

John F. Embree

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON

March 16, 1943

Mr. Edward H. Spicer
c/o Harry L. Stafford
Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

Dear Ned:

I was glad to receive your telegram informing me of your departure for Minidoka. John de Young expects to leave here to join you in about three days. He has done graduate work at Hawaii and at Chicago, and has had some experience in field studies under Lloyd Warner at Illinois.

I am sending the Project Director a tentative outline of the work that should be done by the various Community Analysis Units on the projects. It is made up of rather obvious categories, but I hope it will serve as a general guide to the workers on the projects. The main purpose is to develop first of all a body of fairly comparable data from all the projects.

I hope you are finding your way around all right. When John arrives he should have all the latest news from this end.

Sincerely yours,



John F. Embree, Head
Community Analysis Section



Hunt, Idaho
April 3, 1943

Mr. John F. Embree
War Relocation Authority
Washington, D. C.

Dear John:

Things are moving along nicely. The unit seems to be taking shape in good fashion. The staff consists of three besides John now---- the student whom I mentioned last time (Kin Watanabe), an issei of around 60, and a secretary who has a little sociological background. The issei is a nice old chap who seems to have the reputation of being a quiet scholar around the community. He taught Japanese in Seattle. From him at our last staff meeting came the suggestion that we ought to have a nisei or two on the staff in order to make the necessary nisei contacts, a thing which of course we had planned, but it was nice to have him suggest it. I think it has been a good thing that we haven't started out with callow young nisei on the staff --- a good thing for community relations.

Our relations with the rest of the staff have improved a hundred per cent, I should say, since I last wrote. Up until a few days ago it seemed as if Mr. Stafford was hazing John a little, making sure that he knew his place in the set-up. The hazing will probably continue for a while, but John is going slowly and feeling the staff out and is fitting in alright. I think also something that John did in staff meeting yesterday has helped. Our research assistant, Kin Watanabe the Japanese student, suggested that it would make for better relations if the administration took official notice of the deaths of people on the project, probably even sending a representative regularly to funerals and possibly making a little koden contribution. John mentioned this in staff meeting and it seemed very practical and sensible to everybody and will probably be acted on. George Townsend backed the idea. I think it was a good thing for the Community Analysis Section and that John has probably got his first OK from the staff through it.

The office is still up in the main administrative area, but that simply can't be helped with space conditions as they are. Eventually Townsend will get space out somewhere, I'm sure. Until then it will have to go as it is. There is plenty of office equipment and we had the extreme good luck to get hold of a file of several thousand cards on Seattle individuals which the Seattle JACL had made up last March before evacuation. It was wanted by no one here and was to be thrown out. We grabbed it. It will save John many hours of labor, although of course it does not include everyone on this project.

I shall be leaving next week. By the end of the week I plan to have some sort of report ready to send you on the self-government situation here. I have been paying special attention to that and have been helped by the fact that it is pretty much of a burning issue here and everyone is talking about it.

Best wishes.

Ned

John Embree

May 3, 1943

Personal

Mr. John Powell
Chief Community Services Division
Colorado River Relocation Center
Poston, Arizona

Dear John:

I have just read America's Refugees: Exodus and Diaspora. It is high time someone went to town on the subject and I think you have done an excellent job. Be sure the copies get to Frank Cross of the WRA Reports Office with a suggestion that he send the copies to relocation officers. Cross is especially concerned with getting such things into the hands of these men in Chicago, Salt Lake and elsewhere.

There are one or two statements of fact which created questions in my mind. On page 1, you state that tens of thousands of American-Japanese were employed on secret military preparations. If you are referring to general manual labor of Hawaii, the wording seems to me a bit exaggerated. There is also some ambiguity in the sentence indicating that some of these thousands were in California. This overstatement on the opening page of the paper might weaken its effectiveness with some readers who by questioning its accuracy might be skeptical of the rest of the paper which is straight literal fact.

On page 8, line 2, you use the term "Hakujin". The average reader will need this word defined the first time it appears. On page 8 also, there are some age averages given. You might be interested in knowing that preliminary WRA statistics indicate average ages as follows: alien males, 54; alien females, 47; nisei, 18. These figures are as of 1942. This made nisei even younger as a group than many of us had supposed.

Incidentally, I could do with an extra copy of the article myself and would appreciate it if you could send them to me.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Embree
Chief Community Analysis Section

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON

May 10, 1943

PERSONAL

Mr. Edward Spicer
Community Analyst
Colorado River Relocation Center
Poston, Arizona

Dear Ned:

I am sorry to be so slow in writing you. Evidences of your fine work at Minidoka keep filtering into my office via John de Young and John Provinse. Community Analysis at Minidoka owes all its initial success to your good groundwork. (In sharp contrast, the man we sent to Gila only lasted a month). If you have any written statement of field techniques for interviewing and note-taking in a relocation center, I would appreciate a copy to be distributed to other analysts. The problem of comparable data promises to become a serious one.

