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Segregation of Persons of Japanese Ancestry in the Tule Lake Relocation Center, August 1943

War Relocation Authority

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GUY W. COOK
NISEI COLLECTION
University of The Pacific

SEGREGATION

of

Persons of Japanese Ancestry

in Tule Lake Relocation

Center



WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON, D. C.

August, 1943

The Segregation Program of WRA

(A foreword by the Director of the War Relocation Authority)

THE WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY is responsible for the welfare of all the people of Japanese ancestry who live in relocation centers. The execution of this responsibility is made more difficult by the fact that some of the relocation center residents have indicated that they are neither loyal to this country nor sympathetic to its war aims, while the great majority have indicated that they wish to be American. The War Relocation Authority has an obligation to each of these groups, and it also has an obligation to safeguard and further the national interest.

After long and serious deliberation, the decision has been made that the responsibilities of the War Relocation Authority can best be fulfilled if a separation is made between those who wish to follow the American way of life, and those whose interests are not in harmony with those of the United States.

Accordingly, procedures for a program of segregation have been developed. All relocation center residents found not to be loyal or sympathetic to the United States will be moved to the Tule Lake Center, and those Tule Lake residents found to be American in their loyalties or sympathies will be moved to other centers or, preferably, given permission to relocate outside. The population of the relocation centers after segregation will be composed of those whose interests are bound with the welfare of the United States, and who

therefore are eligible to move from the relocation centers to outside communities.

The program of segregation is not being undertaken in any sense as a measure of punishment or penalty for those who will be moved to the Tule Lake Center. The War Relocation Authority recognizes the integrity of those persons of Japanese ancestry who frankly have declared their sympathy for Japan or their lack of allegiance to the United States. While the privilege of leave will be denied to those assigned to the Tule Lake Center, this privilege would not have been available to them had they remained in their present center.

Segregation offers promise of giving to those evacuees who want to be American the opportunity to live as Americans and to express their Americanism without interference; it should result in increased assurance of harmony in the relocation centers; it should increase public acceptance of those granted leave clearance, and thus aid in the relocation of these people.

The decisions as to who will be segregated will be made in a spirit of fairness and justice.

While it is recognized that the segregation process will put to much trouble those persons who must move, I have no question that the national interest and the long range welfare of the thousands of loyal American citizens and law-abiding aliens justify the step to be taken.

I urge every resident of a relocation center to make himself familiar with the objectives of the segregation program and with the procedures for carrying it out, so that the adjustment may be made with the least possible difficulty to everyone concerned.

DILLON S. MYER
Director

BASIS OF SEGREGATION

No person living in a country which is at war with his native land or with a nation to which he has close hereditary ties can escape the necessity of choosing the nation with which his interests are more closely bound, and to which he pledges his support. Those persons of Japanese ancestry now in relocation centers have had the opportunity to state their individual choices, and to back their statements by their actions.

In determining which persons will be required to remain in the Tule Lake Center, the War Relocation Authority will consider carefully the choices which have been expressed by each individual, and all evidence which indicates whether or not his acts support his statements.

In recognition of the fact that many alien-born evacuees are prevented from being loyal American citizens only by legal technicalities, and that some individuals who legally are American citizens actually are sympathetic to Japan in the present war, the process of segregation will be conducted without regard for citizenship.

One of the important sources of information which will be considered will be the answer given by each individual to Question 28 in the registration conducted in each relocation center during February and March, 1943. In this question each American citizen of Japanese ancestry was asked if he would swear loyalty to the United States and forswear loyalty to all other countries; each alien was asked if he would abide by the laws of the United States and do nothing to interfere with this nation's war effort. In this discussion of the segregation program, these alternate questions will be referred to jointly as "Question 28".

GROUPS OF EVACUEES

For purposes of consideration for segregation the residents of the relocation centers, including Tule Lake at present, fall into four major groups:

GROUP I. Persons who will be designated for segregation without further hearing. This group includes those persons who made formal application for repatriation or expatriation before July 1, 1943, and did not retract their applications before that date.

