

CHAPTER V

THE WAY AHEAD

By the summer of 1943, community government had improved its status with both evacuees and administrators. The administration was turning more frequently and extensively to the councils as a medium of communication with the residents. Project staffs had learned that the councils and council groups were as eager as themselves to have a well-ordered community and that the councils could lend real assistance in meeting some problems.

Community understanding and acceptance of the representative system had similarly increased as the channels through the council to the administration became better known and more frequently used. The residents began to look to their representatives to bring problems of the community to the attention of the administration.

The projects had become better organized. The flow of goods and services had become sufficiently routinized so that the inefficiencies and unmet needs could be placed in a perspective of relative importance. Many of the residents had settled down to an existence that was generally enduring and from which there grew certain satisfactions and benefits. They had learned the limitations of expectancy although many anxieties were still reflected from time to time. These anxieties concerned food, health, employment, education and recreation. They were the normal concerns of a group that had little control over the events which shaped their lives, and that feared what little they had might be taken away or greatly curtailed.

The increasing success with which the council was able to secure remedial measures in some areas and to provide an understanding of limitations in others contributed to a growing sense of security.

A. Segregation

There were, however, anxieties which rose and fell in intensity with each new move or change in policy by the WRA. One such anxiety was the fear that the Government would decide upon a policy of segregation and forced relocation. Rumors were current in many projects, during registration, that the Government would separate the "disloyals" from the "loyals," and then would disperse the "loyals" throughout the country. This rumor was a contributing factor to the large number of people who sought refuge by staying at Tule Lake during segregation and to the large number of repatriation requests made at other centers by families who, to avoid enforced relocation, sought a haven with the "disloyals."

Following registration and the disclosure that large numbers had requested repatriation and others had answered the loyalty question in the negative, agitation for segregation increased from many directions. Pressure was placed on the WRA by the Army, Congressional committees, the JACL, administrative personnel, and by the evacuees themselves. The decision to segregate was announced in early July. Previous to this time, however, the Washington staff had been engaged in discussing the plans and policies for segregation and the administration of a segregation center. The decision was welcomed by most project personnel as a solution to the difficult problem of administering a center composed of groups which appeared to be diametrically opposed in their ultimate objective. One segment of the evacuees had declared for Japan or against the United States, and the other for America.

Segregation was in reality a step in the direction of securing the voluntary relocation of all evacuees. It was the hope of the WRA officials that upon completion of segregation, it would be possible to gain widespread official and public acceptance for the loyal evacuees, to remove many of the security restrictions at relocation centers, and thus reduce center population materially by relocation and dispersal of the residents throughout the country.

The entire program was carefully prepared and contingencies were provided for. Both Washington and the centers had learned many useful lessons from the confused period of registration, and strenuous efforts were made to insure complete understanding of the objectives and plans necessary to accomplish the regrouping of people according to their national sympathies. A meeting of project directors was held in Denver the latter part of July. Policies and procedures were carefully studied to insure complete understanding. Preparations under way at the centers even before the project directors' meeting were given impetus by the return of the project directors from the Denver conference. Two of the project directors, acting upon a suggestion made at the Denver meeting, called upon their community councils for major assistance. At other centers, the movement was under the direct supervision of the administrative staff with the assistance of the block managers and in some instances an advisory group drawn from the council, and often from the segregants themselves.

The organization of the movement at Central Utah, where the community council was given a major share of responsibility, is of interest as an example of the operation of the principles of joint participation and responsibility. There, the project director, following receipt of information on segregation, established a staff group called the Administrative Transfer Committee. His next step was to inform the representatives of the community council of the new policy. The community council immediately called block meetings, at which this information was passed on and the segregants elected one of their

members to be a representative. Thirty-four blocks sent representatives to a Transferee Committee. This group elected a chairman who in turn appointed five members from the committee to serve as the executive group. The community council delegated to a Community Cooperative Committee of five members the responsibility for representing the remainder of the residents.

Since the movement involved both the transfer of people from Central Utah and the reception and induction of people from Tule Lake, there was a division of community functions. The Transferee Committee was primarily concerned with facilitating the smooth movement of their group from the center, while the council committee was concerned with the reception of the incoming Tule Lakers. During the several weeks of preparation and movement, the General Transfer Committee, composed of the Administrative Transfer Committee, the Transferee Committee, and the Community Cooperative Committee were in almost continuous consultation on problems connected with the total segregation movement.