As a result of the establishment of Community Analysis at other projects, I hope there can be more interchange of information between projects. As part of this, we are starting a new project analysis series and will send copies to ^{the} your sociological division at Poston. ^{or} You might be interested in some quotes from John de Young's latest letter:

"Now for a more pleasant story. The Emperor's birthday was last week as you know and I was on the lookout for any signs of celebration. All was quiet. But during the day, 26 army bombers happened to fly over the center. By nightfall, the following story was going the rounds: 'That old WRA. It doesn't miss a thing. Here it was the Emperor's birthday and they send over a fleet of army bombers to scare us so we wouldn't celebrate.' The older people were telling this with a great deal of gusto and I think it is a delightful story. They got a big kick out of it.

"I finally obtained an office closer to the community. We are now in the area where the high school, social welfare and other agencies are located. This area takes up a whole block and runs over into another. I am in one of the barracks right next to residential barracks. As a matter of fact, there is a chicken coop with one chicken next door to me. Is that getting close enough to the people? I think also that I've another prospective assistant - a young Nisei with several years of college training. I haven't any Nisei on the staff and have been trying hard to get one. One of the Issei members though to all practical purposes functions as Nisei, hence I have some contact with that group.



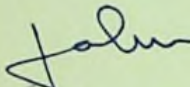
ask about book

"I had a long talk with Stafford this morning. If he was hazing me at first, I think that is past. He is very friendly now - calls me 'John' and seems most cooperative.

"I went to town the other day to get a line on attitudes there and while getting a haircut in a crummy outfit adroitly brought the conversation around to the many Japanese in town. The barber, a gabby old bastard, proceeded to tell me about the Jap concentration camp in the vicinity, etc, etc. Suddenly he stopped and said -- "What do you do for a living?" I hadn't expected the question just at that point and was caught off-guard so I blurted - "I'm a sociologist" (knowing that anthropologist would ring no bell). There was dead silence for a moment and then he said -- "Well, I guess almost anybody can get a job these days." I was properly taken aback. Be sure to tell Frank about it."

I hope you and Alex will keep us up-to-date on developments at Poston.

Yours sincerely,



John F. Embree
Head Community Analysis Section

COLORADO RIVER WAR
RELOCATION AUTHORITY

Poston, Arizona

May 20, 1943

Mr. John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis Section
War Relocation Authority
Barr Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear John,

Thanks for your letter of May 10. It was nice to get news of John de Young. Thanks also for the kind words about my work at Minidoka. I would attribute the success of community analysis there so far to John de Young's ability and adaptability and to the backgrounds and personalities of the top administrators.

I am enclosing a report on self-government at Minidoka. I am sorry I have been so long getting it off, but John writes that they still seem to be stalling up there on self-government and so maybe it is still current. I considered that the applied part of my anthropology at Minidoka was done before I left there. Through personal contacts with Stafford, Schafer, and Townsend and members of the organization commission and other evacuees, I tried to present Poston's experience with self-government and to indicate to them what I was seeing in regard to social trends at Minidoka. I participated in organization commission meetings and went over parts of the new charter with members of the commission. Before I left I wrote a memorandum to Townsend, which I fondly believe had a little influence on the course of events.

The enclosed report is a throwing together of some of my notes in what I hope is an intelligible account. I don't know, after reading it over, what value it may have except as a retrospect and a record. John de Young has copies of the field notes on which it is based.

I'm sorry that I have nothing written out on interviewing and note-taking techniques. I think your note on the format of field notes in the most recent C.A. letter should help a lot.

In Poston we are in the midst of trying to get out (in both English and Japanese) a short history of the project, which we hope will give Caucasians and evacuees a little perspective on the last few months.

Poston I seems to be levelling out. In fact, after the dizzy pace of last winter, it is unbearably quiet. The evacuee committees are taking hold of problem after problem and settling them themselves, insofar as they can be settled. Labor flurries, block troubles, the big gambling scandal, etc.---all of these the so-called Executive Board now takes up and takes care of. There is a general air of smoothness and peace, although Poston III is having a little political flare-up.

I hope to get off a letter to John Provinse this week-end which will contain some of my ideas in regard to the general basis for community organization in a relocation center.