GROUP II. Those persons who, on the strength of their answers to Question 28 or their refusal to answer the question, would appear to be loyal to Japan rather than to the United States. Each of these persons will be asked to appear before a Board of Review for Segregation which will ascertain whether the evidence of pro-Japanese loyalty correctly represents the attitude of the individual. This group includes those who answered "No" to Question 28 and who did not change their answers to "Yes" before July 15, 1943; those who refused to register; those who registered but did not answer Question 28.

The hearings before the Board of Review will be comparatively brief. Those persons found by the Board to continue to hold to their pro-Japanese views will be designated for segregation. Those who sign a statement of loyalty to or sympathy with the United States at the hearings will be reclassified to Group III for further hearings on eligibility for leave clearance.

GROUP III. Those persons who may have stated their loyalty to or sympathy with the United States, but whose loyalty or sympathy is in doubt because of previous statements or because of other evidence. This group includes:

- a. Those reclassified from Group II.
- b. Those who answered "No" to Question 28 at the time of registration but who changed their answers to "Yes" before July 15, 1943.
- c. Those who qualified their affirmative answers to Question 28.
- d. Those who requested repatriation or expatriation but retracted their requests before July 1, 1943.
- e. Those about whom there is other information indicating lack of allegiance to the United States.
- f. Those who have been denied leave by the Director.

Persons in Group III as outlined above will be given hearings by the Leave Section at the relocation center with sufficient thoroughness to enable the Leave Section to determine the true loyalty of each individual, and to decide whether or not he should be declared eligible for leave. The leave clearance hearings may be held at the transfer center after the actual movement of non-segregants.

GROUP IV. Those who are eligible for leave. (Not to be segregated.)

WHO WILL REMAIN IN TULE LAKE CENTER

The following persons will be required to remain in Tule Lake Center after the segregation is completed:

- a. All those in Group I.
- b. Those in Group II found by the Board of Review to be not loyal or sympathetic to the United States.

c. In addition, permission to remain in Tule Lake Center will be granted to persons in Group IV (eligible for leave clearance) who express a wish to remain in order to be with members of their immediate families. While it is the policy of the War Relocation Authority to encourage every eligible person to transfer to a relocation center from which leave permits are granted, or preferably, to relocate outside Tule Lake before segregation takes place, permission to remain voluntarily may be granted after an interview by the Welfare Section.

NOTICE OF HEARINGS

Each person in Group II will be notified of his status in regard to segregation by letter, which will designate the time and place at which he should appear for a hearing before the Board of Review.

Likewise, each person in Group III will be notified of his status in regard to segregation by letter, which will designate the time and place at which he should appear for a hearing before a committee of the Leave Section.

Each person appearing before the Board of Review or the Leave Section will be notified in writing of the decision of the hearing body promptly after the hearing.

WHO WILL TRANSFER FROM TULE LAKE CENTER

All persons who are eligible for leave clearance and who are not granted permission to remain with their immediate families in Tule Lake will be transferred to one of six other relocation centers or will be assisted in relocating outside before the actual movement of persons in the segregation process is completed. Persons to be transferred may indi-

cate their preference of new locations among the following relocation centers: Minidoka, Central Utah, Heart Mountain, Granada, Rohwer, and Jerome. While the indicated preferences will be given consideration, there can be no assurance that it will be possible for all persons to transfer to the preferred relocation center.

In the event that time does not permit holding all leave clearance hearings before the scheduled time of movement, persons determined by the Board of Review to be eligible for leave clearance hearings may be transferred to other centers, where the hearings then will be held. If, after the second hearing, an individual is found not eligible for leave, he will be returned to the Tule Lake Center.

OUTSIDE RELOCATION

During the month of August and perhaps for a longer period of time, special attention will be given to making it possible for residents of Tule Lake Center declared eligible for leave to relocate into ordinary communities, rather than transferring to another relocation center. A special staff will be located in the center to provide information concerning areas where relocation conditions are favorable and concerning other factors which influence the choice of a place to live. Residents of Tule Lake will receive priority on job opportunities which come to the attention of relocation officers.

PLANNING FOR TRANSFER

Each person who is to be transferred will be referred to the Welfare Section for an interview as soon as it is determined that he is to be transferred from the Tule Lake Center. This interview will determine (1) Whether such person is able to travel, and if so, whether special traveling accommodations will be necessary; (2) What members of the immediate family wish to accompany him; and (3) What further assistance is needed by the evacuee or his family.