The merit of this plan of organization was the adequate channeling of communication through the community council and the Transferee Committee direct to each individual segregant. The organization achieved not only communication but also effective planning and action. Through this organization, the segregants selected from among their own members the train monitor, car captains, and others having responsibilities during the trip. As a result of carefully developed plans with full participation of the community, the movement of Tule Lake-bound segregants was accomplished without difficulty.

The Community Cooperative Committee kept the council and through it the residents informed of plans and developments and secured their cooperation. Through the Special Events Committee of the council, plans were made for welcoming the newcomers. Two or three days after the arrival of each train, a special program under the sponsorship of the council was arranged for the benefit of the new people. This committee also cooperated in the reception and induction procedures. The incoming people were met at the gate by the Boy Scouts' drum and bugle corps, escorted to the induction center where light refreshments were served, and then directed to their permanent or temporary quarters.

The organization of the movement at the Rohwer center was similar to that at Central Utah. There a committee of the community council and a committee of segregants worked in close collaboration with the project administration in effecting all plans, thus winning favorable comment from the project director.

Segregation was an important event in the development of community government. Its chief importance rested in the removal from the centers of a number of people who were actively opposed to any form of

cooperation with the project administration. This removal made possible the hastening of the development of a common basis of action for all center residents by themselves and the WRA. Project administration, with the removal of many who were suspected by the administration of being actual or potential trouble-makers, was more disposed to have confidence that a community council could handle internal problems. The active cooperation of the councils at two centers, and to a lesser extent elsewhere, provided a sound basis for future cooperative action.

B. The Policy of Relocation

Even before the completion of segregation, preliminary discussions and plans were being developed in Washington for the initiation of an all-out program of relocation. These plans included staff reorganization, the expansion of the field service, and a concentrated program of information directed at the American public and the evacuees. The reorganization included the separation of the relocation function from the Employment Division and the establishment of the Relocation Division. Field offices were expanded and increased in number. Citizens' committees were organized and understandings reached with local, state, and national agencies and organizations.

The Authority recognized that, so long as the West Coast continued to be closed to evacuees, it was impossible to achieve a complete depopulation of the centers. However, it was expected that many thousands would leave quickly under new relocation procedures. When this expectation did not materialize, it was a considerable shock to many WRA officials to learn that, in spite of desirable economic opportunities, good public acceptance, and continued relaxation of security measures by the Army, many, if not most of the evacuees, preferred the familiar institutional life of a relocation center to the unexperienced condition of life in an unfamiliar American community. The enigma of people choosing the security behind barbed wire and armed guards rather than the freedom of normal society was not easily understood. It was felt by many that a combination of pressure, salesmanship, and incentives would do the job.

The real deterrents to relocation were little understood at that time. One of the most important of these factors was the belief held by many evacuees that there would be a negotiated peace. Many, especially among the Issei, thought that they would receive special consideration under the peace treaty terms which would reimburse them for their loss and reestablish them in as favorable, if not more desirable, status than had been theirs before evacuation. An additional and important factor was an intense fear of personal and economic insecurity on the outside. These fears included those of physical violence, destruction of property, and economic discrimination. There was also a fair-sized group which had found in the centers greater security and more comforts

than it had known before and was not eager to relinquish these advantages. The Authority approached the problem on the basis of the need to create interest, to point to the desirability of relocating, to acquaint the evacuees with the advantages of particular localities or occupations, and to provide services for those who decided to leave.

Beginning in September and continuing for several months, many of the Washington staff were almost continuously engaged in discussing the pros and cons of relocation, resistance to relocation, organization, procedures, policies, and the like. As agreement evolved, reorganization was seen as the initial step. There was also recognized, however, the need to set objectives for the relocation program and to secure their acceptance by both the project staff and the evacuees; to provide channels of communication to the evacuees and to secure their participation in a relocation program; and to implement the program with policies and procedures. It was believed that through organization, to provide services, an educational program to stimulate thinking about the future, and the removal of psychic blocks through counseling, many more would leave the centers.