More another time,

As ever,

EHS/hr
cc: Mails, files, and communications

Dr. E. H. Spicer
Asst. Soc. Science Analyst

May 24, 1943

PERSONAL

Mr. Frank L. Sweetser, Jr.
c/o Mr. R. B. Cozzens
Field Assistant Director
Whitcomb Hotel Building
San Francisco, California

Dear Frank:

Blumer is out so far as Gila is concerned. He seems to be going into OWI. There is another possibility, Gordon Brown, who has done community analysis in Africa as a government anthropologist. If anything develops with him, I will let you know. I will forward your information on the University of Chicago to John. It looks promising if complicated.

The Project Directors are gathering and the meetings begin here this afternoon.

Letters from La Violette and Weston La Barre indicate they are getting well established. Robertson gave La Violette a good word and Whitaker did the same for McVoy, but he hopes McVoy will go in more for learning actual attitudes and motivations of residents and go in less for making recommendations on how to run the leaves office.

How can we expect people in the field to get things straight if the Washington people do not? In your last letter you consistently spelled the Director's name Meyer.

Enclosed is a copy of a letter I wrote to Morris Opler at Manzanar.

Yours,

John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis

Enclosure

JFEmbree/ji

May 24, 1943

PERSONAL

Mr. Weston La Parre
Community Analyst
Central Utah Relocation Center
Topaz, Utah

Dear Wes:

Thanks for your personal letter on your arrival at Topaz. It sounds good and indicates that things are going well so far as your work is concerned. The gentleman's agreement with Banksen sounds workable.

I was interested in your remarks on religion because I have been expecting some such developments as you mentioned as a result of evacuation and its attendant insecurities. Notes on the development and shifting of attitudes of various groups of residents is especially desirable here from time to time, e.g., the effects of the recent shooting, the reaction to the new instruction allowing Issei to hold office, etc.

Did you receive a letter I sent you at Rutgers? In it I gave you a few names of people at Topaz you might like to meet.

Yours,

John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis

JFEmbree/gi

May 25, 1943

PERSONAL

Mr. Forrest La Violette
Community Analyst
Heart Mountain Relocation Center
Heart Mountain, Wyoming

Dear Forrest:

Your excellent letter arrived and has been read with interest, not only by me, but by Phil Barber and some others. You really have jumped in with both feet.

I agree with your remarks on the family. While certain community controls have broken down and parental authority over small children has weakened, the basic family ties of Issei and Nisei are strengthened by evacuation. The family is the only stable thing most evacuees still have to cling to.

You may be interested in knowing that the Employment Division has already started machinery going for employing councilors in connection with relocation. The idea of sending Issei out for a look-see has also been carried out in a few cases.

The idea of having more ceremony surround the departure of indefinite leaves sounds very good.

Mr. Robertson has just arrived in Washington. He feels convinced we sent him the best Community Analyst.

A word of caution. Don't get ^{trapped} involved in administrative details yourself, tempting as they might be at times. In doing so, you become a part of a pressure group and so lose objectivity.

It is good to hear that you have gotten so well established. A good letter came in from Weston La Barre the other day also, so it looks as if Community Analysis is really off to a good start at Topaz and Heart Mountain.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis

Postage
paid

June 2, 1943

Mr. Weston La Barre
Community Analyst
Central Utah Relocation Center
Topaz, Utah

Dear Wes:

The project directors' meetings are over. Mr. Ernst will doubtless give you a full report on them when he returns. He told me you had arrived and were getting established. He hopes to make use of your services on some problems of the local government involving the relationships of the Council and the general resident population. He feels that there is a rather big gap between the two.

I agree with you that the barracks and blocks are among the most significant social units in the centers. Ned Spicer has written a good analysis of this as found at Boston and Minidoka. I may get it duplicated for the use of other analysts.

Your letters are reaching me safely. I look forward to your first regular report.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis

JFEmbree/ji

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON

June 2, 1943

Mr. Edward Spicer
Colorado River Relocation Center
Poston, Arizona

Dear Ned:

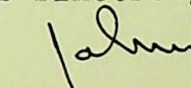
The report on Minidoka arrived and is being circulated to John Provins and others. Such comparative analyses are rare in WRA.

The ten project directors spent last week in Washington on the problems of WRA. The two chief problems discussed were relocation and segregation. It looks as if segregation is due soon with results about which I am not at all optimistic.

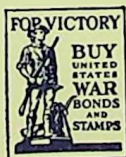
La Violette writes from Heart Mountain that he has run across some cases of mental retrogression as a result of relocation. Have you run into anything like this at Poston?

