

1

APPENDIX I

From the Reports Office

Dec 12  
Manzanar, Calif.

First Report on Events from Saturday December 5 to date.

There was some indication of tension between the Japanese several weeks prior to Saturday, December 5. Several members of the Public Works clerical and maintenance staff had been threatened and warned to quit their jobs. Hervy Brown reports he let one girl go early on Saturday because she was nervous and excited. Staff members of the Free Press had been threatened. Chiye Mori, editor, had been warned several times to quit her job. The printed English edition had been under fire for about 2 months, with an excuse that it was costing too much...only a surface reason for trying to stop it. After every editorial strongly pro-American, Editor Mori would receive threatening letters and warnings. Joe Blamey, Business manager, had been beaten up by a group of pro-Axis boys, and in particular by a semi half-witted boy who was made to "front" for the crowd. (This some weeks prior to the present)

However on Saturday, December 5, things were normal in the Center. Mr. Temple was away on leave. Arthur Miller and Mr. Heath of Employment went to Los Angeles on business. Reports Officer went to Bishop about 3 in the afternoon. Most other Caucasian officials were on the grounds or in Lone Pine or Independence.

Sometime Saturday night..... 6 masked men walked into Fred Tayama's room with clubs. One man hit him over the head, others beat him on the body and legs. He fought back with a chair and other items in the room. A little girl it is reported screamed outside and the men fled. Someone called the ambulance, and reported to Director Merritt and Asst. Director Campbell. Director Merritt took actual charge of the situation, asking the police to go out and round up suspects immediately for questioning. The police record here will show who was brought in and questioned.

Tayama told officers that he was sure one of his attackers was Harry Ueno, a known trouble maker in camp, and head of the Cooks Union -- a group not officially recognized by the administration. Later one of the men questioned stated that Ueno was one of the men. Accordingly the Police picked up Ueno and he was sent to the Independence Jail until he could be questioned at length. One other man who was suspected of the beating was held in the Manzanar Jail. The questioning was stopped at 5 AM Sunday to allow for a little sleep.

Director Merritt called the reports officer at his home about 9 AM Sunday giving the happenings of the night and stating that everything seemed under control that it was not necessary for the reports officer to come down.

At noon a mass meeting of Japanese was called for Mess Hall 22. (This block is the suspected home of the "Blood Brothers" .. see earlier reports.. and is the kitchen Ueno works in) The people overflowed the mess hall and moved out into the Firebreak. It was chaired by a man named Tateishi (not sure but think block leader of

Block 23) Report of this meeting was given by Geo Kurata and is attached. Delegates were nominated to call on the Director and ask for the release of Ueno. Much talk was made of the "dogs" among the Japanese and the dogs among the Caucasians. The Delegates left to meet with the director about the time the director drove up to see what the meeting was about. Director returned to his office. Found that the mob was following the delegates. This was about 1:30 PM. Instructed Asst Director to call the military and have them stand-by-- (director did this before driving to the firebreak to see the meeting... so that by the time the mob reached his office the military were turning in the main gate.) The military moved in deployed and set up machine guns in front of the Police Station and Administration buildings. Director Merritt walked up to the crowd with Chief of police Gilkey. They walked in through the crowd telling them to go home and stating that he wouldn't talk to a mob, would only talk to a representative body. Director Merritt estimated 1500 people. Some Japanese reporters later reported the crowd filled streets back to the warehouses and estimated it at more than 3000, Many (perhaps half say the Japanese) were curiosity seekers only.

Finally Joe Kurihara -- chairman of the delegates and an outspoken pro-Japanese-- addressed the crowd telling them to go home. They responded with boos. Merritt then took the delegates around the corner of a building and asked them what they wanted. They said that they wanted the release of Ueno. Merritt stated he wanted something too, that they might strike a bargain. Japanese asked what.

Merritt said he would return Ueno to the Manzanar jail and would try him before the Manzanar Judicial committee upon the condition that the delegates promises no more mobs... no more meetings of any kind until the Ueno case was settled--no attempted jail delivery-- and the delegates in the interest of law and order would help deliver the 6 masked men who beat up Tayama to the police. After talking among themselves and refusing these terms once, Kurihara then said the terms were agreeable. Merritt then said the crowd must be dispersed. That sometime that afternoon he would take Capt Hall and Chief Gilkey around Camp and if it were quiet he would go up personally and get Ueno. The Japanese asked that the troops be removed first. Capt Hall and Merritt agreed, and in the face of humiliating catcalls the military moved out, Kurihara then addressed the crowd. Japanese police chief Higashi interpreting told Merritt that he stated the terms of the agreement-- but Reporters and other reliable Japanese stated that no agreement was mentioned, that Kurihara stated only that Ueno would be returned, that the crowd had won its point and that it should meet again at 6 PM and force the return to Ueno out of the local Jail.

Merritt kept his agreement, delivered Ueno shortly after 3 PM and in the presence of Capt Hall and Chief Gilkey repeated the agreement to the delegates and Ueno in the jail. All shook hands on it binding the bargain.

Around 5 PM Merritt called reports officer in Bishop and told him the story of the mob and what the director had done. Said he thought

there was an armistice until morning and not to worry but to call George Savage and stop any publicity until we could get together the next day. Shortly after (maybe half hour) the director again called the reports officer stating that he had received word a mob was on its way to the hospital to "finish" Fred Tayama, Reports officer left immediately for Manzanar.

The crowd had gathered at 6 (see attached report) half had been instructed to go to the Hospital and the other half to go to the police station and get Ueno out. When word was brought to Merritt on this he again called the Military to come. Shortly thereafter he told the Asst director to get Hall and instruct him that the camp was turned over to him. He called Savage and issued a statement to this effect (attached).

