

“LET THE CONSCIENCE OF CHRISTIAN AMERICA SPEAK”:
RELIGION AND EMPIRE IN THE INCARCERATION OF JAPANESE
AMERICANS, 1941-1945

by

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Introduction

“There is every assurance that [the problems facing Japanese Americans] can be solved as His people go forward in a spirit of Christian unity. . . . Our highest ideals are at stake in this enterprise, and thus there is presented a magnificent opportunity to solve these problems and thus to win a great victory for American democracy and vital Christianity.”

*--Gordon K. Chapman, executive secretary of
the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service¹*

Christmas 1942 looked bleak to the majority of the Japanese American population. One year earlier they had celebrated Christmas in the post-Pearl Harbor confusion with many of their community leaders detained and imprisoned by the FBI on suspicion of disloyalty to the United States, their assets in Japanese banks frozen, and their movement curtailed by military imposed curfews. Less than two months later, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which allowed Lieutenant General John DeWitt, commanding general of the Western Defense Command, to force the removal and detention without due process of 110,000 Americans and residents of Japanese ancestry from California and the western portions of Oregon, Washington, and Arizona. After summer months in temporary housing at county fairgrounds and racetracks, Japanese Americans arrived with few belongings at ten hastily constructed incarceration camps in the interior of the United States. Euphemistically called “Relocation Centers,” these instant cities were marked primarily by their inhospitable surroundings. Extreme temperatures, dust storms, mud, public dining halls and bathrooms, and uninsulated wooden barracks divided into small apartment rooms for each family invited low morale. The loss of livelihood and property and the branding by their government as disloyal and un-American because of their

¹ Gordon K. Chapman, Report of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, December 1943, Box 1, Folder 16, RG 315, The Papers of the Rev. Daisuke Kitagawa, 1923-2009, The Archives of the Episcopal Church, Austin, TX (hereafter cited as the Kitagawa Papers).

relation to enemy Japan intensified the dislocation and demoralization of these imprisoned communities. By this second Christmas after the United States entered the war, Japanese Americans had faced two removals and many felt forgotten by the outside world.

As detainees struggled to find hope in the bleakness of a harsh landscape and pondered their equally uncertain futures, groups on the outside hastily organized a massive gift drive for camp residents. The ecumenical Home Missions Council grandly proclaimed it “America’s Biggest Christmas Party.”² After passively acquiescing to the government’s incarceration of men, women and children because of their ethnicity, churches, Sunday schools, and service organizations experienced pangs of concern for the numerous children now living surrounded by barbed wire and armed guard towers. Christmas 1942 approached, and people of faith realized that without their assistance, Japanese Americans in incarceration camps might not experience the magic of Christmas.

The San Francisco-based Protestant Commission for Japanese Service collaborated with the Japanese American Citizens League (hereafter, JACL), the American Friends Service Committee (hereafter, AFSC), and the Fellowship of Reconciliation (hereafter, FOR) to canvass the country seeking donations of gifts and money for the camps.³ Although a last-minute, poorly coordinated effort, the gifts poured in to each of the camps. A resident at one camp noted that they received 17,000 gifts from “860 persons and organizations”

² Home Missions Council, “The Story of America’s Biggest Christmas Party,” 1943, Box 26, Folder 8, NCC RG 26, Home Missions Council; and Home Missions Council, “The Story of America’s Biggest Christmas Party,” reprinted in Toru Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice: A Story of the Church and Japanese Americans* (New York: Friendship Press, 1946, 1978), 43-48.

³ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 14 October 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA of the United States of America Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College (hereafter cited as the YWCA Papers); Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 2 December 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to Jacob Long, 27 December 1942, Box 11, Folder 42, RG 301.7, UPCUSA Board of National Missions Division of Church Strategies and Development Collection, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (hereafter cited as BFM Church Strategy).

throughout the United States (Figure 1).⁴ Outsiders sent gifts for every child, whether Buddhist or Christian. Pastors and church and community leaders in each camp cooperated to devise Christmas programs to uplift the spirits of residents.⁵ These celebrations proved important to the detained Japanese American population.⁶ Many found in the gift offerings evidence that they were not forgotten or despised by all. In his year-end report, Nao Kodaira, a Presbyterian pastor at the Hunt, Idaho camp, echoed the sentiment voiced by others: “We felt, from the bottom of our hearts, the warmth and the love of American churches outside during this wartime.”⁷ Annual deliveries of Christmas gifts from across the United States continued to remind internees that other Christians remembered them during the season of cheer. Those annual Christmas deliveries continued to be coordinated by the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service (hereafter the Commission), an organization created and led by former missionaries to Japan.

⁴ Quoted in Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, 44.

⁵ Japanese American Buddhists had embraced Christmas as a cultural practice earlier in the twentieth century. Many found it consonant with practices of gift-giving in Buddhism and in Japanese culture; even more importantly, enabling their children to participate in this consummate American holiday promoted the idea that Japanese Americans truly were American. Celebration of Christmas was one of many innovations in American Buddhist practice which scholars have termed the Protestantization of Buddhism. David K. Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei: Race, Generation, and Culture among Japanese Americans of California, 1924-1949* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 44; and Tetsuden Kashima, *Buddhism in America: The Social Organization of an Ethnic Religious Institution* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977), 33-43, 213. For an account of a Buddhist family celebrating Christmas before the war and in Amache camp, see Lily Yuriko Nakai Havey, *Gasa Gasa Girl Goes to Camp: A Nisei Youth behind a World War II Fence* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2014), 105-110.

⁶ On the use of Christmas displays and celebrations by camp residents as a means to both celebrate their American identity and resist their incarceration, see Anne M. Blankenship, “Civil Religious Dissent: Patriotism and Resistance in a Japanese American Incarceration Camp,” *Material Religion* 10, no. 3 (September 2014): 264-292.

⁷ Narrative Report on National Missions Work in Los Angeles Presbytery, 19 February 1943, Box 12, Folder 6, RG 301.7, BFM Church Strategy.



Figure 1. Women wrap donated gifts at Minidoka Relocation Camp, Idaho. Reproduced from Densho.org

While concerned to provide presents and Christmas cheer to every camp resident, Commission members insisted on the Christian basis of the holiday. They were anxious lest the camp celebrations cease to emphasize the birth of the progenitor of the Christian faith and become instead the commercialized experience that it had become in the United States by World War Two.⁸ After working with other organizations, including the JACL, in 1942 to provide gifts to the camps, the Commission tried to assert its control over the process on subsequent Christmases by arguing that a “truly Christian celebration” ought to be led by the churches in the camps and not handled by a secular organization like the JACL or by secular

⁸ A fascinating scholarship exists on the historical development of Christmas in the United States as an increasingly commercialized, material event. Scholars contend that Christmas gift-giving and ostentatious displays developed in the mid-to late nineteenth century as a way for the bourgeoisie to control excessive carousing by the urban working class and as a means to encourage consumerism. Stephen Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996); Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 105-191; Penne L Restad, *Christmas in America: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); and Richard Horsley and James Tracy, *Christmas Unwrapped: Consumerism, Christ, and Culture* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001).

Community Councils in each camp.⁹ Ultimately, Christmas celebrations in the camps became interfaith events. In some camps, neighborhood blocks competed to see who could come up with the most creative Christmas displays in their block cafeterias. Community councils organized parties replete with Santa Claus at which presents were distributed. The Protestant churches held caroling parties and elaborate Christmas Eve services which Christians and Buddhists attended. The performance of Christmas commemoration in the incarceration camps became a familiar combination of religious and secular or civic nostalgia that would have been recognizable in any community in the United States during the 1940s (Figure 2).¹⁰



Figure 2. Christmas celebration at Amache Relocation Camp, Colorado. Reproduced from UC Berkeley, the Bancroft Library.

⁹ Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 30 August 1943, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

¹⁰ Anne M. Blankenship, "Civil Religious Dissent: Patriotism and Resistance in a Japanese American Incarceration Camp"; and Kathleen M. Sands, "Still Dreaming: War, Memory, and Nostalgia in the American Christmas," in *Christmas Unwrapped: Consumerism, Christ, and Culture*, ed. Richard Horsley and James Tracy, 55-83.

The struggle by Protestant missionaries to dominate the Christmas narrative at the camps and the sense among Japanese American recipients of Christmas gifts from outside churches of belonging to a larger national and religious community underscores key themes of this dissertation. From early 1942, as pressure to remove all Japanese Americans from the West Coast heightened, until the end of the war dozens of missionaries displaced by the war from their positions in Japan coalesced under the banner of the Protestant Commission to work on behalf of the rights of Japanese Americans, ameliorate the difficulties experienced by incarcerated Japanese Americans, and imbue federal policies toward Japanese Americans with Protestant values. Whether Christmas was properly a religious or a civic observance was only one of many battles fought by missionaries in the camps to protect the rights of Japanese American Christians and influence camp life. The efforts of the Commission, which worked closely throughout the war with Japanese American camp churches and with government authorities, to impress a particular set of Christian ideals on the Japanese American incarceration experience brings to the fore the heretofore overlooked importance of religious belief and expression in the World War II incarceration experience and the intersection of church and state in camp policy-making and daily life. Furthermore, through the Commission, missionaries reminded Protestant Japanese Americans who felt excluded from participation in the American civic community of their membership in a larger community that transcended national and racial-ethnic boundaries and was determined by faith in Jesus Christ. This belief, embraced by Protestant missionaries as “Christian internationalism,” informed both the commitment of the missionaries to

incarcerated Japanese Americans and the faith that carried Protestant Japanese Americans through the incarceration experience.¹¹

This dissertation argues that through the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service Protestant missionaries utilized their commitment to Christian internationalism to influence federal policy and practice in the camps and to build relationships with incarcerated Japanese Americans. Their goals were to reform the United States into a nation that embodied emerging liberal Protestant ideals of racial inclusivity and civil liberty and to restore incarceratedees' faith in their country and fellow citizens. At times, these efforts crossed the line separating church and state, blurring the distinction between protecting the religious freedom—and freedom from religion—of incarceratedees and promoting the agenda of Protestant missionaries and Protestant Japanese Americans. The work of the Commission highlighted the vital importance of religious practice and belief at all levels of camp life. It also demonstrates that this cadre of Protestant missionaries whose understandings of race and rights were deeply influenced by decades of service in Japan were at the forefront of the movement in the United States toward a pluralistic view of race, ethnicity, and religion, even as the missionaries were often hampered in their ability to relate with second- and third-generation Japanese Americans by cultural incompetence born of years of immersion in Japanese and not American culture. By making these arguments, this dissertation furthers our understanding of the interplay of religion and government in the Japanese American

¹¹ To a lesser extent, some Buddhists and Roman Catholics also reflected positively on this sense of fellowship; while they would not agree with the Protestant vision of Christian internationalism that was at heart exclusive in its faith claims, Christian internationalism included the possibility of a broader inclusion of all faiths in a community of friendship and understanding. See Chapter One for a more in-depth discussion of this trend.

incarceration experience and provides a new assessment of the changes that occurred in the liberal Protestant missionary movement in the 1940s.

That missionaries played a key role in the project of manifesting Protestant religion in technically secular federal prison camps should be unsurprising to anyone with a familiarity with the history of missions in America, yet their involvement in the Japanese American incarceration experience has been largely overlooked.¹² For example, histories of the Japanese American wartime experience cite the heart-warming story of goodwill and generosity at Christmastime as the primary means by which people of faith assisted incarcerated Japanese Americans. Depending on the critical stance of the authors, this influx of gifts and well wishes serves as either a powerful and cathartic example of religious intervention on behalf of a demoralized population, or it highlights the limited nature of the response of the broader faith community to the mass expulsion and incarceration of citizens and aliens of Japanese descent during World War II.¹³ Shizue Seigel aptly sums up the limits of church-based responses. White churches offered a sparse and muted challenge to mass expulsion. Seigel writes that “although some Christian organizations and individuals did much to help the internees, they collectively failed to fill a greater need, which was to convince the US government and the American people that wartime policies against the

¹² Anne M. Blankenship has most recently tried to address this deficiency in her dissertation. Anne M. Blankenship, “Steps to a New World Order: Ecumenism and Racial Integration during the World War II Incarceration of Japanese Americans,” (Dissertation: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2012).

¹³ Toru Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, considers American churches generous in their assistance to Japanese Americans. John Howard, *Concentration Camps on the Homefront: Japanese Americans in the House of Jim Crow* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), is an example of a scholar who excoriates this Christmas celebration as forced religiosity on a captive audience.

Japanese Americans were a racist travesty of justice.”¹⁴ Although muted and inadequate, some Christians did offer support and aid to Japanese Americans during the war.

While numerous organizations, including the secular Japanese American Citizens League, cooperated in the project, published reports of “America’s biggest Christmas party” often inaccurately credit the American Friends Service Committee as the leaders of the undertaking. This assumption has led to the charge that only the Quakers put their lives and reputations on the line to uphold the rights of a despised population.¹⁵ In her influential work on Japanese American incarceration camps, Michi Weglyn maintains that “most of the few white Americans who took a stand against the policy of racial internment were pacifists,” and focuses on the activities of Quakers and the American Friends Service Committee, whose involvement with incarcerated Japanese Americans was a natural extension of their prewar pacifist and interracial emphases.¹⁶ By focusing on Christmas 1942 and the efforts of the AFSC, extant scholarship overlooks the range of other religious responses to Japanese American expulsion, incarceration, and resettlement just as it ignores the importance of religion in the Japanese American experience. The questions of whom besides the Quakers dedicated their time and passions for the Japanese Americans, and what form that assistance took remain unanswered.

¹⁴ Shizue Seigel, “Incarceration and the Church: An Overview,” *Nikkei Heritage* 11, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 4-5, 16-21.

¹⁵ i.e. Allan W. Austin, *From Concentration Camp to Campus: Japanese American Students and World War II* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Michi Weglyn, *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America’s Concentration Camps* (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1976); Audrie Girdner and Anne Loftis, *The Great Betrayal: The Evacuation of Japanese Americans During World War II* (New York: MacMillan, 1969); Floyd Schmoie, “Seattle’s Peace Churches and Relocation,” in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, ed., Roger Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor, and Harry H. L. Kitano (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989, 1991), 117-122. In another essay included in this edited work, Sandra C. Taylor discusses the attempts of various denominations and ecumenical groups to aid Japanese Americans, but she emphasizes the efforts of the AFSC. “‘Fellow-Feelers with the Afflicted’: The Christian Churches and the Relocation of the Japanese during World War II,” in Roger Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor, and Harry H. L. Kitano, ed., *Japanese Americans*, 123-131.

¹⁶ Weglyn, *Years of Infamy*, 105.

