2-13-2008

"Railcars Loaded With Crisp Fresh Vegetables" A study of Agriculture at the Tule Lake Relocation Center 1942-1946

Michael David Schmidli
Portland State University

THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Michael David Schmidli for the Master of Arts in History were presented February 13, 2008, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

COMMITTEE APPROVALS:

Katrine Barber, Chair

Kenneth Ruoff

Patricia Schechter

Michael McGregor

DEPARTMENT APPROVAL:

Linda Walton, Chair
Department of History

ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Michael David Schmidli for the Master of Arts in History presented February 13, 2008.

Title: "Railcars Loaded With Crisp Fresh Vegetables" A study of Agriculture at the Tule Lake Relocation Center 1942-1946

In the Spring and Summer of 1942, the population of West Coast Japanese were rounded up and forcibly moved from their homes to temporary camps and soon after to ten permanent relocation camps in the interior Western United States. This thesis traces the history of one such camp, the Tule Lake Relocation Center. In this thesis I argue that from its inception the Tule Lake Center was unique among the ten camps. The decision to build a permanent center at Tule Lake was based upon the unique potential the area provided for agriculture on a huge scale. The other permanent centers were located in remote inhospitable areas where large scale agricultural operations were impossible.

The introduction outlines my key research questions and the methodology used. This section identifies my central theme, agriculture at the Tule Lake Relocation Center, and situates my own research within the existing scholarship on the Japanese-American Relocation. Chapter one is a review of the factors, including racial animosity, and wartime hysteria leading up to the decision to relocate every Japanese individual living on the West Coast. Chapter two discusses the little known

history of how and why Tule Lake was chosen for a permanent relocation center. Chapter three documents the commitment of the War Relocation Authority to a massive agricultural project at the Tule Lake Center.

Chapter four recounts the tumultuous registration period at Tule Lake. In the winter of 1943, the War Relocation Authority and the War Department combined to administer a loyalty questionnaire to every internee over the age of 17, revealing shocking disloyalty at Tule Lake. Chapter five discusses the decision of the War Relocation Authority to segregate Japanese Americans declared disloyal, and the choice of Tule Lake as the segregation center. Chapter six discusses the events, in particular the tragic accidental death of a farm worker, which led to the end of large scale agriculture at Tule Lake.

In conclusion, I assert that War Relocation Authority blunders, including a lack of cultural sensitivity, led directly to the cessation of the agricultural project at Tule Lake Segregation Center.

"RAILCARS LOADED WITH CRISP FRESH VEGETABLES"

A STUDY OF AGRICULTURE AT THE TULE LAKE RELOCATION CENTER FOR JAPANESE-AMERICANS 1942-1946

by

MICHAEL DAVID SCHMIDLI

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
HISTORY

Portland State University
2008

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my father W. E. (Bill) Schmidli, the finest man I have ever known.

Acknowledgments

I owe the most profound gratitude to my adviser Katy Barber. I never could have finished this thesis without her guidance. Through the long, sometimes discouraging process of writing and revising, Dr. Barber consistently expressed affirmation that I was on the right track and that the work had merit. Dr. Barber pushed me to produce the best work I was capable of and when she declared the thesis ready for submission to the Defense Committee I knew it truly was.

I also owe special thanks to Defense Committee members Patricia Schechter and Ken Ruoff. Dr. Schechter taught my first class in the graduate program at PSU, and I learned a great deal from her about conducting interviews for an oral history project—an experience that served me well on this work. I was thrilled when Dr. Schechter agreed to serve on the thesis Defense Committee. Ken Ruoff has been a mentor of mine ever since I enrolled in a Japanese history course at PSU, and throughout the process of writing this thesis Dr. Ruoff added expert advice and skilled editing. I also would like to thank Michael McGregor of the English Department at PSU for graciously serving as the representative from outside the History Department on my thesis Defense Committee.

If I were to personally acknowledge everyone who has given me moral support during the two years I have worked on my thesis, this section would be longer than the paper itself. Therefore, to all my friends and family, thank you for your love and confidence in me.

I would be amiss if I failed to give heartfelt thanks to the two most important individuals in my life, my son and daughter, both of whom took the time and trouble

to share their expertise with me to polish this work. My son, a trained historian, invited me to conduct research at the extensive archive at Cornell University, and it was there that I discovered much of the original historical evidence contained in this thesis. He has also been a constant sounding board for my thoughts and ideas from the beginning of this thesis, and hopefully a touch of his professionalism comes through in this paper. My daughter, a graduate in English from the University of Oregon, is a brilliant writer. As with all my work, she has improved this thesis with constructive advice and excellent editing.

Finally I would like to thank my dear friends Neil and Bobbie Kniskern for countless meals and constant support and companionship during my time in the graduate program at PSU. It was Neil who first suggested that I pursue the subject which became the basis for my thesis. While all named here were helpful, I alone am responsible for any factual mistake or errors in judgment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

The internment camp experience holds a central position in Japanese American studies. As historian Paul R. Spickard makes clear, "by far the largest volume of writing by and about Japanese Americans has focused on the group's prison camp experience during World War II. It has now become one of the most frequently described subjects in American history."[1] Notwithstanding the voluminous body of work on the internment period, however, key facets of the West Coast Japanese experience in World War II remain under-explored. This thesis adds to the existing scholarship on the internment of West Coast Japanese during the Second World War by illuminating the unique role of large-scale commercial agricultural production at the Tule Lake Relocation Center.

Unlike any other camp, army and War Relocation Authority (WRA) officials envisioned the Tule Lake Center as having an immense profit potential that could be realized by harnessing the agricultural expertise and readily available labor of the Japanese American internee community. Relocated to an area characterized by visceral racism, lacking personal mobility, and dependent on the U.S. government for both protection and basic necessities, internees at Tule Lake faced a unique form of labor coercion that has been largely overlooked by scholars. This thesis focuses on three core research questions. First, how did army and (WRA) officials envision the role of commercial agriculture at Tule Lake? Second, what was the extent of

---

[1] Paul R. Spickard, *Japanese Americans: The Formation and Transformation of an Ethnic Group* (New York: Prentice Hall International, 1996).

internee-based commercial agricultural production? Finally, how did commercial agriculture at Tule Lake affect the relationship between internees and (WRA) administration officials?

The existing evidence reveals that in April 1942, army and WRA officials perceived the proposed relocation center site at Tule Lake, California, as having immense potential for large-scale commercial agricultural production. Situated in the heart of a highly-productive agricultural area in close-proximity to the bustling population center of Klamath Falls, Oregon, Tule Lake did not fit the geographical criteria developed by the army for any of the other relocation sites. Historian Roger Daniels describes the majority of relocation sites as "godforsaken places where no one has lived before or since."[2] In fact, the Tule Lake Center was not on the original list of prospective relocation camp sites, and was brought to the attention of the army by a local area resident, Clark Fensler, whose effort to convince WRA officials of Tule Lake's suitability linked agricultural production to the coercion of internee labor.[3] Army and WRA officials concurred with Fensler's assessment of the agricultural potential at Tule Lake. Investigation by WRA representatives revealed thousands of acres of Bureau of Reclamation land "comparable in richness to that of the Nile Valley," and available for immediate cultivation by Japanese internees.[4] The documentary record clearly shows that with American farm profits soaring to a new

---

[2] Roger Daniels, "Incarceration of the Japanese Americans: A Sixty-year Perspective," *The History Teacher,* Vol. 35, No. 3. (May 2002), 297-310.
[3] George D. Dean, *Report on Attitude of Citizens and Officials in Tule Lake Area to Japanese Reception Center Near Tulelake, California.* WRA, April 20, 1942. Perkins Library, Duke University.
[4] Stan Turner, *The Years of Harvest: A History of The Tule Lake Basin,* (Eugene: Spencer Creek Press 1987), 179.

high of $15 billion in 1942, and facing farm labor shortages due to the war, the decision to build the Tule Lake Camp was directly linked to federal plans for large-scale commercial agricultural production.[5]

The initial success of commercial agriculture during the first year at the Tule Lake Center exceeded even the most optimistic WRA estimates. Remarkably, the internees put approximately 2,500 acres of prime farm land into production in 1942, planting a variety of crops, including 827 acres of potatoes and 1,057 acres of barley.[6] The result of this massive agricultural undertaking was a bountiful harvest in the fall, and the profits generated by the sale of vegetables from the project farm filled the coffers of the WRA. As *The Tulean Dispatch*, the center newspaper, reported on September 29, 1942, "a huge pool of funds has accumulated from the proceeds from the bumper crop."[7] The following spring, evacuee farm workers increased production, and once again the crops were outstanding.[8] In sum, internee-based agriculture during the first two years at Tule Lake constituted a huge and extremely successful venture.

The bountiful harvest of 1942 did little to ameliorate tension, however, between the Japanese American internee community and WRA officials. Indeed, from the outset, agriculture at Tule Lake was a source of contention for evacuee farm workers, who resented low wages, poor living and working conditions, and inadequate food served in the mess halls. More significantly, labor coercion on the

---

[5] "Grain Production at New Peak in "42" Estimated Cash Farm Income Sets a New High of $15,000,000,000" *New York Times*, January 3, 1941, Page A64.
[6] *The Tulean Dispatch*, August 3. 1942.
[7] "Farm Funds Accumulate," *The Tulean Dispatch*, September 29, 1942.
[8] "Harvesting of Vegetables Begin on Project Farm," *The Tulean Dispatch*, July 21, 1943.

part of the WRA dramatically increased dissatisfaction among internees at Tule Lake. The administration consistently threatened internees who refused to work with fee assessments, and used psychological harassment, often in the form of browbeating articles published in the camp newspaper.

Despite the unpleasant conditions they labored under, the original residents of the camp, what I refer to as the "Old Tuleans," continued to report to work on the project farm and in the packing sheds. Finally, I argue that when all the West Coast Japanese were asked to affirm their loyalty shortly after New Year's in 1943, the WRA failed to recognize the relative nature of loyal and disloyal responses. Further, the WRA failed to recognize the difference in the demography of the Tule Lake center relative to the other centers. When Tule Lake became the segregation center the WRA did not bring together like minded internees but rather factions vying for influence. Within this group was a well organized faction fanatically loyal to Japan. This inability on the part of the WRA to anticipate the frightening situation that developed led directly to more hardship for internees and the cessation of commercial agriculture at Tule Lake.

Sources

Although historians have written about the relocation for sixty years, the work of early sociologists chronicling day-to-day life in the camps still stands as some of the best and most important scholarship on the subject. By far the most insightful example of early scholarship is Dorothy S. Thomas and Richard

Nishimoto's 1946 volume,.[9] Thomas was a professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley when the United States entered into the Second World War. When relocation began she received a federal grant to conduct a study of the effects of relocation on the West Coast Japanese.

Accordingly, Thomas sent bilingual Japanese American graduate students trained in field work to assembly centers and later to three relocation camps—including Tule Lake. Their job was to live at the camps and document the internment experience without being identified as professional social scientists. The work involved a substantial degree of danger for the social scientists involved. Such activities as typing reports late a night, cashing checks from the University of California, and receiving mail labeled Resettlement Study could result in being branded an *Inu*—literally "dog" in Japanese, but in camp jargon loosely translating as "informer" or "stool pigeon." *The Spoilage* is a direct result of such intrepid field work, and it offers an invaluable "worm's eye view" of life in the camps. Because they were the first to document protest and tragedy, as in the case of the troubles at Tule Lake, the observations of Japanese American graduate students imbedded in the camps are a vital resource, giving a clear and often frightening picture of the camps.[10]

---

[9] Dorothy S.Thomas and Richard Nishimoto, *The Spoilage: Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1946). Richard Nishimoto received his Ph.D. from Berkeley, where he had studied under Thomas. His work in the field at Poston Arizona Relocation Center was excellent. With the ability to move in camp society without causing suspicion, Nishimoto became Thomas's key contact at Poston.

[10] Thomas's methodology is not without a good deal of controversy. She had little interest in the safety or comfort of her field workers, except as it related to their ability to do the job. She was interested in production. She pushed her people in the field constantly for more and more detailed information. Moreover, recent research by historian Lane Ryo Hirabayashi shows Thomas and

A second early source on the relocation period was produced by the WRA itself. Bureau of Sociological Research Director Alexander H. Leighton's "Community Analysis Research Studies" series is a particularly valuable historical resource. Although taking an entirely different perspective than Thomas's informants, these studies published by the WRA chronicling camp life and the views and attitudes of the internees from the perspective of professional sociologists are often highly insightful and useful. Leighton also subsequently wrote a volume entitled *The Governing of Men: General Principles and Recommendations Based on the Experience at a Japanese Relocation Camp*, revealing a rare understanding of internees' attitudes and views.[11]

Much of the work on relocation both in the early years after World War II and to this day, tends to look at the West Coast Japanese as victims of an unfortunate incident which they were able to overcome through their hard work and patriotism. Although many of these works—which scholars generally refer to as the "unfortunate incident genre"—are very useful in providing a broad overview of the Japanese experience, they tend to present a picture of a virtuous people performing in a noble manner under trying circumstances. Perhaps the earliest example of this

---

Nishimoto used the excellent work of Tamie Tsuchiyama, imbedded at Poston, with hardly an acknowledgement. In his 1999 biography of Tsuchiyama, *The Politics of Fieldwork: Research in an American Concentration Camp*, Hirabayashi exposes a serious lack of professional credit on the part of Thomas and Nishimoto, and underscores the pressure Thomas put on social scientists in the field. Indeed, after nearly three years of clandestine sociological work in the camps, Tsuchiyama dropped out of the graduate program at the University of California, Berkeley, and never published any of her work from that period. See Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, *The Politics of Fieldwork: Research in an American Concentration Camp* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999).

[11] Alexander H. Leighton, *The Governing of Men: General Principles and Recommendations Based on the Experience at a Japanese Relocation Camp* (Princeton, NJ. Princeton University Press, 1945).

literature is Mine Okubo's 1946 work *Citizen 13660.*[12] A brilliant cartoonist and writer, Okubo's drawings and stories from the Tanforan Assembly Center and the Topaz Relocation Center exemplify the type of narrative that celebrates the courage and spirit that sustained the Japanese Americans throughout the internment.

One of the earliest works on the internment by a historian is Morton Grodzins's 1949 book, *Americans Betrayed: Politics of the Japanese American Evacuation.* Grodzins set the tone for a generation of scholars seeking to debunk the so called "military necessity" theory, that West Coast Japanese posed a serious threat of sabotage, and espionage, arguing instead that the internment was perpetrated by Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt allied with West Coast politicians, the media and economic interest groups.[13]

Audrie Girdner and Anne Loftis's 1967 volume, *The Great Betrayal: The Evacuation of the Japanese Americans during World War II,* looked at some topics which earlier writers on the subject had failed to explore. For example, Girdner and Loftis offer an excellent discussion of labor coercion and protest at the Santa Anita Assembly Center where internees, especially women, were pushed into working on a camouflage net project.[14] Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt was able to brag in his

---

[12] Mini Okubo, *Citizen 13660* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946). See also: Allan R. Bosworth. *Americas Concentration Camps* (New York: Norton, 1967). Sandra C. Taylor. *Jewel of The Desert: Japanese American Internment at Topaz* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
[13] Grodzins, Morton. *Americans Betrayed: Politics of the Japanese American Evacuation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949).
[14] Audrie Girdner and Anne Loftis, *The Great Betrayal: The Evacuation of the Japanese Americans during World War II* (New York; Macmillian, 1969).

Final Report, Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, that profit from the camouflage net project paid for feeding the entire Santa Anita Assembly Center.[15]

The preeminent historian of the relocation of West Coast Japanese is Roger Daniels. Paul R. Spickard asserts that Daniel's first book, *Concentration Camps USA* (1971), "is the most widely read volume on the World War II era, and the best treatment of the political aspects of the internment."[16] Building on and revising the work of Grodzins, Daniels uses the documentary evidence to give a clear picture of the government forces at work after Pearl Harbor leading to internment. Daniels digs deeply into government documents to conclude that Colonel Karl Bendetsen and Provost Marshall General Allen W. Gullion were most complicit in the decision to relocate the entire population of West Coast Japanese Americans. Daniels also is unafraid to single out President Franklin Roosevelt for the ultimate responsibility. Daniels looks at the relocation from a broad perspective giving us a basis within the relocation as a whole to study specific aspects. Daniels has also contributed excellent scholarship to several fine compilations of essays by historians on the subject.[17]

Years of Infamy by Michi Weglyn is a volume which I found useful for my work. Among other important aspects of relocation, Weglyn discusses many of the

---

[15] Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, *Final Report, Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942*, (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.1943), 205-206.

[16] Paul R. Spickard. *Japanese Americans: The Formations and Transformations of an Ethnic group* (New York: Prentice Hall 1996). This volume offers a fascinating study of Japanese American diaspora.

[17] Roger Daniels, *Concentration Camps USA: Japanese Americans and World War II* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972). Roger Daniels, *Prisoners Without Trial: Japanese Americans in World War II* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004). Roger Daniels. *The Politics of Prejudice* (New York: Arno Press, 1969). Roger Daniels, "Western Reaction to the Relocated Japanese Americans: The Case of Wyoming," in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, Rodger Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor, and Harry H. L. Kitano, eds. (Seattle and London: University of Washington 1991).

situations that developed specifically at Tule Lake, including revolt and riot. Weglyn was sent to a relocation camp with her family as a young woman. Although *Years of Infamy* is not autobiographical or a memoir, Weglyn often draws upon her own experience in the camps to add insight to a specific point she is discussing. For example her discussion of the loyalty registration period is the best I have read on the subject.[18]

Methodology

I have been aware of the existence of the Tule Lake Center since early childhood. I grew up in a farm family approximately five miles from the camp. I remember driving by the camp countless times with my father on our way to irrigate potatoes on Bureau of Reclamation land he was leasing within site of the camp. I had no knowledge of the situation which brought the internees to Tule Lake. A young boy's inquiries were met with vague responses from adults who knew very little about the episode.

I was in about sixth or seventh grade when I realized that the internees were Japanese Americans and not prisoners of war from Japan. A few years later, I was shocked when a wise old English teacher recounted her experience as a substitute teacher at the Tule Lake Center, and offered the theory that the relocation of West Coast Japanese in World War II had been unnecessary and morally wrong. This was a startling idea to a patriotic, ignorant country boy in 1965. My country was wrong?

---

[18] Michi Weglyn, *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps*. (New York: Morrow Quill, 1976).

Decades later, I returned to the subject of Japanese American relocation as an undergraduate at Southern Oregon University. The idea for this thesis started in fall 2002 when I wrote a paper on the barracks buildings of the Tule Lake Center. At first I thought the research for the project would involve mostly oral history interviews. Many of the buildings were moved from the original site of the camp to locations all around the area soon after the war. My idea was to document how and why the buildings were moved to their current locations. This was no easy proposition considering that fifty-five years had passed since any of the buildings had been at the original camp site.

Inquiries among the local old-timers led me to residents who had been involved in moving the buildings from the camp to their present locations. Subsequent interviews produced a flood of memories about the buildings and the first few years after the war. This made for an extremely compelling social history of young men and women who moved to the area or were returning after the traumatic years of World War II.

Buoyed by my success in the area of oral history, a random thought occurred to me: could I expand the research to focus on the Tule Lake relocation camp experience? Suddenly, the random thought became an epiphany. If these buildings made for interesting social history after they were moved, what about the history of why and how they came to be built in this little corner of the U.S.A? Many specific questions about the buildings came to mind: What were they made of? Who built them? And what was life like for the first residents of the barracks buildings?

The micro-film collection at the Klamath County Library in Klamath Falls, Oregon, revealed a treasure trove of source material, especially from the local newspaper, *The Herald and News*. It is from this research that I became familiar with the history of the Tule Lake Center. I remember my surprise as I read about Tule Lake becoming the segregation center for disloyal Japanese Americans in the September of 1943. Likewise, the reports of the riot in November of 1943 had me riveted. It was as if the events were happening as I was reading instead of almost sixty years ago. Significantly, my early research clearly revealed that Tule Lake was remarkably distinct from any other relocation center.

My last formal class in the graduate program at Portland State University was titled Twentieth Century Western United States. For the final oral presentation I resumed my work on the Tule Lake Center. In doing research for the oral presentation, I came across a bit of random information on the Tule Lake camp. In a report a few days after the Tule Lake riot of November 4, 1943, WRA National Director Dillon Myer mentioned that $500,000 worth of vegetables still needed to be harvested at the Tule Lake Center farm, a huge sum of money in 1943. Remembering the Girdner and Loftis discussion of labor coercion in the camouflage net project at Santa Anita, I wanted to know the extent of agriculture at Tule Lake. Any farming operation which could produce that sort of income would have to be extensive.

To my surprise, secondary sources turned up absolutely nothing about agriculture on a large scale at Tule Lake. However, I knew two important facts: first,

Myer had used the figure of $500,000; and second, the farm land around the site of the Tule Lake Center is some of the finest in the world, certainly capable of producing bountiful crops. I had a hunch that there must have been a huge agricultural operation at Tule Lake if I could just find the documentation.

In the winter of 2006, I conducted a 6-week research trip to Ithaca, New York, to examine the "Japanese-American Relocation Centers Records, 1935-1953" held at Cornell University.[19] With 22.9 cubic feet of documents on the relocation, ranging from WRA reports to internee paintings, the collection is one of the finest in the United States. I vowed to look at every document in the archive.

After about a week I had found many useful documents on relocation in general but very little on Tule Lake. Then I made my first big discovery. One day I was looking at some WRA reports which were in such bad condition that they were almost unreadable. Among them was a document titled: *Report on attitude of citizens and officials in Tule Lake area and Klamath County, Oregon to Japanese Reception Center near Tule Lake California.*[20] This report confirmed something I had not expected, that the Tule Lake Center was built specifically for its agricultural potential. Examining the extremely rare center newspaper *The Tulean Dispatch* on micro-film, I found statistics on the incredible size of the agricultural operation, and documentation of labor coercion at Tule Lake. From these two key sources and many others including WRA community analysis reports, and the Klamath Falls newspaper

---

[19] "Japanese-American Relocation Centers Records, 1935-1953," Collection Number 3830, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

[20] John D. Dean WRA *Report on attitude of citizens and officials in Tule Lake area and Klamath County, Oregon to Japaese Reception Center near Tulelake California* War RelocationAdministration, April 26, 1942Perkins Library, Duke University.

The Herald and News, and many fine secondary sources I was able to complete this thesis.

Chapter 1

A Citizen is a Citizen: Unless?

The racial tension was old and bitter. In the aftermath of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor the animosity of the Salinas Vegetable Grower-Shipper Association toward the minority population of Japanese farmers in the area was palpable. Composed of a few large-scale white growers, the association produced lettuce, carrots and other fresh vegetables year-round in the Salinas, Imperial and Salt River valleys of California for the eastern U.S. markets. "The salad bowl of the nation," as the area came to be known, often grew half the head lettuce sold in the country's markets.[1] By the 1940s, however, long standing resentment had reached a boiling point. In the early years of the Great Depression, reflecting a deeply ingrained racial hierarchy, dust bowl migrants from the Southwest filled out the upper levels of the production process, while Japanese laborers were relegated to work in the fields. "White men and women, largely Oklahomans, handled packing plants, but they were never able to endure the back-breaking stoop work in the fields," the *Saturday Evening Post* told its readers. "Only the short-legged Japs could take that."[2]

---

[1] Frank J. Taylor, "The People Nobody Wants," *The Saturday Evening Post*, May 9, 1942, transcribed by War Relocation Administration, Japanese Americans Relocation Centers Records, Cornell University, hereafter referred to as, WRA, JARCR/CU, Box 11, File 33, page 6.

[2] Ibid, 6. Such racial tension between Caucasian and Japanese workers in California illustrated how the process of migration was dramatically reshaping American labor patterns. Between 1914 and 1970, an estimated 15 million Americans from the Mid-West migrated to the North and Far West. See James N. Gregory, *American Exodus: The Dust Migration and Okie Culture in California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), xvii.

Notwithstanding daunting racial obstacles, many thousands of Japanese had managed to go out one by one to farm on their own. Mostly cultivating small plots of land, they had become moderately successful. More importantly, they had become competitors in a market previously dominated by white growers. Japanese farm operators controlled about 226,000 acres on 5,000 farms in California in 1940. The average Japanese farmer operated about forty-three acres.[3] Japanese operators used what today would be called micro-management, cultivating every inch of their small holdings with intense care.

A few Japanese farmers had become very successful. In the spring of 1942 Takeo Yuchi was one of the most successful farmers in the Salinas Valley. Takeo's father died shortly after he graduated from Salinas High where he had been a track star. The younger Yuchi, still in his early 30s in 1942, built the family's 100- acre farm, cultivated by one small tractor, into an empire of over 2,000 acres with 50 tractors and 125 employees.

In 1941, Yuchi's farms produced an array of fruits and vegetables, including 300 acres of sugar beets refined by Spreckles Sugar Company. Yuchi's beets produced approximately two million pounds of sugar every year. His farms also produced an astounding 2,700 railcars of lettuce in and 70,000 hundred pound bags of Australian brown onions in 1941. The Australian Browns were especially prized by the American Navy for their tough skin, which allowed for good keeping quality on long voyages. Indeed, the Navy bought Yuchi's whole crop in 1941, and wanted

---

[3] John Bird, "Our Japs Have Gone To Work," *Country Gentleman* 3 August, 1942, WRA JARCR/CU Box 11, File 23.

more Australian Browns in 1942. Accordingly, in the spring of 1942, Yuchi heeded the Navy's request, and planted even more Australian Browns.[4]

Not surprisingly, members of the grower-shipper association viewed the gains of individuals like Takeo Yuchi and thousands of other Japanese farmers with growing animosity. In many respects, the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor and the subsequent U.S. declaration of war on Japan provided the opportunity white growers had been waiting for. Shortly after December 7, the grower-shipper association's managing secretary, Austin E. Anson, traveled to Washington to urge federal authorities to remove all Japanese from the area. Anson pointed out to the War and Navy departments, the Attorney General, and to every congressman who would listen to him that Monterey Bay was a perfect landing place for the Japanese army, and led directly to the Salinas valley—an area full of Japanese farmers waiting to rush to the aid of their invading countrymen. With their equipment and knowledge of

---

[4] Taylor, "The People Nobody Wants," *The Saturday Evening Post*, 2. West Coast Japanese were not only successful in farming. Before the Navy froze their fleet, based at Terminal Island, in Los Angeles Harbor, the fishing industry in Southern California was heavily influenced by the Japanese. The 500 or so Japanese families living on Terminal Island were treated particularly callously by the U.S. Navy. The Navy posted notices on February 14, 1942 advising Japanese residents they would have to leave the Island by March 14, 1942. But on February 25 new signs were posted advising them they had to be out in just two days by the 27th of February. Residents fled to friends and relatives' around Los Angles, to wait and see what would happen next. See also, Sandra C. Taylor, "Evacuation and Economic Loss: Questions and Perspectives," in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation To Redress*, Roger Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor and Harry H. L. Kitano, eds. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press), 166. In Seattle, Japanese operated more than half the city's hotels. In Portland, one-third of the hotels were Japanese run. Seattle, Tacoma, Yakima, Portland, Sacramento, Fresno, San Francisco, Salinas, Monterey, Los Angeles, San Diego and El Centro all had Japanese enclaves and their commercial interests were estimated at the time to be worth from $55 million to $75 million. Estimates of uncompensated Japanese losses from relocation are between $1.2 billion and $3.1 billion. This estimate is in 1942 dollars. Adjusted for inflation it would be much more. See also William Robinson, "Outcast Americans" *The American Magazine*, April 1, 1942, transcribed by WRA, JARCR/CU, Box 11, File 23, page 1. Although much scholarly attention has been directed at working class Japanese Americans in the agricultural sector, and urban entrepreneurs and blue collar workers, Japanese professionals were also caught in the dragnet. Robinson points out the plight of a prominent San Francisco Surgeon, given 48 hours to wind up his affairs and report to the assembly center.

the area, Anson argued, the West Coast Japanese could do tremendous mischief in support of the attacking army, including such acts as blowing up bridges, disrupting traffic and sabotaging defense sites.