From these discussions there emerged three memoranda which contained the philosophy, organization, and plans for relocation. A considerable portion of these memoranda recognized the need for evacuee participation and understanding of the relocation program if it were to succeed. The memorandum of October 28 recognized this need in a sentence which read: "A progressive relocation program can be achieved only through the full and complete participation and cooperation of the evacuee population; and there should be increased delegation of responsibility to the community council and other evacuee groups to make their participation possible."

This idea was elaborated by an additional comment quoted below:

"The future of the evacuees is of greater concern to them than to anyone else, and they should fully share in planning their relocation. This should be borne in mind in carrying out the relocation program, and evacuee cooperation should be secured through delegation of responsibilities. Since the council is elected to represent the community, it is essential that it be involved in the relocation planning, and other representative evacuee groups may have additional contributions to make. The first step in evacuee participation might well be the determination by the council of the answers to certain basic problems that will affect future participation, such as:

- "(1) Kind of organization that should be established by the community council to deal with relocation problems for the evacuee community, with full consideration given existing evacuee relocation committees.
- "(2) The relationship of the community council and evacuee relocation committees to project staff functions in connection with relocation.
- "(3) The nature and extent of the responsibility that may be effectively delegated to the community council (and the evacuee community) in connection with the relocation program.

"It is recognized that plans for greater evacuee participation are well under way at some projects, and suggestions and comments of project directors and community councils growing out of their experience will be welcomed. Extra copies of this letter are being sent to you under separate cover so that you can make them available to the council."

The suggestion was also made that a national conference of evacuee representative--those at the centers, those who had relocated, and Japanese Americans who had never been in relocation centers--should be held, the purpose of which conference "would be to draw the attention of the Japanese Americans to the larger problems of relocation, to stimulate them to plan for the eventual absorption into American life of all persons of Japanese descent and to form the basis for a comprehensive assimilation program."

A memorandum of November 8 elaborated on the earlier statements and provided a detailed plan for achieving the objective of joint planning between the staff and the evacuees. Full recognition was given to the community council as representatives of the evacuees and as the group which should assume a major responsibility in the planning efforts.

The plan provided for the establishment of a Relocation Planning Commission to be appointed by the community council and to be composed of representatives of various resident groups. This commission would then select an executive secretary. The project director was to appoint a Relocation Committee composed of staff members with the relocation program officer as its executive secretary. Three representatives of each of these groups were to constitute the Relocation Executive Board with the relocation officer as the executive secretary and with the executive secretary of the Relocation Planning Commission as an

ex-officio member.

The function of the evacuee commission was "to coordinate the efforts of the various committees (of the council), to prepare regular reports of progress, to receive suggestions for improvement of the program, and to transmit these suggestions and reports to the Relocation Executive Board."

The Relocation Committee had as its responsibility "planning and coordinating the contribution of the various divisions and the sections to relocation. It will develop procedures and provide general guidance for all coordinated operations. It will prepare and submit recommendations to the project director on changes in organization or program emphasis which lead to better working relations between the divisions and sections. It will be responsible for planning active participation of all staff members and utilizing interests and capabilities of all persons in whatever capacity."

The responsibilities of the Relocation Executive Board were planning, coordination, and guidance. In this capacity, it would make recommendations to the project director for transmission to Washington for changes in policy or program, and to secure approval of policies and plans as they operated in the center. It would define responsibility of the staff and evacuee groups, develop cooperative relationships, determine the sequence of phases of the program, and work out details implementing agreements or resolving disagreements.

Further implementation of this more aggressive relocation policy was spelled out in a memorandum on welfare counseling issued November 9, 1943. This memorandum called attention to the individual and family problems of a social nature which were basic in relocation resistance. It also developed a plan for individual and family counseling and put the responsibility on the welfare section. Its objectives were to assist evacuees in developing plans for relocation, to furnish information on the resources of communities to which evacuee might go, to gather basic family data which could be transmitted to the appropriate relocation office when a family relocated, and to provide WRA with information for an over-all program. It was not intended that the family counseling program should be used as a pressure technique to force people to relocate. Its major objective was the transmittal of reliable information to the people counseled and, through the interviewing technique, to relieve them of many psychological blocks.