Protestant missionaries played an important and overlooked part in the Japanese American World War II exclusion and detainment experience. Integrating their story into the Japanese American story pulls together the missing analytical threads of religious involvement and religious impact on Japanese American incarceration history by demonstrating that religious individuals, organizations, and beliefs influenced numerous aspects of the story, from the decisions made by politicians in Washington D. C. offices to the attitudes of Nikkei (the Japanese term referring to all Japanese Americans) sitting on benches in the barrack churches at one of the ten relocation centers. The narrative begins in the years before the war as transnational experiences challenged the provincial mindsets of Protestant missionaries and developed the skills and attitudes they would carry into their work on behalf of Japanese Americans. It follows them through the war as they interact with Japanese Americans and denominational and government officials, serving as mediators between the groups, and closes with glimpses of how their wartime experiences challenged their understandings of missions and the country's and church's relationship with Japanese Americans.

Furloughed in the United States during the war, or retired after decades of service, Protestant Japan missionaries opposed the mass exclusion from the West Coast of Japanese Americans. In early 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, allowing General DeWitt to remove from the West Coast any persons or groups of persons deemed a security threat. Several Japan missionaries, with the blessings of the ecumenical Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (hereafter, FCC) and the Home Missions Council of North America (hereafter, HMC), formed a group which they named The Western Area Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service (later

shortened to the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service).¹⁷ The Commission relied on furloughed missionaries as its primary officers, naming San Francisco-based Presbyterian Gordon K. Chapman as its executive secretary, Methodist Frank Herron Smith as its first chairman, and Congregationalist missionary Galen M. Fisher and Episcopalian Bishop Charles Reifsnider as vice-chairmen. Each of these men had between twenty and forty years of service in Japan. Smith and Fisher had been serving the Japanese American community for almost twenty years.

The Protestant Commission pulled its membership from denominations and organizations that had existing missions among the Japanese American population, and these organizations appointed former Japan missionaries as their representatives. The Commission, with the able leadership of Fisher, a former Young Men's Christian Association missionary in Japan, launched a public relations campaign on behalf of Japanese American citizens, and organized missionaries and clergy to speak before the congressional committee that in the spring of 1942 held hearings in West Coast cities on the issue of the removal of alien residents of Japanese, German, and Italian nationality and citizens with Japanese ancestry from the West Coast; these churchmen served as virtually the only white voices to protest mass internment before the Commission.

Although the Commission failed in its efforts, its members made valuable connections with federal and military officials which they used to push their agenda for the

¹⁷ Although its abbreviation, the FCC, may lead readers to think of the Federal Communications Commission, it is the abbreviation used by the Federal Council and its constituent agencies. The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America was an ecumenical organization started in 1908 and dedicated to promoting Christian social issues on behalf of its constituent organizations. In 1950, it became the National Council of Churches in a reorganization planned before the United States entered World War II. The Home Missions Council was also an ecumenical organization that helped coordinate the domestic mission planning and projects of various Protestant denominations in the United States which became a unit of the National Council of Churches in 1950. Robert T. Handy, *We Witness Together: A History of Cooperative Home Missions* (New York: Friendship Press, 1957).

incarceration camps.¹⁸ Counter to historian John Howard's claim of complicity, I argue that they viewed their actions as pragmatic and expedient responses to a done deal: How might they ameliorate conditions for Japanese Americans, work to positively change public opinion toward these unfortunates, and show their support for the war effort? The Commission and its supporters campaigned to convince the government that former Japan missionaries were best poised to understand the needs and issues of Japanese Americans because of their intimate knowledge of Japanese language and culture. In return, the federal government and the War Relocation Authority (hereafter, WRA), the agency created by the president to run the incarceration camps, viewed the Commission as a volunteer contractor, able to supply resources and programs which the government was too stretched to provide.

The Commission considered itself a "clearinghouse" and mediator with four primary roles. It assisted Japanese Americans in the camps with religious and practical issues, including interceding with denominational leadership when necessary. It helped connect furloughed missionaries who wanted to work among the Japanese Americans with camp churches and camp administrations. The Commission instigated campaigns to favorably influence public opinion toward Japanese Americans, helped missionaries and released Nisei engage in speaking tours, wrote letters on behalf of Issei in Department of Justice camps, or Nisei wanting to attend an interior college, and published essays supporting Nikkei rights in denominational and national journals. Finally, the Commission became the mediating agency between the federal government (particularly the WRA) and Japanese Americans on all religious issues. This mediating effort quickly expanded to include numerous other practical matters that affected Japanese Americans. By the end of the war, the Commission

¹⁸ Although the short form FCC may lead readers to think of the Federal Communications Commission, it is the form that the Federal Council used to refer to itself.

members reversed their careful support of the government and openly questioned WRA policy and compared the mass exclusion and incarceration of Japanese Americans to Nazism. Even as the missionary members of the Commission assisted Japanese Americans in their fight for religious freedom, civil rights, and inclusion in the body politic and the body of Christ, they attuned their sights to the postwar mission field. Combining their experiences in Japan prior to the war with the relationships they developed with Japanese Americans in the States, these Japan missionaries pushed their denominational mission boards to embrace a reconciliatory, humble, and collaborative missional postwar stance – one at odds with America’s “Occupation” attitude toward Japan.

This dissertation provides interventions in three fields: Japanese American incarceration history, US religious history, and missiology, while showing the continued, though waning, influence of the Protestant establishment upon the government in a period many scholars have determined as the apogee of the Protestant establishment. Religion remains a sorely under-examined aspect of Japanese American incarceration history. Less interested in the day-to-day religious practices of Japanese American incarcerated, this thesis argues that religious understandings of citizenship, assimilation, and justice shaped the decisions and actions of government officials, “do-gooders” who sought to help Japanese Americans, and the incarcerated themselves.

While sociologists and ethnographers have studied recent Asian American religious practices, church historians have been slower to engage the Asian American religious experience. My dissertation adds to the historical exploration of the variety of Asian American historical religious experience. Finally, while rich scholarship exists about foreign and domestic missions prior to 1930 and after 1950, little work has yet been done on the

mission fields during the intervening period. Sarah E. Ruble's recent work, *The Gospel of Freedom and Power: Protestant Missionaries in American Culture after World War II*, provides an overview of the missionary role in shaping American foreign policy during the nineteenth century. She notes that the 1920s marked the beginning division of the missionary movement into liberal and conservative factions, but glosses over the years after the 1925 Scopes trial to begin her analysis in 1945.¹⁹ Like most scholarship on missions, Ruble's work assumes a static field in a rich period for missions. The years in which the missionaries connected with the Protestant Commission transitioned from their Japan work to the incarceration camps and back to Japan are pivotal years for understanding the shift in liberal evangelical Protestant missions to the postwar partnership model. This thesis makes that argument and aims to help fill in the research gap.

Because this work intersects several research fields, it attempts to draw existing scholarship on missions, church-state relations, American foreign policy, and Japanese American WWII experience into conversation with sources from numerous archives. The Gordon K. Chapman collection at the Sylvia Lamson Hewlett Library in Berkeley and the Gordon K. Chapman collection at the San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, and the foreign mission personnel files, and collections of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in North America, the Home Missions Council of North America, and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America located at the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia provide the starting point for my research. These collections include the voluminous correspondence Chapman exchanged with members of the Protestant Commission, missionaries, denominational leaders, US government officials, concerned

¹⁹ Sarah E. Ruble, *The Gospel of Freedom and Power: Protestant Missionaries in American Culture after World War II* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

laity, and Japanese Americans between 1942 and 1946. These letters and memos provide an idea of the complexity of the relationships among these various persons and entities as Americans tried to solve what they often termed the “Japanese [American] Problem.” Minutes of meetings of the Protestant Commission, government agencies, and denominational groups, as well as memos, missionary personnel files, materials from the War Relocation Authority camps, and oral histories and recollections of Issei and Nisei who survived the incarceration experience, located in university and denominational archives in Berkeley, Los Angeles, Austin, and Northampton, Massachusetts, fill in missing components from the Chapman collection. They add both breadth and depth to the story of the relationship among Protestant missionaries, Japanese Americans, and the federal government during World War II.

More than seventy years after World War II, the Japanese American incarceration experience remains a prolific field of study. Excellent work continues to push traditional boundaries of the field and to question two earlier contentions. First, that isolated racism, greed, political pressure, and the actions of a few government officials led to Japanese American incarceration. Secondly, that the portrayal of Japanese Americans as a hard-working, acquiescent model minority. Eric Muller, Tetsuden Kashima, and Greg Robinson examine the complicity and failures of conscience at numerous levels of the federal government in shaping and carrying out its policy toward West Coast Japanese Americans.²⁰ Mae Ngai, John Howard, and Karen Lea Riley consider the ways in which the incarceration

²⁰ Eric L. Muller, *American Inquisition: The Hunt for Japanese American Disloyalty in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Tetsuden Kashima, *Judgment without Trial: Japanese American Imprisonment during World War II* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003); Greg Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

camps, and especially the camp schools, became governmental experiments in “forced assimilation” of a captive population.²¹ Several recent books challenge the uplifting portrait of the camps engraved in the public’s imagination through Ansel Adam’s federal government-sponsored photography. The current scholarship contrasts the politicization of images allowed out of the camps during the war with the suppressed work of Dorothea Lange and several detainees who documented camp life with banned cameras.²² Cherstin Lyon, Brian Masaru Hayashi, and Eric L. Muller blur the definition of loyalty while asserting that acts of resistance and rebellion toward incarceration that earlier scholars dismissed as isolated events were actually widespread and indicative of a larger opposition to incarceration.²³ These works challenge the narrative of the “quiet [Japanese] Americans” who passively and obediently followed government orders as a means to prove their loyalty and patriotism.

While these new works complicate our understanding of the breadth of governmental entities involved in “managing” and “containing” the Japanese American population during the war and present Japanese Americans as more ambivalent about the nature of loyalty and

²¹ Mae Ngai, “‘An Ironic Testimony to the Value of American Democracy’: Assimilationism and the World War II Internment of Japanese Americans,” in *Contested Democracy: Freedom, Race, and Power in American History*, ed. Manisha Sinha and Peggy Von Eschen (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 237-257; John Howard, *Concentration Camps on the Home Front: Japanese Americans in the House of Jim Crow* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Karen Lea Riley, *Schools behind Barbed Wire: The Untold Story of Wartime Internment and the Children of Arrested Enemy Aliens* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Little, 2002).

²² Linda Gordon and Gary Okihiro, ed., *Impounded: Dorothea Lange and the Censored Images of Japanese American Internment* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006); Jasmine Alinder, *Moving Images: Photography and the Japanese American Incarceration* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009); Eric L. Muller, ed., *Colors of Confinement: Rare Kodachrome Photographs of Japanese American Incarceration in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

²³ Cherstin Lyon, *Prisoners and Patriots: Japanese American Wartime Citizenship, Disobedience, and Historical Memory* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012); Brian Masaru Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy: The Japanese American Internment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Eric L. Muller, *Free to Die for their Country: The Story of Japanese American Draft Resisters in World War II* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2001).

the assimilation project, none takes a serious look at the influence of religious beliefs or organizations on these subjects. Religion remains a neglected analytical lens in the vast field of Japanese American World War II incarceration scholarship. This neglect is surprising, as the majority of detainees participated in Buddhist or Christian services, both for entertainment and as a source of stability and meaning-making, and Protestant Christian groups, in particular, created a delicate alliance with the federal authorities running the camps. Berkeley sociologists who embedded themselves in the camps, War Relocation Authority officials, and Protestant missionaries who worked with Japanese Americans estimated that the majority of Japanese Americans identified themselves as Buddhist or Protestant Christian. These reports also contended that Japanese Americans active in Christian congregations “assimilated” better in resettlement areas and appeared to have better coping skills and a higher degree of hope than the rest of the Japanese American population.²⁴

Other memoirs and oral histories of incarceration highlight the importance of religion in the camps. Memoirs of camp experience often include descriptions of church life in the camps and the often ambivalent relationship of the memoirists and their families to the church.²⁵ Sociologists Stephen Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez titled a chapter in their book on incarceration, “Religion and Making Sense of the Incarceration.” Their analysis of

²⁴ Dorothy Swaine Thomas and Thomas Nishimoto, *The Salvage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974). Interestingly, Brian Masaru Hayashi discovered that prior to the war, members of Buddhist congregations in Los Angeles exhibited a higher degree of assimilation to American culture than members of Protestant churches. He argues that Buddhist congregations intentionally reshaped Buddhist practice to look more like Christian worship and structure as a means to gain public acceptance. Brian Masaru Hayashi, “*For the Sake of Our Japanese Brethren*”: *Assimilation, Nationalism, and Protestantism among the Japanese of Los Angeles, 1895-1942* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).

²⁵ i.e. Yoshiko Uchida, *Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese-American Family* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982); Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar* (New York: Dell Laurel-Leaf, 1973); Havey, *Gasa Gasa Girl Goes to Camp*; and Mary Matsuda Gruenewald, *Looking Like the Enemy: My Story of Imprisonment in Japanese-American Internment Camps* (Troutdale, OR: NewSage Press, 2005).

numerous oral histories of Nisei survivors of the camps suggests the different ways that Buddhists and Christians integrated their experience into their worldviews.²⁶ These assertions further highlight the need for the incorporation of religion in work on the Japanese American experience. The impact of faith on the ways in which Japanese Americans negotiated expulsion, detainment, and resettlement is a vital area of study; because Japanese American Christian churches remained tied to the dominant white Protestant denominations, the interaction between Japanese American and white Christians is also a fruitful field for analysis.

These recent trends in scholarship, both the works that question received understandings of Japanese American resistance and loyalty and those that examine governmental attitudes and actions toward Japanese Americans, and the limited number of articles and books that consider religious issues, point toward the need to integrate religion into a larger study. Introducing his study on American church responses to World War II, Gerald Sittser cogently argues that during the war, American Christianity was “vital, complex, and creative. It contributed significantly to the war effort. The war also affected American Christianity, in some cases by sending it in new directions, in other cases by correcting the course it had already chosen for itself. Like rationing, religion’s presence and influence was so diffused and universal that it was often taken for granted. But, again, like rationing, its impact during the war was enormous.”²⁷ If, as stated earlier, most Japanese Americans claimed religious affiliation, as did most of the general population in the United

²⁶ Stephen Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez, *Altered Lives, Enduring Community: Japanese Americans Remember Their World War II Incarceration* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), 173-193. Gary Okihiro links the “resurgence” of Buddhism among Japanese detainees to the larger patterns of resistance in the camps. Gary Y. Okihiro, “Religion and Resistance in America’s Concentration Camps,” *Phylon* 45, no. 3 (3rd Quarter, 1984), 220-233.

²⁷ Gerald Sittser, *A Cautious Patriotism: The American Churches and the Second World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 8.

States, the near absence of serious analysis of religious involvement in the debate over expulsion, in efforts to challenge or change official policy toward West Coast Japanese Americans, or to ameliorate the incarceration and resettlement experience suggests a “Christian nation” complicit by its silence rather than “vital, complex, and creative.”