In some cases the head of a family signed an application for repatriation or expatriation for the whole family. Any member of such a family who has not actually signed an application will be asked to sign a simple statement requesting or declining repatriation or expatriation. Those who request repatriation or expatriation will remain in Tule Lake Center. Those who decline an application for repatriation or expatriation, and who are otherwise eligible for leave clearance, will be transferred to another center, or permitted to relocate before the segregation movement is completed.

This policy of having each person, regardless of age and sex, sign his own application for repatriation or expatriation is in keeping with the WRA principle that those people remaining in the Tule Lake Center are doing so by virtue of their own acts or statements which show they are not loyal to the United States or sympathetic to the war aims of this country.

Persons too ill to travel will not be moved from the Tule Lake Center until they are sufficiently improved. Their immediate relatives will be permitted to remain with them without loss of the rights to leave. These and other special concessions involving illness or the necessity for special railroad accommodations will be authorized by the project medical officer.

Advance notice will be given to each person who is to be transferred to a relocation center. This will include the date of departure and the car in which he is to ride. This notice will be given as far in advance as possible, to assure time for farewells and parting calls.

In the meantime the departing evacuee should be making all necessary arrangements for checking in government property and packing and labeling his personal belongings

which he wishes to have transferred. Only essential household items, meaning those in actual use and including what home-made furniture falls in this category, will be shipped at government expense. These belongings will be shipped as freight, and may not reach the destination for as long as sixty days after the owner has arrived.

For this reason it will be essential that transferees take with them sufficient clothing and necessary household effects to maintain them for that period. This will be carried as hand luggage or as checkable baggage on the transfer train. The checkable baggage may not be in excess of 150 pounds per full fare ticket, and will not be accessible during the train trip.

Hand luggage should include only such items as will be needed on the trip.

It is the responsibility of each segregant to see that his baggage and freight are ready and correctly labeled with his name, address, family number and its place of destination. Tags for this purpose will be provided. Merchandise classified as freight must be crated and ready for pickup at least 24 hours in advance of the owner's time of departure. WRA will supply the crating material free of charge. Checkable baggage must be ready for pickup at least 24 hours before the owner's time of departure.

The moving of several thousand people of all ages to the Tule Lake Center and the transferring of an almost equal number of people from the Tule Lake Center to six relocation centers will be a complicated and difficult task, especially during wartime, when railroad facilities are overburdened. With the cooperation of the Army the WRA is planning this mass movement with great care in order to accomplish it with as little discomfort as possible to those who will be

moved. There will be a WRA representative on each transfer train, to assist the evacuees in meeting any problems that may arise. Food will be provided in the cars, and medical and nursing care will be available, together with special formulas and facilities for the care and feeding of babies.

Aged or infirm persons will receive sleeping accommodations on board the train if the project medical director certifies that this is necessary. In general, however, travel will be by coach.

WHY TULE LAKE CENTER WAS CHOSEN

The Tule Lake Center in northern California was selected as the segregation center for four reasons:

1. With a capacity of over 15,000 persons it is expected to be able to accommodate all those who will be segregated.
2. The farm is well developed and will provide food and employment on a large scale for residents of the center.
3. The Tule Lake Center has more residents who will be designated for segregation, thus reducing the total number of persons to be moved in the segregation process.
4. The center is located in the evacuated area where escort requirements have increased the cost and difficulty of outside relocation.

DIRECTOR OF THE TULE LAKE CENTER

Raymond R. Best, who became project director of the Tule Lake Center on August 1, 1943, was appointed by Director Myer with "complete confidence in his ability to make the Tule Lake Center a success."

Born near Kalamazoo, Michigan, Mr. Best has lived in the West since boyhood and for 25 years made his home in Idaho. Prior to joining the WRA in April, 1942, he was with various agencies of the Department of Agriculture for a number of years.

Mr. Best is one of the pioneers of WRA. In the early days of this agency he helped to set up and supply the centers. He spent six months at the Minidoka Relocation Center before being designated as director of the WRA isolation center, first located at Moab, Utah, and now at Leupp, Arizona. At Moab and Leupp, Mr. Best won the confidence and loyalty of the residents there, and established a reputation for considerate and just administration.