He writes: "Within the past several days I have started running across the kind of materials in which I am deeply interested--signs of personal degeneration. This morning I got clues on a case in which a fellow is regressing back to something earlier than six years of age--a nisei who is now talking much more Japanese and beginning to hang around with the kibe. Another chap described to me how his letter writing ability has changed--at home it took 20 minutes, here it takes two hours. He says he has gotten to the point where he can't think any longer, and he comes from one of the finer families, and is so much an American that it is difficult to realize that he is here."

Yours sincerely,



John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis



Correspondence

Portage paid

June 2, 1943

PERSONAL

Mr. Edward Spicer
Colorado River Relocation Center
Poston, Arizona

Dear Ned:

The report on Minidoka arrived and is being circulated to John Provinsé and others. Such comparative analyses are rare in WRA.

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Yours sincerely,

John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis

JFEmbree/ji

June 29, 1943

PERSONAL

Mr. John de Young
Community Analyst
Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

Dear John:

The fat Minidoka envelopes continue to pour in. Where do you get it all? In regard to diagram material, Frank suggests that bar graphs are better than pie charts. Also in regard to the charts of people relocating, those going out on indefinite leave have been diagramed on one scale while those going out on group employment have been diagramed on a different scale, which is slightly confusing. Incidentally, those relocation charts look as if they might be of some value to the Employment people. Did Schaefer and Beeson raise many questions in regard to them, such as why certain blocks have a higher relocation rate than others?

It doesn't look as if we can swing any special travel money for Lloyd. But I presume that is not essential in arranging an extension course. I am enclosing a document John Provinse recently unearthed on the subject.

How did Lantis make out? Did you wheedle any notes on the Jerome Center out of her?

The flowers are up again in Arlington - sweet peas as well as zinnias this year. Clare has gone off to camp for a month. Maybe I'll get out your way sometime this summer.

Yours,

John F. Embree
Head Community Analysis Section

Enclosure

JFE/ji

July 6, 1943

PERSONAL

Mr. John Rademaker
Community Analyst
Granada Relocation Center
Amache, Colorado

Dear John:

Miss Gifford brings back word that you are getting along well at Granada but I have had no word from you since a letter of June 4th. Are you still in Lamar or have you managed to get located on the project?

I should have answered your letter before now and I am sorry to have been so slow. Most of the general news is in Community Analyst Letter No. 4 which has just gone out. Locally there has been a general meeting of relocation officers to discuss ways and means of improving the resettlement program. The Dies Committee has been keeping us busy and at long last WRA is going to get a chance to go on the record with its side of the story.

Drop me a line soon and let me know how you are getting on.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis Section

P.S. By the way, what happened to those reports
mentioned in your letter?

JFEmbree/jj

July 16, 1943

PERSONAL

Mr. Edgar McVoy
Community Analyst
Jerome Relocation Center
Denson, Arkansas

Dear Ed:

I spoke to Mr. Provinse this morning concerning your plans for a trip to Washington. He feels that the Washington office could not justify a specific request for your visiting Washington at this time because of the need for such people as yourself at the projects during the present pre-segregation period.

This, however, does not in any way interfere with any special request which Mr. Taylor might make for you to visit Washington in connection with Jerome business. Also, of course, it in no way interferes with your taking enough time off to bring your wife to Washington at this time.

You are right in your information that there is to be a general meeting of project directors and Washington staff in Denver to work out the final plans in connection with the segregation program. For your information, segregation will involve repatriates, expatriates, and those people who have answered "No" to question 23. In connection with the "No" answers, those who are not at the same time repatriates, will be given an opportunity for a hearing in case there was some misunderstanding in regard to the question at the time of registration. The whole program is simply a separation of those persons who prefer to live and make their future in this country, and those who look to Japan as their present and future homeland. Segregation is in no sense a punishment. The Leupp Center is the center for people who cause trouble; the segregation center is simply a place for the pro-Japanese people to live together. Your analysis of probable reactions to segregation came in and was much appreciated. You may be interested to hear that both Mr. Provinse and Mr. Rowalt read it and regarded it as a well written and reliable analysis of the situation at Jerome.

I will be attending these Denver meeting myself and Frank will be taking care of this office during my absence. Don't hesitate to write him any of your problems as he

- 2 -

would be able to take care of them, I am sure, as well as I could.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis Section

JFEmbree/ji
Air Mail

John Embree

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON

August 13, 1943

Lieut. Alexander Leighton
Community Analyst
Colorado River Relocation Center
Poston, Arizona

Dear Alex:

Herewith a couple more items on segregation which may not have reached you through ordinary channels. So far as we can tell at present things seem to be running pretty smoothly in regard to this program at most of the centers including Tule.