Shortly after the war, Toru Matsumoto published an account of Protestant responses to Japanese American incarceration which remains the standard source of information for others who mention religious issues in the incarceration experience. A Japanese citizen who received his ministerial training at Union Theological Seminary in New York and served as secretary of the Committee on Friendly Relations among Foreign Students, Matsumoto spent a year in an incarceration camp before taking the position of executive secretary for the Federal Council of Churches’ and Home Missions Council’s jointly sponsored Committee on Resettlement of Japanese Americans. In the foreword to Matsumoto’s slim book, HMC Executive Secretary Mark Dawber called the United States’ treatment of Japanese Americans “one of the most tragic stories in our history,” and declares Matsumoto’s account a “story of triumph – the triumph of the gospel of Jesus Christ over injustice, persecution, and prejudice.”²⁸ Matsumoto emphasized the agency of Japanese American Christians in a time of adversity, but also presented the ecumenical Protestant church as a beacon of hope and an important ally for them. Matsumoto’s work remains the most frequently cited source on the religious aspect of the expulsion, incarceration, and resettlement experience, highlighting the paucity of published material.

Also regularly cited, Methodist minister Lester Suzuki used his experience in the camps as the inspiration for his Doctor of Ministry thesis, later published as *Ministry in the*

²⁸ Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, v, vi.

*Assembly and Relocation Centers of World War II.*²⁹ Using church bulletins, interviews with surviving Nisei and Issei pastors, and the files of the executive secretary of the Protestant Commission for Church Service, Suzuki offers the most thorough picture of the organizational structure and daily practices of the federated Protestant churches in the assembly centers and incarceration camps. *Ministry in the Assembly and Relocation Centers* serves as a valuable resource for scholars who lack access to the primary documents Suzuki used. While it primarily looks at the efforts of Japanese American Protestant pastors, the book also provides insight into interfaith relationships in the camps and the presence of white pastors and missionaries in camp life. Scholars who mention religious issues in the Japanese American World War II experience frequently cite these two books as their sources and rarely use primary sources.

Matsumoto and Suzuki depict religious faith and practice as integral to the incarceration experience and as an important factor that propelled individuals and organizations outside the camps to engage with Japanese Americans during the war. Their studies of incarceration camps underline the absence of sustained analysis of religious factors in the majority of extant works. Sandra Taylor suggests that the responses in the larger faith community to the government's treatment of Japanese Americans varied widely, but was fairly muted. Failing to speak out against mass evacuation, "some soon repented that decision. From that point on, their actions were reactive and humanitarian in nature, redemptive rather than initiatory, seeking to undo the initial wrong."³⁰

²⁹ Lester Suzuki, *Ministry in the Assembly and Relocation Centers of World War II* (Berkeley: Yardbird Publishing, 1979).

³⁰ Sandra Taylor, "Fellow-Feelers with the Afflicted," 128.

Robert Schaffer, Cheryl Greenberg, and Ellen Eisenberg have all shed more light on the limited responses of religious organizations to Executive Order 9066. They suggest that existing antagonisms, desires to appear patriotic, and disbelief that the government would actually deny an entire group of citizens its civil liberties fed into the sparse response.³¹ Stephanie Bangarth's recent monograph examines the activities of Canadian and American organizations on behalf of the two nations' Japanese residents and citizens. A portion of one chapter compares Protestant responses to expulsion and incarceration in each country, and curiously finds little transnational communication or cooperation among religious organizations.³² At the same time, Bangarth accords equal importance to the involvement and influence of religious entities on issues related to war-time treatment of Japanese Americans/Canadians as to secular organizations. John Howard echoes Mae Ngai's assertion that the government practiced "coercive assimilation" as authorities viewed the incarceration camps as experiments in democracy; Howard argues that the State's agenda remained entwined with an insidious brand of Protestantism. According to Howard, the state considered conversion to Protestant Christianity an inextricable aspect of assimilation to American culture. Japanese Americans who claimed to be Protestants, then, would be considered more American and more loyal than Buddhists, Roman Catholics, or those who practiced no faith.³³ Howard fails to back up his accusation with documentation, yet his argument for the wedding of church and state in the incarceration project is provocative and

³¹ Robert Shaffer, "Opposition to Internment: Defending Japanese American Rights during World War II," *Historian* 61, no. 3 (Spring 1999): 597-619; Robert Shaffer, "Cracks in the Consensus: Defending the Rights of Japanese Americans during World War II," *Radical History Review* 72 (1998): 84-120; Cheryl Greenberg, "Black and Jewish Responses to Japanese Internment," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1995): 3-37; and Ellen Eisenberg, *The First to Cry Down Injustice? Western Jews and Japanese Removal during WWII* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008).

³² Stephanie Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest: Defending Citizens of Japanese Ancestry in North America, 1942-1949* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 70-88.

³³ Howard, *Concentration Camps on the Homefront*, 151.

worthy of further examination. While raising questions about religious complicity and complaisance with government-sponsored injustice, these works also impress the need for further research into the activities of religious organizations and individuals around Japanese American issues during World War II.

Howard's argument points toward the historically ambiguous relationship between religious bodies and governments in the United States since the final US state formally disestablished its state church in 1833. Scholars have explored the connection between faith-based organizations and government initiatives at other moments in American history; existing scholarship underlines Sittser's contention that the church played a central role in many aspects of the foreign and domestic policy of the United States during World War II. The drawn out process of disestablishing the church from the states in the early nineteenth century did not end the tangled relationship between Christians and their government. Nor did President George W. Bush's faith-based initiative mark the first formal invitation by the federal government to Christian organizations to take the lead in providing government-funded social services or in shaping federal policy on a subjected people.

Numerous scholars have studied the relationship between Christians and the colonial projects of the federal government. At times, Christian laity, pastors, and missionaries appeared to serve as lackeys for the imperial aims of the United States. Nineteenth century Protestants frequently equated Protestant Christian faith with the achievements of industrialized Western society. This equation included accepting Victorian insistence on separate spheres for men and women, and embracing Western forms of agriculture. In the late-nineteenth century, missionary societies believed that the missionary's role was to convert and rescue "heathens" from their barbarous state by clothing them in a westernized

version of Christianity. Missionaries created space for American businesses and politicians to cast colonial states in the American mold. As the editors of *Competing Kingdoms* note, missionaries shared with most Protestants the belief that everyone “deserved the triple advantages of Protestant Christianity, American civilization, and American forms of government.”³⁴ This belief extended to the treatment of American Indians, Asian and Eastern European immigrants, and newly emancipated African Americans who fell under the aegis of home missionary societies. President Ulysses Grant’s Peace Policy placed Indian reservations under the auspices of Protestant church people, believing Christians could best “civilize” American Indians. Margaret Jacobs, Tisa Wenger, and Peggy Pascoe, among others, have demonstrated the conflicted nature of domestic missions in the nineteenth and early twentieth century to “uplift” indigenous and immigrant communities. Wenger and Jacobs describe the paternalistic shift in the twentieth century toward an emphasis on preserving indigenous culture, a shift again championed by Christian organizations and missions that shifted in the inter-war years away from a vision of Christian imperialism to one of Christian internationalism which emphasized greater respect and friendship with people around the globe.³⁵

³⁴ Barbara Reeves Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo, ed., *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 4.

³⁵ Margaret Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); Tisa Wenger, *We Have a Religion: The 1920s Pueblo Indian Dance Controversy and American Religious Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). The religious motivation of the women Jacobs considers is more implicit in her text than explicitly analyzed. Rumi Yasutake ably analyzes the activities of white, Japanese, and Japanese immigrant women who participated in Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) activities. She argues that women in Japan and Japanese immigrant women in California used the tools and skills gained in the WCTU to resist imperialism and push their own agendas. Rumi Yasutake, *Transnational Women’s Activism: The United States, Japan, and Japanese Immigrant Communities in California, 1859-1920* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

The inter-war years witnessed a shift among liberal Protestant Christians away from the insistence that the United States represented the apex of God's intentions toward a critique of America's fallen state and need for redemption. The modernist movement of the early twentieth century pushed Protestant pastors and missionaries especially to reconsider their faith in light of evolution and higher criticism, a move that enabled them to reject earlier dualist beliefs that separated Christians from everyone else.³⁶ Calling for increased respect toward other cultures and faiths, liberal evangelical Protestants argued that America was still destined to be a city on a hill, but that the country could only attain its potential by re-committing to God's kingdom, rather than the kingdom of mammon.³⁷ This increased emphasis on respect and spiritual regeneration grew out of the Social Gospel movement, a late nineteenth century liberal Protestant movement that emphasized the intersection of personal salvation and social evils and encouraged Christians to address issues of economic inequality in order to usher in the kingdom of God.³⁸

The horrors of the First World War illuminated for many Protestants the intransigence of evil and led to the demise of the movement, if not its underlying impulse. By the late 1930s, this concern for the Christian regeneration of the nation found its strongest advocates among Christian Realists like Reinhold Niebuhr. Christian Realists were

³⁶ Lian Xi, *The Conversion of Missionaries: Liberalism in American Protestant Missions in China, 1907-1932* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 14.

³⁷ Until the mid-twentieth century, most Protestants, liberal or conservative, embraced the term evangelical as a natural explanation of their purpose as Christians: to share the good news of the Gospel with other people. In the second half of the twentieth century, the term came to be associated with a particular group of conservative Christians, and often mistakenly conflated with fundamentalism, or the belief in the literal truth of scripture.

³⁸ A key text that helped spur the Social Gospel movement on its publication in 1908 is Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991). Other works helpful to understanding the movement include: Ronald C. White, Jr., *Liberty and Justice for All: Racial Reform and the Social Gospel, 1877-1925* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002); Wendy J. Deichman Edwards and Carolyn De Swarte, eds., *Gender and the Social Gospel* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2003); Christopher H. Evans, *The Kingdom is Always But Coming: A Life of Walter Rauschenbusch* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2004); and Gary Scott Smith, *The Search for Social Salvation: Social Christianity and America, 1880-1925* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2000).

a self-named group of theologians who “forged a theology of international engagement for America” during the inter-war years.³⁹ Their concerns grew out of the emergence of totalitarian regimes, a second world war, and the continued commitment of the United States and many liberal Christians to pacifism and isolationism. Mark Thomas Edwards documents the development of the Realists, who he describes as “the right of the Protestant left.” For Edwards, the insistence of theologians like Niebuhr that the United States had a moral responsibility to enter into World War II emerged from their belief that America must behave like a Christian nation, which included taking a stand against evil as represented by the Nazis.⁴⁰

Even as Christian Realists challenged their fellow believers and the government to reclaim the sacred mantle of righteousness America appeared to have discarded, Realists and pacifists alike increasingly questioned how the United States could fight for democracy abroad while denying entire groups of people their civil rights at home. Members of the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation challenged racial discrimination and enforced conscription, often landing in jail or conscientious objector camps for their stances.⁴¹ In 1941, under the leadership of Niebuhr, the Realists launched the journal *Christianity and Crisis* to challenge church and country to take seriously the “ultimate crisis of the whole civilization of which we are a part and whose existence has made possible the survival of

³⁹ Heather A. Warren, *Theologians of a New World Order: Reinhold Niebuhr and the Christian Realists, 1920-1948* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3.

⁴⁰ Mark Thomas Edwards, *The Right of the Protestant Left: God's Totalitarianism* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

⁴¹ On the Fellowship of Reconciliation, see, Paul R. Dekar, *Creating the Beloved Community: A Journey with the Fellowship of Reconciliation* (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing, 2004).

our type of faith and our type of church.”⁴² Other liberal Protestants challenged the government on the issue of civil rights for the dispossessed Japanese Americans.

Missionaries, as in earlier periods of American history, proved to be among the individuals most actively seeking to intervene in federal policies and programs directed at the West Coast Japanese American population. While their activities did not coalesce into an upsurge of church-based response, they positively affected choices made at the federal, state, and local levels towards Japanese Americans, heightened congregational-level awareness of the situation of Japanese Americans, and impacted the incarceration experience of many Japanese Americans. Their efforts grew out of a longer history of missionary attempts to influence popular opinion and political policy toward the non-white population of this country and the world.

Historians of religion have ably demonstrated the conflicted and often ambiguous relationship between the United States government and religious groups. While white Protestants and Catholics failed to create a concerted effort to challenge the constitutionality of ethnically based mass exclusion and detention or unite to decry the treatment of other minority or oppressed groups, what emerges from a study of current scholarship is that one particular group of individuals has been most likely to engage the government on issues related to minorities: liberal Protestant missionaries. These individuals may have challenged or agreed with federal policies; they often modified government intentions and actions toward minority populations.

⁴² Reinhold Niebuhr, “The Crisis,” *Christianity and Crisis* 1 (February 10, 1941), 1; and Mark Hulsether, *Building a Protestant Left: Christianity and Crisis Magazine, 1941-1993* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1999).

The relationship of missionaries and the United States government provides a helpful means to understand the relationship of Protestant Christianity and the state. Male and female Protestant missionaries served as the primary interpreters of foreign cultures for Americans through their correspondence, articles in missionary and women's society periodicals, and public lectures when on stateside sabbaticals.⁴³ Immersion in different cultures affected the beliefs of missionaries about the nature of other people – Asian and African in particular—and the purpose of the missionary endeavor. Their shifting views of missions challenged American Protestants to reconsider their own understandings of the role of the United States abroad. Jane Hunter and Ian Tyrrell, among others, have noted the complex relationship between overseas missionaries and America's imperial ambitions. After the First World War, in particular, the efforts of Protestant missionaries overseas often served as a “source of *challenge* to the dominant nationalist culture.”⁴⁴ No longer did the west have “a monopoly on virtue.”

Tyrrell argues that the work of international organizations like the Women's Christian Temperance Union (hereafter, WCTU) by the turn of the twentieth century was one of “intercultural mediation.”⁴⁵ Female missionaries led the growth of internationalism. By the early twentieth century, missionary publications focused on “minimizing cultural difference” as a means to make overt forms of racism less acceptable.⁴⁶ In the 1920s, the

⁴³ Karen J. Leong, *The China Mystique: Pearl S. Buck, Anna May Wong, Mayling Soong, and the Transformation of American Orientalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 11; Karen Seat, “*Providence Has Freed Our Hands*”: *Women's Missions and the American Encounter with Japan* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 156.

⁴⁴ Emphasis in original. Jane Hunter, “Women's Mission in Historical Perspective: American Identity and Christian Internationalism,” in *Competing Kingdoms*, ed., Barbara Reeves Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo, 22.

⁴⁵ Ian Tyrrell, “Woman, Missions, and Empire: New Approaches to American Cultural Expansion,” in *Competing Kingdoms*, ed., Barbara Reeves Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo, 50.

