

DEM-531a  
(1-42)

905

# TELETYPE MESSAGE

October 5, 1944

Duncan Mills  
Colorado River Relocation Center  
Poston, Arizona

Attention: Moris Burge

Teletype Message No. 147

Reour phone conversation, Ned Spicer will be at Rohwer until approximately October 10, after which time he will return to Washington.

*Earl D. Brooks*

Earl D. Brooks  
Acting Executive Officer

EDBrooks:vc

*EDB*

*RECORDED & INDEXED*

3-0840 nobu-ct-pd-wp



WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS SECTION

Profiles of the Centers

Given at C. A. Conference, Denver, Colo., Sept. 1944

ROHWER--by Charles Wisdom

Population. The manpower problem is especially serious in Rohwer. They are worried about recruiting labor to cut wood for the winter. There aren't enough able bodied men, many who have relocated are worried about their families receiving enough warmth this winter because of their knowledge of this labor shortage. These men at the project don't want to cut for all families. They feel they will care for their own only and let the others worry. No community spirit is observed among them.

There are more Issei and Women in the center than other groups and the number are increasing as the younger leave. The center is made up of very young and very old people, and women. 40% are under 19, and 15% are over 60. There are several "old bachelors' blocks". The people come from Stockton area and from Los Angeles area. Those from Stockton are mainly farmers, transient laborers, tenants, and sharecroppers. They are not a wealthy group. Those from S.A. Assembly Center are more urban, some had businesses but even among them many were farmers on the outskirts of Los Angeles. The occupational distribution is: 60% farmers, wholesalers and vegetable merchants (many were farmers originally), unskilled laborers, skilled laborers and 1.3% professionals.

A manpower survey made by the analyst discloses that there are 2600 full time laborers, 468 light workers, 722 homemakers, 2418 students and pre-school children, and 384 unemployables. Many of the full time workers are either too old or already employed in hard labor.

Administration-Evacuee Relations. The relations on an official level are excellent. There is no organized opposition to the administration; the project director is always approachable and well liked by the evacuees. He has given prestige and authority to evacuee bodies and makes them feel responsible. The Block Managers too are elected in this center. There has been very little turn-over in personnel as witnessed in the other centers. The social relations between the two groups though not always cordial are not strained. The evacuees are "tolerated". The a.p.'s fall into two groups: Those from South Arkansas (local people) who dislike evacuees and refuse to have social relations with them but will deal with the evacuees on an objective professional level and get along very well; and the non-South Arkansan who fraternizes with the evacuees but feels somewhat restrained by the first group. Some of the a.p.'s are especially critical of the members of the Com. Management division staff who are more liberal and likely to fraternize with the evacuees.

Relations with Outside Communities. 1. McGhee. The evacuees get along well in this community and no trouble has ever arisen. 2. Dermott. Very poor relations in Dermott, merchants refuse to wait on evacuees and the townspeople are unfriendly. It is possible that the many Chinese merchants in Dermott influence this attitude. 3. Little Rock--relations are good here.



**Evacuee Attitudes.** The evacuees have a great fear of being considered "niggers" Actually, they are in an intermediate caste position.

**Community Organization, and Attitudes.** For the first six months the evacuees were united against the administration because of the injustices of the evacuation. This was followed by a year characterized by factionalism. Many troubles occurred among the evacuees; there was a split in the co-operative, councils changed personnel constantly etc. About 6 months ago the trend toward community solidarity was again noted but this time it was not concerned with WRA. The attitude of "nothing really matters" was prevalent everywhere. Now people are beginning to individualize more than in the past. Young Nisei are becoming dissatisfied, feel they wish to leave the center before the war is over. Many are leaving parents behind and refusing to support them. The older people on the other hand are thinking in terms of remaining at the center permanently or planning colonial resettlement. Many would prefer the center as they do not wish to work as hard as they did before evacuation. They like the center environment. It is attractive, they have beautified it and are content with it.

**Block Solidarity** continues and is increasing. Funerals are block matters, recreation is planned on a block basis. The Block Manager's role is very important. He is the sociological father of the block, has much prestige especially with the young people. During the closing of Jerome there was much conflict about housing arrangements. Although people were content to move within the block to make room for the Jerome people, they resisted moving into other blocks.

**Jeromians.** The Jerome people (2500) have thus far remained aloof from Rohwer politics. Many are interested only in settling their families and then relocating.

**Relocation.** Relocation is increasing. However, the bulk of the relocatees are Jeromians. The Issei are taking Trial Indefinite leaves while the Nisei still prefer Indefinite Leave. Family relocation has not increased much. Although a large number of families are having their head relocate, they are not calling out other members of the family.

**Family Relocation Counseling.** This center has not yet developed a project-wide interviewing program to reach every family. Lack of personnel, equipment and space are the reasons given for the delay in the program. Instead the Welfare section is doing selective relocation interviewing of families who came on their own initiative and those who are relocating. Even this limited service cannot be given to all. Minors wishing to relocate to cities in which they have no relatives are counseled.

**Relocation.** Relocation is increasing. From 80-100 per week are leaving (during the past months). Most people are taking Trial Indefinite leaves, especially the Issei. The Nisei continue to take Indefinite leaves. Previously the Issei took Seasonal leaves. One can expect a number of the Issei to return to the center at the end of the Trial period (around January). Many of the Jerome people are leaving and this is a factor in the increased relocation. Many had not relocated before wishing first to settle their families in the new center before leaving....The Relocation Commission in this center is very active.

Leadership and Status When people first came to Rohwer they were divided along Assembly center lines. Santa Anita versus Stockton was the order of the day. At present there are two groups in Rohwer, 1. the former leaders, wealthy business men and farm owners. They are known to everyone. 2. the people who had no status before the evacuation and who now seek leadership positions. The group 1 people resent them.

Colonization. There is still a great deal of pressure among the older people for group relocation and colonization. Some of the schemes proposed are unrealistic and grandiose. Demands for government financing up to even \$1,000,000 have been proposed. It is necessary to sit down with the groups making these proposals and discuss the various aspects with them to help them see the impossibility of the scheme.