A detailed approach to secure community acceptance for family counseling and to facilitate interviewing was included as a part of this document. It provided that the head counselor of the welfare section should discuss the program with the community council and, having secured its understanding and acceptance, ask for the appointment

of a counseling committee to work with the welfare section. This committee would also be thoroughly informed of the objectives and techniques of counseling, and would assume responsibility for advising the welfare section on its approach and also for familiarizing the residents with the objectives and the basis of scheduling interviews. It was proposed that interviewing be conducted on a block basis and that previous to scheduling interviews a thorough understanding and acceptance on the part of the residents should be achieved. The block manager would then schedule each family in his block for the welfare section. This procedure would be repeated block by block until the interviewing program had been completed.

These plans represented the most comprehensive and detailed attempt ever made by the WRA to bring joint efforts to bear on the solution of a common problem. Their description will help us to understand the subsequent events and to evaluate the kind of relationships existing between the administrative staff, the community council, and the evacuees.

The failure of this plan to work as it was outlined rests upon a history of past relationships, inability to develop organization, and a lack of understanding between some staff members and the evacuees. The plan was partially successful. However, a year and one-half later, the welfare section was still engaged in conducting interviews or re-interviewing families where an inadequate first interview had been held. A year later one of the centers established its first evacuee relocation commission. Another center which had made a number of unsuccessful attempts to secure evacuee participation finally concluded that its attempts were useless. Counseling was divided between the welfare section and the relocation division and in actual operation assumed a character far different from what was originally intended.

Generally speaking, the response to the plan for the organization of staff-evacuee relocation groups indicated better understanding than that accorded other portions of these documents. Project directors did appoint staff committees to discuss problems of relocation even though, with a few exceptions, these committees were inactive within a short period. The failure came largely from an inability to convince participating staff members that they could make a significant contribution to the total relocation program by going beyond their regular duties. At these meetings, the relocation officer made a report of relocation progress, and new policies and procedures. This was not the function envisaged for them in the original statement.

Several of the community councils established relocation planning commissions. Again, however, there was considerable misunderstanding and misinterpretation on the part of both the administrative people and the evacuees of the function of this group. At some centers, the

relocation officer attempted to utilize the group as a channel for pressuring people to relocate. When the commission resisted his efforts to convert them to his propaganda program, he either lost interest or decided that the commission was useless.

Evacuee participation in relocation planning was a half-hearted gesture at several centers. An active relocation commission was already functioning at Rohwer and Gila River. At both these centers, these groups were directly related to or were creations of the community council rather than of the administration. Commissions were eventually started at all other centers except Manzanar. The one at Central Utah was never very active and defined its activities narrowly. The Granada commission was originally a creation of the administration, and only after several months did it become identified with the council. It was not until the fall of 1944 that an evacuee relocation group was established at Poston.

In one respect, these evacuee groups achieved a much larger measure of success than might under the circumstances have been anticipated. For one thing, relocation was not a popular subject among the evacuees, and it was with some difficulty that evacuees were persuaded to serve with these groups. There was the ever present fear, which was frequently justified, that these evacuee groups would become subject to administrative pressure of a kind that was unpopular within the center. The attempt on the part of some relocation supervisors to place responsibility for drumming up trade for the relocation office with the evacuee groups was resisted and was a perversion of the original intent. The fact that these commissions survived the staff relocation committee and were generally more active indicates that they did meet a need in the community. At those projects where the relocation officer met frequently with the commissions and kept them informed of policy and problems, there was a much better response. The failure of administrative leadership was in large measure responsible for these groups failing to assume the role intended for them.

A third factor contributing to the lack of widespread participation was the inability of the welfare section to initiate its program of family counseling within a reasonable period of time. Several months passed before personnel had been recruited and decisions made as to the data to be gathered in the family interviews. When the centers were finally informed of what was desired, it appeared to many people, including the evacuees, that the counseling program was in effect another registration. As such it encountered considerable opposition. Furthermore, there is no record that any welfare section ever attempted to enlist the support of the community in the systematic manner outlined in the memorandum of November 9. By the time the interviewing unit did get under way, its original purpose had been greatly modified and a large portion of the operational job and personnel had been allocated to

the relocation division.

The inability to achieve the objectives of evacuee participation in a relocation program was due to many factors inherent in the total situation. These factors included a set pattern of managerial direction and supervision by an administrative staff and the failure to appreciate or understand the useful potentialities of consultation with evacuees through organization in the achievement of a goal. There was also the difficulty of definition of objectives. The administrative staff was primarily interested in moving increasingly large numbers of people out of the centers. Many of the evacuees were not interested in leaving the centers under the conditions then existing, and others were unwilling to leave under any conditions.