⁴⁶ Karen Seat, “*Providence Has Freed Our Hands*,” 126.

women’s missionary movement announced a theme of “World Friendship.” This new emphasis suggested a shift from paternalism toward a mission of partnership that sided with “the conflictive social forces of the day – ‘racial consciousness, the development of nationalism, the demands for self-determination and social justice.’”⁴⁷ Such an embrace included efforts by missionaries to immerse themselves in the culture and practices of their adopted home (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Missionary Sarah Clarke Oltmans in Kimono, c. 1919. Reproduced from the Presbyterian Historical Society.

The influence of missionaries extended beyond American foreign policy into the realm of immigration law.⁴⁸ James Reed has argued that during the Progressive period missionaries envisioned a “new international order . . . [but] cultivated indifferences to the

⁴⁷ Evelyn Riley Nicholson, *Thinking it Through: A Discussion on World Peace, Christian Comradeship Series* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1928), 25, quoted in Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 278.

⁴⁸ Robert, *American Women in Mission*, 273.

daily realities of power . . . [and] tended to avoid explicitly political questions.”⁴⁹ More recently in her study on Protestant missionary involvement in American policy toward Asian immigration, Jennifer Snow notes the historiographical tendency (fueled in the popular imagination by fictional works like Barbara Kingsolver’s *The Poisonwood Bible*) to portray missionaries as intentional “accomplices to American imperialism, racism and ethnocentrism.” She discovered instead that their embrace of Christian internationalism led Protestant missionaries to become the most vocal opponents of oppressive immigration and citizenship laws that limited American citizenship to Anglo-Saxon Protestants. Snow argues that missionaries “attempted to define American identity by a Christianity which would transcend race, state, or religious status, an America which would be known throughout the world for its Christian welcome to individuals of all colors and all religions.”⁵⁰ Their experience on the mission field shifted their view of the validity of different cultures and peoples and pushed them to challenge the racist views promoted by newspapers and politicians. They practiced what Gary Okihiro calls “anti-racism.”⁵¹ Individual missionaries like Methodist Frank Herron Smith invested their energies fighting the 1924 Asian Exclusion Act, calling out American prejudice, and insisting that the legislation would lead to war.⁵² Organizations like the ecumenical Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and the Foreign Missions Board, influenced by the missionaries among them,

⁴⁹ James Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy, 1911-1915* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 96.

⁵⁰ Jennifer C. Snow, *Protestant Missionaries, Asian Immigrants, and Ideologies of Race in America, 1850-1924* (New York: Routledge, 2007), xiv. Barbara Kingsolver, *The Poisonwood Bible*

⁵¹ Gary Okihiro, *Storied Lives: Japanese American Students and World War II* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), xiii.

⁵² Shaffer, “Opposition to Internment,” 611.

published open letters to churches and Congress opposing the restrictive immigration law, and sent representatives to lobby politicians on Capitol Hill.⁵³

The nature of missionary connection to the state remained fluid and ambivalent. Missionaries and their home organizations actively shaped policy toward minority groups. They involved themselves in American Indian education and reservation systems and undertook, with quiet nods from the government, to assimilate immigrant groups into American cultural norms. At times, as with the Exclusion Act, their challenge to prejudicial policy failed. In every situation and time, their effectiveness depended upon their ability to serve as the mediator between the public and the minority group. As “internationalists,” missionaries hoped to unite people across cultures and countries in Christian kinship. This desire and the skills learned via their immersion in a “foreign” culture made them experts on the “Other,” translators of strange languages, cultures, and behaviors to the American public and government. At times, they may have been guilty of complicity, as John Howard accuses, but often they found their relationship with both the government entities and the minority or foreign group whom they served marked with ambiguity and ambivalence. Such is the case in World War II with the group of missionaries who devoted their energies to “the Japanese problem.”

The dissertation begins with an analysis of the ways in which missionaries to Japan changed their understandings of mission in the first four decades of the twentieth century. By using the prolific writings of Galen Fisher and other missionaries, Chapter One untangles the transitions missionaries made from their enchantment with a theory of Christian

⁵³ Robert T. Handy, *We Witness Together*, 89.

imperialism in the early twentieth century to their embrace of Christian internationalism by the start of World War II. Uncovering the shifts in mission theology among liberal Protestant missionaries is important for a full comprehension of the reasons these missionaries decided to champion the rights of Japanese Americans during the war and to bind their daily lives to the travails of Nikkei. The chapter begins with Fisher's arrival in Japan in 1898 as a young YMCA secretary and ends with the events of early 1941 that led to an unprecedented gathering of American and Japanese theologians in Riverside, California in an attempt to avert the gathering clouds of war between their respective countries. While missionaries in the early twentieth century supported Christian imperialism and thrilled at Japan's emergence as a global power, by the late 1930s they were wary of the dangerous military buildup in Japan and the continued anti-Japanese policies of the United States which seemed to invite retaliatory aggression from Japan.

Chapter One examines how the experience of missionaries in Japan shaped their theological and social outlook and ultimately influenced how they approached the incarceration of Japanese Americans. This chapter looks at generational and gender differences in the experiences, expectations, and philosophies of Japan missionaries. Their years in Japan shaped them culturally; having spent more time with Japanese friends, colleagues, and students, and other missionaries made them transcultural agents with a better understanding of and empathy for Japanese culture and history than most Americans. This chapter connects the Japan mission movement with the ecumenical leadership in both the United States and Japan. Japan missionaries played a pivotal role instigating the Riverside Conference; their belief that Christians could influence the US government's actions toward Japan reflected the predominant belief among liberal Protestants by the 1940s that America

had strayed from its Christian roots and needed guidance to again become a beacon of light in the world. The concern among missionaries and ecumenical leaders rested as much on a concern for the effects of war on the Christian movement in Japan as on Japan-US relations and a resistance to violence as the solution to global issues. The Riverside Conference manifested the bedrock belief among the mission movement in Christian internationalism and the unshakeable bonds of fellowship across race and nationality.

Chapter Two argues that the missionary community began focusing on the situation of Japanese Americans by January 1942; for furloughed missionaries, Japanese Americans were a logical population to champion. With the formation of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, an ecumenical group of missionaries used connections with government and military officials to push for their vision of a Christian solution, which included the protection of civil rights and fair treatment of citizen and alien. Like Christian Realists, the missionaries avoided overtly Christian language in their efforts, using instead the language of justice and civil rights, although they referred to the duties of a Christian nation, and suggested the United States failed its Christian foundation in its racist policies. While hopeful that they might shift the tide of support for mass incarceration, members of the Commission took a realist view of government politics, and ultimately shaped their appeals to the more limited end of individual hearings for Nisei. Realizing the limits of their influence on federal decisions, the Commission chose instead to use relationships to work with the government and try to influence and ameliorate its policies towards Japanese Americans from the inside. At the same time, several missionaries began their daily work with Japanese American communities in transition during the confusing weeks before their removal to camps. In their work with local communities, these missionaries helped make

concrete the goals of the Commission. This chapter looks at the development of the Protestant Commission and the shifting trajectory of its goals, as well as its developing relationship with Japanese Americans, the military, the federal government, and other activist groups like Americans for Fair Play.

As the War Relocation Authority developed its policies to run the euphemistically termed “Relocation Centers,” the Protestant Commission offered the government guidance and advice. The Protestant Commission envisioned itself as the official intermediary between Japanese Americans – essentially cut off from outside world – and churches and the government on all issues related to religious life in the camps. Chapter Three focuses on the question of religious freedom as defined by the Protestant Commission, Japanese Americans, and the War Relocation Authority, and how it played out in the camps. Officially proclaiming the freedom of religious practice in the camps, the WRA, Japanese Americans, and Commission members debated the boundaries and limits to the policy as they considered the source of pay for camp pastors, tolerated different faiths and practices, determined the relationship between camp pastors and the camp administration, and debated the development of federated churches and the provision of space for church meetings.

While the official members of the Protestant Commission played a vital role influencing federal policies toward Nikkei during the war, missionary involvement in the daily routines of camp life proved just as important an influence on religious life and experience for Nikkei. Testimony by missionaries who remained in Japan when the Japanese navy bombed Pearl Harbor about their time in detention camps in Japan witness to their sense of kinship with Japanese, especially Japanese Christians, and the interconnectedness of humanity. Chapter Four begins with these experiences that gave missionaries empathy for

the experience of Japanese Americans and provided justification for their calling to work in the incarceration camps and in public relations efforts on behalf of Japanese Americans. The chapter considers the variety of experiences of missionaries who sought work in the camps and the nature of their interactions with Nikkei. The Protestant Commission served as the official clearing house for missionaries who sought work in camps, providing names of available missionaries to both the WRA and camp churches. Some missionaries worked on behalf of the Protestant Commission, traveling to the camps, teaching, counseling, and doing public relations work outside of the camps trying to foster positive attitudes toward Japanese Americans in relocation areas and on the West Coast. Other missionaries found work in the camps as religious workers, teachers, and social workers. Missionaries seeking work in the incarceration camps encountered a variety of responses from WRA authorities and Japanese American incarcerated. At times these constituencies questioned missionary loyalties, intentions, and cultural competencies. Placed in challenging positions and, like the Japanese Americans, unwillingly dislocated from their homes, the missionaries worked to understand this American community, garner support for Japanese Americans from congregations on the outside, and prepare themselves to return to mission work in Japan postwar. This chapter not only looks at the tangled alliances of the missionaries in the camps but the gendered differences in their experiences.

Ultimately, as the conclusion argues, the war experience affected the postwar visions of these missionaries for Japan, the mission movement, and Japanese Americans. The incarceration of Japanese Americans pushed many of the missionaries and their home denominations toward an emphasis on reconciliation, humility, and equality in their work in Japan, and led some Japanese American Christians to a commitment to the larger civil rights

movement. The efforts of the missionaries involved with the Protestant Commission to work for Japanese American rights and to shape religious life in the camps represented the limits of the power of the Protestant mission movement to influence federal policy. Their work demonstrates the anti-imperialist shift in liberal missions at a period when the United States emerged as a dominant world power bent on containment and hegemony.

A Few Words on Terminology

Scholarly consensus rejects as inaccurate the term “internment camp” popularly used to describe the experience of the majority of West Coast Japanese Americans during World War II. Internment is a legally recognized process by which the Department of Justice arrested alien nationals considered a threat to security, and confined them in an internment camp where they obtained due process through individual hearings. In contrast to this, both residents and citizens of Japanese descent found themselves caught in a mass detention, their only crime being their status as ethnic Japanese. Never proven to be an actual threat to military security and denied individual hearings, Japanese Americans were forced to “prove their loyalty” by leaving—and often losing at great cost—homes, businesses, farms, and work, and moving into camps surrounded by barbed wire and guard towers.⁵⁴ This unconstitutional mass removal of an entire population and the racially based deprivation of civil rights and due process to an entire group of citizens is akin to other racially and religiously based “pogroms” throughout history that have detained populations into concentration camps. Some scholars and activists use the term “concentration camp” to

⁵⁴ Roger Daniels offers a useful discussion of the need for more accurate terminology in “Words Do Matter: A Note on Inappropriate Terminology and the Incarceration of the Japanese Americans,” in *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, ed., Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 190-214. Cherstin M. Lyon offers an assortment of more accurate terms, some of which I utilize in this essay: “forced removal,” “exclusion,” “confinement,” “incarceration,” “detention,” and “detainee.” Lyon, *Prisons and Patriots*, xii-xiii.

describe the camps in which the government placed Japanese Americans. President Roosevelt and others at the time used that terminology.⁵⁵ However, the term “concentration camp” has become so associated with the Nazi camps that it is difficult to successfully use the term in relation to other programs without creating passionate debate and comparison of the different systems employed. Therefore, I am following the lead of other recent works and using the term “incarceration camps” to refer to the camps and “incarcerees” to refer to the Japanese Americans imprisoned in the camps during World War Two.

Several Japanese terms used to define the Japanese American population appear frequently in this dissertation. “Issei” refers to the first generation Japanese Americans, the majority of whom arrived in the United States between 1882, when the country prohibited further Chinese immigration and employers turned to Japan for a steady supply of cheap agricultural and industrial workers, and 1924, when the United States passed the Asian Exclusion Act as part of its immigration policy. “Nisei” refers to the second generation Japanese Americans who were citizens by virtue of their birth in this country. “Kibei” refers to Nisei who received a portion of their education in Japan.

Until the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952, Issei were unable to naturalize. Anti-Japanese forces in the United States used their lack of citizenship against the Issei and missionaries tried to argue in the lead-up to incarceration that the majority of Issei would have become citizens of the United States had this country’s racist laws not prohibited them from doing so. Following the missionary line of argument, the term “Japanese Americans” in this dissertation refers to all Japanese Americans regardless of citizenship status.

⁵⁵ See Robinson, *By Order of the President*.

Likewise, “Nikkei” is the Japanese term that encompasses the entire Japanese American community and is used in the same sense in this dissertation.

Chapter One

“It is a challenge to demonstrate that Christian brotherhood transcends blood and skin color”: The Transformation of Japan Missionaries, 1899-1941

Shortly after President Franklin Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066 paved the way for the military’s compulsory removal and incarceration of 120,000 American citizens and residents of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast, Galen Merriam Fisher penned an impassioned critique of this decision for the *Christian Century*, an influential liberal Protestant magazine. The sixty-nine-year-old Fisher drew upon long personal experience and engagement with Japanese, Japanese Americans, and religious and governmental entities for his article.⁵⁶ “Our Japanese Refugees” displayed Fisher’s training as a sociologist, his pragmatic leanings, and his well-honed skill as a rhetorician. In a piece calculated to arouse the sympathies of its readership and provoke them to act on behalf of an uprooted population, Fisher called the exclusion of Japanese Americans from the Pacific West “an ordeal of personal suffering. It is also a test of their ability to rise above resentment and to maintain faith in their America and ours.”⁵⁷ Fisher portrayed Japanese Americans as noble victims and co-sharers in the American promise while viewing American and Christian ideals as separate but interrelated. Three weeks earlier, the editor of the *Christian Century* called Japanese Americans “helpless people” and “victims of a

⁵⁶ Fisher served as the Young Men’s Christian Association secretary in Japan (1898-1919). After getting a Master’s degree in sociology from Columbia University on his return to the United States, Fisher held a series of positions related to missions, foreign relations, and the task of educating the public about Japan. These included research associate and secretary for John D. Rockefeller’s Institute for Social and Religious Research, and at the Institute for Pacific Relations. In 1941 he helped found the Northern California Committee for Fair Play for Citizens and Aliens of Japanese Ancestry.