The military arrived to find the mob at the jail. It had not attacked the jail. Officer Williams in charge stated that he had them "on his hands approximately half an hour". Capt Hall met the delegates and told them to tell the mob to go home. He reports them unreasonable and the mob very emotional.

The reports officer arrived when the mob was congregated around the jail. He was passed through the lines and joined Director Merritt and Asst Director Campbell. He looked over the mob to see if he knew any person in it. It looked to be about 500 people. Recognized no one by name. Made up in the front line predominately of young men. There was much "ribbing" of the military. One officer was cautioning the men(soldiers) to hold their head. Military sent for tear gas.

Brown Merritt and Campbell retired to Campbell's apartment watching the crowd through the window. In about one-half to three-quarters of an hour onlookers heard tear gas bombs explode and saw the tear gas. A high wind was blowing and the tear gas disappeared quickly. (see military report here) Eyewitnesses say the crowd dispersed with the tear gas, but reformed in a few minutes and started back for the jail. The onlookers heard bursts of shots at this time. (hospital report here of dead and wounded)

The crowd dispersed for good at this time, and mess halls throughout camp began ringing bells calling meetings. These meetings went on until 3 PM. Japanese reporters state that there was much emotionalism at the meetings many people who were usually calm lost their heads--much talk about mobing the soldiers and the Caucasians etc.... the racial differences cropped up.

Soldiers patrolled the camp during the night and there were no more incidents.

Monday morning reports indicate that many members of all crews reported for work, but in most instances were sent home. Schools opened but there was no oil and about 11 AM students were told to go home after the highschool boys had made a demonstration. All essential facilities operated-- cooks - warehouse crew - water, sewer, oil etc.

Washington was notified during Sunday and immediately Monday. We were informed Mr. Fryer was flying out.

Threats against outspoken pro-American Japanese continued through the night of Sunday and all day Monday. Girls were threatened

if they came to work. Leading members of the Free Press and the Police were threatened, followed etc. (Insert) Sunday night John Sonoda a pro-American Kibei was severely beaten by a gang with clubs at the theatre. Also Tayama was hidden in the hospital and the gang didn't get him. He was later taken to the MP headquarters. Others who were on the "black list" (see attached report) were able to get to the military for protective custody) During Monday certain Japanese came in asking for protective custody.

By Monday noon there were approximately 40 persons- men women and children in protective custody. They were afraid to return to camp. A decision was made to find a place to put these people temporarily.

Insert back to Sun night: The delegates of the mob were picked up by the military police and with others taken to the Bishop jail.

Director Merritt sent Bob Brown, Hooper and McLaughlin to Death Valley Monday night to inquire about use of the CCC camp there. It was found available. This news was transmitted to Washington Tuesday morning and Merritt was instructed to wait until Mr. Fryer arrived Wed. morning. In the meantime trucks were loaded for the trip to Death Valley. The group of protective custody people grew to about 65. (definite number on a list in possession of Merritt)

During Monday people met throughout camp and elected a committee of 5 to negotiate for them. This committee headed by Tom Ozamoto. Met with Capt Hall and Bob Brown. Made two demands: That all prisoners be returned and that the Spanish Consul be asked in to mediate. Capt Hall turned these down.

On Tuesday this committee met with Director Merritt and made the same demands. Merritt told Ozamoto to write the Spanish Consul, but that it would be meaningless because he was an American Citizen.

On Tuesday the office girls did not show up. They sent word down that they had been intimidated and threatened if they came to work. Most of the people in camp this day were wearing black arm-bands supposedly in mourning the boy who was killed. Information suggested that these also meant that the people were pro-Japanese and if a person did not have an arm band he was to be mobbed. This of course made most of the people wear them.

Tuesday night director Merritt and Brown met with the key people of the reports section who were in protective custody and obtained their story which is attached.

When the military took over -- about 10 PM Sunday Capt Hall called and stated no phone calls could go out unless he oked them and that his superiors had ordered a censorship of all news. During Monday George Savage tried to break through the censorship, and enlisted the aid of the Calif Newspaper Publishers Assn-- several of the major LA papers and others. Our public relations with the press and with Savage were beginning to break. On Tuesday Col. Mueller asked reports officer Brown to sit on his staff as public relations officer and got the approval to release stories direct from Manzanar. Copies of each release and the only authorized releases from Manzanar are on file. This cleared the WPA public relations situation as all stories were released directly through Savage who kept the outside press away from the gates. No photographers showed up at Savage's suggestion.



Military reinforcements began to arrive Monday. The Calif State Guard arrived sometime during Sunday night having been called from Bishop.

Mr. Fryer arrived 5 PM Wednesday. A meeting was called for 8 PM at which there were Merritt, Fryer, Brown, Campbell, Adams, D'Ille, and the two attorneys. Matter of segregation came up for discussion. It was finally decided to send the pro-American group to Death Valley as an immediate solution to this problem but not to keep them there longer than two weeks if possible. To also seek another CCC camp where the unruly element could be sent. Matter of finding who the unruly element was discussed. Lists of these were prepared Thursday and the internal police began picking them up Thursday night.

Insert back Sunday night: Some one started the Fire Chief's Govt car in motion toward the jail. It swerved knocked a corner off the building, was fired upon by the machine gun crew, finally came to stop against a truck.

Permission to use the Death Valley CCC camp was gained about 1 PM Thursday and the caravan rolled under direction of Asst Director Ned Campbell.