Although this situation was fully recognized in the three memoranda discussed above and although procedures were developed to break down opposition, a common interpretation at the projects was that this new program really meant increased pressures to get more people to move. Many of the actions of the national office of WRA began to be interpreted by project administrations and evacuees alike as evidence that people were going to be forced out of the centers. This attitude, justified or not, did much to intensify feelings of insecurity and to prevent such discussion as might lead to a commitment to leave the center. There was also the failure on the part of the Washington office to provide adequate implementation with personnel and procedures to initiate the counseling program in such a way that its objectives could be understood by the community.

There was, however, one immediate response from the evacuees. There developed a demand for a conference of center delegates to discuss problems of relocation and relocation centers.

C. The Abortive Evacuee Conference

The first serious attempt to secure evacuee participation on a major policy problem, that of relocation, evoked wide interest at several centers. The suggestion in the Director's letter of October 28, 1943, that a national conference of evacuee and WRA officials might be desirable was followed up by a resolution of the community council at Heart Mountain favoring such a proposal. This resolution was adopted by the council November 30, transmitted to the National Director, and copies sent to all other centers requesting their support. A similar resolution from Rohwer and concurrence from councils at other centers caused officials in Washington to give serious consideration to such a meeting.

Agreement was reached with the Director that the WRA would sponsor a national evacuee conference on relocation the latter part of January 1944 in Chicago. It was arranged that each center should send

two representatives and that relocated people in each of the eight areas should also send representatives. It was decided, because of possible public criticism, that it would be unwise for the WRA to pay the expenses of these delegates and that the individuals or communities must defray traveling and living expenses. Announcement of this decision was made by teletype to each of the centers and relocation offices on January 1. The teletype requested a reply by January 10, listing important questions to be discussed and decision as to representation. It said "prior to the conference, you will also want to agree on and have ready a list of the major problems facing center residents in terms of their future as well as specific plans or proposals for creating better understanding and working relationships between the evacuees and the Authority for discussion at the conference."

The response from all centers, except Manzanar, was an agreement on the need for such a conference and willingness to attend, with strong representations that WRA bear the expense of the delegates. The WRA again reiterated its stand on delegate expense.

During the next few days, there was much discussion in Washington as to the organization and purpose of such a conference; these discussions revealed serious differences of opinion among the key staff members. The relocation division maintained that the conference was primarily for discussion of ways and means to increase relocation. Others took the position that the conference objectives should be framed in terms of the larger problem of the future of Japanese in America, and that there was need to develop a working basis for creating understanding between the evacuees on problems besides those of relocation.

The combination of disagreement in the Washington office, the attempt of the evacuees to secure expenses for their delegates, various evacuee disagreements and the need for additional time to develop understanding and agreement on an agenda, led to the decision to postpone the conference indefinitely, and the centers were so notified on January 14. Detailed explanation of the position of the WRA in terms of its inability to cover expenses of such a conference and of the objectives to be sought from such a meeting were contained in a letter of January 29 addressed to all the councils. This letter said in part:

"When we asked ourselves what purpose such a meeting should serve, we came to the conclusion that it should be phrased in the broadest possible language. The many anxieties and uncertainties which the evacuees feel individually and in the group could be encompassed under the general heading of the future of all persons of Japanese ancestry in the United States. There is no delusion that one or many meetings could dispel all these anxieties, but it was hoped that through the

opportunity to discuss fully the manifold problems which the evacuees are facing, some mutual agreement could be reached on the nature of the problems and of action that could alleviate or help remedy the situation.

"Delegates would undoubtedly wish to present from their point of view the many and complex problems facing the evacuees. Family adjustment, economic security, social acceptance, and the post-war world would all come in for their share of discussion. There should also be constructive discussion where plans and programs could be proposed that would work to remove as many as possible of the hindrances which the evacuees saw facing them.

"Since these problems are also of primary concern to the Authority, there would be an opportunity for mutual exchange of constructive ideas. An opportunity would also be afforded for a statement of our relations with Congress and the American people, the expenditure of money and the legal controls and responsibilities which we must carry. A review of the legal standing of the evacuees as presently interpreted by the courts could be given. The limitations which surround any Federal program and their specific application to the program of the War Relocation Authority could be presented."