⁵⁷ Galen M. Fisher, “Our Japanese Refugees,” *Christian Century* 59, no. 13 (April 1, 1942): 424. Cynthia D. Boes argues that Fisher used the language of Japanese Americans as “victims” in his statements as a rhetorical move intended to engender sympathy for them in his intended audiences. Cynthia D. Boes, “Other-Directed Protests: A Study of Galen Fisher’s Anti-Internment Rhetoric” (MA Thesis: Oregon State University, 2003), 111-112.

howling jumble” of politicians and business interests.⁵⁸ Fisher incriminated the larger Christian American public. “For white Americans,” Fisher continued, “it is a testing by fire of devotion to the letter and spirit of the federal Constitution, and of their ability to hold justice and national unity above antipathy toward persons of Japanese race. For white Christians,” he concluded, “it is a challenge to demonstrate that Christian brotherhood transcends blood and skin color.”⁵⁹ Fisher accused the majority of “intelligent” Christians and secular Americans of inaction in the face of such a tremendous injustice, a bold action at a time when public opinion on the West Coast favored the permanent expulsion of a people ethnically related to the enemy against whom the United States was waging a costly war. He held up as an example for white Christian Americans the sacrifice and unity of Japanese Americans in the face of injustice and national crisis.

Fisher’s essay represented a shift in missional understandings of race, the relationship between Christianity and other faiths, and the link between Christianity and the nation. His career as a skilled observer, organizer, educator, and writer highlights the three primary transitions made in liberal Protestant missions in the four decades preceding the United States’ entry into World War II and highlights how missionary experience forged an anti-racist and ecumenical commitment to Japanese American rights. As the Young Men’s Christian Association (hereafter, YMCA) secretary in Japan for twenty years, Fisher embraced Christian imperialist ideology. His work promoting positive attitudes toward Asian immigrants, fighting the 1924 Asian Exclusion Act, and critiquing missionary involvement in the Korean independence movement illustrate a movement toward world-mindedness among missionaries. By the 1930s, Fisher had engaged in increasingly strong

⁵⁸ Editorial, *Christian Century* 59, no. 10 (March 11, 1942): 309.

⁵⁹ Galen M. Fisher, “Our Japanese Refugees,” 424.

critiques of US domestic and foreign policy while tempering his understanding of Christian missions. He became a model of Christian internationalism as the secretary for the John D. Rockefeller-funded Laymen's Mission Inquiry, an interdenominational study of mission work in Asia that served as a lightning rod to galvanize both ends of the theological spectrum in the mission movement and helped disseminate liberal ideas about the object of missionary work. Throughout the 1930s, Fisher combined his sociological and theological expertise in publications for the Institute of Pacific Relations (hereafter, IPR) that sought to educate the wider public about Japanese culture, society, and growing militarism. In early 1941, at the instigation of Japan missionaries and the Japanese National Council of Churches, he helped leading American and Japanese Christians organize an unprecedented conference in Riverside, California at which the two groups participated in prayer, mutual sharing for mutual understanding, and discussion of ways to help Japanese and American statesmen avoid hostilities between the two countries.

Fisher published extensively about Japan, US-Japan relations, and religion throughout his high-profile career in missions and international relations prior to World War II. His writings document key moments in US imperial history and the way these crises and the on-going interaction with Japanese culture and people transformed the attitudes and theology of Fisher and his fellow Protestant missionaries in Japan. This chapter uses Galen M. Fisher's writings in conjunction with the voices of other Japan missionaries as a window into the challenges and changes faced by the Protestant missionaries in Japan who eventually turned their energies toward incarcerated Japanese Americans during the War and toward effecting positive sympathies among the US population. These early experiences in Japan fitted them to argue for and work on behalf of Japanese Americans even as long

missionary engagement in Japan raised questions about imperialism, racism, acceptance of non-Christian faith, and the responsibilities of missionaries toward host country, home country, and oppressed populations.

Evangelizing the World (1897-1918)

Historian Sara Griffith argues that from the 1880s until the end of World War I, American missionaries advocated US and Japanese imperialism in the Pacific region. YMCA and denominationally based missionaries tended to view the two nations as “equivalent forces in the spread of modernity, democracy, and in the case of Japan, a global Christian movement that would bring insight to backward East Asia.”⁶⁰ Individuals like YMCA secretary Galen Fisher, Methodist missionary Frank Herron Smith, and Episcopal missionary Charles Reifsnider arrived in Japan in the waning years of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. They considered Japan an emerging power in Asia ripe for Christian conquest. Influenced by the evangelical model of mission work espoused by leaders of the influential Student Volunteer Movement (hereafter, SVM), which was the primary organization motivating young women and men to undertake mission work in the early twentieth century, and reflecting the strong nationalist and imperialist current in American culture, Japan missionaries focused particularly on reaching the booming student population in Japan and other young adults who they considered the incipient economic, political, and military leaders of the country.

As they developed their roles in Japan, these missionaries championed Japan’s own imperialist ambitions in Asia while critiquing the excesses of modern materialist culture and claiming the supremacy of Christianity over other religions considered barbaric and

⁶⁰ Sara Griffith, “Where We Can Battle for the Lord and Japan’: The Development of Liberal Protestant Anti-Racism before World War II,” *Journal of American History* 100, no. 2 (Sept 2013): 429.

superstitious. Fisher's involvement in three major events in the early decades of the twentieth century suggests the distance he and his cohorts had to travel to reach the antiracist, internationalist stance they adopted by 1942. This section shows the development and slow death of Christian imperialist theology among Protestant Japan missionaries by considering the impact of the SVM on the development of Galen Fisher's early work and the work of the Japan YMCA in supporting both Christian and Japanese imperialist ambitions, the Japan YMCA's opportunistic use of Japan's war against Russia in 1904 to spread Christianity among the troops, and Japan's historic Three Religions Conference in 1912.

The United States believed it had a special burden to bring Japan and other nations under the reforming power of Protestant Christianity.⁶¹ This attitude of Christian imperialism became evident in American responses to the Spanish-American War in 1898. Although many missionaries at first held reservations about American involvement in Spanish possessions and its official entry as a colonial power, most supported US action once the United States became involved.⁶² The decision aligned with existing understandings of the relationship between Protestant Christianity and western civilization. The language used in support of American usurpation of the Philippines invoked the language of manifest destiny and the idea that America as a "Christian" nation bore the

⁶¹ Because Japan adopted Western models of industrialization, education and politics so quickly, most Americans held a positive view of the country and did not consider the Japanese part of the "White Man's Burden" about which Rudyard Kipling famously versed. President Theodore Roosevelt also championed Japan, writing in 1905: "I think Japan has something within itself which will be good for civilization in general. If she is treated fairly and not yet cringed to. . . . We have a good deal to learn from her." Quoted in Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 60.

⁶² As scholars have shown, this view obscures the fact that the United States was already engaged in the colonial enterprise in its practice of settler colonialism and indigenous extermination on the North American continent. George Tinker, *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993); Margaret Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*; Ward Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas, 1492 to the Present* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1997).

divine burden of bringing lesser races and people into the realms of Protestant Christian and American understandings of progress. Arthur T. Pierson, a popular lecturer on missions with the YMCA, stated a decade earlier that “the foremost nations of the earth, England and the United States, are not only Christian, but Protestant, and they have their grip upon the leading nations of the rest of the world.”⁶³ Indiana’s Republican Senator Albert Beveridge placed the United States’ international responsibilities, particularly its responsibility for the Philippines, in divine terms when he stated on the floor of the Senate that Americans were “a people imperial by virtue of their power, by right of their institutions, by authority of their Heaven-directed purposes . . . [and must] broaden [the] blessed reign” of freedom “until the empire of our principles is established over the hearts of all mankind.”⁶⁴

Even proponents of the Social Gospel approved of imperialist Christianity. The Social Gospel was a progressive Christian reaction to the harshness of industrialization and urbanization in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The movement emphasized meeting the physical and material needs of individuals and addressing societal injustices over personal evangelization. Josiah Strong, a leading proponent of the Social Gospel and of domestic missions in the United States, contended that the Americans were a “pioneer race” and the United States the “elect nation for the age to come” in possessing the world for Christianity. He clarified this view in an 1895 statement before the American Missionary Society in which he declared that whites, blacks, and American Indians were “blood relatives” in Jesus Christ.⁶⁵ Strong influenced other Protestants to support annexation of the

⁶³ Arthur T. Pierson, *The Crisis of Missions or the Voice Out of the Cloud* (New York: Baker and Taylor Company, 1886), 194.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 1.

⁶⁵ Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Present Crisis* (New York: Baker and Taylor Company, published for the Home Missionary Society, 1885, 1891), 263-264; and Rev. Dr. Josiah Strong, “Address

Philippines through his publication in 1900 of *Expansion; Under New-World Conditions*. In this book, Strong contended that the United States had a divine mission to “control” underdeveloped countries, to lead by example, and to manifest in its benevolent uplift of other peoples the Christian ethic.⁶⁶ This belief in benevolent uplift led countless individuals to become missionaries at home and around the world.

The Student Volunteer Movement grew out of this belief in America’s exceptionalist call to evangelize the world. The SVM emerged from the genius of one motivated individual but fomented a passion in thousands of young men and women for mission work. In 1900, Methodist layman John Mott riveted a cohort of young college-educated men and women with his challenge to join in the “evangelization of the world in this generation.”⁶⁷ Mott meant that every person in the world should be exposed to the Christian gospel. Working through the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions and the World Student Christian Federation (hereafter, WSCF), which were two international, interdenominational organizations he helped create, and the YMCA, Mott influenced thousands of young people to dedicate their lives to mission service.⁶⁸ Described by Fisher as an “apostle” of world

before the America Missionary Association Annual Meeting,” *The American Missionary* 49, no. 12 (December 1895): 423-424, accessed September 12, 2014, <http://digital.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/pageviewer-idx?c=amis;cc=amis;rgn=full%20text;idno=amis0049-12;didno=amis0049-12;view=image;seq=0451;node=amis0049-12%3A30>.

⁶⁶ Cited in William H. Berge, “Voices for Imperialism: Josiah Strong and the Protestant Clergy,” *Border States: Journal of the Kentucky-Tennessee American Studies Association*, no. 1 (1973), accessed September 12, 2014, <http://spider.georgetowncollege.edu/htallant/border/bs1/berge.htm>.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Norman E. Thomas, ed., *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), 75. On the enduring power of these watch words, see Gordon K. Chapman and Katherine D. Chapman to Friends, 24 May 1967, Box 27, Folder 37, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Records. For more on John Mott’s instrumental role in galvanizing student support for world missions, his leadership in ecumenical dialogue and cooperation, and his statesmanship, see Galen M. Fisher, *John R. Mott: Architect of Cooperation and Unity* (New York: Association Press, 1952); and C. Howard Hopkins, *John R. Mott, 1865-1955: A Biography* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979).

⁶⁸ Originally its own organization that cooperated with the YMCA and the YWCA, the SVM became the missionary division of those organizations in 1898. The SVM drew its membership primarily from US and Canadian colleges. On the other hand, the WSCF, the dream of John Mott and Luther Wishard, created a truly international student Christian movement with its founding at Vadstena, Sweden, in 1895. For more

mission, Mott “moved men [and women] by his combination of logical argument, daring challenge, and burning sincerity.”⁶⁹ While applicants for missionary service in the late nineteenth century through the 1920s might list athletics and debate societies among their extracurricular activities, all emphasized their involvement in at least one of these Christian organizations as formative to their understanding of their call to be foreign missionaries. Indeed, between the establishment of the SVM in 1888 and 1919, at least half of all foreign missionaries included the SVM as a primary motivator.⁷⁰ Those who embarked on mission work in the early years of the twentieth century agreed that the primary goal of the church was to share the Christian gospel with people in every nation. In 1912, when the Social Gospel focus on addressing the social and physical needs of a rapidly industrializing world challenged the traditional understandings of mission and Christian witness, Mott still argued that the primary aim of missions was “the enthroning Christ in individual life, in family life, in social life, in national life, in international relations.”⁷¹ The urgency of this task inspired many young adults including Galen Fisher.

Galen Fisher was one of the young adults who found his life irrevocably changed by Mott’s vision. After graduating from the University of California, Berkeley, Fisher took the

information on these organizations, see Johanna M. Selles, *The World Student Christian Federation, 1895-1925: Motives, Methods, and Influential Women* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011); Robin Boyd, *The Witness of the Student Christian Movement: Church ahead of the Church* (Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches Publications, 2007); John B. Lindner, Alva I. Cox, Jr., and Linda-Marie Delloff, *By Faith: Christian Students Among the Clouds of Witnesses* (New York: Friendship Press, 1991); Clifton J. Phillips, “The Student Volunteer Movement and its Role in China Missions, 1886-1920,” in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed., John K. Fairbanks (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 91-109; Kenneth Scott Latourette, *World Service: A History of the Foreign Work and World Service of The Young Men’s Christian Association of the United States and Canada* (New York: Association Press, 1957); Jon Thares Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress: The American YMCA in Japan 1890-1930* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press; London: Associated University Press, 1998); Nancy Boyd, *Emissaries: The Overseas Work of the American YWCA, 1895-1970* (New York: Women’s Press, 1986); and Anna V. Rice, *A History of the World’s Young Women’s Christian Association* (New York: Women’s Press, 1947).

⁶⁹ Fisher, *John R. Mott*, 11.

⁷⁰ Phillips, “The Student Volunteer Movement and its Role in China Missions, 1886-1920,” 101.

⁷¹ Quoted in Thomas, ed., *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity*, 75.

position of intercollegiate secretary at the Boston YMCA. Reading excerpts from Mott's description of the world tour he was undertaking to establish the WSCF convinced Fisher to become a Student Volunteer. He arranged for Mott to speak at a YMCA conference in early 1897; several months later Mott invited him to become a secretary for the Japan YMCA, an organization Fisher served for more than twenty years.⁷² Under Mott's tutelage, Fisher continued to find opportunities to engage in ecumenical and international activities throughout his career. Like Mott, Fisher possessed a keen intellect and a strong ability to argue with fervor, logic, and sincerity.⁷³ Fisher's passion and intellectual skills would influence the development of the Japan YMCA up through the First World War as he used his talents to further his belief that Christianity should shape all aspects of national life.

Early on, Fisher employed his talents in his reports to Americans about the efforts to spread Christianity in Japan. Japan represented for Fisher, Mott, and other compatriots a vital factor in the effort to evangelize Asia. As an emerging political, economic, and military powerhouse, Japan's conversion to Christianity promised to affect missionary work in other parts of Asia.⁷⁴ Fisher's writings evidenced what historians of missionary work have called "a deeply affirming and a sharply critical stance" toward American culture.⁷⁵ The embrace of material culture by both Americans and Japanese concerned Fisher and other missionaries. The prosperity engendered by industrialization could benefit Christians and the church in both countries by increasing the well-being of members. But, Fisher recognized

⁷²Fisher, *John R. Mott*, 86.