Anson was more candid about the association's motives in a subsequent interview. "We're charged with wanting to get rid of the Japs for selfish reasons." He told the *Saturday Evening Post*, "We might as well be honest. We do. It's a question of whether the white man lives on the Pacific Coast or the brown man...And we don't want them back when the war ends, either."[5] In the spring of 1942, the Salinas Vegetable Grower-Shipper Association published a brochure entitled, *No Japs Needed*, to counter the impression that the country would go hungry without the Japanese farmers. With the brochure, the grower-shipper association sought to instill confidence in the public, that things would be fine without a few bothersome, and probably disloyal Japanese. The brochure pointed out to the nation that, "Only four and a half per cent of all the vegetables grown in the United States are produced by California Japanese... If all vegetable acreage produced, controlled or influenced by Japanese were completely eliminated, the loss in available fresh food supply to the United States and Canada would be insignificant."[6]

In the hostile, reactionary environment following Pearl Harbor, it was almost impossible to find a government official, elected or appointed, or anyone for that matter, particularly in the media, with a good word to say about individuals of Japanese descent. Immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor, law

---

[5] Taylor, "The People Nobody Wants," *The Saturday Evening Post*, 7.
[6] Ibid, 8.

enforcement and military agencies arrested West Coast Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans considered suspicious. The arrests continued, terrorizing the Japanese community. In a meeting of California law enforcement officers in Sacramento during the first week in February of 1942, a high official made the statement, apparently in all seriousness, that he favored shooting all Japanese residents of the state on sight.[7] Debate regarding what to do with the West Coast Japanese swirled throughout the nation, including at the highest levels of government.

On the West Coast, immediately after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, commander of the Fourth Army headquartered in San Francisco, lobbied for some kind of exclusion of alien enemies. DeWitt became head of the Western Defense Command (WDC) when the West Coast was designated a Theater of Operations, just days after Pearl Harbor. He had the ear of a most important ally in the federal government, Secretary of War Henry Stimson, and Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy. It was Stimson who convinced President Roosevelt of the military necessity of Japanese relocation.

The entire population of West Coast Japanese would be excluded and evacuated from their homes in the soon-to-be prescribed military area. A comparison is often made with Hawaii, which was obviously more vulnerable to attack than the mainland, and where Japanese outnumbered the white population. If ever there were a strong case for military necessity, it was Hawaii. Yet no mass relocation of people of Japanese ancestry was undertaken. However, the situation in Hawaii was quite

---

[7]Alice Yang Murry, "The Decision for Mass Evacuation," in *What Did the Internment of Japanese Americans Mean?*, Murray, ed. (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000), 50.

different from the West Coast. Hawaii was not permeated with the same virulent anti-Asian racism as the West Coast.[8] As historian Wendy Ng pointed out in her 2002 volume, *Japanese American Internment During World War II,* "Japanese labor was needed to rebuild the damaged facilities. If the Japanese were removed, they would have to be replaced by and equivalent skilled labor force from the mainland."[9] The economy of Hawaii, including, importantly, military industry, would have been severally crippled by evacuation of the Japanese population.[10] Ironically, by contrast, the economic considerations that helped save the Hawaiian Japanese from evacuation helped seal the fate of West Coast Japanese with the opposite effect.

John L. DeWitt believed strongly that Japanese living on the West Coast had not severed cultural ties with Japan. Furthermore, he saw the war with Japan as a race war. In his final recommendation to the Secretary of War, we get an insight into his mindset. He wrote to Stimson on February 14, 1942:

> In the war in which we are now engaged racial affinities are not severed by migration. The Japanese race is an enemy race and while many second and third generation Japanese born on United States soil, possessed of United States citizenship, have become "Americanized", the racial strains are undiluted. To conclude otherwise is to expect that children born of white parents on Japanese soil sever all racial affinity and become loyal Japanese subjects, ready to fight and, if necessary, to die for Japan in a war against the nation of their parents. That Japan is allied with Germany and Italy in this struggle is no ground for assuming that any Japanese, barred from assimilation by convention as he is, though born and raised in the United States, will not turn against this nation when the final test of loyalty comes. It therefore, follows that along the vital Pacific Coast over 112,000 potential

---

[8] Gary Okihiro, *Cane Fires: The Anti-Japanese Movement in Hawaii, 1865-1945* (Philadelphia: temple University Press, 1991). Okihiro also points out that the commanding officer in Hawaii General Delos Emmons held a more rational and less negative view of the Japanese on the islands than DeWitt's view of West Coast Japanese.

[9] Wendy Ng, *Japanese American Internment During World War II* (London: Greenwood Press, 2002), 25.

[10] Brian M. Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 38.

> enemies, of Japanese extraction, are at large today. There are indications that these are organized and ready for concerted action at a favorable opportunity.

DeWitt concluded with a statement with the following, seemingly paranoid, supposition: "The very fact that no sabotage has taken place to date is a disturbing and confirming indication that such action will take place."[11]

DeWitt had like-minded military allies in Provost Marshal General (PMG) Major General Allen W. Gullion, the army's top legal-affairs officer, and Gullion's chief of the Aliens Division of the PMG's office, Major Karl R. Bendetsen. During the two month debate, DeWitt vacillated at times, regarding relocation, depending upon the direction of the political wind, but with his important allies in Washington, his draconian view carried the day.[12]

Military necessity espoused by DeWitt, Gullion, Bendetsen and the media, justified the mass forced relocation of West Coast Japanese. In the panicked atmosphere after Pearl Harbor, certainly many believed there was an urgent military necessity. Fear of Japanese sabotage and latent racism fused with the economic interests and overt racism of groups such as the Salinas Vegetable Grower-Shipper Association.

Roosevelt's Executive Order #9066 represented the end of the debate over what to do with the West Coast Japanese. On February 20, 1942, Secretary of War

---

[11] DeWitt, *Final Report*, 34.

[12] Peter Irons, *Justice At War: The Story of the Japanese American Internment Cases*, (Berkeley: University of California Press: 1993), 25-47. Bendetson was assigned to DeWitt's staff, and he would subsequently oversee the nuts and bolts operation of rounding up West Coast Japanese and putting them in assembly camps, and later more permanent relocation camps. He also is credited with choosing the sights of the relocation camps. The job would win Bendetson the rank of colonel. Until his death in 1989 Karl R. Bendetson staunchly defended the relocation of West Coast Japanese as totally justified and proper. See his testimony before the Commission on the Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) as a good example of his unrepentant attitude.

Stimson sent a letter to General DeWitt authorizing him, "as Military Commander to carry out the duties and responsibilities imposed by said Executive Order (#9066)... Accordingly I designate you to prescribe military areas for the protection of vital installations against sabotage and espionage."

For the next ten days DeWitt busied himself putting together his staff and discussing plans for an expedient relocation. Historian Roger Daniels writes that DeWitt was confused and disorganized, and thus took no action for ten days after receiving the mandate from Secretary of War Stimson.[13] Daniels's assertion is not born out by the documentary evidence. DeWitt was, if nothing else, a logistics expert. In hindsight, he is a totally unsympathetic character. He was a racist. He was a pivotal player in one of the greatest travesties in American history. He was not, however, confused or disorganized. The record shows, it was not until March 2, 1942, in another letter from Stimson, that DeWitt was allocated funds to move on his plan. The Secretary of War wrote, "You are also authorized to employ the service of any association, firm, company, or corporation in furtherance of your mission...In order to remove any doubt as to your authority to obligate funds, I specifically authorize you to obligate funds in such amounts as you deem necessary to effectuate the purposes of the Executive Order."[14] DeWitt had the mandate, and finally the money. He did not wait for another day to pass.

On March 2, 1942, he issued Proclamation No. 1, establishing prohibited and restricted zones in roughly the western half of Oregon, Washington, and California,

---

[13] Rodger Daniels, *Prisoners Without Trial,* 51.
[14] Letter, Henry L. Stimson to John L. DeWitt, March 10, 1942, reproduced in *Final* Report, 32.

an area designated as Military Area Nos. 1 and 2.[15] From March 2 onward the dragnet, which would snare almost all the Japanese living on the West Coast, moved with amazing speed. DeWitt first sent military detachments to mark the restricted territory: "in order to insure proper public notice of the location and extent of each area, zone signs were posted at every entrance to each of them".[16]

In truth, March 1942 was a time when fear and panic gripped the Japanese community. In his final report, General DeWitt called this period "Voluntary Evacuation, Phase 1 of the program."[17] During this period, West Coast Japanese could voluntarily leave the military area. Many families made hasty plans, sold their holdings for pennies on the dollar and loaded whatever conveyances they had and headed east. This strange and sad migration was, for the most part, a terrible failure doomed from the start, and an episode the West Coast Japanese would never forget.

Some people, mostly those with friends or family established inland, found sanctuary.[18] The great majority, however, were met with cruel hostility when they traveled east. When Japanese pilgrims tried to stop at service businesses, such as grocery stores, restaurants, gas stations, and motels, they were met with ugly racial epithets, in the form of strategically placed signs, and verbal abuse. Signs were simple, not very creative and to the point: "We don't serve Japs," "No gas for Japs," and "Move on Tojo." Often Japanese daring to stop were sent off at gun point.

---

[15] John L. DeWitt, "Proclamation No. 1," On March 2, 1942, reproduced in *Final Report*, 32.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid, 44.
[18] Robert C. Sims, "The 'Free Zone': Nikkei, Japanese Americans in Idaho and Eastern Oregon in World War II, in *Nikkei In The Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 236.

Antagonism toward Japanese migrants also took official forms. Hostility often manifested itself in the form of highway patrol officers putting up road blocks at the border of their respective states instructing Japanese travelers to turn around. They were literally forced to return to the West Coast to await their fate. The traumatized bitter travelers then recounted their stories to friends and family of frightening encounters with *hakujin* (whites) to the east.[19]

DeWitt summed up the voluntary evacuation period by writing, "The program met with measurable success. ... However, the attitude of the interior states was hostile ... Incidents developed with increasing intensity. ... By proclamation No. 4 dated March 27, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry were required to remain within Military Area No. 1 and were not permitted to change their places of residence. ... It was stimulated essentially by reason of the need for protecting the evacuees themselves."[20] Proclamation No. 4 ended the voluntary evacuation.

DeWitt never had much faith in voluntary evacuation, and the general used the month of March to plan the forced migration which he felt was inevitable. The plan evolved into a two-part evacuation. First, evacuees would be herded into fifteen hastily improvised and constructed "Assembly Centers," typically at race tracks and

---

[19] Jim Marshall, "The Problem People," *Colliers*, April 1, 1942, transcribed by WRA, JARCR/CU, Box 11, File 23. Marshall's article for *Collier's* points out that the most notable exception to the hostility faced by West Coast Japanese was in Colorado which had a sizable Japanese population of around seven thousand before WWII. Governor Ralph Carr offered to take in Japanese escaping the West Coast. Almost two thousand West Coast Japanese made their way to Colorado and spent the duration of WWII in freedom. Ironically Governor Carr ran for Congress in the fall of 1942, and was defeated by Edward C. Johnson who ran a campaign stressing that Colorado should not become the dumping ground for the Pacific Coast states.

[20] DeWitt, *Final Report*, 43, 44. In subsequent years many have wondered why the Japanese population submitted peacefully to relocation. The most important factor is; they believed relocation was being carried out for their protection.

fair grounds near their homes.[21] In conjunction with the assembly center period, DeWitt and a team headed by his right hand man Major Carl Bendetson, began to consider possible sites for permanent "Relocation Centers."

The formation of a new government agency, the War Relocation Authority (WRA), coincided with Proclamation No. 4. The WRA was formally created by President Roosevelt on March 18, 1942, with Executive Order 9102.[22] Although there was a difference of opinion as to the extent of the role of the military in the permanent centers, the exigencies of the war effort led DeWitt and Secretary of War Stimson to conclude that the day-to-day administration of the permanent centers should be carried out by a civilian (assumed to be Caucasian) authority.[23]

The President concurred with this assessment, and relocation plans were quickly underway. Accordingly, a military presence would be maintained at all ten permanent centers, but its function would be limited to guarding the evacuees and monitoring proper documentation of those leaving or entering the centers. All movement of the Japanese would be controlled, with the army available at a moment's notice if summoned by the WRA administration.

Roosevelt appointed Milton S. Eisenhower as the first director of the War Relocation Authority. Eisenhower, brother of the future president, was a relatively

---

[21] Ibid, 151. Of the fifteen Assembly Centers there were three exceptions to the use of either race tracks or fairgrounds. Interestingly in Portland the Pacific International Live Stock Exposition was turned into an Assembly Center, where ply-wood was hastily thrown over poorly cleaned dirt floors of live stock pens. Through the summer of 1942 the Japanese lived in these atrocious conditions.

[22] Ibid, 219.

[23] Ibid, 237. DeWitt wrote in his final report: "Obviously the evacuation would lead to the creation of long-range social and economic problems. These problems were essentially non-military in nature and it was considered unwise to require the military establishment to exert its energies in that direction but rather too conserve them for the aspects of the war effort intensely related to the defeat of the enemy."

young bureaucrat from the Department of Agriculture. An extremely liberal New Dealer, Eisenhower took a progressive view of the West Coast Japanese situation, envisioning a minimum of stress and restraint on the Japanese in the permanent centers, followed by prompt relocation to civilian communities inland. Accordingly, one of Eisenhower's first acts as head of the WRA was to call a meeting in Salt Lake City during the first week of April 1942 to present the early stages of his plan for the permanent centers to the governors of inland western states.

Eisenhower proposed self-government for the centers with only minimal influence from the WRA staff, and relative freedom of movement for the Japanese around the areas where the centers would be located. He outlined the wage scale proposed for the work done by the evacuees, and the types of work they would be encouraged to undertake. Inside the relocation centers they would pursue public works, such as reclamation, agriculture, and manufacturing. Outside the centers there would be the opportunity for private employment, and self-supporting communities could be set up outside the centers to provide work for the evacuees.[24]

The western governors attending the meeting met these proposals with a hostility that shocked Eisenhower. Herbert B. Maw of Utah, Chase Clark of Idaho, and Nels Smith of Wyoming each took a turn ridiculing Eisenhower's plan.[25] The bottom line for the governors was simple: if West Coast Japanese were to be moved

---

[24] Roger Daniels, "Western Reaction to the Relocated Japanese Americans: The Case of Wyoming," in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor, and Harry H. L. Kitano, eds. (Seattle: University of Washington, 1991), 113-115.

[25] Eric L. Muller, "The Minidoka Draft Resisters in a Federal Kangaroo Court," in *Nikkei In The Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans And Japanese Canadians In The Twentieth Century*, Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds. (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2005), 177.

to their states they should be put in concentration camps under close confinement and armed guard. Above all, the Governors wanted assurances that after the war the Japanese would not be allowed to stay in the areas of the respective concentration camps, that they would be moved out, in other words, just as they were to be moved in. Thoroughly disillusioned with the governors' intransigence, Eisenhower subsequently moved his staff to San Francisco where they could work closely with the Army.[26]

In his final report on Japanese evacuation, DeWitt mentioned one noteworthy aspect of the Salt Lake City meeting. "A large group of sugar beet growers and sugar refiners were present at the conference, and shortly thereafter a crystallized program emerged," DeWitt wrote. The general added, "although most of the governors present at the conference indicated that they would permit no evacuee labor to enter their respective states, a complete change of heart soon became evident in that suitable arrangements were executed in writing covering the use of group evacuee labor parties in the sugar beet fields."[27] In other words, DeWitt and the governors agreed that Japanese internees would be allowed to leave the camps to work for private sugar beet and other farmers in the interior west.

In subsequent months, the army and the WRA worked together on the selection of sites for the permanent centers. This vast logistical puzzle was carried out by the army with efficiency and enthusiasm. The military was also responsible

---

[26] Hayashi, *Democratizing The Enemy*, 108.
[27] DeWitt, *Final Report* 244.

for the original provisioning of the relocation centers.[28] By June 1, 1942, virtually every Japanese person living on the West Coast was in a temporary assembly center.[29]

The army and the WRA compiled and sifted through a list of prospective sites for permanent centers. They chose, in the words of historian Roger Daniels, "godforsaken places where no one has lived before or since."[30] From Poston in the Arizona desert, to Heart Mountain in arid Wyoming, the relocation camps were virtually identical: differing only in size, they were uniformly bleak and Spartan. The center at Tule Lake, situated in a windswept corner of Northern California was no exception, and internees were forced to live in poorly-constructed barracks that offered little shelter from the area's unforgiving climate. Unlike any other camps however, Tule Lake was located in an immensely fertile agricultural region. With wartime prices for foodstuffs soaring and overseeing a readily-available pool of

---

[28] DeWitt, *Final Report,* 239. The "Memorandum of Agreement Between the War Department and WRA" dated April 17, 1942, states: "The acquisition of sites for Relocation Centers is a War Department function...Construction of initial facilities at Relocation Centers will be accomplished by the War Department...The War Department will procure and supply the initial equipment of the Relocation Centers, vis., kitchen equipment, minimum mess and barrack equipment, hospital equipment and ten days' supply of non-perishable subsistence based on the date on which the WRA initiates the operation of any Relocation Center."

[29] Carey McWilliams, "Moving the West-Coast Japanese," *Harpers Magazine*, September 1942, transcribed by WRA, JARCR/CU, Box 11, file 33. McWilliams visited the Santa Anita Assembly Center on June 25th 1942. His observations are fascinating. "When I visited the center it had a population of 18,562." "The occupants of Santa Anita consume 70,000 pounds of food a day." "The center boasts of a one-hundred-and-fifty bed hospital, staffed by Japanese doctors, nurses, and attendants. Some twenty-one babies have been born in the camp, the first, Katherine Anita, being the daughter of Dr.Mitonori Kimura, a distinguished scholar, whose attainments are chronicled in the British Dictionary of National Biography." McWilliams was an outspoken advocate for immigrant rights in the years leading up to WWII, and he states in this article that "I was opposed to mass evacuation." However, mirroring the prevailing attitude of the era, the general tone of the article becomes conciliatory to the military necessity theory, and the humane manor in which it was being carried out.

[30] Roger Daniels, Incarceration of the Japanese Americans: A Sixty-Year Perspective. *The History Teacher,* Vol 35, No. 3. (May, 2002), 297-310.

captive labor, the WRA quickly recognized a unique potential at Tule Lake for large-scale commercial agricultural production.

Chapter 2

Dollar Patriotism and Beet Culture

"Dollar patriotism" is a term which came into use shortly after Pearl Harbor. It inferred that an individual or group was hiding its profit motive behind a guise of patriotism. This chapter tells the story of how one man's dollar patriotism intersected with beet culture and brought thousands of West Coast Japanese to Tule Lake the largest of the ten relocation centers.

Tulelake, California, was an agricultural community located roughly 200 miles inland in north-central California near the Oregon border. In 1941, Tulelake had a population of roughly 1,000 much the same as today, give or take a few dozen. Klamath Falls, Oregon, located approximately thirty miles to the northwest, was a small city of approximately 10,000 in 1941, and the nearest population center to the small agricultural communities of Malin and Merrill, Oregon, and Tulelake, California, clustered in a triangle in the southern corner of the huge valley known as the Klamath Basin. As its name implies, Tulelake sits on the former bed of Tule Lake.

Like much of the American West, the Klamath Basin is to a great extent a creation of the federal government. On June 17, 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt signed into law the Newlands Reclamation Act. This law, authored by Nevada Congressman Francis G. Newlands, would have a profound effect on the arid west in general and the Klamath Basin in particular, since the law provided for funds from

the sale of federal lands to be held in an account for the purpose of creating irrigation projects, and for land reclaimed from lakes and marshes under the provisions of the Newlands Act to be opened to homesteading.[1] The Bureau of Reclamation began the Klamath Reclamation project in 1905. Moving in stages over a period of thirty years, the Reclamation Service built an intricate and amazingly efficient irrigation system, bringing water to over 100,000 acres of farm land. Draining off Tule Lake and reclaiming the former lake bed for agriculture was an integral component of the project.

As land was reclaimed, in accordance with the Newlands Act, it was opened up to homesteading. By 1941, the Tule Lake division of the Klamath Project consisted of approximately four hundred homesteads, on slightly over 25,000 acres of reclaimed land.[2] Much of the land in the Klamath Reclamation Project is of marginal quality, suitable only for forage crops such as alfalfa. The former lake bottom of the Tule Lake division however, has been described as, "comparable in richness to that of the Nile Valley."[3] This idyllic agrarian corner of Northern California and Southern Oregon was teaming with resentment and protest in the spring of 1942.

In April of 1942, the War Relocation Authority (WRA) sent one of its best troubleshooters, Senior Information Specialist George D. Dean, to the Klamath Basin,

---

[1] Gerald Nash, *The Federal Landscape: An Economic History of the Twentieth-Century West,* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999), 146.
[2] George D. Dean, "*Report on Attitude of Citizens and Officials in Tule Lake Area to Japanese Reception Center near Tulelake, California"* WRA, April 20, 1942.
[3] Stan Turner, *The Years of Harvest: A History of the Tule Lake Basin,* (Eugene, Spencer Creek press 1987), 179.

to investigate vehement protests to a proposed Japanese relocation center. Dean spent only a few days in the Klamath Basin but he got to the crux of the situation with great efficiency. In describing the people of the basin, Dean wrote:

> They are sincere, hard-working, hard-drinking people. Sales of liquor in adjacent Klamath County, Oregon, through state liquor stores are second in the state only to those in Multnomah County, which includes Portland. Many carry rifles constantly in the back of their automobiles to shoot jackrabbits or ducks which abound in the area, or, as they frankly admit, to take care of any emergency that might arise. They are exceedingly proud people, proud of their homes and farms which are notably well kept, and particularly proud that this is a 'white man's country.'

Dean was especially impressed by the support locals gave to the war effort. He continued:

> These people, too, are intensely patriotic, vitally aware America is at war. They claim to have a larger proportion of the eligible population in the armed forces than any other selective service district in the United States. This I could not verify, but young men were conspicuous by their absence. Being surrounded on all sides by mountains, they naturally are somewhat provincial in their thinking. Nevertheless, on the whole they are a reasonably intelligent people, talk straight from the shoulder, trust those who do likewise and distrust brass hats, big shots and brain trusters.[4]

Despite the patriotic bent that characterized the basin, Dean ferreted out a huge source of resentment in the Tulelake area, associated with the establishment of the reception center, which he described as "beet culture". The locals believed that big Central California sugar beet interests were responsible for bringing the unwanted Japanese Americans to the area as a source of cheap labor.

The Klamath Basin is potato and barley country. By the early 1940's, Klamath Basin potatoes were famous in the principal cities of the West Coast for their quality and versatility for baking, boiling, or frying. Potatoes produced by far

---

[4] Dean, "*Report on Attitude of Citizens and Officials in Tule Lake Area to Japanese Reception Center near Tulelake, California*," 4, 5.

the most income of agricultural products in the area, and continue to do so to this day. The 4200 foot elevation of the basin makes for warm days and cool nights during the short growing season. Provided there are no killer frosts, always a possibility in the Klamath Basin, the climate is perfect for spuds.

Barley was the principal grain crop in the Klamath Basin. The area is noted for producing excellent brew barley with low protein content, the type of barley prized in the brewing industry, which commands top prices. Most basin farmers followed a simple two crop rotation pattern in their fields: potatoes one year and barley the next. By the spring of 1941, this pattern had been followed in the Klamath Basin for more than twenty years, and it proved especially successful in the rich black soil of the former lake bed.

In the late 1930s, the Spreckels Sugar Company of Woodland, California, hired Clark Fensler, a local homesteader and entrepreneur as a liaison to coordinate experimental plantings of sugar beets in the Klamath Basin, and equally importantly, to promote beets in the basin.[5] A World War I veteran, Fensler had come to the Klamath Basin in 1928 from the Eugene, Oregon, area. In 1930, he registered in the fifth homestead allotment for reclaimed lands of Tule Lake. With only twenty-four farm units offered and 162 individuals making application, Fensler was one of the lucky winners.[6]

By 1941, Clark Fensler had become one of the most influential citizens in the area. He was a sharp dresser, a wheeler dealer who hired out all the labor on his farm,

---

[5] Ibid, 6.
[6] Interview with Dick Fensler, Tulelake California, February 11, 2007.

drove the local school bus, and led the local American Legion chapter in parades. In a recent interview, Dick Fensler recalled his father, "In 1938, Spreckels Sugar hired my Dad as a 'field man.' His job was to drum up enthusiasm for growing beets, and get some local growers to experiment with growing them in the basin, and oversee the whole process. He also grew a few acres on our homestead, and I got stuck working in the damn things."[7]

The first trials of sugar beets in the Klamath Basin were very successful. Both the sugar content and yield-per-acre of the basin beets were much better than traditional beet growing areas of California, Utah, Colorado and Idaho.[8] The local growers encountered difficulties however, overcoming a severe shortage of workers willing to put in long hours in the beet fields. Dick Fensler recalled:

> The problem with beets was finding labor to do the back-breaking work in the field. In those days everything with beets was done by hand. Planting the beets, thinning the beets, toping the beets before digging them. Then digging them by hand and loading them on trucks. Everything done by hand. And it took skill too, you had to know what you were doing.You could never get enough good people to work in the beets. I was a pretty good specimen when I was young. I had a scholarship to play football at Oregon State before the war changed everyone's plans, but I wasn't tough enough to work in those damn beets, not all day every day. Man, beets were back-breaking work.[9]

Despite constant labor concerns, sugar beets proved to be profitable and plantings increased. In the 1941 growing season, 984 acres of beets were harvested in the Basin, still a very low acreage compared to roughly 15,000 acres of potatoes, but nevertheless leading farmers in the area to conclude that sugar beets might

---

[7] Ibid.
[8] Dean, "*Report on Attitude of Citizens and Officials in Tule Lake Area to Japanese Reception Center near Tulelake, California*," 6.
[9] Interview with Dick Fensler.

eventually take over as the main crop in the Klamath Basin. Indeed, Spreckels Sugar Company had plans for 2000 acres of beets in 1942, and indicated that if plantings continued to increase, a refinery could be in the future for the Klamath Basin. Then came the events of December 7, 1941, and, as Dick Fensler put it, "everyone's plans changed."

Following the U.S. declaration of war on the Axis powers, Dick Fensler and his brothers were joined by young men from all over the country who answered their nation's call. As a result rural America was faced with the prospect of a serious labor shortage, compounded by the fact that good jobs quickly began to open up in defense industries all along the West Coast. Suddenly, migrant workers who traditionally followed the crops had job opportunities previously unimagined, making twice as much money in one day than they could in a week of farm labor.

As the spring planting season approached, Spreckels weighed its options. Recognizing that sugar would be a vital food source for the war effort, Spreckels estimated that the price of sugar would soar. The labor problem in the beet fields however, was now magnified. Accordingly, during the first week in April 1942-- about the same time Milton Eisenhower was meeting in Salt Lake City with Western Governors-- Clark Fensler traveled to San Francisco in his capacity of liaison for the Spreckels Sugar Company. The smooth talking, enthusiastic World War I veteran was able to get a meeting with another World War I veteran, Lieutenant General

John L. DeWitt.[10] Fensler pitched the merits of the Tulelake area for a prospective relocation camp, including the availability of Bureau of Reclamation land. Although the documentary record of this meeting is sparse, it is clear that he made a favorable impression on the general and his staff who were looking for camp sites. Indeed, Fensler hurried back home and called a meeting of beet growers and all those interested, and announced that he had spoken to General DeWitt and there was a strong possibility of getting a camp in the area. He pointed out the imminent labor shortage ahead, and stated that Japanese from the camp would be available for work in the fields.

