

## SCHOOLS AT THE GRANADA RELOCATION CENTER

### AMACHE AMAZES AMERICA!

#### INTRODUCTION

Considerable newspaper and conversational recognition has been directed since December 24th to a proposed expenditure by the WRA of \$308,000 for three school buildings at the Granada Relocation Center.

#### Fundamental viewpoint:

We must distinguish between:

1. Whether American education should be offered to Japanese-American citizens on the one hand; and
2. The high cost of construction on the other.

Remarks to be centered around two points:

1. Should an educational system be provided for Japanese-Americans?
2. What factors should be considered in regard to building school buildings at Amache?

#### I SHOULD COMPARABLE SCHOOLS BE PROVIDED FOR JAPANESE AMERICANS?

##### A. Background

1. 120,000 Japanese in the United States.
2. 89% on west coast.
3. 66% American citizens.
4. 1/3 aliens, many through no choice of their own.
5. Pearl Harbor.
6. The President of the United States asked the Army to take any means necessary to protect our interests on the west coast.
7. At the direction of the Army, on patriotic grounds, these people cooperatively, without incident, gave up homes, crops, all they knew and loved, and moved into situations similar to that existing at Amache.
8. It should be kept clearly in mind that these people were not evacuated because of any belligerent act -- rather because:
  - a. Pressure, political and otherwise, was exerted by residents on the west coast -- caused by fear and confusion;
  - b. Protection of the Japanese Americans from acts of violence and removal from danger zones in case of actual invasion.

##### B. Are they entitled to an education?

1. The State Constitution, Article IX, provides for the establishment and maintenance of a "thorough and uniform system of free public schools throughout the State."

The Amache Schools were established in cooperation with the State Department of Education.

2. Our national mores include it, especially for all citizens. Virtually all school children of Amache are citizens. Are there alien children being educated in Lamar?

3. Our common sense says so.

Are ideals, beliefs, customs, standards of living, culture, etc. products of nature (heredity) or nurture (environment)? All evidence points to no superiority of races. (Garth, Boaz) It is a false loyalty to take pokes at these people. Mein Kampf: play minorities against each other.



Robert Louis Stevenson's poem:

Stevenson's little child expressed perfectly the attitude of all people with limited knowledge or sympathy:

"Little Indian, Sioux, or Crow,  
Little frosty Eskimo,  
Little Turk or Japanee,  
Oh, don't you wish that you were ME!"

You can forgive that in a child of five; it is tragic to meet it still in men of fifty.

4. Our one hope of assimilation is education.
5. We expect them to pay taxes in California.  
(The responsibilities of citizenship but no privileges.)
6. Democracy assumes that the individual is important.

Molly Mayfield article appearing in the  
Rocky Mountain News  
December 24, 1942

"Yesterday I stepped into a department store elevator and noticed a Japanese girl about 15 years old behind me. Each time the youngster stepped timidly into the elevator some woman would shove -- I MEAN SHOVE! -- her out with some remark about 'Japs.'

"Well, the last glimpse I had of the girl she was crying as if her heart was broken. Well, I could have invited the whole car of nit-wits out on the next floor and taken them on one at a time. But I'm supposed to be a lady who has control of her primitive instincts. I'd just like to ask a few questions.

"Do these women think our boys are laying down their lives just to get them more bobbie pins, rubber girdles, silk hose, coffee, etc., or have they ever heard of democracy? Do they know that democracy means freedom of speech, kindness, tolerance, love of a great country, and all of the wonderful privileges they have enjoyed since they were born -- and born free?

"I wish these mentally-arrested females would listen and stop their whining to every grocer, baker, and butcher.

"Are they going to throw away our way of living and take it out on a poor, defenseless child?"

7. They have left excellent schools in California.
8. The best hope for morale and lack of trouble is creative endeavor.
- C. Are attempts being made now to capitalize on education and training of these people?
  1. We have over 5,000 Japanese Americans in the armed forces.
  2. 19 boys went to the Army Intelligence School, Savage, Minnesota. There is not a single large task force of the United States operating but has a Japanese American contingent assigned to it.
  3. 31 instructors at the Navy Language School, Boulder: 35 - 40% of the total teaching staff.



4. Mary Mueller, Foreign International Service, of F.C.C. had had over 15 applicants for monitor job.
5. British Consul needs translators and monitors, free script writers, etc.
6. 1,400 out on farms.
7. 800 are out now on permanent or temporary leave.
8. New requests received daily.
9. War Manpower Commission endorses all types of Japanese American labor. Conclusion is that these people must be of some real value to our war effort.

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From ideological, theoretical, and practical, pragmatic viewpoints, then education for these people is not only desirable but imperative.