⁷³ He later offered advice to the Issei Episcopalian priest Daisuke Kitagawa about effective writing that included these sympathetic words: "I well know how long it takes to work up an article into something that will carry readers along without effort, be so concise that you can't find a superfluous phrase, and so convincing the reader will be converted or driven into action." Galen M. Fisher to Daisuke Kitagawa, 27 November 1944, Box 3, Folder 11, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

⁷⁴Latourette, *World Service*, 169-170; and Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress*, 40.

⁷⁵ William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 4; and Ian Tyrrell, "Women, Missions, and Empire," 45, 50.

that political and economic ambitions could easily become idols that replaced ultimate faith in the Christian God. An emphasis on material gain devoid of spiritual grounding could create a godless nation.

Like Social Gospel practitioners in the United States who believed that materialism created a crisis of faith during the Gilded Age, Fisher and other missionaries worried that Japan's fast industrial, political, military, and financial ascendancy threatened the spiritual health of the nation. Sherwood Eddy, another prominent promoter of the SVM and YMCA, believed that materialism and attitudes of pride and self-sufficiency weakened the Japanese character.⁷⁶ Japanese Christians and non-Christians also worried about the effects of modernization on the country, and especially on the youth, who found decreased opportunities to enter the growing middle class as competition for employment in the cities increased.⁷⁷ In 1898, Fisher contended that Christians ought to use materialism as a means to attract followers but not as an ultimate end in itself. In particular, Fisher believed that the emergence of a strong middle class would increase the student body at Protestant-and state-run institutions of learning; middle class urban students represented for Fisher a prime locus of the evangelical push in Japan.⁷⁸

He urged the evangelization of students in Japan for several reasons, not least of which was his recognition that university educated men would become the nation's political, economic, and military leaders. In an address before the 1889 international YMCA conference, another YMCA leader had remarked on the youthfulness of the officials who

⁷⁶ Davidann also mentions the shared concerns of other evangelists. Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress*, 38, 40.

⁷⁷ Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress*, 100-102.

⁷⁸ Galen M. Fisher, "Missions. Christianity and the Students of Japan," *The Independent . . . Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts* 50, no. 2612 (December 22, 1898): 1885.

were “stirring and controlling” Japan and Korea.⁷⁹ Protestant denominations also recognized the importance of the student population, establishing and expanding existing Christian high schools, colleges, and seminaries in this period. Charles Reifsnider, who arrived in Japan with his wife, Mary, in 1904, became the president of St. Paul’s College (Rikkyo Daigaku) in 1912, five years after the Episcopalian college began in Tokyo with a mission of educating future pastors, teachers, and leaders in commerce and business administration.⁸⁰ Fisher’s initial position in the Japan YMCA was developing and supporting college Associations, and he considered educated youth the population the most potentially open to the logic of Christianity. He prized his placement in Tokyo, the capital of Japan, where he saw Protestant Christianity “firmly entrenched in the very center of the higher life of the empire . . . [and] one of the strongest direct influences in the development” of imperial life.⁸¹ Educated young people were the future leaders of the country. If the YMCA and the Christian churches could win the souls of these youth, they felt sure to win the entire country to Christ. If they could secure Japan, these missionaries believed that the rest of Asia would soon follow.

Like others, Fisher considered Japan a unique force in Asia. After Commodore Matthew C. Perry forced the opening of Japanese ports to outside trade in 1853, Japan quickly embraced the lessons of Western imperialism and embarked on a crash course in

⁷⁹ Elbert Monroe, “The Responsibilities of Members of American Associations to Young Men in Foreign Mission Lands,” address, *International Convention Proceedings* (New York: Association Press, 1889), 45, quoted in Jon Thares Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress*, 39.

⁸⁰ Henry St. George Tucker, *The History of the Episcopal Church in Japan* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1938), 151.

⁸¹ *The Independent* . . . *Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts*, “Christian Work in Tokio,” 52, no. 2687 (May 31, 1900): 1341.

westernizing its political system, its economy, and its educational system.⁸² Fisher and others developed respect for Japan as it mimicked the trajectories of American and European powers in its attempt to stave off the fate of colonization and usurpation that met other Asian countries. Japan's success proved that Asian peoples could don the veneer of Western civilization. As a founder of the SVM and as the influential secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions from 1891 until the eve of World War II, Robert E. Speer reveled in the impact the United States had on Japan. He stated in 1898 that "today, whichever way we turn we can see the influence of American progress stamped in the Japanese material civilization."⁸³ While Japan modeled its institutions in many ways on American ones, Protestants believed that the dangers of materialism that challenged America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would especially plague Japan without the moralizing infusion of Christianity. Yet while Fisher and others worked to Christianize the nation, they also promoted efforts by Japan to extend its supremacy over other parts of Asia which appeared both technologically and religiously more backward.

Just as most Americans approved of the United States' involvement in the Philippines, Fisher did not question Japan's own acquisition of colonial domains when it entered into war with Russia in 1904 over contested territory in Manchuria and Korea.

⁸² Peter Duus, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of Japan, Volume 6: The Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter Duus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1-52; E. Sydney Crawcour, "Industrialization and Technological Change, 1885-1920," in *The Cambridge History of Japan*, ed. Peter Duus, 385-450; and James L. Huffman, *Japan in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 72-90. For a picture of Japanese history from a former SVM worker in China and contemporary of Fisher, see Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The History of Japan* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1947). Latourette served as a traveling secretary in Asia for the SVM in 1909-1910 and briefly taught at the Yale-in-China program before spending most of his career at Yale University and Yale Divinity School as a professor of missions and Christian history. He served as president of the American Historical Association, and influenced not only several generations of missionaries but the wider public with his dissemination of his views of Asian history and US-Pacific relations.

⁸³ Robert E. Speer, *Mission and Politics in Asia* (New York: Revell, 1898), 185. For more on Speer, see John F. Piper, Jr., *Robert E. Speer: Prophet of the American Church* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2000).

Instead, he viewed it as an opportunity to present Christianity to a targeted audience, and to evangelize Japanese seats of power through its troops. Fisher and the Japan YMCA leadership enlisted the assistance of nobles, army officials, and diplomats of “Christian nations” to gain unprecedented permission to send as chaplains to the Manchurian and Korean fronts five missionaries, six Japanese, and one American YMCA Association secretary. He rejoiced in this triumph as a “unique, momentous” opportunity for Christianity to prevail over “the corrupt and wily Buddhist priests” by sharing the Christian gospel and hospitality with 300,000 rural soldiers, “many of whom will at least have their prejudices against Christianity removed by this friendly Christian ministrations, and become advocates among bigoted kinfolks of the religion of brotherly love!”⁸⁴ The young Fisher failed to recognize the irony of his own bigotry in his statement which fully expressed the intent of Christian imperialism to replace what its adherents believed were superstitious and antiquated religions and cultures with the “progressive” and “loving” Protestantism.

With funding from the United States, Canada, and Japan – including a gift from the Imperial household – the YMCA established along the front comfort stations with reading materials, stationery, baths, tea, music, Bibles, and Bible studies for Japanese soldiers. The YMCA’s initiative increased its popularity among college students and business leaders who appreciated its efforts on behalf of the army.⁸⁵ In its close collaboration with the military, the YMCA literally and symbolically demonstrated its approval of the expansionist aims of the

⁸⁴*Atlanta Constitution*, “Remarkable Work for Christ by Jap Y. M. C. A.,” August 14 1904; ProQuest historical Newspapers: The Atlanta Constitution (1868-1945): D2.

⁸⁵Latourette, *World Service*, 171-172; Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America’s Moral Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 95; and Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress*, 112-128.

Japanese government, the alliance of Christianity with other forms of imperialism, and the desire of many Protestant missionaries to subjugate all other faiths to Christianity.

This view of other religions was still evident in Fisher's report of the Three Religions Conference that the Japanese government organized in 1912, although his language sought more neutrality than before. According to Fisher, the government organized an unprecedented meeting of fifty Buddhist, fifteen Shinto, and seven Christian representatives selected by the government after the vice minister for Home Affairs toured Europe and the United States and concluded that "religion is an indispensable and powerful factor in national life."⁸⁶ Another former missionary reported that the conference transpired from the Japanese government's growing concern over the lack of integrity and morality in public and commercial life. Noting the "marvelous transformation" in Japanese society and institutions in the previous generation accomplished through "Japanese inspiration, initiative and effort," George Heber Jones reported that the decision to seek the support of religion to regenerate the moral fiber of the nation sparked debate over the blurring of the strict separation of church and state.⁸⁷ Fisher also noted the stated goal of the conference to "steady and elevate public morality, which has been disintegrated by the inrush of materialistic thought from the West and the breakdown of the older standards and faiths."⁸⁸ Fisher's statement appears to agree with the sentiment that many of the ideas and values that accompanied Western-style modernization in Japan were not conducive to traditional religious practices and traditions that held together Japanese society. He did not explicitly

⁸⁶ Galen M. Fisher, "The Three Religions Conference," *The Independent*. . . *Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts* 72, no. 3307 (April 18, 1912): 840.

⁸⁷ George Heber Jones, D. D., former Superintendent of Methodist Episcopal Missions in Korea, "An Official Conference on Religion in Japan," *The Journal of Race Development* 3, no. 2 (October 1912): 224, 225.

⁸⁸ Fisher, "The Three Religions Conference," 840.

denigrate Buddhism or Shinto or suggest that they held no value in ordering contemporary Japanese society. Both Jones and Fisher commented on the government's desire to enlist religious institutions in efforts to "stimulate loyalty" to the emperor and the state; they applauded this goal with the stipulation that "the Government is just" and the constitutional guarantee of freedom of conscience and speech for religious bodies was protected.⁸⁹

Fisher drew from the conference proceedings an implicit goal that elevated Christianity and gave it purchase in Japanese soil, and emphasized a triumphalist vision of Christianity. The last decade of the nineteenth century had witnessed a backlash in Japan against Christianity and Anglo-American ideas as Japan began to flex its own muscles in the world. The YMCA's successful establishment of comfort stations along the battle lines during the Russo-Japanese war suggested the relaxation of animus against Christianity and missionaries. The Three Religions Conference implied an even greater triumph for Christianity. For Fisher, Jones, and other missionaries, the conference represented the inclusion of Christianity in the panoply of religions recognized by the Japanese government.⁹⁰ Fisher argued that the conference counteracted an earlier directive by the Ministry of Education that schools encourage ancestor worship and shrine visits. Fisher viewed that earlier directive as a "breach" of the freedom of conscience clause. Furthermore, by recognizing Christianity through the conference, the government was "making public amends . . . for the suspicion and unfair treatment of Christianity in the past."⁹¹ Jones impressed upon his readers the unanimity of the final statement produced by conference

⁸⁹ Fisher, "The Three Religions Conference," 840.

⁹⁰ Fisher, "The Three Religions Conference" 840; and Jones, "An Official Conference on Religion," 230.

⁹¹ Fisher, "The Three Religions Conference," 840. Fisher recognized here the decade of hostility toward Christianity in the 1890s, when the Japanese government turned against perceived agents of Westernization in its efforts to resist foreign domination.

delegates to cooperate to improve the moral and social conditions of the country. He expressed hope that the constituents of each faith would honor the goal.⁹²

Fisher ignored the call to cooperation. Instead, he emphasized the impression made upon vice minister Tokonami by the fruits of Christianity in European and American society and politics, and the fact that the Christian delegates, even as they agreed to cooperate with the Buddhist and Shinto sects, elucidated their convictions about “the finality of Christianity.”⁹³ While Fisher might have appreciated the nod toward cooperative efforts, he considered Christian values and imperatives the ultimate guides for Japanese society.⁹⁴ He accentuated this belief several years later when he wrote that YMCA leaders “must on the one hand try to interpret to the nation in the light of Christianity the deeper meaning of patriotism and of ancient traditions and on the other hand we must try to communicate to all young men the Christian conception of the nation as a servant of Jehovah.”⁹⁵

These earliest publications showed Fisher’s initial enthusiasm for the benefits of Western-style capitalism and democracy for Japan, the beginnings of a critical stance toward the dangers Christianity faced when competing against material culture, and a tendency to depict non-Protestants as bigoted, superstitious, and corrupt. At the same time, Fisher evidenced respect for Japan and Japanese citizens, who exhibited many of the qualities of

⁹² Jones, “An Official Conference on Religion,” 228-231.

⁹³ Fisher, “The Three Religions Conference.”

⁹⁴ A 1915 article in *The Biblical World* lays out the benefits Protestant Christians commonly presumed their faith brought to Japan: protection of individual rights; the improvement of women’s station in society, including higher education for women; social reforms; and the introduction “into the language and literature of Japan new worldviews, new ideals of life, new conceptions of sin, and new thought of God.” Scholars of mission history have shown the ways in which these “Christian ideals” were closely bound with Western, Protestant culture. N. A., “The Church and the World: Missions,” *The Biblical World* 46, no. 5 (November 1915): 311.

⁹⁵ Galen M. Fisher, “The Contributions of the Japanese Young Men’s Christian Associations to the Life of the Nation,” 10 March 1916, pp. 3-4, Japan Correspondence and Reports, YMCA Archives, quoted in Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress*, 100.

industriousness, creativity, and spirit he admired among Americans.⁹⁶ Rather than criticize either American or Japanese expansionist efforts, Fisher, like other American missionaries, envisioned these imperialist aims, properly tied to Christian ideals, as forces for progress in their respective spheres of influence. His views resonated among the missionary community in Japan and among Protestants at home. Remnants of these views would be seen in the attitudes of these missionaries when they worked with Japanese Americans during World War II: a deep respect for the Japanese people and culture, a continued belief that their own country needed to embody Christian values to live out its ideals, and an awareness that Christianity existed in an interfaith world. The devastation of a world war which American Christians had wholeheartedly backed, theological shifts, efforts in the United States to exclude Asian immigrants, and continued interactions with Japanese society and people challenged the Christian imperialism of American missionaries and slowly moved them to an embrace of the theology and practice of Christian internationalism.