Not one to mince words, Fensler suggested that the group should adopt a resolution favoring the project. The reaction of the group to the suggestion of a Japanese internment camp in the area was, however, decidedly negative. Fensler's hastily called meeting turned into a tense question and answer session. Homesteaders fired questions at Fensler which he could not answer to their satisfaction. Caught off guard, Fensler was put on the defensive by those in attendance who wanted to know how many Japanese he was hoping to bring into the area. In fact, Fensler had no idea as to the massive migration his proposal to the Western Defense Command had set in motion, and he fumbled an arbitrary number of three to four hundred. Additional concerns were raised: "How would they be guarded?" "Would they be permitted to roam at will in the community?" "Would they work side by side with white laborers?" "Would they be allowed to go into Tulelake and get 'liquored up'?

---

[10]. Dean, "*Report on Attitude of Citizens and Officials in Tule Lake Area to Japanese Reception Center near Tulelake, California*," 8. Basin beets had to be hauled to the Woodland refinery, thus cutting into the profit of local growers.

"Would they be allowed to stay on and be eligible to apply for homesteads after the war?" Backpedaling, Fensler promised that in a few days he would have an Army officer in Tulelake to explain what a camp would entail.[11]

News of a possible Japanese Reception Center and the true number of Japanese a camp would involve quickly spread across the Klamath Basin. The reaction to the idea of a large number of Japanese being forced upon the basin was unanimously negative. Although word had leaked that the WRA was considering commandeering Bureau Of Reclamation land ordinarily leased to local farmers for the use of Japanese internees, no federal agency issued a statement regarding their plans and inquiries elicited a reply of 'no comment' from the Army, the Klamath Reclamation Project, and the WRA.

On April 11, 1942, a group of civic organizations including the local chapter of the American Legion, and the chambers of commerce of Tulelake, Malin, Merrill, and Klamath Falls held a joint meeting in Tulelake to discuss possible protest action. The result was a resolution drafted to Western Defense Commander General John L. DeWitt. "The resolution as ordered by the group Monday noon will point out that the Tule Lake basin was settled by whites and has no orientals or negroes among its residents," the Klamath Falls *Herald and News* reported. "It will voice the desire to maintain the present character of the population. They also pointed out that American-born Japs would be more apt to remain in the basin after the war."[12]

---

[11] Dean, "*Report on Attitude of Citizens and Officials in Tule Lake Area to Japanese Reception Center near Tulelake, California*," 8.

[12] "Tulelake Chamber Draws Resolution in Opposition to Jap Evacuation Center," *Herald and News*, April 13, 1942.

The final paragraph of the resolution requested that a substitute camp site be established in a place known as the Madalin Plains, an area ninety miles south of Tulelake. Truly in the middle of nowhere, the Madalin Plains would have fit the pattern of the other relocation camps. General DeWitt however, had made up his mind. There would be a relocation camp at Tule Lake. Local protest was to be expected.

The Tulelake Chamber of Commerce petitioned their Congressman Harry L. Englebright. Englebright passed on his constituents' protests to Secretary of War Stimson who responded to the congressman by stating the position of the federal government in no uncertain terms. "The establishment of such projects will always be the subject of well meaning objection wherever located," Stimson wrote. "Our experience has shown that so rarely has any local group approved of the establishment of the centers that it is impracticable and unwise to seek approval ... In the National interest it is essential that relocation go forward without delay."[13] In any case, by the time Englebright's protests reached Stimson on it was already much too late.

Residents of the Klamath Basin had lost their brief attempt to thwart the government's intention to put a relocation center in the area. On April 17, 1942, an article appeared in the Klamath Falls *Herald and News*, "The Tulelake Japanese reception camp became an actuality Friday morning when purchasing agents visited various wholesale lumber dealers in Klamath Falls and bought 100,000 feet of

---

[13] Official correspondence, from Secretary of War Stimson, to California Congressman Harry L. Englebright May 11, 1942, Reprinted in, *Years of Harvest: A History of the Tule Lake Basin*, (Eugene: Spencer Creek Press 1987) 256.

lumber for immediate delivery to the campsite."[14] Not until the next day, after the lumber purchase, did the federal government affirm that there would be a Japanese relocation camp near the town of Tulelake. In a United Press dispatch, General DeWitt officially announced what had become obvious, and that construction would begin immediately.[15]

Many people of the Klamath Basin felt the federal government had shown them no respect. An editorial on April 19 in the *Herald and News* addressed the government's reticence to admit their intentions. "Reasons for official reluctance to announce the Japanese camp at Tule Lake are not clear," the paper asserted. "In the past week, there have been so many developments in evidence here that knowledge of the general camp plans became public property, but still the various governmental agencies which might give the official word kept mum." The *Herald* concluded with the observation that, "It has evidently been decided that the location's desirable features offset the objections raised here. Let's accept the decision in good spirit and do our part.[16]

Meanwhile, the government's plans for a relocation center moved quickly. The sub-heading to *The Herald and News* article of April 18, confirming the construction of the camp, read, "8000 Acres of Government Land Set For 10,000 Evacuees." Many homesteaders and other farmers in the area had leases on the Bureau of Reclamation land which was now to be part of the relocation complex.

---

[14] "Tule Lake Jap Camp Started: Lumber For First Unit Bought Here," *Herald and News* April 17, 1942.
[15] "Jap Camp Building Starts As Army Confirms Project," *The Klamath News,* April 18, 1942.
[16] Editorial, Klamath Falls, *Herald and News*, April 19, 1942.

"My uncle was one of the ones who had a lease on 140 acres in that area," remarks Frances Frey, a lifelong resident of Tulelake. "He had arranged for financing and had even paid for the lease when they took it away from him for the camp. It was a real hardship to all the farmers in the area who lost their leases for the camp. And they were damn mad. All that prime land just handed to the Japanese."[17]

At the time the government confirmed plans to put the center at Tule Lake, local residents were certain the big sugar interests headed by Clark Fensler had "sold the Army a bill of goods in order to get cheap labor into the district at the expense of other settlers."[18] General DeWitt and the former Agriculture Department functionaries in the WRA had different plans for Tule Lake. DeWitt realized that a camp at Tule Lake could be a huge contributor of fresh vegetables, not just for Tule Lake, but for all the relocation camps. With convenient railroad connections bordering the camp site, the set up was perfect for shipping fresh produce to all the camps of the west.[19]

The question of Japanese labor in the sugar beet fields which had caused such a local outcry when suggested by Clark Fensler the first week of April 1942, was made moot by General DeWitt. Early in the summer of 1942, DeWitt declared that there would be no outside employment of evacuees inside military zone 1. Evacuees in the Tule Lake Camp could apply for a permit to travel inland to work in the sugar beet and other fields in the interior west. However, since the center was within

---

[17] Interview with Frances Frey, February 12, 2007, Tulelake California.
[18] Dean, "*Report on Attitude of Citizens and Officials in Tule Lake Area to Japanese Reception Center near Tulelake, California*," 9.
[19] DeWitt, *Final Report,* 263, 264. In his final report DeWitt wrote: "there are approximately 7,400 acres in the tract. It is extremely fertile and raises bumper crops of garden vegetables."

military zone 1 there would be no employment of evacuees in the fields around Tule Lake.[20]

DeWitt demanded that any work done by evacuees outside the center, such as loading agricultural products at railheads, be accompanied by a special permit issued by the Western Defense Command. Such permits, the general wrote, "must be essential to the operation of the projects and involve meeting a current emergency. Military guards are to be furnished to prevent the unauthorized absence of evacuees from the area in which the work is to be performed."[21] Sugar beet fields immediately disappeared from the Klamath Basin, and did not reappear for decades.

Because of the short growing season of the Klamath Basin, the general assumption might have been that there would not be time for the Japanese evacuees to grow crops in the 1942 season. However, given the quality and quantity of the land, and the reputed expertise of the huge number of Japanese agriculturists soon to be pouring into the camp, DeWitt and his staff were determined to recoup some profit from the fertile soil of Tule Lake in the 1942 season. Regardless of success or failure of vegetable crops in the first year, prospects seemed bright for vegetable production, especially potatoes, in the subsequent years of the war.

At first glance it would seem that Clark Fensler's dollar patriotism had failed. He lobbied the Western Defense Command to bring the camp to Tule Lake on behalf of his employer Spreckels Sugar Company, to obtain skilled cheap labor. Now there would be an immense camp at Tule Lake. Yet there would be no evacuee labor

---

[20] Ibid, 242, 243.
[21] DeWitt, *Final Report,* 243.

outside the fields set aside exclusively for the camp. Moreover, Fensler's efforts had led to an outcry of protest throughout the basin which was totally ignored by the WRA and the Army. He was the subject of great resentment among the locals, and his influence surely must have been at an all-time low. Right?

Wrong! It was time for a payoff, and Clark Fensler landed very much on his feet. The April 18, 1942 article in the *Herald and News* in which General DeWitt finally announced the construction of the camp, contained the sub-heading, "Fensler Appointed." The article noted, "Clark G. Fensler, ex-service man and Tulelake farmer, has been appointed third in command at the camp."[22]

Fenslers' appointment was purely ceremonial. He was not to have responsibility for any of the day-to-day operation of the camp. He would show up for photo opportunities and to glad-hand dignitaries visiting the camp, and he collected his salary as a WRA employee. Fensler's job with Spreckels Sugar Company had thus led him to a better job as a big shot in the huge Tule Lake Center, a post he would hold until the camp closed. Many times over the next four years Clark Fensler would be quoted by local newspapers on some aspect of the camp, and his picture often appeared in the papers in conjunction with the camp. Clark Fensler was responsible for bringing the Japanese Relocation Center to Tule Lake. He was rewarded by the WRA with an important position. Dollar patriotism had paid off for one Tulelake resident. Fensler was a big man with an easy smile. He was perfect for public relations work, and resentment of Fensler soon subsided as locals resigned

---

[22] "Jap Camp Building Starts As Army Confirms Project," *Herald and News*, April 18, 1942.

themselves to the reality of the camp. However, resentment of the camp, and the West Coast Japanese evacuees, never subsided.

The locals in the South Valley were not surprised that Fensler was appointed to an important post at the camp, regardless of the fact that he had no obvious skills or experience which would render him qualified. "That's what we all predicted would happen," George D. Dean quoted a local farmer as saying. "I guess it's okay if he's got pull enough to swing it."[23]

Construction of the camp got off to a terrible start. The third day on the job camp engineers determined that the site selected was not suitable for the camp. Soil condition and drainage were poor, and the site was moved approximately one and a half miles to the northeast.[24] The Army and the WRA wanted the camp completed in one month, and already two days had been wasted.

Drawn by the prospect of instant employment at good wages, workers poured into the area. A huge number of workers were required, and the work force on the project ballooned to approximately 3,000 men at the height of construction. Local farm workers, who could make twice as much hammering nails as they could working in the fields, left their jobs with local farmers and went to work at the camp. Plumbers and steamfitters, for instance, could make $198.42 per week if they worked their full shift. As the Klamath Falls *Evening Herald* reported,

> Gone to the Jap camp, has become the by-word with farmers in the south end of the basin. Farm laborers are fading out of the spring seeding picture like

---

[23] Dean, "*Report on Attitude of Citizens and Officials in Tule Lake Area to Japanese Reception Center near Tulelake, California*," 10. Thinly veiled threats such as the one expressed by this anonymous farmer were fortunately never carried out at Tule Lake.

[24] "Jap Camp Moved to New Location," *Evening Herald*, April 21, 1942.

> fog before the sun. Potato sorting crews too are answering the call for help on the government project and store managers are losing clerks. Farmers faced with the necessity of irrigating land before seeding grain and potatoes are running double shifts by themselves, chasing water night and day. Coupled with the call to armed forces, defense work and federal projects, the drain on farm labor in the basin is beginning to pinch.[25]

A windfall for workers was a hardship for most local farmers and business men, fueling local resentment of the project.

The construction timeframe was staggering: one month to complete 1,200 units, each 100 feet long and 20 feet wide. Work soon reached a fever pitch, and in late April a *Herald and News* headline read, "Jap Camp Construction Goes on 12-Hour Day Schedule as Hurried Completion Sought." The article pointed out that crews were already working eleven hour days and now would boost the already frenzied pace by an extra hour a day.[26] The workmen on the project may well have deserved their pay packets. Spring in the Klamath Basin is in many ways the most inhospitable season of the year, and many workmen from Southern California could not take the cold wind which constantly blows from the southwest that time of year in the Basin.[27]

Sprouting from the South Valley almost instantly, the camp consisted of one and a half square miles of buildings, complete with WRA administration buildings, civilian employees quarters, maintenance and warehouse buildings, a jail detention

---

[25] "Jap Camp Causes Labor Shortage," *Evening Herald*, April 28, 1942.
[26] "Jap Camp Construction Goes On 12 Hour a Day Schedule as Hurried Completion Sought," Klamath Falls *Herald and News,* April 30, 1942.
[27] "Jap Camp Construction Goes on 12-hour Day Schedule as Hurried Completion Sought." *Herald and News*, April 30, 1942. The *Herald and News*, article of April 30, stated that "thus far approximately 600 men have left the Tule Lake job, most of them because of the heavy daily pressure of 11 hours of steady work. Nearly 100 who quit the project were from southern California but found the weather conditions too severe."

center, fire hall, motor pool, hospital, and, of course, hundreds of barracks buildings in the main compound for housing the Japanese internees.[28] The main compound consisted of seven wards, each divided into nine blocks. Each block held sixteen barracks, a mess hall, recreation hall, men's and women's toilets showers and laundry facilities.

The design of the camp was almost identical to that of the other relocation centers. The barracks were the standard Army design. Each barracks building was partitioned into five one-room apartments. One family would live in each of these one-room habitations, with no running water and shared eating, toilet, shower, and laundry facilities.

Astonishingly, on May 24 the camp was completed. "The possibility of constructing over 1,000 buildings within 30 days' time was farfetched" opined the *Herald and News*, "and yet, through perfect coordination of 3,000 men, including engineers, administrative workers, carpenters and laborers, the job has been done."[29] Because the camp site was on Bureau of Reclamation land, the WRA and the Bureau of Reclamation made the decision to name the site "Newell" in honor of the first director of the Bureau of Reclamation, Frederick Haines Newell. The United States Postal Service opened a branch there, and letters sent from the camp bore a "Newell" cancellation stamp.[30]

---

[28] DeWitt, *Final Report.*266-277
[29] "Tule Lake Project Amazing for Speed of Construction," *Herald and News* May 23, 1942.
[30] "Newell, Calif, New Address for Jap Camp Center," *Herald and News,* May 20, 1942.

General DeWitt recorded 446 Japanese in residence at Tule Lake Relocation Center on June 1, 1942.[31] These first internees had arrived on May 27, 1942, from the Portland and Puyallup assembly centers to assist with readying the camp for the mass of internees which would begin to arrive within the next few days. The immense camp was impressive, but it was also bleak, barren, and spartan. Surrounded by barbed wire fencing and guard towers, the area must have made a sobering, even frightening first impression on the internees when they disembarked from their trains and busses.

Waiting to greet those first evacuees was acting Project Director Elmer Shirrell. Shirrell had been on hand within a few days of the beginning of construction of the camp, arriving in Tule Lake as a representative of the WRA on April 23, 1942.[32] Shirrell was a graduate of the University of California. He was a veteran of World War I, and, having served as head of the State Office of Veteran's Affairs, he had experience in government bureaucracy. When he was hired by the WRA he was working in the publishing business for Doubleday Doran & Co.[33]

The early months of the Tule Lake Camp were stamped by the influence of Elmer Shirrell. Although many circumstances conspired to foment dissatisfaction at

---

[31] DeWitt. *Final Report.*375

[32] *The Tulean Dispatch,* June 18, 1942. Shirrell had been appointed acting director of the camp; on May 23, 1942, however, WRA director Milton Eisenhower named C. E. Ratchford project director. This situation which must have rankled Shirrell, but it did not prevent him from performing his job with great ability, compassion and evenhandedness. In a strange turn of events, C. E. Ratchford did not make an appearance at Tule Lake until June 18, weeks after the camp was established. Mr. Ratchford declared that he found the project very interesting and "considering the progress that has been made, I think it is grand." Rachford never assumed control of the camp from Shirrell. He only stayed at Tule Lake for about a week and then he left the camp with a recommendation that Elmer Shirrell be named permanent director, and disappeared into the WRA regional office in Denver. Shirrell continued as acting project director until July 8, 1942, when he was named director by newly appointed WRA National Director, Dillon S. Meyer.

[33] *The Tulean Dispatch,* July 8, 1942.

Tule Lake, very little negative sentiment has ever been expressed about Shirrell's work. "His familiarity with the requirements of governmental bureaucracy, tempered by church-engendered humanitarian concerns," recalled Dr. Harold Stanley Jacoby, who worked under Shirrell at the Tule Lake camp as head of internal security, "enabled him to give experienced administrative leadership to the project operations without losing sight of the fact that we were dealing with people who were hurting."[34]

Shirrell greeted the first contingent of evacuees determined to work with them to soften the impact of the bleak surroundings on the thousands of evacuees to follow. Put simply, Shirrell insisted that arriving evacuees be treated with friendliness and dignity. Starting on June 2, 1942, the main contingents of evacuees began pouring into the Tule Lake Center. Through the months of June and July the influx continued. By the first of July the population of Tule Lake was calculated at 9,040, and on August first it was an astonishing 15,023 persons.[35]

Working with the advance group, Elmer Shirrell set up an orderly system for checking in evacuees. Each family was greeted by an evacuee from the advance group, as they arrived. After a long and miserable journey, people were tired and hungry. Accordingly, before they were assigned their quarters the new arrivals were given breakfast. This simple courtesy is a good example of the management style of

---

[34] Harold Stanley Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation*, (Grass Valley, CA: Comstock Bonanza Press 1996), 19-20.
[35] DeWitt, *Final* Report, 375.

Elmer Shirrell, and not indicative of the typical relocation camp.[36] Additionally, each evacuee was given crude bedding consisting of an Army cot, straw filled mattress, and wool blankets. The bleakness of the camp from the outside was intensified when the evacuees saw the inside of their living quarters. The one-room apartments were devoid of furniture. Not even the simplest of comforts were present; no chairs, no tables, and only a single light bulb hanging on a cord from the ceiling. A coal heating stove sat in the middle of the room. Bert Nakano, a young (Nisei,) a term used for American born citizens of the United States, remembered his family's first day at Tule Lake. "I'll never forget the sad expression on my mother's face when she first set her eyes upon the barren tar-papered barracks...the bare room with the pot-bellied stove which would be our home for who knows how long. She tried her best to hold us together as a family."[37]

Notwithstanding the best humanitarian efforts of Elmer Shirrell, and the goodwill of his staff and the first volunteer evacuees, a formula for resentment, discord, tension, and controversy was built into the Tule Lake Relocation Center. The great majority of evacuees who entered the camp in the first few weeks of June were from the California assembly centers of Marysville, Sacramento, and Fresno. Waiting to check them in were a volunteer staff from the Northwest, people the Californians felt they had nothing in common with, and who had already taken the

---

[36] Harold Stanley Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation*, 22. See also *The Tulean Dispatch*, July 8, 1942. In early May 1942, Shirrell spent about a week at Posten Relocation Center Parker Arizona, which opened a few weeks before Tule Lake. Many of his ideas about how to treat evacuees to lessen the impact of the camp came from observing mistakes made by WRA staff during the opening of Posten.

[37] John R. Ross and Reiko Ross, *Second Kinenhi: Reflections on Tule Lake*, (San Francisco, Tule Lake Committee 2000), 33-38.

choice housing and the best jobs, such as block managers, truck drivers, and clerical workers.[38] Hiroshi Kashiwagi remembered: "There was a block manager, who acted as sort of a welcome committee and saw to it that we had bedding and all that. He was a complete stranger, to us, he seemed a bit like authority. He would always be a big boss there."

Although there was tension between Northwestern and California evacuees, in several important aspects all evacuees who arrived in the first few weeks were relatively fortunate. Not only were there still some good job opportunities, the early arrivals got housing close to important facilities such as laundries, mess halls, recreation halls, and toilets. Most importantly, the early arrivals found huge piles of scrap lumber left over from the construction of the camp. During the first few weeks, it was not difficult to find good lumber to build furniture, shelving and partitions to make the extremely spartan housing much more comfortable. Indeed, during this period, hundreds of evacuees poured over the piles of scrap lumber to find the most satisfactory pieces. Using simple and limited tools, evacuees crafted an amazing array of useful and handsome objects, making use of scrap lumber to produce essential furnishings which became a source of pride and satisfaction for the evacuees. Moreover, some of the work was so exceptional that it led to the first all camp social function. When the quality of the furniture came to the attention of the manager of the furniture department at Sears and Roebuck in Klamath Falls, he convinced the giant department store to offer prizes for a display and contest of the finest woodwork of the evacuees.

---

[38] Ibid, 36.

The first edition of the camp newspaper, *The Tulean Dispatch*, dated June 15, 1942, devoted the very first column to the woodwork display. According to the *Dispatch*, the contest was a great success. The entries were classified into six different divisions: tables, chairs, benches, chest of drawers, screens, and a miscellaneous division. There was also a children's division. In an article on June 18, *The Tulean Dispatch* published the names of the winners and summed up the event, "this spectacular furniture exhibit that attracted the attention of virtually everyone in the community and held them spell-bound with the beautiful pieces of furniture on display."[39]

Between June 18 and June 26, more than 4,000 evacuees arrived at the Tule Lake Center from the Sacramento Assembly Center. Suddenly there was a shortage of available scrap lumber. Coupled with the fact that the evacuees from the Northwest had taken the best housing and jobs, the lack of good scrap lumber added to the resentment of the latecomers. As the camp filled with internees, foraging for scrap lumber became a full time occupation for many, especially unemployed women. An editorial in *The Tulean Dispatch* admonished "colonists": "It is hard to imagine that a group of Japanese people could be so selfish and so forgetful of their dignity as they do in the lumber yard. But the scene is repeated day after day. It is sickening to watch them 'go to town' like a pack of wolves."[40] Project director Shirrell finally limited access to the scrap-heaps to late afternoon and evenings, so

---

[39] *The Tulean Dispatch*, June 18, 1942; Ibid, June 15, 1942.
[40] Editorial Page, *The Tulean Dispatch*, July 8, 1942.

that those with employment at the center, especially those working on the project farm, would have an equal chance to forage.

Shirrell also promised that sufficient wood was on order for those who had no partitions or scrap lumber to work with. Although Shirrell did put in the order on June 25, and reordered on September 3, the promised lumber never arrived.[41] If residents wanted to *buy* lumber, however, there was no problem. Orders could be placed with McCullum Lumber Company of Tulelake, and delivered directly to the resident's "home."[42] As the lumber dispute made evident, throughout the internment experience, money, even just a little money, made life much more comfortable.

Similarly, residents at the Tule Lake Center could order goods from the catalogs of retailers such as Sears and Wards. Simple items such as tobacco, candy and soft drinks were available through camp stores, known as canteens. In light of the fact that in 1942 a bottle of Coca-Cola and a Hershey Bar both cost five cents, the volume of sales done in the canteens is staggering: residents spent between $1,500 and $2,000 *each day* in the canteens.[43] In fact, many Japanese Americans dipped deeply into personal savings and some took out loans while in the camp.[44]

---

[41] *The Tulean Dispatch* noted on August 8, 1942, "an order for $15,000 worth of wall board and lumber was placed four weeks ago and is expected to arrive any day." Adding insult to injury, on October 5, 1942, the *Dispatch* pointed out that when and if lumber arrived it had to be used as specified by the WRA.

[42] *The Tulean Dispatch*, August 15, 1942.

[43] Editorial, *The Tulean Dispatch*, July 11, 1942. These estimates later proved to be much to low. An August 11 article revealed that July canteen sales totaled $74,000. The July 11 editorial also admonished residents not to abuse the canteens by practices such as hoarding, reminding them the canteen was for their convenience. They could have added huge profits as an equally important function of the canteens.

[44] "Preliminary Survey Of Resistances to Resettlement At The Tule Lake Relocation Center," WRA Community Analysis Series No. 9 June 23, 1943 JARCR/CU Box 1, File 25.

Despite the privations evacuees faced, area residents bitterly denounced the Tuleans' consumption of local goods. Fitting into a pattern of longstanding racially-based animosity toward the internees, every time there was a shortage of a particular product, some local would blame it on the Tule Lake Camp. In an August 1, 1942 letter to the editor of the *Klamath Falls Herald and News*, for example, a local citizen bemoaned the lack of soda pop in local grocery stores, taverns, and restaurants. "They all tell me the same story," he complained. "Two local bottlers send the Japanese center at Tule Lake the pop and if and when there is any left the Americans, who have been steady customers for years and years, get it."[45] The writer concluded his bitter tirade with a dire prediction: "If this condition continues it will wreck the people's morale that the Japs in this country get first choice and the rest of us get second choice."[46]

To be sure, there was an element of truth in the complaints of the local population, reflecting a simple matter of logistics. When the West Coast Japanese were rapidly moved into the fairly sparsely populated area of Northern California and Southern Oregon, the new city of 15,000—regardless of the fact that it was behind barbed wire—put a strain on available goods and services. The camp was consuming 1,500 gallons of milk per day, for instance, leaving area locals in short supply of dairy products.

In an article which appeared in the *Herald and News* on October 14, 1942, a prominent citizen called for an investigation of the camp, asserting that internees

---

[45] "Japanese Center Pointers," *Herald and News*, August 1, 1942.
[46] Ibid.

were living the high life, refusing to work and being pampered while local whites were using ration cards. He claimed that although items like ham and bacon could not be bought in the Klamath Basin, they were shipped to the camp by the truckload.[47] Moreover, Director Shirrell and his staff were accused of lax management and allowing internees too much freedom. Not only were internees supposedly being pampered by the WRA authorities, they were also accused of serious law breaking and wrong doing. Project farm truck drivers were accused of routinely exceeding the speed limit and thumbing their noses at white citizens.

There is no question that internees were guilty of one of the accusations leveled against them by area locals. Workers on the project farm soon realized that ducks and geese on the marshes around the Tule Lake Center were there for the taking. Dissatisfied with the poor, inadequate food in the camp mess halls, and enduring intensive labor with little financial compensation, for many internees poaching an occasional fowl became a sort of sport. In fact, in early October, wildlife officials sent a letter to director Shirell indicating that colony residents were disregarding wildlife regulations, and warning that violators were subject to fine and imprisonment.[48] On October 5, the *Tulean Dispatch* reported that Federal Bureau of Fish and Wildlife officials had arrested a number of colonists for killing geese and ducks in violation of the law.[49] The game-bird game was afoot. Fifteen more colonists were found in violation of game regulations on October 21, and three days

---

[47] "Newell Jap Center Conditions Flayed: Japanese Charged With Duck Fishing," *Klamath Falls Herald and News*, October 14, 1942.
[48] "Colonists Cautioned Against Interference With Wildlife," *The Tulean Dispatch* October 2, 1942.
[49] "Arrested For Killing Birds," *The Tulean Dispatch*, October 5, 1942.

later, five additional evacuees were arrested.[50] One unfortunate pair of internees were caught with two geese fully prepared for the barbeque.

The general public became aware of the poaching issue at the Tule Lake Camp from the Klamath Falls *Herald and News* on October 14.[51] Executive secretary of the California Fish and Game Commission George Miller, the *Herald* reported, had it under good information that Japanese at Tule Lake were illegally snaring ducks and geese, mostly at the project farm. The *Herald and News* article reminded the public that the Tule Lake project was situated on reclamation land and game birds were thus protected year round—even during hunting season. The Tule Lake internees, the Secretary continued, were committing flagrant unsportsmanlike violations such as snaring birds with fish hooks and traps.

