the same, in any case, the top price being from 60 to 70¢ per hour, and it is more likely that the beginning wage would be about 50¢. After a few weeks, as experience is gained and ability demonstrated, there would be considerable increase. The ceiling wages in defense industries are higher than in others, but there is also much greater likelihood of finding opposition and unpleasant situations.

Here in St. Louis, instead of a hostel, under the management of some person or couple,

we have what might be called hospitality arrangements. The Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. have rooms for about a dollar a night and food would cost about \$1.25 to \$1.50 per day. Final decisions have not been made, but it is fairly certain that if, after a week or so, work has not been found, then some subsidy, covering about half the cost of room and board would be available for another period while work was being found. These arrangements have been made by the St. Louis Interdenominational Committee on Resettlement.

This Interdenominational Committee has only recently been definitely organized, with committees on finance, organization, education, and other work. Mr. Arno Haack is being released half-time by the Y.M.C.A. at the request of the St. Louis Federation of Churches, and is actively in charge of the work in this area. It is believed that all other groups are cordially and fully cooperating with this general committee and that all is being done in very close cooperation with the local WRA office. Beginning in September, the office for interdenominational work for resettlement will be in the Y.M.C.A., Room 401, and in cooperation with the Federation of Churches. A full-time secretary will be employed for the work of the general committee and of the Congregational Committee on Resettlement. It is expected that all denominational work for resettlement will be cleared through this office, in cooperation with the WRA office, which cordially and fully approves these arrangements as they have developed.

The Congregational Christian Committee has recently published a leaflet, "You Can Do Something About It". This has been very well received. It is available for distribution to any one interested, and quantity prices would be very low. Also, this office has on hand quite a supply of reprints of the Reader's Digest article, "Our 110,000 New Boarders". These are available for one dollar a hundred. Work is practically completed on a new pamphlet, "Seventy Thousand American Refugees--Made in U.S.A.", principally written by Dr. Truman B. Douglass, and this will be available about the end of June. Cost will probably be about 5¢ each. Inquiries for the present may be addressed to Mr. Arno Haack, Washington University Y.M.C.A.; or to Clarence Gillett, 6501 Wydown Boulevard, St. Louis, Mo.

Reports from the following two Midwestern cities give an analysis of types of jobs offered. This analysis confirms our belief that utmost efforts must be made to increase employment opportunities in proportion to the skills of the evacuees. For a tabulation of industrial groups among Americans of Japanese ancestry, see the W.R.A. pamphlet, "RELOCATING A PEOPLE"Editor.

Minneapolis - Mrs. Lawrence D. Steefel, War Relocation Committee:

Miss Edna Porter has turned over your letter of May 5th to the War Relocation Desk where we handle placement, interviews, referrals, etc. To date our report is as follows:

Kinds	Average Wage Offer	Number of Jobs Offered		
		Men	Women	Couples
Agricultural	\$75.mo. and Maint. (\$100-\$150 couples)	20	0	10
Clerical	90.mo.	1	11	0
Domestic	65.and maint.	8	150	20
Industrial	80.	2	2	0
Professional	100.	0	4	0
Others	80.	2	2	0

The wage scale may appear low, but Minneapolis is rated as one of the lowest living cost cities in the country.

It is to be understood that placements have used up many of the jobs mentioned above. In many cases applicants cannot be found for them who are qualified. It has been especially difficult to find couples, though we have excellent opportunities for them.

We have found that our most successful placements result from a thorough knowledge on our part, here at the Desk, of the qualifications of the individual. A clear statement of the type of work desired is necessary, as we find that permanent placements result only where the individual is satisfied with his or her work. Then, with a job open in the field in which the applicant is qualified, we invite him or her to come to the city on the hospitality plan. This means that he or she shares in selecting the job. Hospitality is offered either in our own homes, or on a paid basis of \$1.00 a night at the YMCA or the YWCA. In many cases we call and open jobs for well-qualified persons, preferably on the basis of good impressions of personality and training. We never use the hospitality plan unless a job is open and available at the time the individual is leaving the Center. It is understood that acceptance depends on the interview, but in that way we have avoided flooding the city with people who find themselves forced into work they dislike.

The fundamental basis of our work has been careful cooperation with the War Manpower Authority here, and study of the United States Employment Service employment records. In this way we have known in what fields there are still local unemployed groups in the city, and what fields show a shortage. We have always advised the Nisei against coming here for work in fields where there are still local people in need of work. We have had our volunteer Desk in the United States Employment Service Office, and all standards of wages and working conditions have been cleared with them so that we have avoided undercutting, and have been able to maintain the best standards for work through this backing.

All of our work has been done by volunteer workers, the committee financing letter-heads and postage. The USES has contributed space and switchboard service, and the committee has financed the cost of the separate line.