I am sorry Ned couldn't get in to Washington a little sooner because both Frank and I are going to have to leave a few days before the end of the month, which will leave the section temporarily high and dry. There are many unwritten aspects to the functioning of the section which can only be passed on through association and conversation. However, I will do what I can when Ned comes through Chicago, and perhaps I will get an opportunity to return to Washington for a day or two early in September to assist Ned in getting established in the Washington administrative picture. Another man will also be appointed in the section but we are not yet sure just who this other person will be.

I understand you are leaving Poston and that there will be a need for a new analyst there. I have recently written to E. Adamson Hoebel in regard to the possibility of a field job. If you and Ned think he will be suitable for Poston and if he responds favorably to the idea of going to Arizona, perhaps he would make a good person for the job at Poston. I have not met him myself but I have read some of his work which is very good.

I trust your final report is practically finished now. I hope you will send me in Chicago, as well as the section in Washington, a copy when it is finished.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Embree
John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis Section



Enclosures - 3

July 17, 1943

Personal

Mr. John de Young
Community Analyst
Minidoka Relocation Center
Hunt, Idaho

Dear John:

I am leaving for the meetings in Denver on Monday. Your materials from Minidoka has been coming in faster than I can keep up with them due to the conferences and preparations in connection with the segregation program. I am turning over your latest batch to Frank who will write you if he has any questions or comments.

By present plans it looks as if I might get to Heart Mountain but not to Minidoka. If by any chance you come to Denver, we could get together on problems and experiences of Community Analysis then. I hope some arrangement can be made whereby I can see you before returning from this trip, but right now my plans only take in Denver and Heart Mountain.

If you have any special news, send it to me in care of the Denver office.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Embree
Head, Community Analysis Section

JFEmbree/j1

Air mail



Answered
Jan 31, 1947

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

P. O. Box 18, HONOLULU 10
TERRITORY OF HAWAII

December 10, 1946

Dear Ned,

This is just to let you know that I've read with interest your article on "The Use of Social Scientists by the War Relocation Authority." I only hope that men faced with similar problems in other government agencies will make use of what we all learned in W.R.A. In particular I think you have outlined the experience in Community Analysis very well. As you probably know I have always felt especially good about that side of W.R.A. -- not only because I was originally associated with it, but also because it worked so well throughout the duration of W.R.A., in Washington and in most of the Centers as well.

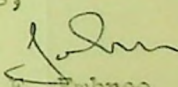
Since leaving W.R.A. I have seen no comparable organization which operated in a similar field with nearly the same efficiency. Military government certainly neglected this tool although there are some signs that the Navy may belatedly make use of it in Micronesia.

Are you planning to remain permanently at Arizona? I may take a year's leave and try a fling at Cultural Relations in Siam if all goes according to plan.

Katharine is going through the usual adjustment period from government to university work, but I think she is enjoying being back in Hawaii.

I sent you a set of the analysts letters by American Express and trust they have reached you safely (or soon will).

Yours,


John F. Embree
Associate Professor of Anthropology

JFE:hs

Answer

Jan. 3, 1947

Dear John,

the
Thank you for set of duplicates of ~~the~~ your Analyst letters. Possibly I am the "logical custodian;" I can't seem to think of anyone else who might have more use for them. I shall let the other analysts know I have them, so that if they contemplate any articles they can make use of the material. I agree that the ~~the~~ stuff still needs to be handled with discretion. I contracted with the Public Administration Review some months ago for an article on Community Analysis, but don't seem to be getting it done. Maybe a glance through this early stuff will stimulate me all over again.

I am indeed planning to stay here at Arizona permanently. We have bought a little old adobe house out under the mountains and are taking our time at fixing it up. This summer I plan to return to Mexico to finish the field job with the Yaquis which the war interrupted. What with Mexican and U.S. government programs for Indians operating side by ~~side~~ side here, reservation and non-reservation Indians all around us, and complicated patterns of race relations involving eight or ten different groups, there is much to do.

What is John Rademaker doing? I suppose you have seen the Christmas number of the Pacific Citizen with articles on resettlement by Hansen and Elmer Smith. Both are keeping their hand very much in Japanese American affairs. Hansen spent some days in Washington at Christmas time serving on the Committee which is attempting to give Cullum some guidance in the resettlement study. Provinse, Leighton, and Ed Marks are other members of the committee. I am expecting to see Cullum and one of his field workers here in Tucson about the first of the month.

I am glad you liked the article on the "Use of Social Scientists by the WRA". Something more needs to be done on the problems involved in such a set-up as Community Analysis, perhaps also on why it worked (which I think it did) and at the same time remained anthropology (in contrast with some other programs).

With best wishes to you and your family and
to Katharine,

As ever,
Red