Despite the combined efforts of the WRA and the Bureau of Fish and Wildlife, poaching was so widespread that enforcement proved very difficult. "The word gets around," Miller complained, "as soon as a game officer enters the area."[52] The number of ducks, geese, and pheasants illegally consumed by internees is anyone's guess. According to the recorded number of Japanese poachers caught, however, we can assume that many internees supplemented their diet with a rustic variant of *duck a l'orange*, pheasant under glass, and roast goose. Not to mention the *pâté de foie gras*.

---

[50] "Wildlife Offenders Subject To Arrest," *The Tulean Dispatch*, October 21, 1942; "Five More Colonists Arrested," *The Tulean Dispatch*. November 1, 1942.
[51] "California Game Chief Charges Violation Of Federal Laws," *Herald and News*, October 14, 1942.
[52] "Tule Lake Japs Accused of Duck Fishing." *Herald and News*, October 14, 1942.

Local animosity toward the poaching of water fowl by internees was part of a larger cycle of resentment. Each perceived act of defiance by the internees became proof to locals that they were disloyal. And each negative report in local and national newspapers referring to the internees as "Japs" and describing them as lazy and pampered and inferring they were stereotypically sneaky and unsportsmanlike—as in the poaching affair—confirmed to the internees that they were not welcome in their own country.[53]

[53] "Preliminary Survey of Resistances to Resettlement at The Tule Lake Center," June 23, 1943, JARCR/CU Box 1, File 27 WRA Community Analysis Section, Project Analysis Series 9. See also, "The Significant Factors in Requests For Repatriation And Expatriation," April 19, 1944, JARCR/CU Box 1, File 27 WRA, Community Analysis Section, Project Analysis Series No. 16.

Chapter 3

"Enlistees Must Work 8 Hours!"

Exactly when the leadership of the War Relocation Authority committed to a full agricultural program at Tule Lake for the growing season of 1942 is not known. The frenzied push to finish the camp and populate it with Japanese-American agriculturists from California, however, was likely a result of that commitment. In spite of his sympathetic and paternalistic attitude toward the evacuees, Acting Director Elmer Shirrell knew that ultimately his performance at Tule Lake would be judged by the success or failure of the project farm. And to keep enough people working on the farm over the course of the 1942 growing season, Shirrell would need every ounce of his ability to finesse WRA-internee relations, as well as nearly all of the official powers of persuasion at his disposal.

Underscoring the significance the WRA accorded to agricultural production at the Tule Lake Center, camp officials made a substantial investment in vegetable seed in early June 1942, including a huge purchase of $80,000 in seed potatoes.[1] Correspondingly, Shirrell sent as many of the first residents as he could to the farm to prepare the soil for planting. By the mid-month, about 2,500 acres of prime black, lake-bottom land was ready for planting. Facing the short growing season in the Klamath Basin, it would take a great deal of luck to plant vegetables, especially potatoes so late in June, and have a decent crop to harvest in the fall. Time was of the essence.

---

[1] *The Tulean Dispatch*, June 19, 1942.

Accordingly, on June 19, Elmer Shirrell made a direct personal appeal to the residents of the camp through an extra issue of *The Tulean Dispatch*, calling on every able-bodied person sixteen years of age and older—and not working at another job—to help with the planting. "We are trying to plant a potato and vegetable crop for food for the colony," Shirrell informed internees. "The land is ready. We have $80,000 worth of seed. We need laborers for the job of planting. If we are to eat fresh vegetables, we must have people to help plant them right now. A few days delay means no crop because the growing season is so short at this 4,000 foot altitude."[2] It was a message that Shirrell would reiterate throughout the summer and fall of 1942: unless internees volunteered to work on the camp farm, there was a strong likelihood that the Tule Lake Center would face food shortages during the long, cold winter.

Accompanying Shirrell's appeal to evacuees' sense of duty to the Tule Lake camp agricultural project, the camp director unmistakably sought to use his administrative authority to coerce reluctant evacuees into the vast fields of the project farm. On June 24, 1942, internees must have been shocked to learn that the camp administration had decided that a levy of twenty dollars a month would be charged to evacuees who did not join the WRA Work Corps. An additional twenty dollar a month levy would be charged to each member of the offending persons'

[2] Ibid.

family.[3] Faced with this unexpected levy, few Japanese Americans were in a position to defy the WRA by refusing to sign up for the Work Corp.

The true irony of the situation was not lost on the evacuees. Many had spent their lives working in agriculture against staggering obstacles to carve out a place for themselves in America. Now they were being held responsible for a farm which was not their own, with Caucasian bosses whose experience in farming for the most part paled against theirs, and they were asked to share their expertise and hard labor for sixteen dollars a month. The alternative was a levy of twenty dollars a month for every member of the family. Undoubtedly adding to the insult were the eleven guard towers surrounding the vast fields.[4]

In the last week of June 1942, coinciding with the huge influx of evacuees from the Sacramento Assembly Center, enough workers did show up on the project farm to avert the disaster predicted by the WRA administration. Internees planted 1,057 acres of Honschol barley, a variety suitable for both animal feed and malting, 208 acres of onions and 827 acres of potatoes, and smaller crops of carrots, lettuce, turnips, peas, beets, and cabbages including nappa, a tasty variety of cabbage particularly favored by Japanese people.[5]

---

[3] *The Tulean Dispatch,* June 24, 1942: "In fairness to the community as a whole the $20 charge will be levied against each person who is eligible for membership in the WRA Work Corps but who chooses not to join and thus not to contribute to community production and against each persons dependents." The article also pointed out that "enlistment in the Work Corp is voluntary and simply means that enlistee is willing to do constructive work for his community and country. In return for the voluntary acceptance of these obligations, the WRA agrees to provide enlistees with an opportunity for useful work and to supply both the enlistees and their families with adequate shelter, food, education and health services."

[4] Ross and Ross, *Second Kinenhi,* 72.

[5] *The Tulean Dispatch,* August 3, 1942.

With the 1942 crop finally in the ground, WRA officials undoubtedly breathed a collective sigh of relief. The work, however, had just begun; the crops would need expert management and thousands of hours of labor to be successful. The Klamath Basin is a desert, and irrigation is the life's blood of any agricultural effort. Keeping the crops of the project farm properly watered was a full time job for hundreds of workers, along with the intensive weed and pest management necessary.

Rising dissatisfaction with rations among evacuees working on the camp farm, however, threatened the success of the year's harvest. Evacuees were expected to work a full eight-hour day, five days a week along with a half-day on Saturday. Most jobs were in the hot sun and labor intensive, and by mid-summer 1942, many evacuees felt they were working on insufficient provisions.[6] The light breakfast, served before farm workers jumped on the trucks transporting them to the project farm, was a particular source of dissatisfaction. Clearly aware of mounting tension over rations, on August 12, Shirrell emphasized the WRA's largess; "there was plenty of food in the city" the director told the camp newspaper, "and there was no excuse for any residents to go hungry."[7] Frustration nonetheless boiled over on August 15, when a group of farm workers refused to board the trucks in protest of being served tea and toast for breakfast.

Support for the spontaneous work stoppage quickly spread. Trucks loaded with workers leaving for the farm were restrained by the strikers. After hasty

---

[6] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 40-42.

[7] *The Tulean Dispatch*, August 12, 1942. Shirrell declared that the problem had been one of procurement mix ups which were a result of the huge influx of residents, food for 11,000 had been ordered when actual numbers of residents were 15,000, and that the problems had been corrected.

deliberations, a group of representatives informed the farm supervisor that there would be no work on the project farm: workers were on strike! Meetings held with the WRA administration that afternoon resulted in assurances of more and better food in the mess halls. Indeed, seeking to diffuse the tense situation, the assistant project steward emphasized to the *Tulean Dispatch* that "there is plenty of food for everyone."[8] Since the following day was a Sunday, farm workers reluctantly agreed to go back to work on Monday, August 17. Other grievances went unresolved, however, including payment of back wages (workers had received no wages—some for two months' work) and clothing allowances.

The August 15 strike represented the first significant work stoppage at the Tule Lake Camp. Equally significant, however, was the spontaneous mass meeting of residents, held around an outdoor stage on the evening of Sunday, August 16.[9] During the meeting, disgruntled farm workers attempted to gain support for a camp-wide work stoppage. Pressed for such a commitment, the great majority of internees recoiled in fear of FBI informants (*inu*) rumored to be in the crowd, who might betray those who spoke up in support of a general strike to the authorities. Reflecting a conservative unwillingness on the part of most Tuleans to coordinate a major confrontation with the WRA, the meeting broke up without a consensus and with hard feelings all around.[10] In any case, the following morning the mess halls served a hardy breakfast.

---

[8] *The Tulean Dispatch*, August 15, 1942.
[9] Ibid, 42.
[10] Ibid, 42. This is a classic example of the type of work done by Thomas's operatives in the camps.

Over the summer of 1942, the crops of the project farm fared much better than the evacuees. The growing season was one of the most perfect in Klamath Basin history. There were no killer frosts which almost always threaten crops, especially in late June. The summer was hot with characteristic cool desert nights, and warm weather lingered into the fall, allowing crops to ripen perfectly. The WRA and camp director Shirrell had taken a calculated risk in the spring by making a substantial purchase of vegetable and grain seed. Given the quality of the soil and the expertise of the work force, Shirrell hoped that the captive work force, so many of them Issei farmers from California, could produce a crop on short notice and in short growing days.

The 1942 harvest, however, far exceeded in tonnage and quality anything which could have been reasonably hoped for. It was by all accounts a bumper crop. On August 31, the *Tulean Dispatch* reported that large-scale marketing of vegetables was underway, with a railcar of turnips shipped from the packing house to the Poston, Arizona relocation camp. With construction of a second packing house nearing completion, the *Dispatch* noted that within a few weeks, beets, peas, spinach and, of course, potatoes would be marketed.[11] Three days later, the *Dispatch* reported that "huge quantities of produce were shipped to the Colorado River Basin projects located in Parker and Gila River, Arizona."[12]

As early as September 29, with only a fraction of the crop harvested, *The Tulean Dispatch* could thus report that "a huge pool of funds has accumulated from

---

[11] "Vegetables Shipped," *The Tulean Dispatch*, August 31, 1942.
[12] "Farm Products Being Shipped," *The Tulean Dispatch*, September 3, 1942.

the proceeds from the bumper crop."[13] With the bumper crop going out of the project farm at a handsome profit, Shirrell announced that the daily food ration would be raised from forty to forty-five cents per person. Surplus vegetables were being sent to other relocation centers, Shirrell added, but "no vegetables would be sold on the open market."[14]

As with spring planting, however, WRA officials were deeply concerned that sufficient workers were not readily volunteering to work on the project farm during the harvest. In addition to field workers, the packing sheds were short on manpower, and even with modern equipment, the tremendous flow of produce was being hampered. By early October, it was obvious that there was no chance that the bulk of the huge bounty of vegetables could be harvested before the onset of winter froze them in the ground.

Facing an impending financial disaster, the WRA initiated an increasingly repressive campaign of labor coercion. Shirrell explicitly warned workers against absenteeism. "All workers" he told the camp newspaper, "are required to fulfill their entire work quota of hours."[15] More significantly, the arrival of over 4,000 evacuees to the Tule Lake Camp in late June, along with subsequent improvements in the Center's infrastructure provided Elmer Shirrell with a larger, more manipulable labor pool than had been available during spring planting. Accordingly, the director held

---

[13] "Farm Funds Accumulate," *The Tulean Dispatch*, September 29, 1942. This article reminded internees that the WRA was "authorized to dispose of by public or private sale, commodities produced, the proceeds of which shall be deposited in a special fund and thereafter shall remain available to the WRA."

[14] "Monthly Food Rations Raised," *The Tulean Dispatch,* August 28, 1942. Internees must have scoffed at the nickel increase in food ration per day. Shirrell's statement that no produce would be sold on the open market would later prove to be untrue.

[15] "Enlistees Must Work 8 Hours," *The Tulean Dispatch*, August 29, 1942.

an impromptu assembly at the recently opened high school on October 7. Citing the "emergency," Shirrell made an impassioned appeal for students to put down their books and report to the project farm to help with the harvest.[16]

Three days later, 600 patriotic and eager high school students stormed the project farm, representing slightly more than 25 percent of the center's high school students. Taking no chances, Shirrell ordered the high school closed for the harvest emergency. Teachers and assistants were sent to the fields with the students, to act as foremen and timekeepers. With the fresh enthusiastic young work force harvest production boomed. On the first day that the students worked at project farm, no less than seven rail cars were sent out loaded with potatoes or beets, and men loading the rail cars were reportedly bogged down by the pace of the harvesting.[17]

For two weeks the high school students made good progress on the camp farm, with 105 rail cars of vegetables leaving the project for destinations to the south and east, and many more tons filling camp storage facilities.[18] Adult residents, however, especially parents of high school-age internees, were anxious for their children to return to school. On Friday October 23, a committee representing parents and other interested adults approached director Shirrell and asked that the high school be opened on the following Monday.

With acres of vegetables still in the field, and in light of the cheap labor the high school students provided—$12 a month on a pro rated scale—Shirrell rejected

---

[16] "Students To Aid Crop Harvest," *The Tulean Dispatch*, October 7, 1942.
[17] "600 Students Storm Project Farm," *The Tulean Dispatch*, October 10, 1942.
[18] "105 Carloads Produce Sent," *The Tulean Dispatch*, October 23, 1942. This number of railcar loads represents over $100,000 worth of produce.

the committee's request. Instead, underscoring the WRA's willingness to subordinate its duty to public education to the exigencies of the harvest, the director offered the representatives a clever compromise. If *they* could come up with seventy-five volunteers to replace the high school kids on the farm, the school would open on Monday. In other words, Shirrell sought to displace responsibility for coercing internees into working on the harvest; by using the empty classrooms as a form of leverage, the director attempted to induce concerned students' relatives to work on the WRA's behalf by pressuring fellow-internees to volunteer for fieldwork.

When Monday arrived, however, the high school students were back at the farm bright and early. The call for seventy-five volunteers to take the place of the youths and allow them to go back to school had come up short. As a result, the high school students devoted yet another week to the project farm. Finally, with the end of the harvest in sight and a huge bounty of vegetables already shipped or safely in storage, the project high school reopened on Monday, November 2. Having saved a huge percentage of the 1942 crop and secured hundreds of thousands of dollars in profits for the WRA, the students received about nine dollars each.

Undoubtedly, the administration would have liked to keep the high school students on the farm until every last potato was harvested. Only the rising tide of protest among the adults in the project forced director Shirrell to allow the students to return to their formal education. After years of accusations that Japanese farmers were not "playing fair" in California by working their wives and children in the fields—while Caucasian farmers were forced to hire workers at prevailing wages—a

profound irony permeated the agricultural project at Tule Lake, as it was the Japanese American adolescents who stepped in and saved the harvest for the bulging coffers of the WRA. Already feeling betrayed and powerless, the closing of the high school deepened the sense of alienation that filled the Tule Lake Center.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the high school students, WRA officials estimated that the immense harvest would last until mid-November. A survey taken on November 2 indicated there were still one hundred and forty acres of potatoes, along with thirty acres of beets, forty acres of turnips, sixty acres of carrots, thirty acres of parsnips, forty acres of cabbages, 2500 tons of rutabagas, many acres of celery, and various other vegetables yet to be harvested. Alarmed by the acreage yet unharvested, the WRA promptly appealed for fifty more farm workers, and the farm placement officer threatened residents that unless a sufficient labor force could be marshaled, the administration would close the high school again.[19]

Responding to the WRA's appeal, in a shameless display of grandstanding, the entire staff of *The Tulean Dispatch* jumped on the truck to the project farm for one day of harvesting. Not surprisingly, the effort was announced in an article on November 6, followed by a bubbly article two days later in which members of the staff of twenty four related their enjoyment at working in the countryside.[20]

More significantly, one hundred volunteers from the recreation department appeared at the farm on the morning of November 11. The mercury had dropped to

---

[19] "50 More Farm Workers Needed," *The Tulean Dispatch*, November 3, 1942.
[20] "We're Rolling Up Our Sleeves," *The Tulean Dispatch*, November 6, 1942; "We're going to see that our little brothers and sisters have plenty to eat this winter" in ibid; "Dispatch Staff Digs Potatoes And Likes It!" in ibid, November 9, 1942.

nine degrees Fahrenheit that morning, but the weather stayed fair for another week and with the help of the "rec" department, the last of the crop was harvested and safely moved into storage.[21]

Throughout the fall and winter of 1942, the two packing sheds of the project worked full time, sending out railcars loaded with fresh vegetables. First the early vegetables, including beans, Chinese cabbage, lettuce, green onions, radishes, rutabagas, spinach, Swiss chard, beets, and turnips were shipped to the relocation centers and sold on the open market. Potatoes were run through the packing shed directly from the field as orders came in. The bulk of the potato tonnage was put in storage units to be used by the center and shipped to other centers and sold on the open market as orders came in.

In addition to vegetables, the Tule Lake Relocation Center was also involved in animal husbandry. In the fall of 1942, while farm crews were harvesting the crops of the vast fields, workers installed two key elements of the project, both on a huge scale. Starting the last week of September and the first week in October, pigs and chickens became part of the project. On September 28 and 29, 560 pigs arrived at pens prepared for the operation, making Tule Lake the only WRA center with pigs.[22] The Tule Lake chicken operation was massive, covering the equivalent of three city blocks with twenty coops two hundred feet long and two brooder houses of the same length. In fact, with 45,000 chickens, the poultry farm was one of the largest in the

---

[21] "Cold Hits Colony," *The Tulean Dispatch,* November 11. 1942; "Rec's Aid In Harvest," in ibid, November 11, 1942.
[22] "560 Hogs Arive Here," *The Tulean Dispatch,* October 2, 1942.

west. Project chickens produced 1,500 eggs a day and 9,000 pounds of meat a month. The primary diet of both pigs and chickens was grain raised on the project farm. [23]

Although start up costs for the chicken and pig projects were substantial, after the massive 1942 harvest, the WRA did not lack venture capital. Looking at revenue from potatoes alone, each railcar that left the project loaded with potatoes held between $1,000 and $1,200 worth of produce at prevailing prices.[24] In 1942, the Tule Lake Center took a bounty of potatoes off the 827 acres devoted to the tuber. At 400 hundredweight bags per acre, a modest estimate of tonnage, the value of the potato crop alone was approximately one million dollars.[25] Further, if the mess halls averaged serving each resident of the Tule Lake Center eight ounces of potatoes a day, 75 acres of potatoes would have been more than enough for the needs of the camp for one year.

In late October of 1942, Shirell invited a group of representatives from the Klamath Falls Chamber of Commerce to visit the camp, with the intention of discrediting rumors that the Tule Lake Center pampered internees. Undoubtedly cognizant of the racial animosity that pervaded the area, Shirrell demonstrated to his guests the restrictive conditions under which the internees lived their day to day lives. The director pointed out that with few exceptions the Japanese were confined to the boundaries of the camp, and were monitored by troops with the aid of vehicles and seven watchtowers with powerful searchlights. Japanese who were allowed to cross

---

[23] "Poultry Plant Will House 40,000 Hens," *The Tulean Dispatch,* November 4, 1942.
[24] "Potatoes: Russet Burbanks, $3.25-$3.35 cwt, US No 1" *Herald and News,* Nov 11, 1942. A railcar loaded with one hundred pound burlap sacks of potatoes held 360 such sacks.
[25] The exact number using the $3.25 price per cwt. is $992,400.

the adjacent railroad tracks to work at the pig farm, poultry farm, and vegetable processing sheds were always under guard. In response to complaints that internees were seen driving farm trucks on the highway at high speeds and thumbing their noses at locals they met on the road, Shirrell admitted that it was necessary for truck loads of workers and produce to travel on the highway to and from the units of the project farm and the processing sheds. Shirrell pointed out that a private road was under construction, however, which would make travel by internees on the public highway unnecessary.

Chamber representatives also had the opportunity to engage Shirrell in a question-and-answer session regarding the camp, and the director was queried about rumored labor problems at the camp—particularly on the project farm. Shirrell acknowledged that labor problems were not uncommon at the center. Obscuring his own consistent efforts to use administrative authority to coerce evacuees into working on the project farm, Shirell informed the group that he had absolutely no authority to force anyone onto the project farm.[26]

Similarly, when the group questioned Shirrell about vegetable sales from the project farm, the director asserted that although most of the produce was sold to the other relocation centers, a very few surplus vegetables were being sold on the open market. Shirrell was vague when pressed for statistics on produce sales, maintaining that sales were handled from an office in San Francisco, and that he was not familiar with the numbers. The director's vague response was at least partially disingenuous;

---

[26] "Partial Report Made on Chamber Probe Of Condition at WRA Tule Lake Center," *Herald and News*, October 22, 1942.

after a season of constantly pressuring internees to work on the project farm, director Shirrell may not have known the specifics of outside sales, but he was certainly aware of the huge financial success of the season.

The significance of the Tule Lake Center farm was perhaps most clearly revealed during a three-day farm conference held at Tule Lake from October 21-23, 1942. Along with three regional directors of the WRA, the directors of marketing and production traveled from Washington D. C. to Tule Lake, where they inspected the project farm and discussed problems facing agriculture at the Tule Lake Center. Oblivious to the internees' rising dissatisfaction with the WRA's coercive labor policies, the visiting officials generated four conclusions for the 1943 growing season: a) continue producing food to keep the center as close to 100 percent self-sufficient as possible; b) continue to produce staple crops to supplement the other relocation centers; c) sell on the open market, and, most importantly; d) expand the project farm with additional acreage.[27] Thus, after a season of turmoil, living in a concentration camp, laboring on land to which they could claim no ownership, and securing huge profits in which they could not share, internees would be expected to produce even more in the coming year.

---

[27] "Farm Confab Makes Plans," *The Tulean Dispatch,* October 23, 1942.

Chapter 4

A Question of Loyalty

As the tumultuous year of 1942 came to a close the evacuees could look back on the first half year at the Tule Lake Center with relief that they had survived the poor living conditions, and perhaps with a degree of confidence that conditions would steadily improve. Although the hundreds of evacuees who labored so successfully on the project farm from the spring through the harvest were not rewarded monetarily for the profit their labor produced, at the very least it would seem they deserved a well earned rest before repeating the process in 1943. The early months of 1943, held something quite different in store for the residents of Tule Lake. This chapter discusses a questionnaire developed by the WRA and the War Department early in 1943. The Loyalty Registration, as it came to be known, would bring more trauma to the residents of the Tule Lake Center than any issue faced in the first six months. Few residents would go unscathed and the very nature of the center would be changed by a question of loyalty.

According to WRA national director Dillon Myer the relocation centers were meant to be temporary stopovers as West Coast Japanese were granted permanent leave and relocated to communities east of the prohibited West Coast zones. Myer assumed relocation would be the answer to the Japanese problem in America.[1]

---

[1] "Summary Notes on Segregation Conference of WRA Officials," Denver Colorado, July 26-27, 1943. Transcribed by WRA, JARCR/CU, Box 11, File 1. Myer and his staff reiterated their belief in relocation many times. See also, "Partial Report Made on Chamber probe of Center," *Klamath Falls*

Believing that West Coast Japanese had failed to assimilate into American culture because they lived in tightly knit self sustaining enclaves, relocation through permanent leave would disperse the Japanese population into new communities where they would be forced to assimilate into American society. Myer and his staff believed that permanent relocation would be vastly preferable to life in a relocation project.[2]

The pilot program of the relocation policy was the seasonal harvest leave granted to internees in the summer and fall of 1942. In an arrangement made early in the spring of 1942, with western sugar beet growers, a substantial number of internees left the permanent centers to help with the harvest in the western states outside the Western Defense Command-designated military restricted zones. Although enjoying a degree of mobility denied the majority of internees, Japanese Americans who left the Tule Lake Center to help with the harvest nonetheless faced significant challenges. "Our grand abode looks like something out of the Kentucky hills," wrote Ted Shigeno from Corvallis, Montana. Like most Japanese working outside internment camps, Shigeno endured privation as well as frequent racial animosity from area residents. There was, "No running water, no electricity, no sink

---

Herald and News, October 14, 1942. Tule Lake director Shirrell defines Tule Lake as a "Relocation Project" in his interview with representatives of the Klamath Falls Oregon Chamber of Commerce.

[2] *The Relocation Program: A Guidebook for the Residents of Relocation Centers*. (New York: Ams Press, 1975 [1943]). Reprint of the 1943 edition published by the WRA. In this pamphlet distributed to all the relocation centers, Myer made his opinion on relocation clear. "In normal American communities you will have a far better opportunity than in the relocation center to develop the kind of home and family life you really want." By late summer of 1942 the WRA had developed a specific application procedure for permanent leave from the Centers.

in the kitchen and no bathing facilities." Shigeno continued, "we were welcomed with open arms at church, but were tossed out of a couple restaurants."[3]

Despite the trickle of internees leaving projects for permanent relocation, by the fall of 1942 Myers' coveted permanent relocation policy had met with very limited success. Nothing about the program worked smoothly. In particular the process of application for permanent leave was extremely cumbersome. First, applicants had to have a legitimate job offer on the outside and living accommodations arranged in their new destination. They were then submitted to an exhaustive loyalty investigation by the FBI, involving a detailed report on the applicants' actions in the relocation center and a signed affidavit affirming his or her loyalty from the Project Director. Approval for each application was granted or denied by National Director J. Edgar Hoover, then confirmed by Western Defense Command headquarters.[4] Not surprisingly, the lengthy interim from application to approval—the process routinely took three months to complete—often resulted in lost job opportunities.

Not fully aware of resistance to permanent relocation, Myer made a short visit to the Tule Lake Center in October of 1942 to promote the WRA leave program. He announced that all colonists could obtain indefinite leave and that, "we expect many of the colonists within the center to plan on going outside."[5] Myer cautioned applicants to be patient with the WRA. "This type of leave includes both citizens and

---

[3] "Evacuees Having Differing Opinions of Treatment," *Herald and News.* September 30, 1942. See also: "Varied Reports Made in Letters by Farm Workers: Wages, Living Conditions, Experiences, Related," *The Tulean Dispatch*, October 14, 1942.
[4] Jacoby, *Tule Lake from Relocation to Segregation,* 61-64.
[5] "Myer Explains New WRA Policy," *The Tulean Dispatch,* October 12, 1942.

aliens; the applicants must be cleared through the office of FBI and the Record Office of the WRA."[6]

Myer was determined to liberalize the permanent leave program. A method had to be found to make it easier for loyal internees to gain quick approval of leave applications. He got his chance to streamline his permanent leave system through an alliance between the WRA and the War Department. In the summer of 1942, a change in American military policy began to evolve. After Pearl Harbor most Japanese Americans in the military were summarily dismissed with no specific reasons offered, and thrown into the camps. Apparently the government felt no explanation was necessary. All potential Nisei draftees were classified IV-F, a category normally used for the physically unfit. In June of 1943 Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy informed Secretary of War Henry Stimson of a survey which indicated there were twenty-one thousand Japanese Americans of draft age who could be made eligible for military service.[7] Employing an outrageous stereotype, McCloy commented to the effect that Japanese Americans would make good troops because of the fanatical, fatalistic Japanese warrior philosophy. However, it was the propaganda and public relations value of Japanese troops which was most appealing to Stimson and the War Department began to look seriously at forming an all Japanese combat unit.[8]

Dillon S. Myer was thrilled with the idea of forming a Japanese-American military unit, and quick to point out that potential soldiers were not the only

---

[6] Ibid.
[7] Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 140.
[8] Ibid, 140

individuals languishing in the camps. Thousands of Japanese not eligible for the military could be employed in war production jobs outside the camps if a method could be developed for quickly determining the loyalty of each Japanese individual. Stimson concurred with Myer's assessment, and by January 1, 1943, the WRA and the War Department had agreed upon a joint plan to administer a loyalty registration of every Japanese evacuee over the age of seventeen. The registration would consist of two loyalty questionnaires, one for 21,000 male Nisei citizens, and one for the estimated fifty seven thousand other residents of the camps above the age of seventeen. Only the 3,396 individuals who had already applied for repatriation to Japan would be excluded from the Registration. Obviously the individuals who had applied for repatriation had sealed their fate on the disloyal side.[9]

When plans for the Registration became known at the Western Defense Command in San Francisco the engineers of the evacuation program were outraged. General DeWitt thought the Registration would ask the embarrassing question, "Why if Japanese Americans were loyal enough to serve in the army wouldn't they also be loyal enough to live on the West Coast?" Colonel Bendetsen thought it was fine to employ loyal Japanese in defense industries and the military. However the idea of determining loyalty by a questionnaire was ridiculously simplistic to Bendetsen. He felt undesirables would simply lie on a loyalty questionnaire, and loyalty should continue to be determined from intelligence-data.[10]

---

[9] Ibid, 138; Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 53-83.