In World War I Mr. Best served with the Marine Corps. He is married and has three sons, Robert, 23, who is serving in the Army Air Corps; Jack, 14, and Raymond Jr., 10. The younger boys will live at the Tule Lake Center with their parents.

OPERATION OF THE TULE LAKE CENTER

The War Relocation Authority will have full responsibility for operation of the Tule Lake Center, as at present. While many details are yet to be determined, it is expected that the Tule Lake Center will continue to operate under the same general policies which have applied to date, with two notable exceptions:

- (1) Residents of Tule Lake Center will not be eligible for leave.
- (2) Policies which provide for self-government of the community will not apply, but there will be a representative advisory council of evacuees.

As before, the Army will be responsible for external

security, and it is planned to have the internal security maintained by the residents themselves.

American elementary and high schools will continue to be provided as in the past. However, parents of children will have the opportunity to decide whether or not they wish their children to attend such schools. Any other schools desired by the segregants will have to be established and operated without cost to the United States government. Children who attend the government schools will be permitted to attend other types of schools after school hours.

Adult education and vocational training classes will be provided.

There will be freedom of religion at the Tule Lake Center, but since State Shinto is not regarded by the Japanese government as a religion it will not be permitted.

There will be a hospital and an adequate health program. There will be legal services and assistance in property matters. No restraints will be placed on leisure-time functions so long as they do not interfere with the peace and security of the center.

There will be a community newspaper in Japanese or English, or both, if desired. Employment will be voluntary and at the same rates of pay, including clothing allowances, as in relocation centers. Unemployment compensation and public assistance grants will be paid and the WRA will supply work clothing for special types of workers.

The Consumer Cooperative Enterprises will continue to operate. Persons being transferred to relocation centers should go to the Co-op offices at Tule Lake and make arrangements for transferring their memberships or for securing a refund so that they may join the Co-operative at their new center. Patronage refunds owed to those being trans-

ferred will be made as soon as possible after the transfer is completed.

As in the past, housing generally will continue to be by families.

Residents of the Tule Lake Center may be given the right to visit sick relatives or to attend funerals outside the center, at the discretion of the Project Director. Except in unusual circumstances, such trips will be at the individual's own expense. Such trips will be held to a minimum.

Persons outside may apply in advance to the Project Director of the Tule Lake Center for permission to visit relatives or friends there, but the Project Director is not required to grant permission if he deems such visits inadvisable.

Only in unusual circumstances will persons be permitted to transfer voluntarily to the Tule Lake Center after the segregation has been completed.

It should be kept in mind that all persons in the Tule Lake Center will be subject to all policies, rules, and regulations applicable to the center, regardless of whether they are there by direction of the War Relocation Authority or by their own choice.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

In order to provide means for correcting any injustices which may result from the segregation process, an Appeals Board will be established to consider cases of persons living in the Tule Lake Center after the segregation is completed. A resident of the center who feels that he was unjustly retained in this center may make application to the Appeals Board for a hearing. At this hearing, the applicant will have an opportunity to present his case fully. The Appeals

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Board will have the authority to recommend that the person be permitted to transfer to a relocation center.

Persons living voluntarily in Tule Lake Center after the segregation process who wish to transfer to a relocation center also may apply to the Appeals Board for permission to do so.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Citizenship of persons retained or voluntarily residing in the Tule Lake Center is not affected under present laws.

It is impossible to forecast when any person who has applied for repatriation or expatriation will actually be transferred to Japan. The selection of persons for exchange is determined on the basis of lists supplied by the Japanese government through the Spanish Embassy. As in the past, the persons whose names are on such a list will be notified.

It is possible that some persons retained in the Tule Lake Center for good reason but who have not applied for repatriation or expatriation may be listed for exchange by the Japanese government. The determination as to whether or not they will be required to return to Japan will be made by the State Department.

The status of American citizens who have applied for expatriation remaining in the United States after the end of the war cannot be foretold. It will depend upon post-war treaties, acts of Congress and interpretation of present law.

In the event that Selective Service should become operative for American citizens of Japanese ancestry, it is presumed that no exception would be made of American citizens living in the Tule Lake Center.

MS 33 Box 1 1.6