This communication stated also that the WRA would assume the responsibility of acting as a clearing house for statements prepared by various councils. It was assumed that by circulation of these various documents from center to center it would be possible to reach agreement on the fundamental issues to be placed on the agenda of such a meeting.

A counter-proposal came from the Heart Mountain council--which had taken the initiative in a letter of February 9. It suggested that the conference should be held at the Granada Relocation Center from March 6 to 17, 1944, and that the first half of this period should be limited in attendance to the evacuee delegates. It pointed out that the expense of holding a meeting in Chicago was so great that it would work a real hardship. The letter concluded with the assurance that Heart Mountain would send its delegates to a conference "where and when the conference is called and regardless of expense. The main thing is to call the conference and call it as soon as possible." In a letter of February 22, the Heart Mountain council reiterated the need for a national conference and proposed the establishment of small family-type hostels in key cities to house from 50 to 100 families. It recommended financial assistance which might be secured by pooling the resources of the center cooperatives.

In the meantime, however, the Washington office of WRA had decided that the conference should be postponed indefinitely. The decision was based upon two facts: (1) the current unrest in the centers over the operation of Selective Service; and, (2) the recent transfer of WRA to the Department of the Interior: the administration was not yet sure of the degree to which the transfer would affect the Authority's policy-making powers.

The question of a national conference was finally disposed of by an administrative notice issued April 15, which, in addition to pointing out the undesirability of any such meeting within the near future, vetoed the proposal to conduct an all-center conference at any relocation center. It was stated, however, that, if the evacuees wished to have a meeting outside a relocation center, WRA would raise no objection. The evacuees were cautioned against taking any action which might affect the group adversely.

Interest in a conference had in the meantime been submerged in a more pressing issue: the announcement of the restoration of Selective Service to the Nisei had revived and intensified evacuee interest in some of the old problems of civil rights and citizenship status. It is not clear that any large segment of the population had ever been vitally interested in holding the all-center conference, and those who were eager to have it were discouraged because of what they called WRA's lack of good intentions as evidenced (according to evacuee interpretation) by the Authority's refusal to pay the expenses of the delegates.

D. Selective Service and the Councils

The reinstatement of Selective Service for the Nisei in January of 1944 precipitated another major crisis at the relocation centers. The old wounds of evacuation were reopened. Bitterness and resentment which had lain dormant for several months were expressed in violent emotional outbursts. Much of the discussion represented an honest effort to secure answers to legitimate questions. Some people used the incident, however, to stir up opposition, while others used the opportunity to recount past injustices and seek a redress of grievances.

Petitions addressed to the President, Vice President, Secretary of War, Secretary of the Interior, the Director of WRA, and other public agencies and officials were prepared and transmitted through the community councils. These petitions represented the reaction of the more responsible residents following the initial outbursts of emotion, and were close approximations of majority thinking. These petitions were also a reflection of the fears of continuing discrimination and ill treatment. Many Nisei felt that the plan of the War Department was in effect an affirmation of their fears of a second-class citizenship status; others, particularly parents, were fearful that Nisei troops

would be used for suicide missions and that their treatment as casualties and in training would be inadequate and inferior to that provided other American soldiers. These uncertainties were a normal reaction of people who had been subjected to a forced evacuation and who had for many months been removed from the main stream of American life. The anxieties were to be expected of an isolated group which lived in an environment of uncertainty. Each petition contained an affirmation of loyalty and the desire to accept the obligations of citizenship, but included a list of grievances and objectives which were regarded as an essential restoration of rights and privileges.

If we examine the events at several centers, we can better understand some of the factors at work. The community council at Granada became the focal point for the conflict which developed at that center. The issue, as first defined, was one of resistance to Selective Service unless a full restoration of civil rights and recompense for losses engendered by evacuation were guaranteed. The more moderate group favored cooperation with Selective Service but asked for favorable attention to evacuee grievances. When a vote was taken only four blocks dissented from the more moderate course. The alien members of the council who had originally disavowed any direct interest in the problem aligned themselves with the non-ultimatum group.

Following an expression of loyalty, the petition stated, "we believe, however, that the rights and privileges of citizenship, in all justice, be combined with the duties and obligations of citizenship." It then proceeded to list point by point the conditions which the signers felt would need to be met before the rights and privileges were fully restored.