[10] Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 140. On the subject of an all Nisei combat unit Bendetsen stated: "I see no objection to raising a combat team. I think it would be a ten-strike on the

Notwithstanding the protests of the Western Defense Command, the joint plan of the WRA and the War Department went forward quickly. Newspapers at the relocation centers carried an announcement by Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson on January 30, 1943, entitled, "Nisei were once again eligible to join the U.S. Army."[11] The paper reported that the new program of the War Department included a provision for all 'loyal' individuals of Japanese ancestry to contribute toward winning the war through employment outside the camps in war production, as well as military service. Dillon Myer also offered his congratulations to the internees of the relocation camps. "I find deep satisfaction in the announcement today by Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson. This announcement makes January 29, 1943 the most significant date in the last ten months for persons of Japanese ancestry in the United States."[12]

The residents of the relocation camps became aware of the registration program on February 4, when the news broke that plans for an Army Nisei combat unit had been finalized. The War department had organized ten such recruiting teams, one for each of the relocation camps. Army recruiting personnel composed of a lieutenant, two sergeants and a corporal would be arriving at the centers to formally announce the mission of the new combat unit, the *Tulean Dispatch* reported. The

---

international relations side. As far as a contribution to the winning of the war is concerned, I don't think it amounts to a hill of beans either way and I'm sure nobody else does."

[11] "Nisei May Now Join U.S. Army: Stimson Issues Order, Program Enables Jobs in War Production" *The Tulean Dispatch.* January 30, 1943.

[12] "Significant Date," *The Tulean Dispatch,* January 30, 1943.

Nisei who wished to volunteer for service while the recruiting personnel were present would have the opportunity to do so.[13]

A second article in the *Dispatch* announced that a general registration of all evacuees 17 or more years of age would start the following week at all relocation centers. The registration consisted of two questionnaires, one for Nisei men qualified to volunteer for military service, and one for all other evacuees over the age of 17, including all first generation Japanese immigrants known as Issei.[14] According to the immigration laws of the time Issei were not eligible for citizenship in the United States. The objective of the registration was to speed up the leave program by obtaining clearance on a large number of employable loyal evacuees *before* they applied for leave.

The questionnaire for non-Nisei male internees was titled, "War Relocation Authority Application for Leave Clearance." The logic of the title was obvious to National Director Myer and the WRA. However, to the residents of the camps, many who feared relocation and had no intention of leaving, the title Application for Leave Clearance was the first confusing step in the loyalty registration.[15]

The two almost identical registration questionnaires were long and complicated, consisting of thirty questions about everything from the number of relatives the individual had in Japan to what he or she liked to read. The critical

---

[13] "Army Combat Team Plans For Nisei Are Completed," *The Tulean Dispatch* November 4, 1943.
[14] "General Registration Will Begin Next Week," *The Tulean Dispatch* November 4, 1943.
[15] Michi Weglyn, *Years Of Infamy The Untold Story Of America's Concentration Camps* (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1976), 136.

loyalty questions were numbers 27 and 28. For Nisei men qualified to volunteer for military service the questions read:

> 27. Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?
>
> 28. Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any and all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any foreign government of organization?

For non-Nisei over the age of 17 the questions read:

> 27. If the opportunity presents itself and you are found qualified, would you be willing to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corps or the WAAC?
>
> 28. Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or other foreign government, power or organization?

The loyalty questions were seen as improper and unfair by both Issei and Nisei evacuees. Question 28 asking Japanese nationals to forswear all allegiance to the country of their birth and swear unqualified allegiance to a country where they were systematically barred from citizenship was problematic to the Issei. Those who answered yes would be without a country. Those who answered no would be deemed disloyal to America. Question 27 asking "Would you be willing to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corp," was especially confusing to Issei men. Why would they want to volunteer for a women's branch of the military? Many Issei parents were dubious about the War Department's change of heart regarding military service for the citizen Japanese. The Issei were terrified their sons were going to be sacrificed in suicide squads to spare Caucasian troops.[16]

---

[16] Ibid, 141

Nisei men were also shocked by the questionnaire. Had they not already shown tremendous loyalty by submitting to relocation in the camps? Just as with the Issei men, question 27 caused confusion for Nisei men. Many assumed that answering yes to question 27 was tantamount to volunteering for the Army.[17] They also could not be sure of the consequences of a no answer on question 27. Could a negative reply put them at the head of the list for the draft? In every camp the Nisei men were extremely bitter about having only one right restored, the right to go into harm's way for the country which had destroyed the dreams of their parents. If they did volunteer or were drafted, what would become of their Issei parents? Would they be allowed to stay in the camps or would they be permanently relocated to some ghetto to end up destitute and despised? Moreover, in the first few months of the permanent relocation program, there was no support system for evacuees leaving the centers for cities to the east. Any individual or family who applied and was granted permanent leave was on his own in a strange often hostile environment, unless he had friends or relatives near and in a position to help.[18]

Only a very small percentage of evacuees were in favor of the registration. Michi Nishiura Weglyn was a teenager when her family was relocated into the camps. She recalls in her powerful 1976 book *Years of Infamy*, "Patriots who roundly cheered the development were vastly outnumbered, and in centers where

---

[17] Ibid, 138.

[18] See *The Relocation Program: A Guidebook For Residents of Relocation Centers*, In the winter of 1943 the WRA began to set up field offices in principal Mid-Western and Eastern cities, (Chicago, Salt Lake City, Denver, Kansas City, Cleveland, New York) to assist internees out on permanent relocation.

feelings ran high, those who volunteered did so secretly, fleeing the camps in the dead of night."[19]

Although residents of all the relocation centers shared apprehension of permanent relocation, resistance to the program was particularly strong at Tule Lake.[20] Tule Lake was overwhelmingly made up of rural agriculturists from central California, with the core consisting of first generation (Issei) Japanese immigrants, whose opinions were crucial in developing the general attitudes of the community. Most of the Issei had come from very humble origins in Japan, and had come to America planning to amass a small fortune and return home to establish prosperous farms in their native villages. Few achieved their dreams of quick prosperity, and most settled into cultural enclaves and established families through marriage with younger women often imported as picture brides.

After decades of hard work and sacrifice, the Japanese Americans' relocation constituted a devastating economic reversal, and the idea of a new start as a low-level employee in a community to the east held no appeal for most Issei. Indeed, to many internees it seemed ridiculous for an elderly rural person to take an urban job and thus confront language and cultural barriers as well as isolation from his community. To the majority of rural California Issei, urban centers like Chicago or Kansas City seemed like the end of the world, and until the WRA allowed the

---

[19] Ibid, 136.
[20] "Preliminary Survey of Resistances to Resettlement At The Tule Lake Relocation Center." WRA Community Analysis Section, June 23, 1943, JARCR/CU, Box 19, File 11.

Japanese to return to their farms—a relatively short distance south—the internees were determined to stick it out at Tule Lake.[21]

The registration began at the ten relocation centers amid anguish and debate on how to respond to the critical loyalty questions. However in camps where residents felt less threatened, and a positive interaction between Caucasian staff and evacuees existed, registration progressed more smoothly, and a much higher percentage of positive responses were recorded.[22] The recruiting teams sent to the camps hammered home propaganda that this was a golden opportunity for the Nisei demonstrate their loyalty. The recruitment drive in the camps which was intended to produce 3,000 volunteers could only muster 1,181 volunteers for military service.[23] A stark contrast can be seen in Hawaii, where 10,000 Nisei gratefully living in relative freedom, and eager to show their loyalty, rushed to volunteer.[24]

In the camps where resistance to the registration was strongest the Project Directors were instructed to threaten inmates with severe penalties of up to twenty years in prison fines of $10,000 under the Espionage Act for interfering with the registration. Project Directors were also given permission to remove trouble makers disturbing the registration process, often mistakenly removing individuals without any evidence of wrongdoing.[25] Through these strong arm tactics registration was

---

[21] Ibid, 6.
[22] Ibid, 145. Weglyn also points out that camps farther to the east, such as Minidoka in Idaho, Topaz in Utah, and Amache and Rohwer in Arkansas, removed from the racial hostility of the West Coast registered in a more orderly manner. Also see Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation*, 70-79; Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 53-83.
[23] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 61.
[24] Weglyn, *Years of Infamy,* 144.
[25] On February 28, 1943 federal agents removed 28 persons from the two Gila Arizona, camps Butte and Canal.

completed on schedule at nine of the ten relocation centers. An aggregate of 10% of the residents of the camps where registration was completed on schedule, answered no to one or both of the crucial loyalty questions.[26]

Indeed Tule Lake was the sole camp not to complete the registration on schedule. Tule Lake was in a state of flux in the winter of 1943. An article appeared in *The Tulean Dispatch* on December 21, 1942, indicating that Project Director Elmer L. Shirrell would leave the project on December 27, to become head of the WRA Private Employment Division in Chicago.[27] Regardless of the battles of the first year at Tule Lake, Shirrell was extremely personable and generally admired and trusted by the evacuees. The *Dispatch* article noted the emotional and reciprocal tributes made by evacuees and Elmer Shirrell. "During the past week many farewell dinners in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Shirrell have been given by various organizations in the Project." The *Dispatch* continued, "When he spoke at dinner about his impending departure from the project where he resided ever since the first volunteer contingent arrived in late May, he lost control of his emotion and could not hold back tears when he bid farewell."[28]

Shirrells' successor, Harvey M. Coverley, left the regional office of the WRA to take the job at Tule Lake. Unlike Shirrell who spent considerable time in the evacuee living area visiting with residents, Coverley was formal and distant in his

---

[26] Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation,* 79. See also, Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 62-63. In *The Spoilage*, arguably the definitive study on the loyalty registration, Thomas and Nishimoto use bar graphs to show the percentages of yes and no answers at the various camps.
[27] "Shirrell To Leave December 27 For Position Of Evacuee Employment Head," *The Tulean Dispatch* December 21, 1942.
[28] Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation,* 74. Jacoby states, "It was generally felt that regional and national offices considered him (Shirrell) too soft as an administrator."

dealings with the Japanese, and preferred to administrate the camp from his office.[29] Coverley's first statement on the camp in *The Tulean Dispatch* was simply to recognize the advanced agricultural development and general superiority of the equipment such as trucks and farm implements. He did not mention the residents themselves.[30]

When the registration program was announced on February 4, 1943, Tule Lake residents began frenzied efforts to obtain solid information regarding exactly what they were registering for. Representative internee groups such as the Community Council and Planning Board bombarded Project Director Coverley with questions. Coverley deferred to Assistant Project Director J. O. Hayes, who had just returned from a registration orientation conference in Washington D.C. Incredibly, Hayes could add no details on the upcoming registration. Interviewed by *The Tulean Dispatch*, Hayes sidestepped the issue of registration, declaring that further clarification would be announced by the Army recruiting team due to arrive at the center on February 6.[31] A rumor spread in the camp that Hayes had not attended any of the meetings in Washington D.C., instead spending his time in the capital looking for a job in some other federal agency.[32]

The Army recruiting team eventually arrived on February 9. The next day just 24 hours before the registration was scheduled to begin, hastily organized

---

[29] Ibid, 74.
[30] "Tule Lake Project Most Advanced In Physical Aspect—Coverley," *The Tulean Dispatch*. January 5, 1943.
[31] "Army Combat Team Plans For Nisei Are Completed: Recruiting Personnel To Arrive On Project On Feb 6, Hayes Reports," *The Tulean Dispatch* February 4, 1943.
[32] Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation*, 73. According to Jacoby, Hayes was disgruntled by not being named Project Director at Tule Lake.

meetings between the recruiting team and various evacuee groups proved unsatisfactory in clarifying the ramifications of the registration. The recruiting team stuck to a predetermined script, emphasizing the 'golden opportunity' the registration provided for evacuees to get out of the relocation camps and show their loyalty to America. In only a few of these meetings did the recruiting team accept questions from the evacuees. Only standardized, anticipated questions, practiced in the recruiting team script, were answered. Once again important questions were left unanswered. Most importantly, the evacuees wanted a straight answer on the consequences of yes and no responses to the loyalty questions.[33]

The Issei population at Tule Lake was the most confused segment of the population. They requested a special public forum to discuss matters of intense personal importance to the Issei population. Project Director Coverley made a monumental error by refusing the request with an offhand comment that the loyalty decision was a private matter.[34] Coverley's lack of tact, sensitivity, or understanding of evacuee apprehension was typical of his management style. The issue was not complicated in Coverley's assessment; the evacuees were required to register and regardless of their answers they were going to register. The Issei were left feeling humiliated, frustrated and angry. Evacuees were forced to formulate their own answers as to what they were registering for and why it was considered necessary. The overwhelming sentiment of the center, articulated in dozens of informal

---

[33] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 73; Weglyn, *Years of Infamy*, 146; Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation*, 74.
[34] Weglyn, *Years of Infamy*, 146.

discussions throughout the camp, was that the registration was another injustice forced upon them.[35]

Registration also exacerbated divisions within the Japanese-American community. The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) came in for extreme criticism at Tule Lake. The JACL had always been unpopular at Tule Lake by the majority of the internees, especially the Issei. This deep-seated resentment went back to the decision to relocate West Coast Japanese. The JACL had advocated the measure as necessary for national security and safety of the Japanese population. JACL members had also been prominent at Tule Lake from the opening of the camp. The first group of 446 volunteer evacuees from the Northwest who came to facilitate the opening of the center was predominantly JACL members.[36] The JACL came out early in favor of the loyalty registration, and advised that eligible young citizens volunteer for the Army. JACL members were labeled as "Inu" (a term that literally means dog in Japanese but in camp jargon stood for "rat fink" and "stool pigeon.") In short JACL members were seen as collaborators with the War Department, the WRA and especially the camp administration.[37] Battle lines were being drawn at Tule Lake.

Undeterred by rising tension among the internees, Coverley was determined to make a good showing of his first important assignment at the Tule Lake Center. Notwithstanding the confusion and mishandling of the issue, the loyalty registration was on the agenda of the WRA the War Department. In a letter to the project

---

[35] Ibid, 146-150.
[36] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 73.
[37] "Planning Board Probes JACL," *The Tulean Dispatch*. February 8, 1943.

directors, Dillon Myer gave instructions that registration was to become the "No 1 priority." The National Director also reminded project directors to announce "registration is compulsory."[38] Coverley decided the first step in facilitating the registration was to close the project schools for the duration of the registration process. High school teachers were assigned along with their assistants to administer the registration questionnaire.[39] The administration estimated schools would be closed about one week.[40]

The Tulean Dispatch printed a registration supplement to the February 11 issue of the camp newspaper. Rudimentary hypothetical questions were fielded with more of the vague, autocratic answers evacuees had become familiar with. For example, one question asked, "Who must register?" Evacuees had known for at least a week that every resident over the age of 17 was required to register. Another question fielded by the *Dispatch* was: "Why must we register?" The answer: "Because the Washington officials have issued instructions that registration is compulsory, except for those who have requested repatriation."[41] Residents were also informed of their paper work obligation in no uncertain terms.

> All male citizens 17 years and up will file two copies of forms DS8 and 304A two copies of WRA 126A, and four copies of WRA 26. All male citizens

---

[38] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 58. The National Director also asked Project Directors to make it clear to evacuees that "we are not going to force people to relocate when they do not want to be relocated" This statement would later prove to be a lie for some evacuees and problematic for others, for instance evacuees who answered yes at Tule Lake and refused to leave when Tule Lake became the segregation center for "disloyals." See Also: "Mass Registration Begins in Project," *The Tulean Dispatch.* February 8, 1943.

[39] "Mass Registration Begins In Project: Everyone Over 17 to Register," *The Tulean Dispatch*, February 11, 1943.

[40] "Schools Will Close During Registration," *The Tulean Dispatch,* February 8, 1943.

[41] "Registration Rules: Please Keep This For Your Information," *The Tulean Dispatch,* February 11, 1943 Supplement. Underline added.

> between the ages of 17 and 37 will fill out two copies of form DS8 165 and DSS154 when they are interviewed by the Army representatives at the offices established by them. All female citizens and alien males and females over 17 years of age will file four copies of WRA form 26.[42]

Registration began on schedule on February 11, 1943.[43] At breakfast on that morning, in the blocks where registration was to commence, the two teachers assigned to administer the questionnaire announced the names of evacuees expected to register that day. After breakfast the two teachers and their aides, were waiting at those predetermined block manager's offices to register the residents.[44]

The administration's logistics acumen could not substitute for the negative manner in which the administration interacted with evacuees on the registration. Indeed, by all accounts, the registration was a disaster. Seemingly everything that could go wrong did go wrong. Resistance at Tule Lake far surpassed any of the other centers: in fact only at Tule Lake did resistance to the registration manifest itself as a collective movement.[45] With the influential Issei leading the way, resistance to the registration was widespread and well organized. Whole blocks vowed to stand together in refusal to register. Many evacuees rushed to request repatriation. One block conducted a poll in which the majority voted to sign up for repatriation. Tule Lake residents were not going to commit in writing to a questionnaire they did not fully understand.[46]

---

[42] "Mass Registration Begins In Project," *The Tulean Dispatch* February 11, 1943. Underline added.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 74.
[45] Ibid, 72; Weglyn, *Years of Infamy,* 134-155.
[46] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 77-83.

The administration responded by bombarding evacuees with propaganda in *The Tulean Dispatch* to the effect that the registration was a good thing for them no matter what their status.[47] After three days very few evacuees had come forward to complete the registration questionnaire. Furthermore resistance was not breaking down as it did in the other camps, rather at Tule Lake resistance was becoming more entrenched by the day. After a week the WRA knew Tule Lake was a serious problem. Project Director Coverley took to appearing at the mess halls during the lunch meal, escorted by Army officers to read off the names of draft age men due to register. To stem the tide of residents applying for repatriation to avoid the loyalty registration, the administration announced in an extra edition of *The Tulean Dispatch*, "All citizens, both male and female, 17 years of age and over, must register whether or not they have or intend to apply for repatriation."[48]

Stepped up pressure from the WRA and the War Department, which had broken flimsy resistance at the other centers, seemed to strengthen internees resolve at Tule Lake. WRA National Director Myer announced in *The Dispatch*, that Section 35 of the United States Code provided for a fine of $10,000 and or a jail term of not more than 20 years for willfully obstructing recruitment or registration at the center.[49] Corresponding with Myer's announcement on February 18, an Army

---

[47] "Sgt. Tsukahara Hopes Many Serve: Says Army is Educational," *The Tulean Dispatch,* Feburary 12, 1943. Tsukahara was the Japanese American sergeant at Tule Lake as part of the recruiting team. He painted a rosy picture of Army life. See also: "Resettlement Plans Are Culminated By Mass Sigh-Up." *The Tulean Dispatch,* February 12, 1943.In this article the WRA continued to show misunderstanding for the resettlement issue. They were under the impression that the great majority of evacuees would rather be on the outside in some Eastern city.

[48] "Citizen Repatriate Registration," *The Tulean Dispatch*, February 20, 1943.

[49] "Registration Penalty," *The Tulean Dispatch,* February 18, 1943.

representative, Major Marshall, arrived at the project from Washington D. C. Major Marshall had orders to get the center into compliance with the registration.[50]

Marshall launched into a nasty attack of the residents of the Tule Lake Center. He framed the situation bluntly and tactlessly, saying in effect that Japanese at the center had a choice to make. They could stand with the United States or against it. The registration, he emphasized, was not a debatable matter. "The residents do not have a bargaining position with respect to it. Those who refuse to register will have no complaint if such refusal is taken as ipso facto proof of disloyalty."[51] The Major added that if the residents of Tule Lake could not meet the government halfway on the registration program, and in fact worked to defeat the program, public opinion could well turn against them and become hostile. The Major summed up his tirade against the residents by reminding them they were totally isolated in their intransigence. "I am advised by Washington that registration has been completed at some centers and that the others are more that halfway completed. Only at Tule Lake do residents have the false and misleading idea that they can treat registration on a take-it-or-leave-it basis."[52] After the events of the past year, the threat of a hostile American Caucasian public held no terror for the evacuees, and only served to remind them, especially the Issei farmers from central California, they did not want to go out into the public.

---

[50] "Registration Is Clarified: Army Major Says Choice Must Be Made," *The Tulean Dispatch,* February 18, 1942.
[51] "Major Says Defeat of Program Could Create Hostile Public," *The Tulean Dispatch,* February 18, 1942.
[52] "Registration is Clarified," *The Tulean Dispatch,* February 18, 1943.

This ploy by the WRA and the War Department to bring in a big gun to intimidate evacuees into complying with the registration and affirming loyalty to the country resulted in the opposite effect at worst and no positive effect at best. Every day in February seemingly brought another crisis at Tule Lake. Each event served to galvanize the residents' resolve. On February 19 after another day in which the great majority of those scheduled for registration failed to appear, a delegation of thirty-four Nisei from Block 42 marched to the administration building to present a petition demanding the right to apply for expatriation.[53] As a crowd of Block 42 residents gathered behind them, officials met the young men outside the administration offices, and refused to take applications for expatriation. Administration officials attempted unsuccessfully to persuade the young men to register, and finally the entire crowd dispersed without further incident. Once again Project Director Coverley proceeded in a tactless manner. The next day the young men whose names were on the petition were notified they were expected to register immediately. Backed by the entire Block none of the young men came forward to register.

Harold Stanley Jacoby, chief of internal security at the Tule Lake Center remembered subsequent events in his 1996 memoir.

> Feeling that such an open flouting of a 'legal order' should not be ignored, the administration made arrangements for a risky, if not dangerous, operation designed to arrest and remove the offending individuals from camp. On Sunday afternoon, a platoon or two from the military police company were trucked in and deployed around Block 42, while my two Caucasian internal security assistants and I moved through the block to arrest the offenders. We encountered no difficulty from either the crowd that gathered or the young men. The latter were all packed up and quite ready to be arrested and transported as local heroes. A self-appointed body of Isseis stationed

[53] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 77. Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation* 77.

themselves between the assembled crowd and the soldiers to discourage any demonstration by the crowd.[54]

Obviously Jacoby had misgivings about the operation and felt fortunate that the ill-advised move had not gotten out of hand. He knew, however, there would be serious consequences from the unnecessary show of force he concluded, "My associates and I completed our work by loading the 'prisoners' onto the trucks for their triumphant ride; the military police withdrew in orderly fashion, and the potential danger was averted. But the operation did not go unnoticed."[55]

By calling in the military Harvey Coverley lost any chance for retaining control of the Tule Lake Center. Coverley set a fateful precedent by sending in heavily armed soldiers to apprehend thirty-four seventeen and eighteen-year-old boys. No one at Tule Lake Center would forget the events of Sunday evening, February 21, 1943.[56] The arrests sent the camp into a panic. Many saw it as a challenge and vowed never to register. Immediately petitions were circulated calling for a general strike. At an emergency meeting of the combined Evacuee Planning Board and Camp Council, cooler heads prevailed regarding a strike. The respected members of the two representative groups concluded that a general strike would likely have disrupted any semblance of normal life left in the center. A delegation was appointed to negotiate with the Director for the release of the thirty-four

---

[54] Jacoby, 78.
[55] Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation*, 77-79. See also, "15 Tuleans Are Sentenced To Isolation Camp In Utah," *The Tulean Dispatch*, April 3, 1943. In a sort of kangaroo trial presided over by Project Director Coverley, he sentenced 15 of the original 34 boys to banishment at Moab Utah Isolation Camp. Some came back to Tule Lake When It became the Segregation Center.
[56] Weglyn, *Years of Infamy*, 147-152.

unfortunate young men, and equally importantly to establish some sort of a working relationship with the administration.[57]

With one last opportunity to negotiate for a measure of cooperation from the evacuees, Coverley chose to dig in his heals. In meetings with the delegation Coverley refused categorically to release the arrested young men. The delegation asked for guarantees there would be no more arrests; Coverley again refused. The delegation proposed a mail-in registration to avoid the pressure from all sides caused by the public registration process. Coverley would not consider any measure other than the exact registration procedure prescribed by the WRA and the War Department. After all, the director reasoned, reports were coming in from all the other centers that registration was almost complete.[58] Tule Lake would be expected to fall in line just like all the other centers. Finally the delegation suggested the registration should be postponed until things calmed down in the camp. With Tule Lake already falling behind by the day, this suggestion was probably the most unacceptable to Coverley. Faced with the administration refusal to negotiate on any of these issues, the delegation along with all the members of the Planning Board and Community Council resigned their positions in protest.[59]

In just seventeen days between February 4 and February 21, Tule Lake had undergone a transformation from a peaceful camp into "a seething cauldron of angry,

---

[57] Ibid.
[58] "Registration at 2 Centers Near Finish," *The Tulean Dispatch*, February 18, 1943; "Jerome Sign-Up Is On Schedule," *The Tulean Dispatch*, February 20, 1943; "83% Complete At Minidoka," *The Tulean Dispatch*, February 25, 1943.
[59] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 78.

frightened, and intimidated people."[60] Sadly, Tule Lake became the scene of mob violence as JACL members and others identified as pro-administration or moderates were singled out for beatings by roving youths.[61] Evacuees with jobs in the administrative area quit showing up for work for fear of being labeled collaborators. The administration led by the hard nosed if not draconian Coverley countered with more arrests of suspected trouble makers, and pressure on all segments of the population to submit to the registration.

In the midst of this uproar, on February 23, his fourth day at Tule Lake, Major Marshall made one important clarification for Nisei men of draft age, which at least increased the number of registrations. As Army representative, Marshall posted a mimeographed statement in the mess halls on the meaning of a yes and a no answer for men of draft age. "Those who answer no to questions 27 and 28 cannot anticipate that the Army of the United States will ever ask for their services."[62] Nisei men, who had refused to register as a protest against the possibility of being drafted while behind barbed wire, now realized they would be exempt from military service by answering no to the loyalty questions. Therefore protest could be logged by answering no, and punishment for refusing registration could be avoided. Many Nisei stepped forward to register with negative answers to the key loyalty questions.

