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NARRATIVE REPORT

Madelon Carper

November 1, 1945

My job as counselor and registrar at Tri-State High School consisted of helping students with their personal and scholastic problems, advising students into the required courses for graduation, checking attendance, and preparing and transmitting transcripts.

The personal problems of students were those which arose from conflicts between attendance at the Japanese schools and American schools, and the general lack of interest in any type of educational or social life as the result of American citizenship rights being violated.

Many parents insisted on their children's attending Japanese schools as well as American schools, even though it was against the wishes of the children to be enrolled in the former. Some of them complained to us of the subject matter and manner of teaching in the Japanese schools and stated that they, the students, did the least amount of work possible--just enough to get by. Many times they made fun of the Japanese schools.

There were other students whose parents would permit them to attend American schools only on condition that they attend Japanese schools. A few students who attended Japanese schools also attended American schools against the knowledge of their parents. These students would ask us not to check their absences at American schools because then their parents would know of their enrollment. This policy could easily have been conducive

to truancy if a student had such an inclination. Fortunately, we had no difficulty with such students when we complied with their request of not making a home call to learn the reasons for their absences.

The program of the American school was set up in such a way that students could attend that school a half day and the Japanese schools a half day. We tried to cooperate with the latter whenever possible by scheduling our activities at a time when they wouldn't conflict with the Japanese schools. But, they did not "return our cooperation." They would request to have students excused from our school to play baseball, to have pictures taken which could be taken on Saturdays or after school, to attend picnics, and to bid farewell to teachers who were re-locating. The Japanese schools would tell the children they were excused for the above reasons and then ask us if we would excuse them. If we refused some of the children obeyed the Japanese schools and were penalized by us. This naturally caused conflicts and resentments within the children who were confused in their choices of which schools to obey. The Japanese schools would also cause the students to be tardy to our school. We would not excuse such tardiness even though it wasn't the students' fault. Yet we could do nothing about the situation so had to turn a "blind eye" to that type of tardiness.

I think that the existence of the Japanese schools has been a serious mistake from the standpoint of the students'

welfare and the smooth running of American schools. The Japanese language could easily have been taught as a foreign language in the American schools, the same as any other foreign language, and the Japanese schools would have had no reason for being established. Some of them violated their promises and became strongly nationalistic to the detriment of students who were immature in their judgments.

The scholastic problems of students consisted in trying to find out the causes of students' low grades. There were various reasons: disliking a subject, low mental ability, disliking the teacher, conflicts at home caused by different cultures, lack of interest because of being placed "behind a fence", and laziness. We talked over some of these difficulties with the teachers of the students and in many cases we were able to bring about a more sympathetic understanding between student and teacher which resulted in improved work on the student's part many times. Students who were depressed because of segregation were given encouragement by counselors and teachers.

Another one of my duties is to see that students take the required courses and required number of credits for graduation. This is done during registration at the beginning of each semester. The grades and credits of prospective graduates are constantly checked to see that they will be eligible for graduation on the appointed date.

We were aided in checking attendance by a Japanese man who made home calls to learn why students were absent. The majority

of cases were for legitimate illnesses. I felt that many times students either were not ill or were not ill enough to stay out. However, since there was no school nurse to check we had to accept the students' excuses for illness even though we doubted them. Students were required to bring notes from home when they returned. These didn't mean much as many parents could not write and the students wrote the excuses themselves. Students who attended the clinic or hospital were required to bring an excuse signed by a doctor or a nurse. There were a few cases of truancy which were the effects of personal or school problems which were mentioned in the first part of this report. We had to suspend a few students and require their parents to come to school and talk over the matter with the principal before the students could be reinstated. Most parents were quite concerned about the truancy of their children and wanted them to attend school regularly. However, there were a few parents who could not keep their boys from cutting classes. I knew of only one girl who was a truant. Sometimes students would be absent from American schools in order to prepare their lessons for Japanese schools.

The preparation and transmittal of transcripts included those of graduates, and those undergraduates who transferred to other centers or who relocated. Grades and credits were recorded on permanent folders, then transcripts were typed from these; colleges would frequently request personal information concerning students which perhaps could be compiled from

personality rating sheets within the folders. When these were not available, teachers would be contacted to furnish the information.

Some of my problems as counselor and registrar at Tri-State High School were identical with those of counselors and registrars in all high schools; others were indigenous to this school alone and so had to be solved by the trial and error method. Many of the more difficult problems would not have arisen had there not been the dual school system, the two cultures striving for supremacy.