Growing World-Mindedness (1919-1938)

The interwar years marked a shift in missionary attitudes toward other religions and the facile connection of Christianity and Western values. The younger generation of missionaries who entered service during the war years and the 1920s brought into their work what Galen Fisher called “world-mindedness”: “An open-minded, sympathetic and intelligent interest in [and a] . . . positive respect for the culture and attainments of other races and peoples, an eagerness to know more about them, and a willingness to cooperate

⁹⁶ Cynthia D. Boes notes that Fisher’s great-grandparents were missionaries in Hawaii, and his great-uncle, George Wilcox, owned Grove Farm Plantation which employed Japanese workers after 1885 and was known for his favorable treatment of plantation labor. This family history may have influenced Fisher’s own developing internationalist outlook. Boes, *Other-Directed Protest*, 44.

with them.”⁹⁷ Although the deeply engrained paternalism was difficult to slough off, older missionaries like Fisher and Methodist Frank Herron Smith also moved toward this stance. Disillusioned by the brutality and seeming hypocrisy of the United States and other supposedly Christian nations in World War I and escalating anti-Asian immigration sentiments in the United States, these Japan missionaries questioned their previous assertion that the United States was a God-ordained nation called to conquer the world for Westernized Christianity. New ideas in colleges and seminaries, in part developed out of the immersion of several generations of missionaries in other cultures, broadened understandings of mission work and engagement with people of different races and faiths, and the emergence of a cadre of college-educated women who embraced the opportunities to engage in socially conscious work through missions also changed the nature of mission work in Japan. Recognizing the similar challenges facing women, men, and children in industrial, modern Japan and in the United States and learning from the innovations and theologies of Japanese Christians and the struggles of people living under Japanese colonialism also pushed Japan missionaries toward an internationalist attitude.⁹⁸

These attitudes marked a noticeable departure from the militantly Christian claims used to rally the nation to war in the previous decades. President Woodrow Wilson’s calls for the self-determination of nations and the global recognition of the inherent rights of individuals stirred up Americans, churched or not, to support the Great War believing they

⁹⁷ Galen M. Fisher, “Does the Christian Movement Promote World-Mindedness Abroad?” *Religious Education: The Journal of the Religious Education Association* 21, no. 2 (April 1926): 179.

⁹⁸ Although missionaries used the term Christian internationalists, Michael R. Auslin defines them as cosmopolitans in his most recent book. Cosmopolitans were those who “believed that different cultures could learn from each other and thereby promote greater understanding and a sharing of cultural forms,” while Auslin defines internationalists purely in political terms as those who “sought to transcend national governments with supranational global governance that would end conflict.” Michael R. Auslin, *Pacific Cosmopolitans: A Cultural History of U. S. –Japan Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 4.

were fighting God's cause.⁹⁹ Even liberal Protestants associated with the Social Gospel movement rallied to support World War I as an opportunity to reveal God's Kingdom of justice and light. In 1932, one theologian observed of the first decades of the twentieth century that it was "the Age of Crusades. There were a superabundance of zeal, a sufficiency of good causes, unusual moral idealism, excessive confidence in mass movements and leaders with rare gifts of popular appeal. The people were ready to cry 'God wills it' and set out for world peace, prohibition . . . 'the World for Christ in this Generation.' The air was full of banners and the trumpets called from every camp."¹⁰⁰ This era may have represented the height of America's unreflective assumption that its particular version of capitalist democracy embodied the Christian gospel and came with the imprimatur of God.

After the enthusiastic and muscular support of American churches for US participation in the First World War, disillusionment over its results emerged. The human carnage of the war, the failure of Wilsonian idealism to deconstruct Western imperial practices, and emerging nationalist movements in Asia pushed many Protestants to question the United States' own imperial practices and charge their country with failure to live by the example of Christ. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the Social Gospel movement began to shift liberal evangelical Protestant theology from a purely individualistic account of sin and salvation to a critique of social and economic systems that promoted poverty, disease, and inequality. The increasing acceptance of historical biblical criticism and new sociological understandings of race broadened receptivity toward other peoples, cultures,

⁹⁹ Gerald Sittser, *A Cautious Patriotism*, 2.

¹⁰⁰ Gaius Glenn Atkins, *Religion in Our Times* (New York: Round Table, 1932), 156, quoted in Robert T. Handy, "Protestant Theological Tensions and Political Styles in the Progressive Period," in *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the Present*, 2nd Edition, ed. Mark A. Noll and Luke E. Harlow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, 2007), 233-234.

and religious experiences. Foreign missionaries who were sympathetic toward the nationalist aspirations of colonized populations discerned that the failure of the United States to respect the rights of non-white people domestically or internationally crippled evangelistic efforts. These various forces challenged naïve couplings of God and Western civilization.¹⁰¹ For too long, Christianity came cloaked in Western culture, technology, and values. Particularly throughout Asia where citizens struggled to overthrow colonial powers and renegotiate treaties that favored Western powers over the interests of Asian nations, missionaries found that potential converts blamed Christianity for the transgressions of countries like the United States that claimed to be Christian.¹⁰²

Although he would overlook these concerns in his response to the Korean independence movement, by the mid-1920s Galen Fisher listened carefully to the critiques assailing missionaries from abroad. In 1926 he used criticism from Muslim and Hindu leaders to argue for a more tolerant and hospitable missionary culture. That Fisher and other proponents of mission work were beginning to listen to non-Christians was a big step. By naming the concerns of non-Christians, Fisher recognized their moral agency, a morality

¹⁰¹ William R. Hutchison calls liberalism in the 1920s a “powerful orthodoxy.” William Hutchison, “Modernism and Missions: The Liberal Search for an Exportable Christianity, 1875-1935,” in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 126. Of course, this liberal orthodoxy was fiercely competing in the United States with a fundamentalist backlash. These missionaries were part of the liberal part of the modernist-fundamentalist divide that shook Protestantism in the interwar period. Many Protestants rejected these new developments in theology, biblical studies, and sociology, as evidenced by such as the Scopes trial. See, Martin E. Marty, ed., *Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Munich & New York: KG Saur, 1993); William R. Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); and Betty A. Deberg, *Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990).

¹⁰² As they entered the 1920s, religious organizations faced a crisis; up through the Great War, “the [Home Missions and Federal] Councils felt themselves to be in the vanguard of a significant crusade: they thought of themselves as pioneers for the coming kingdom of God. As the decade unfolded, however, the ‘Protestant crusade’ fell under sharp attack. Disillusionment born of war, reaction to the uncritical enthusiasm of the churches in supporting the war, and the failure of all too many Protestants to move from the nineteenth century patterns of thought all contributed to the sharp criticisms aimed at the churches both from within and beyond the fold.” Robert T. Handy, *We Witness Together*, 110.

that in this case was superior to that of the missionary community. Fisher portrayed the barriers facing the spread of Christianity as the “sycophantic” support missionaries gave to the military during the war. Missionaries, according to the Muslim and Hindu sources, relinquished their “role as moral prophets and claimed to see in the victories of the Allies the direct interposition of Providence opening doors of opportunity and breaking down barriers in Moslem lands, and they dared to do this without a syllable in criticism of the atrocities committed” by Allied troops in the Balkans and Asia.¹⁰³ Fisher rounded out this criticism by stepping away from his youthful enthusiasm for Christian imperialism. He charged that for peoples in other lands, Christian missionaries and western civilization appeared conjoined, dependent on the “*force majeure*” of military might, “industrial exploitation, and the worship of activity.”¹⁰⁴ Missions needed to change. They needed to decouple from the accretions of generations of imperialism and parochialism.

In order to reflect world conditions, Fisher proposed a new approach to missions. This approach had been advocated sporadically by mission advocates for a generation, but the events of the First World War galvanized a larger movement toward a truly internationalist mission. While Fisher urged missionaries to build up indigenous expressions of Christianity instead of forcing Western religious patterns, “architecture [,] and music” upon them, he also called for reciprocity between countries and ideas. The nations sending missionaries “must recognize that they, too, are non-Christian when seen under the white light of Christ himself.”¹⁰⁵ The most qualified missionaries in these changing circumstances

¹⁰³ Fisher, “Does the Christian Movement Promote World-Mindedness Abroad?”182. Influential missionary Sidney Gulick claimed that the war revealed the “disease of white-race megalomania and lust for world supremacy.” Sidney L. Gulick, “The Foreign Policy of the United States and Foreign Missions,” *The Chinese Recorder*, January 1920, 32-38, quoted in Lian Xi, *The Conversion of Missionaries*, 180.

¹⁰⁴ Fisher, “Does the Christian Movement Promote World-Mindedness Abroad?”182.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 187.

would embody not only a “firm grasp” of Christian theology and a deep commitment to Jesus Christ, but a humorous and hopeful personality, a cooperative mindset, a willingness to “play second fiddle” to Japanese colleagues, and a “sympathy superior to racial, creedal, and national distinctions.”¹⁰⁶ The new missionary modeled for the laity the expansive, tolerant, and flexible spirit of Christian internationalism.

Fisher joined the vanguard in calling for a new understanding of missions. Daniel Flemings, an influential theologian and missiologist at theologically progressive Union Seminary in New York City had already called to task the patronizing attitudes of missionary societies and prophesied that eventually the United States and Europe would be sites of mission activity by missionaries from Asia and Africa.¹⁰⁷ Fleming advocated the renovation of seminary courses to prepare future missionaries to rise “above limited and provincial thought.”¹⁰⁸ Seminaries addressed these concerns by adding courses such as Christian social ethics, psychology of religion, history of religion, and Christian missions to their catalogs. Innovations in secular universities found their way into seminary training and broadened the perspectives of future missionaries to include social, psychological, and historical aspects of faith and culture.¹⁰⁹

Similarly, the Laymen’s Foreign Missions Inquiry challenged provincial models of mission work in 1932. Funded by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the Laymen’s Foreign Missions Inquiry grew out of a concern among laity in many denominations about the efficacy and purpose of missions and a questioning about how denominational funds to support missions

¹⁰⁶ Galen M. Fisher, *Creative Forces in Japan* (New York: The Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1923), 206.

¹⁰⁷ Cited in Fisher, “Does the Christian Movement Promote World-Mindedness Abroad?” 187.

¹⁰⁸ Daniel J. Fleming, “The Opportunity of the College to Contribute to the Preparation of the Missionary,” *Christian Education* 11, no. 9 (June 1928): 738.

¹⁰⁹ James Thayer Addison, “A New Departure in Theological Education,” *Christian Education* 13, no. 9 (June 1930):688-695.

were being spent. A two-year investigation of missions in China, Japan, and India, for which Galen Fisher served as general director, resulted in a searching and somewhat scathing report that censured ill-prepared missionaries who focused on proselytization and assumed the superiority of Western civilization over the receiving societies. *Re-Thinking Missions* proposed the meeting of religions on an equal plane and better training for missionaries.¹¹⁰ Theologian James Addison Thayer saw the report as an “extreme reaction against the old attitude of superiority.” Japan missionary Charles Iglehart saw missionaries extend this sense of superiority from Christianity to Western culture and to their own persons.¹¹¹ More recently, historian Grant Wacker has asserted that the study “was not so much a call for reform as a summary of significant transformations already in place. . . . [as] thousands of Christians on both sides of the Pacific had come to view conversionary missions as culturally imperialistic at best, and morally indefensible at worst.”¹¹²

One reason some missionaries like Fisher began to question imperial practices was the sense that America’s racist treatment of non-white people both within and outside its borders threatened the viability of the mission prerogative to share the Christian gospel

¹¹⁰William Ernest Hocking, Chairman, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen’s Inquiry after One Hundred Years* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publisher, 1932). On responses to the survey, see John A. Mackay, “The Theology of the Laymen’s Foreign Mission Inquiry,” *International Review of Missions* 2, no. 2 (April 1933): 174-188; K. S. Latourette, “The Laymen’s Foreign Missions Inquiry: The Report of its Commission of Appraisal,” *The International Review of Missions* 2, no. 2 (April 1933): 153-173; and Robert E. Speer, “*Re-Thinking Missions*” Examined: An Attempt at a Just Review of the Report of the Appraisal Commission of the Laymen’s Foreign Mission Inquiry (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1933). For an historical analysis of the Laymen’s Foreign Mission Inquiry, see John R. Fitzmier, and Randall Balmer, “A Poulitice for the Bite of the Cobra: The Hocking Report and Presbyterian Missions in the Middle Decades of the Twentieth Century,” in *The Diversity of Discipleship: Presbyterians and Twentieth Century Witness*, ed., Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991), 105-125.

¹¹¹ James Addison Thayer, “The Changing Attitude toward Non-Christian Religions,” *International Review of Missions* 27, no. 1 (January 1, 1938): 120; Charles W. Iglehart, *A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan* (Rutland, VT, and Tokyo, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1959), 94.

¹¹² Grant Wacker, “The Waning of the Missionary Impulse: The Case of Pearl S. Buck,” in *The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home: Explorations in North American Cultural History*, ed., Daniel H. Bays and Grant Wacker (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2003), 200.

throughout the world. As Fisher noted in his 1926 article, neither Christians nor non-Christians in other lands differentiated between American policies and Christianity. This was understandable, for missionaries, statesmen, and lay people alike lauded the United States as a uniquely Christian nation and coated the American capitalist and imperialist project with a Christian veneer. If the United States with its racism and unequal treaties claimed to be a Christian nation, then many non-white populations wanted nothing to do with Christianity. After the atrocities and failures of World War I, liberal Protestant missionaries began to join the chorus that challenged racism in the United States. By calling their country to higher standards of racial inclusion, they hoped to further the boundary-less ideals of Christian internationalism at home and abroad. They also believed that racial equality in the United States would assist their efforts to evangelize people of color who struggled against oppression and colonialism elsewhere.

Fisher took up this concern about racism when he returned to the United States. Joined by George Gleason, who had also worked for the Japan YMCA and who later energetically promoted the rights of Japanese Americans in southern California during World War II, Fisher initiated the Survey of Race Relations on the Pacific Coast. This Institute of Social and Religious Research-sponsored venture, which used eminent sociologists like Robert Parks of the University of Chicago, was intended to educate the public about Asian Americans on the West Coast. Such education would counter movements to ban Japanese American immigration to the United States, increase racial tolerance, and improve international relations.¹¹³ Although the Survey failed to stop the passage of the

¹¹³ Henry Yu, *Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact, and Exoticism in Modern America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Henry Yu, "Orientalizing the Pacific Rim: The Production of Exotic Knowledge by American Missionaries and Sociologists in the 1920s," *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 5, no.

1924 National Origins Act, which set quotas for immigration and banned any further immigration from Japan, the only Asian nation not already excluded from the United States, it marked Fisher's energetic support of civil rights for Japanese Americans.

Fisher and other missionaries responded vigorously to the Asian Exclusion Act. In 1928, his address to the Jerusalem Conference of International Missions was published for wider distribution as *The Christian Mission in Light of Race Conflict*. In this publication, Fisher lambasted the US church for heightening racial tensions through "dependence and maintenance of a patronizing attitude toward the Oriental." He used as evidence the refusal of white churches to welcome Japanese congregations to their neighborhoods and their reluctance to integrate or include non-white individuals.¹¹⁴ Fisher included quotes from Japanese Americans in his essay, including one from a central California Japanese pastor who mourned that he had "watched Christian America break almost every ideal I possess. In the face of the immense efforts of the Japanese to adjust themselves to American life and ideals and habits and to show that they could be assimilated, the American people have passed one unjust law after another until we wonder whether there is any justice left in America."¹¹⁵ For Fisher and his colleagues, the issue went beyond international relations to the treatment of Asians on American soil.