The registration process at Tule Lake, projected by the administration to take about ten days, painfully dragged through March, as Project Director Coverley

---

[60] Weglyn, *Years of Infamy*, 148.
[61] "13 Removed From Colony For Beatings," *The Tulean Dispatch* March 1, 1943: "Thirteen Young colonists were removed from the project Friday to await trial for perpetrating or attempting to perpetrate beatings upon other colonists."
[62] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 80.

postponed the deadline several times in an attempt to pressure evacuees into compliance.[63] Finally on April 7, 1943 registration ended at Tule Lake. By that time Coverley had arrested more than 140 residents who were treated like criminals in various states of confinement, including isolation pens, FBI camps and deserted CCC camps. In spite of the arrests and pressure nearly 3,000 evacuees at Tule Lake, mostly Issei, refused to register.[64]

At Tule Lake the percentage of male citizens (Nisei) refusing to register or giving nonaffirmative answers was high at 49 percent. The percentage of male citizens giving no answers to the key loyalty questions at all the other centers was relatively high at 25 percent. However, the astounding statistic is among the Issei. The percentage of Issei men registering no answers at all the other centers except Tule Lake was a mere 4 percent. At Tule Lake almost half, 42 percent of Issei men either refused to register or registered with no answers.[65] By the statistics we can clearly see the influence of the Issei at the Tule Lake Center on the registration issue. This group predominantly made up of farmers from central California had lost everything as a result of relocation. In the first year at Tule Lake they were forced to work harder than evacuees at other centers, doing the farm work they were sent there to do. The statistics from the registration suggest that Issei at Tule Lake were utterly disgusted with the United States. They were bitter and afraid of the outside.

---

[63] "Citizen Registration Period Is Extended Until March 10: Special Concession Made To Give Everyone Opportunity To Sign-Up," *The Tulean Dispatch*, March 2, 1943: "Those who have not registered by that date will be considered as having violated the orders of the War Department and the War Relocation Authority and subject to such penalties as may be imposed." See also, "Alien Sign-Up Sked For Wednesday," *The Tulean Dispatch.* March 2, 1943.
[64] Weglyn, *Years of Infamy*, 151.
[65] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 62-63.

Importantly, they knew they were as close to home at Tule Lake as they were likely to be for the duration of the war. The final total for all evacuees at Tule Lake, male and female 17 years of age and older, was 42 percent either answering no or refusing to register.

From the time the registration officially closed on April 7, three months would pass before the Tuleans learned the meaning of their responses on the loyalty registration.[66] Throughout the traumatic registration episode residents of the Tule Lake Center, the Tuleans, continued to report to the packing sheds, pig farm and poultry operation. Shipments of fresh vegetables continued to leave the camp bound for the open market and the other relocation centers, procuring huge profits for the WRA. No concession was ever made for the internees of Tule Lake because they were turning in an unprecedented profit. In fact, residents of Tule Lake were treated with perhaps the least consideration regarding the registration.[67]

As the first week of April came to a close, the camp began to calm down considerably from the traumatic days, weeks and finally months of the registration. Coverley and the WRA administration had no intention of killing the goose that laid the golden egg. Regardless of their negative responses or refusal to register, it was time for evacuees at Tule Lake to return to the project farms. Early crops such as barley needed to be planted as soon as possible. The rich black soil needed preparation for the vegetable crops. Taking into consideration the late start in the

---

[66] "Segregation To Begin In September: Program For All Relocation Centers, To Segregate On "Basis Of National Loyalty Or Sympathy," *The Tulean Dispatch,* July 12, 1943.

[67] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 53-83. Thomas and Nishimoto break down the registration camp by camp. In all centers the registration was handled more skillfully than Tule Lake.

spring of 1942, WRA administrators dared to expect more acreage in production the second year. To produce tonnage similar to the astounding crop of 1942, a good deal of luck would again be necessary. Luck notwithstanding, the project farms would be a site of continuous activity for the next seven or eight months.[68]

The second week of April evacuee farm workers returned to the fields of the project farm. According to the camp newspaper, they returned with greater enthusiasm than the year before.[69] Perhaps the registration had been such a strain that evacuees were glad to lose themselves in the hard work of the spring season on the project farm. Perhaps the fact that they had done the job once before and knew what to expect, and what was expected of them, gave the Tuleans confidence they could handle the labor intensive demands of the farm. With no knowledge of the consequences of the registration, perhaps some of the Tuleans possessed the attitude that they could show their loyalty by their effort on the project farm.

Regardless of the reasons for their diligence, when the spring planting came to an end in 1943, the project farm included the same variety of crops as the spring before. The only difference between the two plantings was in acreage. The 1943 planting included an astounding 2,900 acres, 400 more acres in production than the 2,500 acres of 1942.[70] Through the spring and summer of 1943 the Tuleans tended the crops with characteristic skill. There is no record of discord in the fields of the vast project farm in the summer of 1943. The Old Tuleans as they would come to be

---

[68] "Occupational Survey Of Project Residents," *A Tule Lake Interlude,* May 27, 1943. Of the approximately 6,000 evacuees employed in the center 40% worked in agriculture.
[69] "Harvesting Of Vegetables Begin On Project Farm," *The Tulean Dispatch,* July 21, 1943. Page 1
[70] Ibid.

known might not have worked with such sincerity if they had known what was in store for the Tule Lake Center.

The crops of the project farm in the second season were destined to become the legacy of the Old Tuleans. In the first year at Tule Lake they endured trying conditions, and attempted to improve living standards in the camp through hard work and reasonable interaction with the administration. When they clashed with the administration they stood up for their rights with civility using law-abiding means. The nature of the Tule Lake Center was in for a transformation.

Based on responses to the registration, a second forced relocation was in store for the West Coast Japanese. Many of the residents who had participated in the agricultural project at the Tule Lake Center were spending their last months at the center in the summer of 1943. Over half of the 15,000, evacuees at Tule Lake would leave for other destinations before the cold weather of late fall and early winter. Corresponding with the exodus from the center was a migration of evacuees to the center, as Tule Lake transformed into the segregation center for disloyal Japanese. Chapter five recounts the tragic history of the segregation episode.

Chapter 5

Segregation: The Automatic Choice of Tule Lake

From the beginning of the indefinite leave program, National Director Dillon S. Myer and the WRA were under fire. Many individuals in government and the private sector were strongly against the leave program under any circumstances, and they vehemently complained of lax judgment by the WRA in sending Japanese out into the American public. In particular, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was certainly not in favor of approving leave for Japanese Americans of questionable loyalty. The autocratic director gave orders to agency personal to be especially thorough in adjudicating applications, resulting in a mere trickle of citizens leaving the camps.[1]

After the trauma of the loyalty registration all the camps experienced a period of welcome tranquility.[2] Myer had embraced the loyalty registration as an opportunity to speed up the permanent relocation program, and to identify the loyal Japanese from the disloyal. However registration did not serve to quiet criticism of Myer's vision of relocating the great majority of loyal Japanese from the camps. When the results of the registration were made public there was an outcry in Congress regarding the 'mass disloyalty' demonstrated by a large percentage of evacuees. Myer and the WRA were accused of being "soft-on-Japs."[3]

---

[1] Hayashi, *Democratizing The Enemy,* 146-147.
[2] Ibid, 148. Hayashi refers to this time as the "Quiet Period."
[3] Weglyn, *Years of Infamy,* 151. See also, The Segregation Program; A Statement for Appointed Personnel in WRA Centers. WRA August 1, 1943. Japanese-American Relocation Centers Records, Cornell University Box 20, File 2.

In May of 1943, the United States Congress held hearings convened by Congressman Martin Dies of Texas. Dies was Chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, and the committee wanted explanations regarding the high number of disloyal responses to the registration, and low number of Japanese citizens volunteering for the military. Dillon Myer was subjected to a rough grilling in hearings scrutinizing WRA programs. Many outrageous claims came out of the inquiry, including that spies and saboteurs had been approved for indefinite leave by the WRA. Myer took "soft-on-Japs" criticism personally, and rejected accusations forcefully.

The chief investigator for the Committee on Un-American activities Robert E. Stripling made the unfounded accusations involving spies and saboteurs. Myer responded: "This statement reveals a complete ignorance of the manner in which this agency is conducting its program. No evacuee is permitted to leave a center if there is any indication that he would in any way endanger the national security." Myer continued, "The statements of Mr. Stripling have the effect of misleading the public on an important principle of democracy."[4] Regardless of Myer's indignation, the fact remained that in the spring of 1943 West Coast Japanese were discredited and demonized even more emphatically than the year before. Bashing the incarcerated Japanese population remained a source of political hay for government officials.[5] Dillon Myer and a few social scientists working for the WRA were among a small

---

[4] "Myer Refutes Statement That Spies, Saboteurs Released," *The Tulean Dispatch* June 10, 1943.
[5] Weglyn, *Years of Infamy*, 153. Weglyn uses Senator A. B. "Happy" Chandler of Kentucky, as an example. Chandler went on a fact finding trip to five camps and declared that both Issei and Nisei would "commit almost any act for their Emperor, and 60 percent of them are disloyal."

minority of Americans who realized after one year that the relocation of West Coast Japanese was a mistake. Most of the individuals in this group opposed relocation from the start.

In a May 28, 1943 article published in *The Tulean Dispatch*, Myer was quoted as saying, "administration has been difficult, and many loyal citizens have been embittered by what they consider unfair treatment." Myer continued, "establishment of relocation centers was a mistake!"[6] Myer's statements indicate that he realized, in most cases where individuals responded to the loyalty registration in the negative, treatment of the West Coast Japanese after Pearl Harbor had fostered this so-ccalled disloyalty.

Notwithstanding his degree of enlightenment relative to the era, Myer's sympathy lay squarely with the great majority of Japanese who were able to swallow their pride and cooperate with the WRA throughout the relocation experience, including the loyalty registration. Eighty-six percent of Japanese had in fact answered yes to the key questions. Myer believed the eighty-six percent who affirmed their loyalty should be relocated into the American public. With the Dies Committee breathing down his neck, Myer was aware that in order to save the leave program, something definitive had to be done to placate Congress, government agencies, and the American public regarding the loyalty issue.

In May of 1943 amidst the backdrop of Dies Committee sensationalism, Myer quietly summoned the Project Directors from each of the ten centers to Washington D. C. Although many aspects of the WRA program were undoubtedly

---

[6] "Establishment of WRA Centers Mistake-Myer," *The Tulean Dispatch.* May 28, 1943.

discussed, Myer brought the Project Directors to Washington for one main purpose. He announced that because of developments including the results of the loyalty oath and Dies Committee investigations, the WRA would undertake a program to isolate the disloyal Japanese from the loyal.[7] No formal plans for the program were discussed at the May conference, and importantly, Myer's decision on segregation of disloyals was not made public. Directors returned to their projects knowing only that there would definitely be a segregation program.[8] Myer assigned top WRA employees to the task of making arrangements for implementing the program. Coincidently, on May 28, 1943 when Dillon Myer made his comments to the effect that the relocation was a mistake, details were being sorted out for an even more repressive segregation center for those deemed disloyal.

On July 6, 1943 Myer was back testifying before the House Sub-committee investigating the WRA, the alleged disloyalty of the Japanese, and the relocation in general. Under another tense session of questioning from California Representative John M. Costello, the chairman of the sub-committee, Myer became annoyed and bluntly accused the House Un-American Activities Committee and its investigations of accomplishing nothing but, "stirring up public hatred."[9] He pointed out further that the world was watching and the committee was providing the enemy with

---

[7] "Summary Notes on Segregation Conference of WRA Officials," Denver Colorado. July 26-27, 1943, JARCR/CU, Box 11, File 1, page 1.
[8] Ibid.
[9] "Myer Says Committee Stirs 'Public Hatred' Segregation Asked," *The Tulean Dispatch*, July 10, 1943.

material which might be used to convince the people of the Far East that, "the United States was undemocratic and is fighting a racial war."[10]

Myer then changed gears by announcing that plans were virtually completed for segregation of evacuees on the basis of national sympathy or loyalty. Myer told the committee, "Segregation will be undertaken for the purpose of promoting harmony in the centers and to facilitate the program of outside relocation for loyal citizens and law-abiding aliens now in relocation centers."[11] With extraordinary speed the Senate passed a resolution on the same day, asking the President of the United States to instruct the WRA to, "segregate those evacuees whose loyalty to the United States is questionable or who are known to be disloyal from those whose loyalty has been established, for the purpose of establishing additional safeguards against sabotage by such persons."[12]

On July 20, 1943, Tule Lake Center Director Harvey M. Coverley announced Dillon Myer had informed him by telephone call that Tule Lake had been designated as the center to which evacuees considered disloyal to the United States would be assigned.[13] Detailed information on the segregation program was lacking. Coverley cautioned evacuees not to accept rumors, and to be patient until more information

---

[10] Ibid.
[11] "Program For All Relocation Centers, To Segregate on 'Basis Of National Loyalty Or Sympathy,'" *The Tulean Dispatch.* July 12, 1943.
[12] Ibid. Reasons for Segregation given by Myer of the WRA and the United States Senate were contrasting to say the least.
[13] "Tule Lake Designated For Those Considered Disloyal: Announcement Made By Director Myer, Detailed Information Still Lacking; Project Directors To Meet For Discussion," *The Tulean Dispatch,* July 20, 1943.

was available. Coverley pointed out that on July 26-27 a WRA conference would be held in Denver to finalize procedures for carrying out segregation.[14]

Dr. Harold Stanley Jacoby, head of internal security at Tule Lake Center, remembered viewing the announcement with dismay. "For Tule Lake this would mean that the so-called 'loyal Americans' would be the ones who would have to move," Jacoby recalled, "which would mean in effect that the very ones who, under the most trying conditions were willing to put their loyalty 'on the line' would be the ones who would suffer the requirements of another move."[15] Jacoby traveled with Harvey Coverley to the Denver conference as a representative of the Tule Lake Center. Jacoby was determined to, "seek that some other center than Tule Lake be designated as the segregation center, but when we arrived in Denver we found the die had already been cast. There was no way that Tule Lake could escape its fate."[16]

Indeed, Dillon S. Myer opened the conference on segregation with straightforward remarks. "There are two or there points that should be made clear. There is no argument whether we are going to do the job in spite of the fact that it may cause many heartaches and that we may have in certain spots even more emotion than we had during the Registration."[17] Although Myer acknowledged that it was impossible to anticipate all the problems which were bound to arise, he expressed confidence in the ability of the assembled staff to work through any situation. Myer then sealed the fate of the Tule Lake Center. "After weeks of effort

---

[14] Ibid.
[15] Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation,* 82.
[16] Ibid, 83.
[17] Myer, "Summary Notes on Segregation Conference of WRA Officials."

by various WRA personnel, it has been definitely decided that Tule Lake will be the segregation center."[18]

Myer gave, "four good reasons for choosing Tule Lake."[19] First, as one of the largest centers, with a capacity of fifteen or sixteen thousand, Tule Lake was big enough to house Japanese Americans considered disloyal. Second, Tule Lake was within the evacuated area and therefore more difficult for evacuees to relocate from. Both are logical enough reasons for choosing Tule Lake as the segregation center but not especially compelling. Other centers were as large or nearly as large as Tule Lake and location within the evacuated area seems the least important factor. Manzanar was also within the evacuated area.

The third and fourth reasons for choosing Tule Lake were the most important. Tule Lake, Myer asserted, "has the possibility for agricultural production to take care of not only that Center but to help provide food for other centers as well. Because relocation will not be permitted, there will be need for keeping evacuees busy."[20] Considering the fact that in 1942 the Tule Lake project farm raised a variety of crops worth over one million dollars, for Dillon Myer to categorize Tule Lake as having the 'possibility of agricultural production' is utterly ludicrous. The work of the Tuleans on the project farm was unique, if underappreciated, among the ten relocation centers. Obviously Tule Lake was a valuable asset because of its huge agricultural production, an asset the WRA naturally wanted to protect by continuing to provide a large captive work force for the project farm. Even more acreage was

---

[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.

ripening beautifully in the summer of 1943. Already in late July evacuees at Tule Lake were enjoying early vegetables.[21] Finally Myer offered his fourth reason for choosing Tule Lake. "It appeared, as a result of the registration that more evacuees would necessarily remain at Tule Lake than at any other center."[22] From the WRA perspective it seemed only logical to send perceived disloyals to the site of the greatest initial concentration of evacuees who refused to register or answered no to the loyalty questions. Statistics regarding the percentage of evacuees refusing to register or responding negatively on the loyalty registration conveniently pointed to Tule Lake. However, the Tuleans who answered the loyalty questions with negative responses, or refused to register, did so for specific reasons which differed greatly from many of the segregates soon to be pouring into the Tule Lake Center. The WRA created the segregation center without considering the many diverse reasons for choosing "disloyalty."

After Myer's opening remarks the conference broke up into committees to discuss and come to decisions regarding the various and complex issues associated with implementing the segregation program. Of all the issues the conference faced, the most important questions were, "Whom are we going to segregate, and how do we determine who falls into those groups?"[23] The formula which resulted from the conference divided evacuees to be segregated into three categories. The first group

---

[21] "Harvesting Of Vegetables Begins On Project Farm," *The Tulean Dispatch*, July 21, 1943. "After many months of cultivation planting, hoeing and irrigation the vegetable farm began its harvest this week." Two of the crops taken at this early date were potatoes and peas, providing a delicious classic American dish 'New Potatoes and Peas.'

[22] Myer, "Summary Notes on Segregation Conference of WRA Officials."

[23] Ibid.

designated for segregation was labeled the Repatriates and Expatriates. They included aliens and citizens who asked for repatriation or expatriation, and had not withdrawn their request before June 1, 1943. This group had no recourse in terms of any appeal process. They were automatically ticketed for Tule Lake.

The second group was dubbed the Registrants. This group included all those scheduled for segregation as a result of their responses during the loyalty registration. The Registrants were further broken down into four different categories:

> a. Those who refused to register at all—virtually none at any project except Tule Lake.
> b. Those citizens or aliens who answered "No" to the loyalty question, No. 28.
> c. Those who wrote a qualified answer, neither "Yes" or "No" which required interpretation.
> d. Those who did register but refused to answer question 28.[24]

Evacuees who fell into one of these four categories would be given a hearing before a Board of Review on segregation at their relocation center. Hearings were to determine if the person knew the consequences of his answers on the loyalty registration. Did he understand the questions? Did he know what he was saying? Most importantly, did he still feel that way?

The third group was listed simply as All Others. This group included evacuees with some adverse intelligence reports filed against them, including those who had been denied leave clearance. This group was to be handled on an individual basis, at the discretion of the project director.[25] Project Directors had authority, based on the hearings, to recommend placement of the individual to the Washington D. C. Office of the WRA. The National Office then made the ultimate decision whether the

---

[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.

evacuee would stay in the center and be eligible for relocation or be sent to the segregation center.[26]

At the end of the meeting Myer chaired a question and answer session with project directors to address their concerns. Some of the questions put to the National Director were ridiculous and amusing. Regarding qualified answers to question 28, a project director asked Myer, apparently in all seriousness, "What if the answer written after 28 is 'No and I certainly hope Japan wins the war tomorrow.' Is that a negative or qualified answer?" Myer responded, "Clearly that is a negative answer. Merely because words are added does not mean it is a qualified answer."[27] Other questions and observations of individual project directors were more thoughtful and logical. One project director noted that in his center he knew of evacuees who were loyal to the United States, and either answered no or refused to register as a protest. "He knew what it meant but he did it as a protest because he felt the evacuation was unfair. Said 'no' merely as a protest. When asked if he was willing to change his answer he said, 'no I want the protest to stand.' He is not loyal to Japan but he is unwilling to change his answer." Myer replied emphatically, "If the answer stands as 'no' he goes to Tule Lake. He can find a better way to protest if that is what he wants. If he stands on 'no' he goes to Tule Lake."[28] Here we see an example of the side of

---

[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid, 16. Of course if he the individual was already at Tule Lake he would stay there. This question could well have been asked by Tule Lake Project Director Coverley since Tule Lake was the only center where evacuees refused to register in significant numbers. See also, "Studies of Segregates At Manzanar," WRA Community Analysis Section. October 26, 1943, JARCR/CU, Box 11, File 1. This situation occurred many times during the hearings. Evacuees professed loyalty to America but insisted that the answer stay NO. The standard comment summing up the hearing by the recorder was, "Protest against abridgment of citizenship rights. Recommend Tule Lake"

Dillon Myer that could be extremely inflexible. Myer had very little patience with evacuees who chose to persist with no answers.

In a seeming contradiction, Myer displayed compassion by stressing the point to the project directors that it would not be the practice of the WRA to break up families involuntarily. Therefore family members who answered the loyalty questions with a 'yes' would be allowed to follow their immediate family member who said 'no,' to Tule Lake. Children under the age of sixteen would generally have no choice, and would be required to follow their parents. Children sixteen and older could decide for themselves whether to follow their parents to Tule Lake. Myer also stated that no evacuee would be forced to leave Tule Lake when the camp became the Segregation Center, regardless of their responses to the loyalty registration.[29]

Project directors and delegates left the two day Segregation Conference on Wednesday July 28, 1943, with the responsibility of deciding the complicated issue of who should go to the new Tule Lake Segregation Center. After the time of calm following the registration, the subsequent hearings conducted at the various projects served to bring the whole painful episode back into prominence. The difference was, now the consequences of maintaining negative responses were clearly defined.

The hearings present a vivid picture of the family and personal conflict the issue produced among the evacuees, and many were filled with emotion. The recorder often noted tears on the part of the evacuee being interviewed, as he or she

---

[29] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 104 Thomas and Nishimoto offer that Myer wanted to reward "loyal" Tuleans by giving them a choice. Administrators at Tule Lake were ordered to exert pressure on loyal Tuleans to leave. However, avoiding organized resistance among the loyals to relocation was imperative.

painfully related the individual situation and choice.[30] The hearings, held to ascertain whether or not the evacuees still held to their pro-Japan stance, served as a forum for evacuees to express their true feelings to the authorities, many for the first time. For example, one young man who was the only member of his family of five to answer no to the loyalty questions, was asked if he wished to change his answer. "No, I'll keep it the same," he replied. "I was born in America and raised here. I have never seen Japan. I thought I was an American. But I'm not an American. I'm a Jap. Otherwise, why would I be in here? Read the newspapers. All you see is that a Jap's a Jap and all that stuff."[31] This young man's disillusionment with the country of his birth was typical of many evacuees who refused to change their answers.

The hearings generally resulted in evacuees professing no loyalty to Japan, and no hope, or intention of pursuing a future in Japan. As historian Michi Weglyn described the process in her 1976 work *Years of Infamy,* "Impassioned outbursts against a country which had jailed them, slandered them, and stripped them of their rights had little to do with the evacuees' disloyalty to America or loyalty to Japan...It was a registering of grief, disappointment, anger and sometimes rage against what they considered disloyalty on a mammoth scale-America's disloyalty to them."[32] After such outbursts the WRA employees conducting the interviews would affirm that they realized the individual was angry. The overriding issue, however was whether or not the internee was loyal to the United States.

---

[30] Studies of Segregates At Manzanar, WRA Community Analysis Section October 31, 1943, JARCR/CU Box 11, File 1.
[31] WRA Community Analysis Notes January 15, 1944, JARCR/CU Box 1, File 31.
[32] Weglyn, *Years of Infamy,* 157.

Evacuees overwhelmingly chose to let their answers stand as no. The hearings failed to produce a significant number of evacuees who agreed to change their answers on the loyalty questions to yes, and the hearings actually resulted in a higher number of evacuees than anticipated requesting transfer to Tule Lake. Although segregation broke up families, many families with mixed answers on the loyalty questions decided to stay together by all following "disloyal" family members to Tule Lake. Requests for repatriation and expatriation, mostly from Manzanar, continued to increase, resulting in a steady flow of new evacuees into Tule Lake, further complicating the situation, and seriously overcrowding the new segregation center.[33]

Many evacuees chose the new segregation center because they felt there would be substantial advantages. The prospect of employment and a safe haven for the duration of the war were strong pulls for evacuees from other centers to choose "disloyalty." The WRA announced in the summer of 1943, that it intended to severely cut back on employment at the relocation centers. As usual Tule Lake was the exception. The Segregation Center would continue to offer employment for those willing to work on the huge project farm. The fact that agriculture at Tule Lake required many hundreds of workers was well publicized, in effect rewarding the "disloyal" with jobs.[34] The Old Tuleans foresaw even more substantial advantages to remaining at Tule Lake. After making their living conditions as comfortable as possible, they would not be required to move either to another center or to the

---

[33] *"The Significant Factors In Requests For Repatriation And Expatriation"* WRA Community Analysis Section, Project Analysis Series No. 16. April 19, 1944, JARCR/CU, Box 1, File 27.
[34] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*,103.

outside, for the duration of the war. Many Old Tuleans sought to maintain the stability afforded by the project farm or in related agricultural operations.

The transition of Tule Lake to the segregation center was well underway by the first week in September 1943. Changes in the physical plant and camp administration were moving rapidly. A new eight foot high "manproof" fence surrounded the center. The military guard was increased from approximately two hundred men to full battalion strength, and new housing was built for eight hundred more military personnel, and half a dozen tanks were lined up outside the fence in full view of the residents.[35]

The oppressive prison-like atmosphere at the revamped segregation center reflected the attitude of the newly appointed Project Director Raymond R. Best. Immediately following the conference in Denver, Dillon Myer appointed Best to replace Harvey Coverley as project director. When he got the call to Tule Lake, Best already had extensive experience in WRA administration. However until he went to Tule Lake, where he would remain for the life of the center, Best had constantly been on the move from one job to another. He had spent time as project director at three different relocation centers. Most recently Best was working as director at Leupp, Arizona Isolation Camp, one of two centers in the west set up to house "troublemakers" sent from the relocation centers.[36]

---

[35] Ibid, 106.

[36] "Best Greets Residents; Center Policies Told To Combat Spreading Of Unfounded Rumors," *The Tulean Dispatch.* August 4, 1943. In his remarks to the Tule Lake community regarding the upcoming segregation Best assured evacuees, "no major changes in policy have been contemplated."

In a twist of fate, evacuee Harry Ueno was transferred from Leupp Isolation Center to Tule Lake soon after the camp became the Segregation Center. Ueno knew what to expect from Raymond Best. He recalled his 'run-ins' with Best at Leupp. "When I was at Leupp I fought with Best for my rights. I had so many arguments with him. One time, he told me, 'Harry, this is Leupp, it's wide open country, nothing but sage brush. If anything happened to anybody they would never find them in a million years.' Ueno went on to further describe the sadistic bent to Best's personality. "Then he started scare tactics, you know right by the side of the building, target shooting. I knew what he intended, mental torture."[37] It is safe to say that Raymond Best's performance at Tule Lake would make him one of the individuals most hated by the evacuees. Best also raised the ire of the more liberal-minded civilian employees at Tule Lake. He told Chief of Internal Security Harold S. Jacoby he intended to disband the Evacuee Warden Corp, a group Jacoby had taken great pride in forming and leading. Best would beef up the internal security force considerably with professionally trained law enforcement people.[38] Harold S. Jacoby, along with several other WRA workers, turned in their resignations before the transition to the Segregation Center was complete.

Agriculture at Tule Lake had always been a source of contention between the administration and the old Tuleans. However in the weeks prior to segregation, hard

---

[37] Harry Ueno, quoted in Ross and Ross, *Second Kinenhi*, 97.

[38] Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation To Segregation*, 85-86. Jacoby recalled that Raymond Best accepted his resignation unhesitatingly. Jacoby would accept a job offer from the first Tule Lake Project Director, Elmer Shirrell, in Chicago with the Chicago Japanese Resettlement Office, where Shirrell was Director. Jacoby's memoir expresses no regret that he left Tule Lake when he did. See also: "Internal Security," *The Tulean Dispatch.* October 16, 1943.

work and tranquility carried the day. The second harvest was in full swing well before the transition from relocation to segregation. In the fall of 1943, vegetable shipping started earlier than the year before. The early spring planting gave the crops plenty of time to ripen to their full potential. The packing sheds had already sent out forty-two railcar loads of vegetables to different relocation centers by the end of the first week of September 1943, ironically including, potatoes to Minidoka Idaho Relocation Center, located in the heart of "Famous Potato" country.[39] The packing sheds at Tule Lake were much improved from the first harvest. Both units were now highly automated state-of-the-art facilities including box makers capable of turning out shipping crates at an astounding rate. Each packing shed employed over one hundred skilled men and women, many of whom had been employed in vegetable packing concerns in California before the war.