The petition asked that citizens be eligible for all branches of the armed services without regard to racial ancestry. Request was made that all citizens should be allowed to travel wherever they wished in the United States including the West Coast states, from which they were still excluded. It asked for the restoration of full civil rights guaranteed under the Constitution. The request was made for a guarantee of physical safety and provision of adequate economic means for those who resettled. The need for clarification of voting rights was mentioned and the desirability for extension of eligibility to citizenship to the aliens. It requested fair treatment for those who remained in the relocation centers and an adequate wage for work performed, based on U. S. Army standards. Request was made that the Government would assume the responsibility for enlightening the American public as to the difference between the enemy Japanese and the law-abiding and loyal Japanese in the United States. It requested the removal of restrictions preventing attendance at certain institutions of higher education. Finally the petition urged that the Government should take precautionary measures to protect any and all minorities from the

possibility of future mass exclusion and evacuation.

Feelings against certain aspects of the Selective Service program ran high at Central Utah. There a citizens' committee composed of two representatives from each block was established. The community council established a Selective Service committee which included a representative of the citizens' committee as one of its members. The citizens' committee prepared a petition which in its drafting revealed the divergent attitudes found elsewhere.

The petition was transmitted through the community council and raised a number of questions. It posed the question of the legality of induction since the citizens affected were in effect incarcerated and under supervision of military guards. It asked questions regarding the basis for the determination to extend Selective Service to the Nisei, the status of returned veterans, the limitation of service in the armed services and the reason for a segregated unit. A request was made for the extension of citizenship rights to aliens, the reopening of the West Coast, and dependency allotments. It asked for the elimination of the special procedure for war plant clearance as applied to persons of Japanese ancestry and for measures to counteract discrimination and to restore full civil rights.

The petition from Minidoka was prepared by a citizens' committee and covered many of the points already mentioned, but included a request for special military training in colleges and universities, equal opportunity for advancement, and equality in employment in industry. This petition asked also for favorable consideration of the parents of soldiers in the Army and their reclassification to a friendly alien status, financial restitution for loss, and action against anti-Japanese discrimination and propaganda.

The situation which developed at Heart Mountain was more dramatic and heated than at other centers, and the results were more serious. There, a small group under the name of the Fair Play Committee not only agitated for restoration of civil rights and protested certain aspects of the program, but also used the occasion to attack the WRA and the local community council. As a result of temporary but widespread support, the Fair Play Committee was able to develop considerable resistance to Selective Service with the consequence that a fairly large group of young men refused to report for induction.

The community council, composed at this time entirely of Issei, had at first maintained a "hands off" attitude toward the whole issue. As the feeling became more intense and the position of the council came under criticism of the Fair Play Committee leaders, the council took the lead in preparing a petition which in its contents was similar to that of other centers. This petition reaffirmed the loyalty of the signers, called attention to the hardships of evacuation, asked for

universal application of the draft without segregation, induction into all branches of the armed services, return to the West Coast, full civil rights, and the same treatment for Nisei soldiers as for other American soldiers. There was also a petition signed by Issei which simply commended the Nisei petition to the consideration of the President. During the ensuing period of conflict, council members were forced to define their position and contributed much to maintain sanity and balanced judgment on the issues involved.

Although the petitions produced little immediate amelioration for the mass of the evacuees, they did clarify the situation and gave an emotional release. As the process of calling young men to the Army continued, many of the earlier problems were satisfactorily solved. Nisei were made eligible for the special Army training program at universities and colleges. The long delay between physical examination and induction of the Nisei was gradually shortened. Letters from boys actually in the Army must also have had their effect.

Perhaps as important a factor as any was the fundamental cooperativeness of the Japanese. The desire to give some expression of Godspeed and good wishes to the departing young men gave an opportunity for organized center groups to participate. At several centers, the community council, USO, and parent-soldier groups joined together in sponsoring farewells.

The most significant change came with the announcement of casualties from the ranks of those already fighting. At Minidoka, a chairman of the community council requested the project director for permission to hold a center-wide memorial service for several young men who had been killed. Other centers organized memorial services with evacuees and staff honoring the parents of deceased soldiers. The war had changed from "the war" to "our war."