## II WHAT ABOUT SPENDING \$308,498.00 FOR SCHOOL BUILDINGS?

- A. Buildings planned are type "E."
- B. Advertised for bids throughout United States -- many Colorado firms bid. 9 contractors bid.
  1. There was a range from \$308,498 to \$383,663 or a differential of \$75,165. There was a difference of \$23,000 between low and next to low bidder.
  2. Contract let in regular established government procedure.
- C. Comparisons between proposed cost for three buildings and other situations. Recognition is made of necessity for temporary structures.
  1. In 12 cities of Colorado: Average age of buildings 20 1/2 years.  
Average appraised value of school buildings, per child -- \$204.00  
Amache - - - - - 132.00
  2. 1940 Colorado statistics.  
Average appraised value school property per ADA \* - - - 302.00  
Amache - - - - - 171.00
  3. Prowers County, 1940  
Average appraised value per ADA - - - - - 274.00  
Amache - - - - - 171.00
  4. Lamar, 1940  
Average appraised value per ADA - - - - - 284.00  
Amache - - - - - 171.00
  5. Troxel (President, Colorado Education Association):  
"\$6,000 minimum cost per classroom for 'E' buildings.  
Amache: High School \$5,520  
Elementary 4,700
- D. Total Construction is now reduced to the High School building alone.
  1. Contract price -- \$136,886.00.
  2. Work is stopped on 2 elementary buildings, @ \$86,306, totaling \$172,612.
- E. Assumption that a saving of \$172,612 has been effected is erroneous.
  1. Contractor can claim his profit for total contract signed in good faith regardless of how much is completed;
  2. 1/2 cost of materials already purchased.

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\* Average Daily Attendance



E. Betz Editorial

Lamar Daily News  
January 16, 1943

"Statements by some of the senators and representatives in Congress, as reported by the press, indicate that they are, in many instances, either poorly informed as to the facts, or wish to make bombastic statements, with an appeal to prejudice.

"We have seen so many 'rumors' blown up about this particular project, through the simple medium of investigation and getting the facts, that we are not quick to excite when newspapers and congressmen take for headlines and jockey for political position.

"From a strictly selfish and material standpoint, it happens that to date the relocation center is the largest, and in fact the only, project this community has received out of the war effort. It has meant the expenditure of thousands of dollars in this region, which has meant much to local business in these days of high taxes and vanishing normal business. Its coming has brought also the hope that this section of the Arkansas Valley would at last receive the long hoped for intensive agricultural development which it has so definitely deserved and needed. One can hardly conceive such a program being carried through if the center is to be returned to the Army.

"It is rather interesting to note that Representative Edgar Chonoweth, who is actively opposing the school construction work at Amache, was pleased to announce a few days ago an additional million dollar appropriation for the alien concentration camp located at his home city of Trinidad; and that Denver and Pueblo, home cities of large newspapers actively fighting any expenditures at the WRA project in Prowers county, are crowded and jammed with civilian workers and service men connected with war-time establishments located in the Denver and Pueblo areas. It might be well for the senatorial committee, which visits Amache, to stay over a few days and look for waste and extravagance and inefficiency in some other war projects, about which we read no complaint in our indignant Colorado press."

CONCLUSION:

Before dealing with any aspect of the problem of providing schools or school buildings for Japanese Americans, it is imperative that we differentiate between:

1. The Oriental Japanese, with whom we are at war, "the slant-eyed backstabbers;" and
2. The Japanese American, born, raised, schooled in the United States; citizen, taxpayer, voter, member of a minority group -- jive crazy, puzzled American.

Establishing this differentiation, then, we may generalize somewhat as follows:

In thinking through the issues involved in the question of whether large amounts of government money should be spent for schools at Amache, we must distinguish between two fundamental concepts:



III To the suggestion that the Army should assume control of all Japanese American centers, there are several considerations:

A. Letter to Casey -- Rocky Mountain News, January 20, 1943

"I am wondering if you have given consideration to the following problems before reaching the conclusion that the responsibility for administering the Granada Relocation Center should be placed with military authorities:

1. "Have you any evidence that the Army is desirous of assuming this responsibility? It is my understanding that the War Relocation Authority was established because the Army admittedly did not wish to assume responsibility for conducting this entire relocation program.
2. "Are there not more useful places for the services of our technically trained Army men than in a Japanese Relocation Center?
3. "Have you given consideration to the reaction which might occur within the various centers among the evacuees -- especially the loyal citizens of the United States? It would be somewhat ambiguous for us to say to a person torn between active loyalty to the United States and frustrated doubt, 'You are a citizen of the United States, you are required to pay taxes, but we feel the necessity of having an armed guard around you in order to "discipline" you.'
4. "What evidence do you have that, if the Army should assume control of these relocation centers, they would be operated any more efficiently or at any less cost to the people of the United States? All the evidence which I have seen would seem to point in the opposite direction."

B. From local standpoint:

1. You can criticize the WRA and help to formulate policies.
2. You can't criticize the Army.