As the transition to the Segregation Center drew near, skilled packing shed workers, scheduled to leave Tule Lake, often worked side by side with people who were staying at the project, and new workers set to take the place of "loyals" leaving Tule Lake, were trained and proficient before anyone moved. Unlike the packing facilities, the project farm was not nearly as well prepared for the transition to segregation. There was plenty of work on the project farm in the fall of 1943, just as the year before the farm needed any and all able-bodied harvesters.[40] The transition from relocation would accentuate the usual manpower shortage on the project farm.

---

[39] "Tule Lake Packing Shed Scene Of Much Activity," *The Tulean Dispatch*. September 7, 1943.
[40] Ibid.

The migration commenced on September 13, 1943, with train loads of "loyal" Tuleans leaving the Tule Lake Center. The record shows that slightly more than six thousand evacuees left the center over the following week. Approximately six thousand "disloyal" Tuleans stayed at Tule Lake. Estimates vary considerably on how many technically "loyal" Tuleans stayed at the center.[41] Many "loyals" rejected administrative pressure to leave and were allowed to stay at Tule Lake. Often they simply did not show up for their scheduled evacuation, hiding out until the train they were supposed to be on was gone. Apparently they were happy to hide out as long as possible. The administration announced on September 23, 1943, that all colonists including those remaining in the center were required to be fingerprinted and photographed at once, and pre-segregation records were considered invalid.[42]

Beginning September 18, "disloyal" evacuees started arriving at Tule Lake. Over the next month the segregation center grew to 18,000 residents, making Tule Lake by far the largest camp. According to the WRA, when the migration was over, 10,500 men, women, and children had moved to Tule Lake.[43] Although the events leading up to the migration were extremely emotional for the evacuees, the actual movement was carried out without incident.[44]

The new residents from the nine other camps recognized immediately that agriculture at Tule Lake was the only aspect which was more developed than their

---

[41] Jacoby, *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation*, 85. Jacoby puts the number of loyal Tuleans staying at the center at 2500. See also, Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 104. Thomas and Nishimoto place the loyals staying at around 1100.
[42] "Colonists Remaining Must, At Once Be Photographed and Finger-Printed," *The Tulean Dispatch*, September 25, 1943. The discrepancy in numbers of loyal Tuleans remaining comes because some old Tuleans never submitted to this documentation.
[43] "WRA Tule Now Houses 18,000; 73,000 In Other Centers," *The Tulean Dispatch* October 4, 1943.
[44] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 84-112.

former centers. In fact, according to the transferees, Tule Lake lagged behind in living accommodations, sanitary conditions and food quantity and quality.

George Kunitani was a community leader from Jerome Arkansas Relocation Center, he was elected spokesman for the Jerome contingent. In a letter to a Caucasian WRA employee at Jerome, Kunitani related his first impressions of Tule Lake. "The conditions existing at this center are a mystery to me...There is a definite clean-up job to be done and I think the newcomers will do the work. Condition of the shower-rooms and toilets are beyond words...The over-crowdedness of this center should be cared for as soon as humanly possible. It was really a crime to induct so many people without proper facilities.[45] The WRA administration at Tule Lake also did not inspire a feeling of well-being in the new residents. Kunitani continued his letter with a description of his first meeting with Raymond R. Best:

> On my second day here I went to see Mr. Raymond R. Best, the Project Director. My skepticism about Mr. Best lies in the fact that he does not seem to understand the Japanese at all...He certainly has left us with an unforgettable *bad* impression when he started his conversation by saying "I don't recognize any group activity, I don't care what you have done in the past, but as far as this center is concerned you shall represent no group or groups of people; I am not interested in your demands." Imagine, a project director speaking in that tone!! We went there to meet him, not to make demands or even a request. It was very rude of him to receive us in that manner.

The intransigence of the project director was just one of the obstacles the newcomers to the center faced. The transferees quickly realized they were at an obvious disadvantage to the Old Tuleans. The Old Tuleans had the best of everything in the center. Of course, since most had been at the center for well over one year,

---

[45] "Letter From a Evacuee Newly Arrived in Tule Lake," Community Analysis Report No 34, October 15, 1943, JARCR/CU, Box 7, File 1.

they had the preferred housing. Adding to the consternation of the transferees, after the loyals relocated from Tule Lake, and before the transferees began to arrive, an interim of one week, the Old Tuleans stripped the vacated rooms of shelving, partitions and furniture, leaving the transferees with bare, ransacked apartments. The Old Tuleans also controlled the good jobs and supervisory positions in the center. Most importantly, the transferees became aware that the majority of the Old Tuleans did not share many of the transferees zeal for Japan. Included in this group were the "loyals" with important supervisory positions they refused to relinquish through relocation. Many of the Old Tuleans were also on good terms with the administration. Although loyals did not publicize the fact that they had said yes to the loyalty questions, it did not take long for the truly disloyal transferees to identify the so-called fence-sitters and loyals in the center.

Animosity between transferees the Old Tuleans was immediate. Many transferees had nothing but disdain for what they saw as the Ole Tuleans spineless pro-administration attitude. The transferees noted the overstocked canteens combined with poor food in the mess halls, and the poor facilities in general. In short they had no respect for the Old Tuleans, who realized equally quickly that this new group was going to be hard to handle.[46] For their part the Old Tuleans saw many of the transferees as dangerous hot-heads.

---

[46] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 226-235. Thomas and Nishimoto break down the evacuees into three basic categories. 1. Those who were aggressively even fanatically loyal to Japan. 2. Those who were undecided in their loyalties and were waiting to decide until the war was over. Known as fence-sitters, many were attached to the United States and American culture. 3. Those who had no attraction for Japan and preferred the prospect of a future in America. This group was overweighted with the Old Tuleans.

In fact, it was the Old Tuleans who were totally unprepared for the challenges of segregation. They were entrenched in camp hierarchy because of their longevity. They were not organized to repel a group of young men determined to organize the camp in a conservative movement to pursue Japanese values in order to better adjust to a future in Japan.[47] Informants imbedded in the camp reported, "The transferees also quickly assumed leadership in the promised pursuit of the Japanese way of life. Japanese language schools sprang up in different parts of the project."[48] This and similar cultural initiatives were accompanied by unsubtle pressure on the Old Tuleans to participate in pursuing Japanese culture in the center.

It did not take long for the militant transferees to initiate a concerted agenda of non-cooperation in the center. Random acts of vandalism became common. Windows were broken in camp establishments with which the transferees had grievances such as the Housing Office and canteens. This sort of rowdyism was totally unknown at the Tule Lake Center before segregation.

The combined effect of misguided WRA policy and serious divisions within the Japanese Community led to rapidly escalating tension between the hugely disparate factions and the WRA administration. Serious trouble at the Tule Lake Segregation Center was inevitable. These developments were not what the vast majority of Old Tuleans envisioned when they resolved to stay at the center. Indeed, they were trapped in a frightening position along with loyals who had accompanied family members to Tule Lake, "The changes in Tule Lake Center have been so

---

[47] Ibid, 111.
[48] Ibid., 226.

radical that my interest in residing here no longer prevails," a young woman in the Old Tulean group remarked in her diary entry dated November 3, 1943. "I'm now at a loss as to why I did not leave during the train movements. It is best to play safe and keep one's mouth tightly sealed."[49]

[49] WRA Community Analysis Section Project Analysis Series No. 14 March 27, 1944, Page 11, JARCR/CU, Box 1, File 26.

Chapter 6

The End of Agriculture

It took just one month from the arrival of the first transferees for a crisis to develop at the new segregation center. Nonetheless, the callous actions of the WRA administration and in particular the local Project Director: Raymond R. Best, served to bind the evacuees in a common cause, at least in this instance. Not surprisingly, the crisis involved the agricultural project at the center.

The Tule Lake Segregation Center was created with no consideration for the diverse reasons internees chose the stigma of "disloyalty." With segregation Tule Lake held a more heterogeneous population than any of the original relocation centers, which had been filled, as much as possible, with people from the same or neighboring locations on the West Coast. This was especially true of Tule Lake Relocation Center with its predominant population of Central Valley farmers. Decisions to transfer to Tule Lake were, for the great majority, based on factors which had nothing to do with affinity for Japan. The prospects of keeping the family unit together, employment, and not being forced to relocate into the hostile American public were strong magnets pulling evacuees to Tule Lake. Reduced to the lowest common denominator, a desire for immediate security was the overriding factor in choosing Tule Lake. Certainly this is also true for the Old Tuleans who chose to stay. In fact, the new segregation center had a population as diverse in its attitudes as any relocation center. The important difference at Tule Lake was the presence of a much

larger population of individuals brought together from all the centers, who possessed strong positions of affiliation with and support for Japan.

The significant change in personnel caused by the transition from relocation to segregation center at Tule Lake resulted in a setback in the harvesting pace on the project farm. After an excellent start to the season, six thousand "loyals" had left the center at a critical time in the harvest. Accordingly, the first priority of recently appointed Project Director Raymond Best was to send able-bodied men to the fields.[1] The project farm required hundreds of new workers. The situation was simple: if the transferees were not willing to go to work on the farm, crops would be left in the field.[2]

The vast influx of new arrivals allayed WRA officials' fears, however, and by the second week in October the work force at the project farm was reasonably stable. Over 1,000 workers were piling into the trucks headed for the fields every day.[3] The packing sheds were handling all the produce delivered with expert efficiency. The camp newspaper ran an article featuring the impressive packing shed operation. "As truck loads of fresh, crisp vegetables arrive they are unloaded by men and washed and trimmed by women who are experts. Next the vegetables are packed and rolled along automatic rollers to refrigerated railway cars."[4] Employment at the

---

[1] "Are You Doing Your Bit?" *The Tulean Dispatch,* September 23, 1943. In an interview on the harvest situation Best remarked "The response has been deemed inadequate."
[2] "Manpower Shortage Hits Project Farms," *The Tulean Dispatch,* September 25, 1943.
[3] WRA Community Analysis Series No. 14 March 27, 1944, Page 10, JARCR/CU, Box 1, File 26.
[4] "Packing Shed Depot For Vegetables," *The Tulean Dispatch,* October 5, 1943.

packing sheds had always been a source of pride for internees skilled and fortunate enough to work there.

Harvest work on the project farm, however, was no more harmonious than it had been the year before. Workers were not satisfied with working and living conditions, and bitterly complained about the food in the mess halls. Most distressingly, the center mess halls were not getting deliveries of camp-produced food products, including pork, chicken, and eggs. Vegetables served were said to be inferior in quantity and quality. The finest produce, internees grumbled, was shipped through the packing sheds. Finally, workers' safety, both in the fields and packing sheds, was also a consideration. Farm work is notoriously dangerous, and internees routinely performed dangerous tasks for the sake of expediting the harvest.

Within a matter of weeks, such considerations prompted many segregates to question the worth of harvesting vegetables for eight cents per hour. Work crews, strongly influenced by activist transferees, began quietly organizing—informally electing representatives to lodge formal complaints with the administration. Before any formal complaints had been registered, however, on October 15, tragedy struck. After another inadequate noon meal, farm workers were in a particularly surly frame of mind.[5] As they piled into trucks returning to the fields for the afternoon harvest session, a guard at the front gate held up the convoy for a minor bureaucratic

---

[5] Thomas and Nishimoto. *The Spoilage*, 115. See also WRA Community Analysis Series No. 14 March 27, 1944, pages 11-16, JARCR/CU, Box 1, File 26. This report, although written from the point of view of the WRA, gives a good explanation of farm worker grievances. See also Weglyn *Years Of Infamy,* 160.

technicality.[6] Although some workers returned to their lodgings and refused to report for the afternoon session, most returned to the trucks transporting them to the fields. At about 1:30 in the afternoon, a truck carrying twenty-nine workers tried to pass another truck also loaded with workers. The passing truck, apparently going too fast, hit the soft-shoulder and overturned, pinning several internees to the ground and seriously injuring numerous others. Internees from the second truck ran to the accident and frantically worked to free the trapped men. One man, 53-year-old Tatsuto Kashima, originally from San Francisco, and a recent transferee from Topaz Utah Relocation Center, died of chest injuries shortly after the accident.[7]

The tragedy plunged Tule Lake into a situation similar to the registration episode, where every day seemingly brought a new crisis. After the accident the farm workers returned from the fields to the center, and the recently appointed representatives of the work crews met to discuss the situation. For many internees, Tatsuto Kashima's death brought their simmering anger at the conditions at Tule Lake to a boil. Making matters worse, rumors quickly spread that the driver of the truck in the accident was only sixteen years old—too young and irresponsible, many internees complained, to be transporting workers perched precariously on a flat-bed

---

[6] Thomas and Nishimoto *The Spoilage,* 114.

[7] "Farm Accident Is Fatal To Topazan," *The Tulean Dispatch*, October 16, 1943. A total of 12 were hospitalized. Four were in critical condition, but all survived.

truck. The workers' safety had been ignored, resulting in a horrifying tragedy, and many internees believed that the WRA was to blame.[8]

That evening, farm workers and particularly the group of representatives dispersed to their various mess halls, resolved to hold broader elections within each block. These block delegates would form the official group of representatives to present complaints to Project Director Best.[9] The first action of the representative body, chosen in block elections on October 17, 1943, was to dub themselves the "*Daihyo Sha Kai*," a Japanese term which loosely translated means 'Representative Body.'[10] In reality, the *Daihyo Sha Kai* was heavily weighted with activist pro-Japan transferees, who immediately began compiling a list of complaints against the WRA, including "broken-down plumbing in the latrines, overcrowding, scarcity of jobs, and above all, deficiencies in food supplied to the mess halls."[11] The meeting concluded with the appointment of sub-committees to study such problems, and report back to the *Daihyo Sha Kai* at a later date.

The tragic farm accident became the watershed event for the political direction the center would take for the remainder of its troubled existence.[12] The leaderless Old Tuleans lost influence very quickly. The newcomers who formed *Daihyo Sha Kai* came together at Tule Lake from the other relocation centers where they had been leaders of small minority groups. They felt sincerely that they were

---

[8] WRA Community Analysis Series No 14. March 27, 1944, page 6.Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 119. Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 115; Weglyn, *Years of Infamy*, 116. The driver was later identified as being nineteen years of age.
[9] WRA Community Analysis Series No 14. March 27, 1944, Page 6.
[10] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 119.
[11] Ibid, 119.
[12] Ibid, 118.

qualified to lead the people at Tule Lake as a whole since the minorities they had led before were now the majority at the Segregation Center. The existence of hundreds of Old Tuleans, and hundreds of transferees who came to Tule Lake for many diverse reasons, belied the radicals' assumption that registration and segregation had brought together a majority of like-minded Japanese-Americans. However, the leaders who emerged at Tule Lake in the fall of 1943 were experienced in the politics of the relocation centers. They were men who had held a measure of influence at their respective camps. They knew how a camp was organized, and how to locate the points of dissatisfaction at the new segregation center and capitalize upon them to establish a following.[13]

Camp Director Ray Best had ears and eyes throughout the camp, as well as extensive dossiers on many of the transferees, and he knew almost instantly the makeup of the *Daihyo Sha Kai*.[14] As a WRA report on the aftermath of the death of Kashima succinctly stated, "The group of leaders, dominated if not totally composed of hot-headed men, worked carefully. They seized on the death of the farm worker as something with broad popular appeal."[15] Indeed, for several days after the truck accident no one reported for work. *Daihyo Sha Kai* had declared an informal moratorium on the harvest while they formulated their preparations for the public

---

[13] WRA Project Analysis Series No. 14 March 27, 1944, Page 7. "Important men were from Jerome, Poston, and Heart Mountain." One man from Poston had been a leader of a general strike in 1942.
[14] WRA Project Analysis Series No. 14 March 27, 1944, page 7. This report states that activities of the leaders of *Daihyo Sha Kai* were well known before they arrived at Tule Lake.
[15] WRA Community Analysis Series No.14 March 27, 1944, page 9.

funeral and decided upon the proper approach to make to the Project Director regarding necessary improvements at the center.

Like his predecessors, one of Best's primary goals was to oversee the successful harvesting of the vegetable crop. Using the *The Tulean Dispatch*, Best issued a strong warning to farm workers: "In the immediate situation the entire farm crop needs to be harvested. These are vegetables that the residents of Tule Lake will be eating this winter. The crop will not be lost...The situation is the responsibility, pure and simple, of the residents of Tule Lake Center."[16] Not surprisingly, Best did not to mention the profits at stake for the WRA. The Director concluded with a deadline. "If farm workers are not interested enough to send official spokesmen to the administration by 8:33 A.M., October 21st, it will be necessary for the WRA to request harvesting by the Army and consequent loss of the crops to the evacuees."[17]

Failing to elicit any response from his ultimatum in the *Dispatch*, Best issued an appeal for any representative committee to discuss the problem. The members of *Daihyo Sha Kai* were looking forward to clashing heads with Best. They had one priority, however, which they determined must come before any negotiations: a public funeral for their fallen comrade. Indeed, many people in the center wanted to pay respects to the man who had become a symbol of their maltreatment at the hands of the United States, the WRA, and the camp administration.

Representatives had initially approached Best about using the outdoor stage for the event, scheduled for October 23. Best had given a terse verbal confirmation.

---

[16] "Crop Must Be Harvested," *The Tulean Dispatch*, October 20, 1943.
[17] Ibid.

After receiving no cooperation on the harvest matter, Best formally withdrew his permission for the public funeral on October 22. "In reply to your request to use the outdoor stage for funeral purposes," he informed internees, "my final answer is that no public funeral will be allowed at this time. For your information funerals will be held in the customary locations as they have since the opening of this center."[18]

Rather than intimidate a resistant work force, Best's reversal served to bind the evacuees in a common sense of persecution by and hostility for the administration. Capitalizing on the outpouring of animosity, the *Daihyo Sha Kai* went ahead with the public funeral, and brazenly vowed to run out any Army or WRA representatives who showed up. Two thousand residents attended the funeral held on the outdoor stage, and a group of tough young men—said to be from Jerome Arkansas Relocation Center—manhandled a Reports Officer sent by the project director to take photographs, destroying his camera and throwing him out. The prestige of the *Daihyo Sha Kai* soared.[19]

The *Daihyo Sha Kai* was ready to send a negotiating committee to meet with the project director to begin working out problems in the camp by October 26. The sub-committees had made reports on the various grievances which were now well known, and which never seemed to improve. Everyone realized evacuees had only one bargaining chip, although it was a strong one. The WRA needed the residents of Tule Lake Segregation Center to harvest the vegetables of the project farm.

---

[18] WRA Community Analysis Section March 27, 1944, page 4. Funerals had always taken place at the camp cemetery whether Christian or Buddhist.
[19] Thomas and Nishimoto *The Spoilage*,123.

Accordingly, in the meeting with Best the farm situation took center stage. The committee chided the Director for his "inhuman attitude" regarding the recent funeral. Best dismissed the charge and claimed that residents had been pressured into attending the public funeral.[20] Best steered the discussion to the vegetables still waiting to be harvested. Again he made his point clear. "I am going to sell this crop. There is a war on. There is a food shortage. We are going to salvage this food. I am going to sell it to the government." Later, Best became more civil, offering that "there is no reason why we can't come to an understanding. We are going to make this as decent a place as we can make it."[21] The committee left the meeting feeling they had made their points well, and that Best had been, for the most part, receptive.

The committee reported to *Daihyo Sha Kai* that progress had been made in the meeting, and there was a strong possibility of returning to work soon on the project farm. They were totally unaware that two days before, on October 24, Best had quietly made arrangements to import harvesters to replace the idle work crews at Tule Lake. With more than $500,000 worth of vegetables still in the field, Best was taking no chances.[22] He announced on October 28 that, "due to failure of farm workers to report for work, they have been terminated as of October 19."[23] The implication was unmistakable: *Daihyo Sha Kai* had been trumped; the internees had lost their only bargaining chip.

---

[20] Ibid, 125. Best further pointed out, he did not believe the committee represented the whole camp.
[21] Ibid, 127.
[22] Myer, WRA Advance Release, November 13, 1943, JARCR/CU, Box 11, File 2. In this release to the press Myer stated that, "Faced with the onset of winter and the possibility of losing approximately $500,000 worth of vegetables, the WRA immediately began recruiting loyal evacuees."
[23] Thomas and Nishimoto *The Spoilage*, 128.

Adding insult to injury, the segregates subsequently learned from camp newspaper articles that the strike breakers were "loyals" from other relocation camps, and would receive the prevailing wage of one dollar per hour rather than the current rate of eight cents per hour. In other words, in only two days they would earn as much as the segregates had made in a month.[24]

For the Old Tuleans, in particular, news of Best's decision must have generated bitterness and perplexity. As in 1942, the crop in the field in the fall of 1943 was the result of hard work done by the Old Tuleans, who had never shared in the financial windfall from the harvest. Now men who had nothing to do with establishing the huge agricultural operation at Tule Lake were going to harvest crops for a decent wage. Moreover, although there was a good deal of support for *Daihyo Sha Kai* among the Old Tuleans, many would have undoubtedly chosen to join the new workforce on the project farm for a dollar an hour. The increasingly radicalized situation at Tule Lake, however, made any perceived act of collaboration with the WRA extremely dangerous. Even if they had been given the opportunity to work on the harvest, the Old Tuleans would have been labeled traitors by the *Daihyo Sha Kai*.[25]

On October 30, three hundred "loyal" harvesters arrived by train. They were housed in tents set up near the fields well out of sight of the Tule Lake Center. Naturally, this development was distressing to the entire center. News of the arrival

---

[24] WRA Community Analysis Section March 27, 1943 Page 15.
[25] Celia S. Deschin, *Tule Lake Science in Inaction,* Journal of Education Sociology (February 1948), 368-381. Deschin refers to some of the activists as "disturbed."

of the "loyal" harvesters was not nearly as worrisome, however, as the next revelation to hit the center. On the same day the harvesters arrived, evacuee warehouse workers discovered that Caucasian employees had raided the center's food supply, transporting a significant quantity of staple foods to the project farm for consumption by the new work force.[26] Warehouse workers reported that not only were staple items taken from the warehouse, including one hundred and twenty sacks of rice, and fifty cases of milk, but luxury items reserved strictly for Caucasian staff were also missing. The battle to improve both the quantity and quality of food in the mess halls had been constant for the entire history of the center's existence. The idea that scabs were taking food from the center, and eating better than the Tule Lake evacuees ever had, infuriated internees, and hatred for Raymond Best intensified.[27] *Daihyo Sha Kai* stationed men at the warehouses to watch for movement of food to the "loyal" camp.

On the morning of November 1, word spread throughout the center that WRA National Director Dillon Myer had just arrived to inspect the newly segregated center.[28] Apparently, Myer had no idea of the hornet's nest he was entering, or the level of hatred in the center for Project Director Best. The *Daihyo Sha Kai* quickly determined that they should force a meeting with the National Director, combined with a show of solidarity in the center. At the noon meal in the mess halls, representatives of *Daihyo Sha Kai* announced that Myer was going to make a speech

---

[26] WRA Community Analysis Section, March 27, 1944.
[27] Thomas and Nishimoto *The Spoilage,* 131. Items such as cases of canned pineapple were missing.
[28] Dillon S. Myer WRA Advance Release November 13, 1943 JARCR/CU Box 11 File 2.

to the center, and all residents should go to the administration building immediately after lunch. By 1:30 pm a huge crowd, estimated at between five and ten thousand evacuees completely inundated the area around the administration building. Myer and Best and various WRA staff were effectively trapped inside the building.[29]

A young man approached Myer and Best requesting a meeting with a committee of seventeen men representing *Daihyo Sha Kai*. Under the circumstances, the two men were in no position to refuse. The tense meeting that followed lasted for two and a half hours. The *Daihyo Sha Kai* committee railed against conditions in the center, and demanded that Raymond Best be dismissed as project director. Most important on the list of complaints was the termination of farm workers, their replacement with "loyal" strikebreakers and the use of evacuee food to feed them.

The *Daihyo Sha Kai* expected Myer to demonstrate sympathy for the miserable situation perpetrated by Project Director Raymond Best. Surely the National Director was not aware of what was going on at Tule Lake. After all, Myer's first directives regarding segregation were to the effect that it was not to be undertaken as a punitive measure.[30] However, the radicals found Dillon Myer to be on exactly the same page as Raymond Best. Myer professed complete agreement with Best regarding measures the Project Director had taken over the previous ten days. Under tremendous pressure, with a huge seething crowd of agitated Japanese

---

[29] Myer, WRA Advance Release, November 13, 1943. Thomas and Nishimoto *The Spoilage*, 131. Weglyn, *Years of Infamy,* 162. All the chroniclers of this episode agree the *Daihyo Sha Kai* was well organized for this confrontation with the National Director, including young men distributed among the crowd to keep order and prevent evacuees from leaving the demonstration early. They also had a public address system rigged to keep the crowd informed, and to receive the promised address from Myer.

[30] Summary Notes on Segregation Conference July 26-26, 1943 Page 2.

surrounding him, Myer showed steely resolve in his support for Best. He is quoted by Thomas and Nishimoto from the minutes of the meeting, as saying: "We are going to take care of the harvesting of the crop...You folks did not want to do it so we arranged to have it done."[31] At another point Myer fired back at the committee, "I have never taken any action under threat or duress."[32] At yet another point Myer expressed his belief that the committee did not represent the true feelings of the majority of the center. When questioned about food leaving the center for the "loyal" harvesters while the mess halls continued to serve inferior meals, Raymond Best put the matter simply and clearly. "It is our property and we are accountable for that property. We will do what we want with it."[33]

Early in the afternoon, when it became evident that some sort of showdown with agitated residents was eminent, Best contacted the commander of the military garrison stationed outside the center. Lieutenant Colonel Vern Austin ordered the garrison to quietly prepare to enter the Center at a moment's notice. The garrison was not unfamiliar with the possibility of a scenario which would involve the military entering the camp, and the events of November 1, became, in effect a practice run for the garrison.[34]

When the meeting between the *Daihyo Sha Kai* and the WRA Directors finally broke up, the huge crowd remained in full force around the administration building, The *Daihyo Sha Kai* had not gained one meaningful concession from the

---

[31] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 134. From the minuets of the November 1, 1943 meeting.
[32] Ibid,135.
[33] Ibid,135. For the next thirty months of the center's existence Best was denounced for his actions.
[34] Myer, WRA Advance Release, November 13, 1943.

intransigent administration. The committee asked National Director Myer to address the crowd which had waited so patiently. *Daihyo Sha Kai* had tricked the residents into the show of solidarity by announcing that Dillon Myer was going to speak to the center, which in fact was untrue. Myer had no plans to make any public remarks.

Myer, still unflappable, indicated he would be happy to make a few remarks. Myer told the crowd he had met with the delegates and heard their concerns. He expressed his confidence in Project Director Best, and concluded by saying the center should continue to cooperate with the administration in settling all problems. Prophetically, Myer added that if the residents did not want to deal peacefully with the WRA they would have to deal with someone else.[35]

Regardless of his coolness under pressure, Myer must have breathed a huge sigh of relief as he left the area the next day to catch the train in Klamath Falls. If the National Director was not shaken he was the only one not experiencing unease. Certainly every WRA employee involved in the proceedings of the day before was shaken. Several employees resigned. Myer authorized building a restraining fence around the administration building which was undertaken immediately.[36] Myer was aware that the radical element at the new segregation center was likely to cause more problems. Tule Lake was no longer a stable center where evacuees could be counted on to do their jobs and, for the most part, keep their mouths shut.