We now have four workers in Settlement Houses. A kindergarten teacher, a music director, an assistant teacher and a recreational group leader. We hope for more professional opportunities as the Child Care Centers develop. As our community of Nisei grows we will try to bring out a physician and dentist to practice.

St. Paul - Mrs. Florence Zmadzinski, International Institute.

Our resettlement program here in the International Institute has not included the acceptance of job offers for the past several weeks. Due to the many calls we were receiving which we could not handle satisfactorily without additional help, the acceptance of phone calls and other correspondence from prospective employers has been turned over in entirety to the War Relocation Authority office in Minneapolis. We have thereupon turned our attention wholly to the problems of housing and adjustment of resettled Japanese Americans in St. Paul.

The following tabulation of job offers that have come to our office is only approximate. There may also be some overlapping between our job offers and those listed by the Japanese American Citizens League and the War Relocation Authority in this area.

Kinds	Average Wage Offered per Month	Number of Jobs Offered		
		Men	Women	Couples
Agricultural	\$50. plus maintenance	6	0	3
Clerical	80.	0	6	0
Domestic	60. plus maintenance	10	85	14
Industrial	100.	2	0	0
Professional	60. plus maintenance (nurses)	0	21	0
Others	100. (nurserymen)	14	0	0

On May 9th the second Nisei party was held in the International Institute club rooms. It was well attended by the Nisei in St. Paul, 35 soldiers from Camp Savage and several Caucasian friends. The group is planning another get together next month.

ABOUT THE RESETTLEMENT BULLETIN

NEXT ISSUE

The July issue of the Bulletin will focus attention to what the evacuees themselves want to tell of their stories of resettlement. Evacuee readers of the Bulletin are hereby requested to send in their contributions in the form of reports, articles, letters, etc. Each paper should not exceed 800 words. Please type if possible. Stories of how they obtained employment, community reaction toward them, social activities they have joined, their impressions of living in general, their suggestions for resettlement committees and for their friends in the centers, their concern and hope for the future, will be helpful. Deadline is JULY 20th.

JAPANESE LANGUAGE SUPPLEMENT

Beginning with the present issue, the Bulletin will be translated into Japanese. This is, of course, for the benefit of the Japanese language speaking evacuees. Orders for the Japanese language supplement have already been received from the centers. By this service we hope that the program of resettlement, especially the conditions in new communities, will be better understood by the folks who have sent their children out. We also hope that resettlement by family units will be encouraged.

MONTHLY BULLETIN

As a response to the popular demand, this paper will be issued monthly hereafter. Your suggestions for the improvement of the Bulletin will be welcome. All reports and letters intended for publication in the Bulletin should reach this office by the 20th of each month.

Address all communications about and for the Bulletin to:

Editor, Resettlement Bulletin, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y.

CALLING WORKERS - URGENT

The War Manpower Commission in its publication "THE LABOR MARKET" (March - April 1943), lists cities where manpower shortage is acute. Let us turn our attention to some of them in our planning with a view toward a happy and successful resettlement.

- NEW ENGLAND - Portland, Maine.
Hartford and Bridgeport, Conn.
- NEW YORK - Buffalo.
- MID-ATLANTIC - Baltimore, Md.
Washington, D. C.
- MID-WEST - Dayton, Ohio. Evansville, Ind. Sterling, Ill.
Des Moines, Iowa. Monitowoc, Wis. Detroit, Mich.
- CENTRAL - Wichita, Kansas.

All resettlement workers will want to keep in mind the following cities where the Manpower Commission says acute shortage will occur within six months:

- NEW ENGLAND - Portsmouth, N.H. Greenfield, Mass.
Newport, R.I. New Haven and Stamford, Conn.
- NEW YORK - Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Albany.
- MID-ATLANTIC - Almost all cities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
- MID-WEST - Cleveland, Warren, Akron, Youngstown, and Canton, Ohio.
South Bend, Newcastle and Terre Haute, Ind.
Rockford, DeKalb, Aurora and Chicago, Ill.
Muskegon, Saginaw, Flint and Adrian, Mich.
- CENTRAL-SOUTH - Tulsa, Oklahoma City and McAlester, Okla.
Dallas, Texas.

Send for your copy of "THE LABOR MARKET" to: War Manpower Commission,
Bureau of Program Requirements,
Washington, D. C.

RESETTLEMENT BULLETIN, published bi-monthly, George E. Rundquist, Editor,
by the

COMMITTEE ON RESETTLEMENT OF JAPANESE AMERICANS

Sponsored Jointly

by

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America

The Home Missions Council of North America

in cooperation with

The Foreign Missions Conference of North America

297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y.

10¢ per copy.