The events of November 1 caught the attention of the media. *The Christian Science Monitor* reported on November 4, 1943, "Clark Fensler, head of the citizens'

---

[35] Myer, WRA Advance Release, November 13, 1943.
[36] Ibid.

committee of the WRA, said four Caucasian employees of Tule Lake Center were held prisoner by the Japanese for several hours. Mr. Fensler declared the WRA had not called for Army assistance and said residents feared the Japanese might attempt to break out of the camp. "[37]

Although it is true, Caucasian WRA employees caught in the administration building were deeply frightened, it is somewhat amusing, and not surprising, that the bombastic Clark Fensler, who was not at the center on November 1, 1943, was quick to denounce his employer for not calling in the Army. In the same article in the *Christian Science Monitor,* National Director Myer flatly denied Fensler's allegations that there was any need to call in the Army, saying the Japanese had gathered to hear him speak, and the gathering was peaceful.[38] Edgy residents of the area, including Mr. Fensler, would not have to wait long for Project Director Best to call in the Army. The showdown on November 1 did nothing to ease tension at Tule Lake Segregation Center. The evacuees had gained nothing from the confrontation and the "loyal" strikebreakers were steadily harvesting the crops of the project farm.

Three days after the futile meeting with Myer and Best, the *Daihyo Sha Kai* held a meeting on the evening of November 4 to decide the next course of action to be taken. Suddenly, a young evacuee ran into the room and breathlessly reported that WRA officials were transporting food supplies from the warehouse.[39] The

---

[37] "Californians Claim Seizure By Japanese," *The Christian Science Monitor,* November 4, 1943, transcribed by WRA, JARCR/CU, Box 20 File 2.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage,* 142. See also WRA Community Analysis Section March 27, 1944, Page 17.

committee told the youth to calm down and to return to the warehouse and document what foodstuffs were being taken out.

The young man did not follow orders. He picked up several friends on his way back to the warehouse and then brazenly confronted the WRA employees. Noise of the row quickly drew additional internees, and the group grew to around two hundred. As the crowd swelled, the internees became more and more confrontational. Camp residents sought to keep trucks loaded with food from leaving the center, and clashes broke out with WRA staff including Internal Security men on patrol. As the internees' collective rage reached a crescendo, someone shouted that they should attack the Camp Director. The group of young men, many now armed with baseball bats and two-by-fours, thus converged on Best's residence with cries of "Get Best!" and "Take Best!" The Project Director immediately called in the Army.[40]

In the mayhem that ensued, several rioters were hospitalized with severe injuries. Miraculously, no one was killed in the melee. The rioting evacuees were quickly subdued by well-armed troops, who entered the camp on foot and in jeeps with mounted machine guns. In a rather gratuitous show of force, the ancient tanks also rumbled into the center.[41] Oddly enough, the members of *Daihyo Sha Kai* had been engrossed in discussion and were unaware of the riot until it was all over. In fact, because of the immense size of the camp, the great majority of the residents of

---

[40] Thomas and Nishimoto *The Spoilage,* 144.

[41] "Army Takes Over To Quell Foment At Japanese Camp," *The Christian Science Monitor* November 5, 1943, JARCR/CU, Box 20, File 2. The newspaper reported twenty evacuees were hurt and five hundred were rounded up and questioned.

the center had no inkling of the events of the evening, and were shocked to learn the following morning that the Army was in control.[42]

On November 13, 1943, Lieutenant Colonel Austin declared martial law at Tule Lake Segregation Center. The Army was in total control of administration. *Daihyo Sha Kai* insisted upon continuing the work stoppage at the center. The center was plunged into a period of idleness and impoverishment from which it would never emerge.[43] For the next two months Lieutenant Colonel Austin held control of Tule Lake. Even when martial law was finally lifted and the WRA was returned to administration, the reality that the Army was just outside was not lost on the segregates.

Finally, late in the winter of 1944, a compromise was worked out between the segregates and the administration to resume employment of evacuees at the center. Spirits were buoyed by the prospect of work on the project farm in the spring. Many segregates had chosen Tule Lake because of the opportunity of employment on the project farm. On March 16, 1944 an article in the camp newspaper, recently renamed *The Newell Star*, outlined plans for the project farm in 1944. Although reduced in acreage by almost two-thirds, the farm would still be comprised of more than one thousand acres.[44] This plan proved to be overly optimistic. On March 23, 1944, National Director Dillon Myer made his first visit to the Center since the traumatic events of the fall. In an interview with a reporter for *The Newell Star* Myer was

---

[42] Ibid.
[43] "Tule Lake Case Placed In Hands Of Washington," *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 24, 1943, JARCR/CU, Box 20, File 2.
[44] "Farm Program Drafted," *The Newell Star*, March 16, 1944.

asked about employment policy relative to the huge population of the center. Myer replied, "In general, employment policy will be the same. There will be some curtailment in the farm operations, because of the past incident. The farm operation will be on a basis of self-sufficiency."[45] In other words, the large-scale agricultural project at Tule Lake was finished.

Accordingly, the WRA offered very few employment opportunities on the greatly diminished project farm. Of 822 residents of the center who applied for agricultural employment, on April 20, the Fiscal Section reported a mere 113 residents employed on the camp farm.[46] This number was about the same as the number of employees necessary to run just one of the two packing sheds at the height of the agricultural operation at Tule Lake, and less than 5 percent of the number of workers employed in agriculture during the two previous years. The farm workers managed to plant just 185 acres of vegetables in 1944, a far cry from the 2,500 acres of 1942, and 2,900 acres of 1943.[47] Similarly, in 1945 the center again cultivated only 197 acres of vegetables.[48]

After the traumatic events of the fall of 1943, the WRA and National Director Dillon Myer were not willing to make the commitment in money and labor necessary for the agricultural project of the first two years at Tule Lake. The residents of the center suffered from the loss of employment the project farm provided. At the height

---

[45] Myer visits Center, *The Newell Star*, March 23, 1944.
[46] "Farm Work Preferred According To Survey," *The Newell Star*, April 13, 1944. "Fiscal Section Reveals 5011 Colonists On WRA Payroll," *The Newell Star* April 20, 1944.
[47] "185 Acres planted Says Farm Head," *The Newell Star* April 27, 1944.
[48] "Vegetables 97 Acres Planted in 4 Weeks," *The Newell Star* May 11, 1945. This article indicated another 100 acres of potatoes was yet to be planted.

of the project farm operation, 40 percent of the work force at Tule Lake was involved in agriculture. In the final two years of the project farm, with a teaming population of over 18,000 residents, many desperate for work, and 5,011 employed in the center, only around 2 percent of those with jobs were employed in agriculture.

A social scientist working for the WRA filed a report on conditions at the center in December of 1944. "Because of the curtailment of work following the upheaval, too many residents have nothing to do. It is my opinion that if every able-bodied man and woman were given some kind of job, there would be less chance of internal strife and people would be happier." The analyst further noted: "Because of the intense hatred toward the administration, anyone seen with or talking to a hakujin (Caucasian) is looked upon with suspicion. The gap of understanding between the administration and the colony is wide."[49]

In fact, by the middle of June 1944, Tule Lake Segregation Center had deteriorated into a reign of terror. The increasingly powerful *Daihyo Sha Kai* began labeling anyone who opposed them as *Inu*. Beatings of anyone suspected of being a collaborator with the administration became common. Thomas and Nishimoto quote a member of *Daihyo Sha Kai* as stating: "The Japanese know they are helpless. Naturally, the only thing they can think of doing is get back at those who spy on them. I think the beatings will keep on going for quite a while. The administration listens to the *Inu* and not the others. So such things happen."[50]

---

[49] WRA Community Analysis Section, Report on Adjustment to Tule Lake December 20, 1944, JARCR/CU Box 1, File 31

[50] Thomas and Nishimoto *The Spoilage* , From the Field Notes of an informant, June 17, 1944.

Of all those who suffered from the situation which developed at Tule Lake over the last two years of the camp's existence, no group suffered collectively like the Old Tuleans. The original residents who stayed at Tule Lake lost more than anyone through segregation. The Old Tuleans stayed at Tule Lake because of their overriding desire for security. They intended to continue to do their job, wait out the war, and return home. Instead, the last two years at Tule Lake were a struggle to avoid being singled out for punishment by the militants in control. The Issei resented being ordered about by brash young militants they did not even know. However, they were afraid of causing more strife in the center and of being labeled *Inu* through any association with the administration.[51] As the strength of the militants grew over the tragic death of the farm worker, they influenced a few Old Tuleans to work with them. However, the Old Tuleans were never part of the inner circle and never trusted by the militants.

The Old Tuleans had come in for abuse by the transferees from the start. They were blamed for the poor facilities. Militants claimed the original residents had lacked initiative in obtaining improvements in the camp. Along with controlling the best jobs and housing, the Old Tuleans were accused of being on friendly terms with the administration and, worst of all, of not being truly disloyal. Their status plunged from the highest level of camp hierarchy to the bottom. One Old Tulean remarked to a WRA social scientist: "Anything can happen in this dump. It's as bad as being in

[51] WRA Community Analysis Section March 27, 1944, Page 11, JARCU/CU Box 1 File 26.

Germany. You wonder why you were born. These guys believe in Gestapo methods. You gotta be alert of what you say, and on top of that you gotta give them respect."[52]

One Old Tulean who had managed to retain a good deal of influence was Takeo Noma, the general manager of the canteen enterprises. Noma had been prominent in resisting *Daihyo Sha Kai.* The canteen system handled huge sums of money, and accusations were made that Noma was siphoning WRA profits to private accounts including his own, those of certain WRA officials, and his brother's, who also worked in the canteen enterprises.[53] Rumors spread that Noma had made his fortune and was scheduled to leave the center soon. He was declared Public *Inu* Number One by *Daihyo Sha Kai.* As he was walking to his residence on the evening of July 3, 1944, Noma was attacked by unknown assailants and stabbed through the neck by a sharp object, probably a pair of scissors. He fell on the porch of his brother's apartment and died instantly. The assassins dispersed into the night and were never found.[54]

The shocking murder of Noma was openly approved by *Daihyo Sha Kai.* In a statement dated July 20, 1944, a member of *Daihyo Sha Kai* praised the assassination: "The killing of T. Noma was a blessing to the residents. I have yet to see anyone who really feels sorry for him, other than those of his immediate family. Never have I seen such pleasant reactions to a murder in all my life. Several others are said to be

---

[52] WRA Community Analysis Section March 27, 1944, JARCU/CU Box 1 File 26
[53] Thomas and Nishimoto *The Spoilage*, Page 270. The canteens reported sales of over $110,000 for the month of November 1943.
[54] Ibid, 271

in line for the grave and their deaths violent as they may be, will be openly rejoiced by the residents."[55]

In the final two years of its existence, Tule Lake continued to descend further into frightening anarchy. Under pressure from the militant element in the camp a large majority of evacuees were forced to renounce their American citizenship. In the end Tule Lake is a tale of two camps. First it was the camp of coerced labor on the huge project farm and related agricultural projects, and later it became the Tule Lake Segregation Center where terror reigned.

[55] Ibid. 272

Conclusion

In the panicked atmosphere after Pearl Harbor, fear of Japanese sabotage fused with economic opportunism and latent racism to make the extreme measure of removing all Japanese from the West Coast an acceptable—and, in many instances, popular—initiative for much of the Caucasian American population. Coinciding directly with swift military gains made by the Japanese Army, many Americans worried about a Japanese invasion on the West Coast of the United States. Heightening such fears, newspapers printed unfounded reports of sabotage activity by West Coast Japanese. As the winter of 1942 progressed many groups called for ousting West Coast Japanese, including economic interest groups who coveted Japanese Americans' property, such as the Salinas Vegetable Grower-shipper Association. By the end of year, nearly every law enforcement organization and chamber of commerce on the West Coast was calling for removal of the Japanese population.

Under the guise of military necessity Lieutenant General John DeWitt, commander of the fourth Army headquartered in San Francisco, and Secretary of War Henry Stimson, convinced President Franklin Roosevelt to issue Executive Order #9066. As a result, virtually all of the 110,000 Japanese American citizens and resident aliens living on the West Coast were interned in a temporary assembly center by June 1, 1942. Nearly all of the sites selected by the army and the War Relocation Administration (WRA) for permanent relocations centers were, built in

the most barren wastelands of the American West. Places that remain, for the most part utterly uninhabited to this day. From Poston in the Arizona desert, to Heart Mountain in arid Wyoming, the relocation camps were virtually identical, differing only in size. One camp, however, proved a significant exception: Tule Lake, California, located in an immensely fertile agricultural region. With wartime prices for foodstuffs soaring and overseeing a readily-available pool of captive labor, the WRA quickly recognized a unique potential at Tule Lake for large-scale commercial agricultural production.

Indeed, in the first two years, the widespread labor coercion at Tule Lake camp, where the evacuees devoted long hours to a vast commercial agriculture project for minimal compensation was unique among the ten internment camps. In the spring of 1942 internees at Tule Lake planted 2,500 acres of vegetables and grain, including 1,057 acres of barley, 208 acres of onions, 827 acres of potatoes, and smaller crops of carrots, lettuce, turnips, peas, beets, and cabbages. Despite almost constant controversy and hardship in the first year, including administration threats of fee assessments for those who would not work, as well as disgruntled evacuees working in the fields on inadequate rations, internees at the Tule Lake Center harvested more than a million dollars worth of grain and vegetables at a substantial profit. Moreover, vegetables grown at Tule Lake supplemented the mess halls of all the other centers at a time when fresh vegetables were in short supply.

In an attempt to speed up and increase the number of Japanese Americans leaving the camps for permanent relocation, and to supply the military with Japanese

American troops, the WRA and the War Department jointly undertook a loyalty registration in the winter and spring of 1943. The loyalty questionnaire which each Japanese citizen and resident alien over the age of 17 was required to fill out was meant to be a mere formality. For many internees at Tule Lake, however, the registration created confusion, resentment, and insecurity, and half of all evacuees over 17 years of age refused to affirm loyalty to the United States government.

Despite the fiasco of the registration, the WRA had confidence that the residents of the Tule Lake Center—who came to be known as the Old Tuleans—would return to the fields of the project farm in the spring. No one responsible for the camp's administration suggested cutting back on the windfall agricultural project. To the contrary, the prevailing sentiment of the WRA was more, more, more! The Old Tuleans responded loyally, with 2,900 acres of vegetables and grain in production in 1943, and another excellent crop, regardless of the fact that almost half of all Japanese Americans and aliens declared "disloyal" were residents of Tule Lake.

Notwithstanding the excellent harvest at Tule Lake, WRA National Director Dillon S. Myer, under pressure from both the government and the private sector, made the decision to segregate all those who refused on the loyalty questionnaire to affirm loyalty in the United States. They were given a chance to change their responses on the key loyalty questions. If their answers remained "No, No" they were declared "disloyal," and sent to a new segregation center. In choosing Tule Lake for the segregation center, Dillon Myer intended to supply the vast fields and related divisions of the project such as the packing sheds and railroad loading docks,

with unlimited labor. Myer and the top functionaries in the WRA failed to recognize, however, the relative nature of loyalty and disloyalty among internees, especially at Tule Lake.

By transferring internees from each internment center to Tule Lake, the WRA created a camp more diverse than any other center. Included among the transferees was a minority of militant pro-Japan activists determined to advance a highly activist agenda. Immediately recognizing the fundamental role of agriculture in the exploitative relationship between the WRA and internees at Tule Lake, such activists and their supporters among the population of Old Tuleans made curtailing the longstanding pattern of labor coercion on the project farm a central goal. For his part, WRA Director Myer failed to recognize the intractable tension created by selecting Tule Lake as the destination for "disloyals" while simultaneously attempting to use internee labor to generate yet another bumper harvest.

The tragic death of farm worker Tatsuto Kashima on October 15, 1944 led directly to the rise to power of the radical element of the evacuees, and subsequently to the end of large-scale agriculture at Tule Lake. In the eyes of many evacuees, Project Director Raymond Best put more value on vegetables than on the tragic loss of a human life. When Best refused to sanction a public funeral, residents of Tule Lake were appalled, and, momentarily united by the radical internee group *Daihyo Sha Kai*, evacuees resolved to continue with the public funeral in defiance of the administration. Best responded by countering defiance with vindictiveness, ordering "loyal" Japanese American workers to be transported to Tule Lake from other

centers to harvest the remaining vegetables and paying them substantially higher wages than internees at Tule Lake had received in the previous two years.

National Director Myer got his rude awakening regarding the true situation developing at Tule Lake when he spent the excruciating afternoon of November 1, 1943, meeting with members of *Daihyo Sha Kai*, surrounded by thousands of segregates coerced into a show of solidarity. On that day, which he referred to the subsequent spring as "the past incident," Myer abandoned the huge agricultural commune that had characterized Tule Lake in the first two years. The WRA would cut their losses and salvage what vegetables the "loyal" workers could harvest. Underscoring the dramatic shift, only three days after the fateful meeting the Army was in control of the camp. Tule Lake had become, in a very short time, a center too volatile and dangerous to justify the investment necessary to manage the massive agricultural project.

Ironically, Myer emerged from his experience during the relocation years with his reputation intact. In fact, during his lifetime he occupied a place of virtual reverence in the "loyal" Japanese American community. In May of 1946, just two months after the Tule Lake Segregation Center finally closed, the Japanese-Americans Citizens League held a banquet in Myer's honor. He was presented with a citation describing him in heroic terms:

> American and champion of human rights and common decency whose courageous and inspired leadership as National Director of the War Relocation Authority against war hysteria, race prejudice, and misguided hate, as well as economic greed draped in patriotic colors, contributed mightily in convincing the American Government and public at large that Americans of Japanese ancestry and their resident alien parents were, and are, loyal and

sincere Americans worthy of every right and privilege of the American heritage.[1]

In his 1971 memoir, *Uprooted Americans: The Japanese Americans and the War Relocation Authority During World War II,* Myer implied, in a fanciful recounting of events, that primary responsibility for the decision to undertake segregation, should not fall upon him. "On May 31, 1943, we called all project directors to Washington D.C.," he recalled. "After a thorough discussion the directors were unanimous in their recommendation that we proceed with a mass segregation program. Because I did not feel that I could ignore their unanimous judgment I capitulated, although reluctantly."[2] Put simply, the historical record does not sustain Myer's attempt to distance himself from responsibility for segregation. In his memoir Myer indicated that he recognized faulty logic contributed to the situation which developed at Tule Lake, although he did not take personal responsibility: "There was a tendency in the WRA to assume that the segregation center and other centers would be more harmonious communities after the separation had been completed. This was true of nine centers, but not of Tule Lake."[3] Not of Tule Lake, indeed! The Tule Lake Segregation Center failed to bring together a group of like-minded evacuees or any semblance of harmony. By his actions at Tule Lake, Myer affirmed that his advocacy and sympathy extended primarily to "loyal" Japanese Americans. Evidence uncovered in this thesis indicates that Myer's

---

[1] Dillon S. Myer, *Uprooted Americans: The Japanese Americans and the War Relocation Authority During World War* II, (Tucson, University of Arizona Press 1971) 342.
[2] Ibid, 76 The idea that Myer brought the project directors to Washington D.C. for a vote on segregation is ridiculous.
[3] Ibid, 77.

performance as National Director of the WRA should be reassessed, regarding the director's less than magnanimous treatment of "troublemakers" such as individuals who protested conditions in the camps, and "disloyals" who refused to affirm loyalty in the U.S.A., particularly at Tule Lake, for reasons which had nothing to do with pro-Japan sentiment.

No WRA official including Myer ever lamented publicly the loss of large scale agriculture at Tule Lake. In fact, the unique nature of the Tule Lake Center as a huge agricultural center has been all but lost to history. Although historians have noted that all the centers had agricultural projects, no other camp had a farm operation comparable to Tule Lake. Indeed, of the nine other centers, only Heart Mountain in Wyoming had good potential for agriculture. The growing season was very short, however, and the center was only able to supplement its tables with project-grown vegetables, gladly accepting shipments of vegetables from Tule Lake. Minidoka, Idaho produced chicken meat and eggs but no vegetables to speak of.[4] The Arizona centers of Poston and Gila River were plagued with high alkali content in the soil and vegetable production was disappointing. In the first year at Poston, a sizable investment in tomatoes failed, as many acres of plants died in the fields. Granada, Colorado had similar soil problems, while Manzanar in Owens Valley, California, suffered from a lack of water. At the Topaz Center in Utah, write historians Girdner and Loftis, "Even the Japanese could not grow anything except

[4] Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal: The Evacuation of the Japanese-Americans During World War II*, (London: Macmillan, 1969), 233.

morning glories."[5] By contrast, the Arkansas camps of Rohwer and Jerome were in wooded swampland and subject to excessive heat and unpredictable rain. Only at Tule Lake did the ideal conditions of rich black soil, abundant water for irrigation, and a population of evacuees with the necessary expertise and sincerity come together to make the desert bloom for two years, and to supply a steady stream of railcars filled with fresh crisp vegetables to all the other centers.

The last of the ten relocation centers to close, the Tule Lake camp remained occupied by Japanese Americans until March 1946. In subsequent years, most of the camp buildings were sold, mainly to local homesteaders, and moved by truck to farms and ranches in the area. Today, all that is left to identify the location of the huge camp is a small historical marker, placed by the state of California at the side of Highway 139, adjacent to the site of the camp. The plaque reads:

> Tule Lake was one of ten American concentration camps established during World War II to incarcerate 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry, of whom the majority were American citizens, behind barbed wire and guard towers without charge, trial or establishment of guilt. These camps are reminders of how racism, economic and political exploitation, and expediency can undermine the constitutional guarantees of United States citizens and aliens alike. May the injustices and humiliation suffered here never recur.[6]

Poignant words, indeed. They tell us nothing, however, of the unique nature of Tule Lake among the ten relocation centers located throughout the west, or of the struggles waged in the five years of its existence.

---

[5] Ibid, 232.
[6] California Registered Historical Landmark No. 850-2.

Bibliography

Archival Collections

Japanese-American Relocation Centers Records, 1935-1953, Collection Number 3830, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

Interviews

Dick Fensler, Tulelake California, February 11, 2007.

Newspapers

Evening Herald, Klamath Falls, Oregon, March, 1942-March, 1946.

Herald and News, Klamath Falls, Oregon, March, 1942-March, 1946.

The Klamath News, Klamath Falls, Oregon, March, 1942-March 1946.

The Newell Star, Tule Lake, California, April 1944-June 1945.

The New York Times, New York, New York, January 1941.

The Tulean Dispatch, Tule Lake, California, June 1942-November 1943.

Periodicals

"Army Takes Over To Quell Foment At Japanese Camp," *The Christian Science Monitor* November 5, 1943.

John Bird, "Our Japs Have Gone To Work," *Country Gentleman* 3 August, 1942.

"Californians Claim Seizure By Japanese," *The Christian Science Monitor,* November 4, 1943.

Celia S. Deschin, *Tule Lake Science in Inaction,* Journal of Education Sociology (February 1948), 368-381.

Jim Marshall, "The Problem People," *Colliers*, April 1, 1942.

Carey McWilliams, "Moving the West-Coast Japanese," *Harpers Magazine*, September 1942.

William Robinson, "Outcast Americans" *The American Magazine*, April 1, 1942.

Frank J. Taylor, "The People Nobody Wants," *The Saturday Evening Post*, May 9, 1942, transcribed by the WRA.

"Tule Lake Case Placed In Hands of Washington," *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 24, 1943.

Books

Baker, Lillian. *American and Japanese Relocation in World War II: Fact Fiction & Fallacy* (Medford Or: Webb Research Group, 1990).

Baker, Lillian S. *Dishonoring America: the Falsification of World War II History* (Medford Or: Webb Research Group, 1994).

Bosworth, Alan R. *America's Concentration Camps.* (New York; Norton, 1967).

Daniels, Roger. *Concentration Camps USA: Japanese Americans and World War II* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972).

Daniels, Roger. *Prisoners Without Trial: Japanese Americans in World War II* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004).

Daniels, Roger. *The Politics of Prejudice* (New York: Arno Press, 1969).

Daniels, Roger. 'Western Reaction to the Relocated Japanese Americans: The Case of Wyoming," in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor, and Harry H. L. Kitano, eds. (Seattle and London: University of Washington 1991).

Drinnon, Richard. *Keeper of the Concentration Camps: Dillon S. Myer and American Racism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

Feeley, Francis McCollum. *America's Concentration Camps During World War II* (New Orleans: University Press of the South, 1999).

Girdner, Audrie, and Anne Loftis. *The Great Betrayal: The Evacuation of the Japanese Americans during World War II.* (New York: Macmillian, 1969).

Grenon, Jeffrey T. *Offensive History and the Good War: The Internment of Japanese Canadians and Japanese Americans in World War II* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

Grodzins, Morton. *Americans Betrayed: Politics of the Japanese American Evacuation.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949).

Hayashi, Brian M. *Democratizing The Enemy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

Hirabayashi, Lane R. *The Politics Of Fieldwork; In An American Concentration Camp* (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1999).

Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki. *Farewell to Manzanar* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973).

Irons, Peter. *A Peoples History of the Supreme Court* (New York: Penguin Books 2000).

Irons, Peter. *Justice At War: The Story of the Japanese American Internment Cases* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

Jacoby, Harold Stanley. *Tule Lake From Relocation to Segregation*, (Grass Valley, CA: Comstock Bonanza Press, 1996).

Kennedy, David M. *Freedom From Fear: the American People in Depression and War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Kessler, Lauren. *Stubborn Twig.* (New York: Plume/Penguin, 1993).

Leighton Alexander H. *The Governing of Men: General Principles and Recommendations Based on the Experience at a Japanese Relocation Camp* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1945).

Malkin, Michelle. *In Defense of Internment: the Case for "Racial Profiling"* (Lanham: Regnery Publishing, 2004).

Muller, Eric L. "The Minidoka Draft Resisters in a Federal Kangaroo Court," in *Nikkei In The Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans And Japanese Canadians In The Twentieth Century*, Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds. (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2005).

Murry, Alice Yang. "The Decision for Mass Evacuation," in *What Did the Internment of Japanese Americans Mean?* Murray, ed. (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000).

Myer, Dillon S. *Uprooted Americans: The Japanese Americans and the War Relocation Authority during World War II,* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1971).

Nash, Gerald. *The Federal Landscape: An Economic History of the Twentieth-Century West*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999).

Ng, Wendy. *Japanese American Internment During World War II* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press 2002).

Okihiro, Gary Y. *Whispered Silences: Japanese Americans and World War II.* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996).

Gary Okihiro, *Cane Fires: The Anti-Japanese Movement in Hawaii, 1865-1945.* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991).

Okubo, Mine. *Citizen 13660.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946).

Ross, John R. and Reiko Ross, *Second Kinenhi: Reflections on Tule Lake*, (San Francisco: Tule Lake Committee, 2000).

Sims, Robert C. "The 'Free Zone': Nikkei, Japanese Americans in Idaho and Eastern Oregon in World War II," in *Nikkei In The Pacific Northwest Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians In the Twentieth Century*, Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004).

Spickard, Paul R. *Japanese Americans The Formation and Transformations of an Ethnic Group*. (London: Prentice Hall International, 1996).

Taylor, Sandra C. "Evacuation and Economic Loss: Questions and Perspectives," in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation To Redress*, Roger Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor and Harry H. L. Kitano, eds. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press).

Tetsuden, Kashima. *Judgment Without Trial: Japanese American Imprisonment During World War II* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996).

Thomas, Dorothy S. and Richard Nishimoto, *The Spoilage: Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement During World War II*, (Berkeley: University of California Press 1946).

Turner, Stan. *The Years of Harvest: A History of the Tule Lake Basin*, (Eugene: Spencer Creek Press, 1987).

Weglyn, Michi. *Years Of Infamy: The Untold Story Of America's Concentration Camps* (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1976).