Missionaries still in Japan responded vociferously to the Exclusion Act on the grounds that it hurt mission work in Japan. Individuals like Sidney Gulick and William

³⁴, Special Issue—Bridging an Ocean: American Missionaries and Asian Converts Reexamined (Fall-Winter 1996): 331-359; Eckard Toy, "Whose Frontier: The Survey of Race Relations on the Pacific Coast in the 1920s," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 107, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 36-63; and Griffith, "'Where We Can Battle for the Lord and Japan.'"

¹¹⁴ Griffith, "'Where We Can Battle for the Lord and Japan,'" 447-449.

¹¹⁵ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 448.

Axling toured the United States and published articles calling for the repeal of the act.¹¹⁶

Their activities emerged from an outpouring of anti-American rhetoric in Japan, where teachers at a Methodist Episcopal school in Tokyo were advised to quit because “Japan is better off without the Americans’ ‘unChristian’ ideas.”¹¹⁷ Japanese theologian and activist Toyohiko Kagawa claimed that the action meant that the United States was “no longer a Christian Nation. . . . America today is only a land of liberty for the White race.”¹¹⁸

Missionaries reported that the legislation hampered their work. Methodist missionary Frank Herron Smith, who assiduously avoided overtly criticizing Japanese actions in Korea a few years earlier, prophetically contended that the Act would “lead to war when and as soon as a favorable opportunity presents itself.”¹¹⁹ Several years later, Smith connected fears of

Japanese immigration to his mission work. While speaking of mission efforts in Japan and Korea, Smith reassured a women’s missionary conference in California that the Japanese immigrants posed no threat to the state, countering political assertions of “yellow peril.”¹²⁰

Likewise, Episcopalian Bishop Charles Reifsnider, president of Tokyo’s Rikkyo University, linked Japan’s demand in the 1930s for naval parity to the Exclusion Act. The Exclusion Act affected more than evangelistic opportunities; it damaged international relations and threatened world peace. According to Reifsnider, “Japan’s present attitude of disinclination to participate in international conferences is due almost entirely to the dangerous psychology engendered by the Exclusion Act, and is thus America’s responsibility.” He concluded by

¹¹⁶ For an excellent study on responses to the Immigration Act on both sides of the Pacific, see Izumi Hirobe, *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice: Modifying the Exclusion Clause of the 1924 Immigration Act* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

¹¹⁷ Cited in Hirobe, *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice*, 62.

¹¹⁸ Quoted in Robert Schildgen, “How Race Mattered: Kagawa Toyohiko in the United States,” *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 5, no. ¾, Special Issue—Bridging an Ocean: American Missionaries and Asian Converts Reexamined (Fall-Winter 1996): 239.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Shaffer, “Opposition to Internment,” 611.

¹²⁰ *Woodland Democrat*, “Ladies Aid, Mission Conventions at End,” Friday, Marcy 23, 1928.

calling the exclusion an “unnecessary slap” that signaled Japan’s inferiority.¹²¹ Recognizing the damage to the United States’ reputation as a Christian nation, missionaries in the 1920s began openly criticizing the country’s policies.

Even as missionaries began to question America’s commitment to Christian values, they became more active in social issues in Japan. The revolutions in seminary curriculum and missionary efforts reflected the greater involvement of missionaries with the social and economic challenges facing urban workers and rural families in Japan. As missionaries became more involved with Japanese colleagues in schools and congregations that were largely planted in urban areas, they could not ignore the exigencies of Japanese industrial life. Awareness of such developments as the settlement house movement, labor organizing, and the kindergarten and daycare movement in the United States dovetailed with the activities of missionaries and activists in Japan as well.¹²²

Christian Japanese activists like Toyohiko Kagawa, who spearheaded cooperative, labor, and agrarian movements, proved influential on the attitudes of Japan missionaries and many American Protestants about Japan (Figure 4).¹²³ According to Kagawa, Christians

¹²¹ *Los Angeles Times*, “Exclusion Clause Hit: Repeal Urged by Missionary,” December 27, 1934.

¹²² Roberta Wollons, “The Black Forest in a Bamboo Garden: Missionary Kindergartens in Japan, 1868-1912,” *History of Education Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 1-35; and Manako Ogawa, “‘Hull House’ in Downtown Tokyo: The Transplantation of a Settlement House from the United States into Japan and the North American Missionary Women, 1919-1945,” *Journal of World History* 15, no. 3 (September 2004): 359-387. For explorations of the development of the daycare movement in Japan, which began in the late nineteenth century and expanded after World War I, and the agrarian and labor movements which took hold during World War I and expanded during the 1920s, see respectively, Kathleen S. Uno, *Passages to Modernity: Motherhood, Childhood, and Social Reform in Early Twentieth Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999); and Stephen S. Large, *Organized Workers and Socialist Politics in Interwar Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

¹²³ On Kagawa’s influence on the missionaries who became active on behalf of Japanese American rights, see Shaffer, “Opposition to Internment,” 597-619, esp. pp. 614-617; and Iglehart, *A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan*, 158, 209. Kagawa’s tours of the United States were well attended; The *Berkeley Daily Gazette* (June 8, 1936) reported that on that tour he spoke to audiences totaling 150,000, while Robert Schildgen places the total who heard Kagawa during his 1935-1935 North American tour at 750,000. Robert Schildgen, “How Race Mattered,” 229.

needed to put love into practice in society and home to fight poverty and crime. “Unless we Christians put our love of Christ in practice in helping one another and in extending our love of Christ in social life, prayer and devotion are in vain,” he declared.¹²⁴ Kagawa published prolifically on his interpretation of Christian socialism in Japan, and missionary leaders like Robert Speer, Sherwood Eddy, and William Axling helped translate and disseminate his writings in the United States.¹²⁵ Fisher’s involvement with Kagawa included smuggling money to support Kagawa’s embattled work during a visit to Japan in 1940, calling Kagawa the “brains of the Western Labour Federation” in a 1922 article on mission activity in Japan, and devoting an extended discussion in a 1938 article in *Pacific Affairs* to Kagawa’s efforts to create financial and agrarian cooperatives.¹²⁶ Kagawa, like less famous Japanese Christians who worked closely with missionaries, encouraged the Americans in Japan to focus on more than evangelization.

¹²⁴ *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, “Love plus labor freedom basis, declares Kagawa,” June 8, 1936, accessed September 20, 2014, <http://access.newspaperarchive.com/us/california/berkeley/berkeley-daily-gazette/1936/06-08/page-5?tag=Frank+Herron+smith&rtserp=tags/?pf=frank&pl=herron-smith&pr=20&page=3&psi=14&pci=7>; and Michio Kozaki, “Dr. Kagawa and ‘The Kingdom of God Movement,’” *International Review of Missions* 18 (October 1929): 573-583.

¹²⁵ More than a dozen works by Kagawa appeared in print in the United States between 1925 and 1941. Presbyterian missionary William Axling, who ran into trouble with Japanese authorities and the Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board for his outspoken pacifist views, translated *Christ and Japan*, published by the Federal Council of Churches’ Friendship Press in 1931 and in 1932 (reprint 1946) published a biography of Kagawa that was titled simply *Kagawa* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946). Robert Speer provided a biographical sketch to Helen Topping’s translation of Kagawa’s *The Religion of Jesus* (Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Co., 1931). Sherwood Eddy wrote the introduction to Kagawa’s *Songs from the Slums, Poems by Toyohiko Kagawa* (Nashville, TN: Cokesbury Press, 1935). The London based YMCA’s Student Christian Press published several translations of Kagawa’s writings, while the Rauschenbusch Lectureship Foundation, an arm of the Social Gospel movement, published a series of lectures Kagawa gave during a visit to the United States in 1936, *Brotherhood Economics* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936).

¹²⁶ Galen M. Fisher, “The Cooperative Movement in Japan,” *Pacific Affairs* 11, no. 4 (December 1938): 478-491. On smuggling funds, see Shaffer, “Opposition to Internment,” 616.



Figure 4. Toyohiko Kagawa. Reproduced from Boston University.

In a 1922 review of mission activities in Japan, Fisher noted several trends among missions and Japanese Christian churches, including an increased concern for social issues.¹²⁷ Although the YMCA was slow to take on social issues in Japan, it began to expand its focus from college students to industrial workers in the interwar years.¹²⁸ According to one scholar, Fisher became involved in the settlement house movements, labor organizing, and workers' rights while secretary of the Japan YMCA. This involvement included supporting the 1911 National Factory Law that prohibited the employment of children younger than twelve and provided mandatory holidays and work breaks for both women and children.¹²⁹ As secretary of the YMCA in Japan, Fisher joined his counterpart at the YWCA, Helen Topping, in producing studies about social issues in Japan that also influenced

¹²⁷ Galen M. Fisher, "The Missionary Significance of the Last Ten Years: A Survey. II. In Japan," *International Review of Missions* 11, no. 42 (April 1, 1922): 193-211.

¹²⁸ Latourette, *World Service*, 177.

¹²⁹ Griffith, "Where We Can Battle for the Lord and Japan," 433.

missionaries.¹³⁰ Fisher also expressed his concern for women's changing roles in society in his mission review. By 1922, six hundred thousand women worked in factories, while others worked for the government and businesses as secretaries.¹³¹ Poverty, malnutrition, and insalubrious living conditions confronted these urban citizens.

Japanese and missionary women and men worked together beginning in the early twentieth century to provide settlement houses modeled on the settlement movement in the United States and other educational and respite services for urban women and their families. By 1916, forty-two of the forty-eight mission stations in Japan were involved in some form of social work.¹³² In 1919, the Conference of Federated Missions in Japan passed a resolution calling for all urban missions to establish "either jointly or individually . . . social settlements or community houses with accompanying programs."¹³³ Baptist missionary William Axling, who actively opposed anti-Japanese discrimination in the United States, started a kindergarten and day care program in Tokyo in 1918 in the name of "pragmatic action."¹³⁴ Scholar Manako Ogawa notes the transformative power of the settlement house and other social work on the lives of the missionaries. Although missionaries often expected to transmit their values and practices to Japan through this work, and, as in the US settlement work aimed at immigrants, to assimilate and enculturate their clients into western Protestant Christian ideologies, in reality, the missionaries often experienced their own enculturation into Japanese society and Christian internationalism.¹³⁵

¹³⁰ Iglehart, *A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan*, 159.

¹³¹ Fisher, "The Missionary Significance of the Last Ten Years," 207.

¹³² Iglehart, *A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan*, 158.

¹³³ Ogawa, "'Hull House' in Downtown Tokyo," 365.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 362.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 366.

The trend toward social Christianity also heralded the involvement of female missionaries in new forms of leadership in the mission movement as teachers, social workers, and bridge-builders who helped create greater understanding between American supporters of their mission work and Japan. Fisher noted that the increased interest among Christians in Japan for social issues seemed to dovetail with the marked growth in the number of female missionaries. Between 1910 and 1920, while the number of male and married female missionaries remained steady, nearly one hundred fifty more unmarried women joined the ranks of missionaries.¹³⁶ This increase reflected the growing desire among mission agencies and possibly Japanese Christian organizations for more female educators, medical workers, and settlement house workers, and the sense among the growing cohort of college-educated women in the United States that mission work provided these women opportunities not available at home. Nancy Hardesty argues that as the work of missionaries became “more specialized and professionalized . . . women’s foreign mission boards emphasized female missionaries’ unique opportunities to minister to the secular as well as the spiritual needs of women and children.”¹³⁷ Their work appeared necessary, as women’s roles in home and workplace changed, and cities struggled to deal with the urban poor.¹³⁸

Married missionary women took on increasing work outside the home as mission workers equal to their spouses, even if less recognized and unremunerated for their work. Although mission boards continued to set women and men in a gendered hierarchy, some of

¹³⁶ Fisher, “The Missionary Significance of the Last Ten Years,” 203. The majority of single female missionaries who worked in the Japanese American incarceration camps during WWII had worked as educators in Japan prior to the war, although single female missionaries are credited with starting the first kindergartens and settlement houses in Japan.

¹³⁷ Nancy A. Hardesty, “The Scientific Study of Missions: Textbooks of the Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions,” in *The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home: Explorations in North American Cultural History*, ed. Daniel H. Bays and Grant Wacker (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2003), 115.

¹³⁸ Fisher, “The Missionary Significance of the Last Ten Years,” 207; Fisher, *Creative Forces in Japan*, 68-71.

the male missionaries and Japanese colleagues recognized the especial involvement of female missionaries in social services. Charles Iglehart later praised them, stating that “their reports show an intimate knowledge of working people, as well as a deep concern for their welfare.” Ruth Emerson Hannaford, who with her husband would minister in the Manzanar incarceration camp, served for three years as the secretary of the YWCA in Japan before resigning in 1918 to marry Howard Hannaford and return to Japan as a missionary. In Kyoto, Tsu, and then Tokyo, Emerson Hannaford taught at a women’s college, held Bible classes for factory workers, supported a settlement house for urban children, supervised kindergartens, and by 1939 was helping the Korean YWCA in Tokyo support Korean working women in the city, while also being the “helpmate to a busy husband, a wise mother to an active boy, and a gracious hostess to the guests who, in ones, two and tens and twenties, moved in and out of her living room each week.”¹³⁹ A public relations memo about her work quotes her as stating that while efforts existed to improve working conditions for factory women, her work was non-political, “bringing what cheer [we] can into the lives of the girls.”¹⁴⁰ Like Emerson Hannaford, Hester Ossewaarde Bovenkerk and her husband Henry Bovenkerk, who arrived in Japan as young, theologically progressive idealists in 1930, worked with factory women as well as a large week-day religious education school for mothers and students in the southern city of Tsu.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Press Release on Mrs. Howard D. Hannaford, n.d. [1942], Bureau of Publicity, The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., Box 60, Folder 18, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (hereafter cited as Foreign Mission Personnel Files).

¹⁴⁰ Public Relations Memo, Ruth Emmerson Hannaford, 1936, Box 60, Folder 18, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

¹⁴¹ Henry Bovenkerk and Hester Ossewaarde Bovenkerk’s Foreign Mission Personnel Records, Series 3, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

Social work expanded beyond settlement and industrial work. Howard Hannaford worked at a leper hospital while his wife assisted Korean laborers through the YWCA. He used his experience to reflect upon the growing demands on missionaries to share Christianity with more than words. When a deaf man visited him, he noted that the man could not hear more than “three words out of ten I shout at him, so certainly my testimony to him about Christ in language is very small. Yet he claims to see God through me and seems encouraged in his Christian life by the little kindness I try to show him.” Hannaford concluded by attesting that Bible study classes and personal evangelization were limited means of reaching people with the Christian message.¹⁴² Other missionaries practiced this expression of Christianity through example in other venues.

Some missionaries like the Bovenkerks found themselves at least temporarily in rural, Buddhist strongholds. Described by one of his references as having a “tendency to baldness; otherwise splendid personal appearance,” Henry Bovenkerk was a spare young man at 5’10” and noted for his tenacity, progressive theology, and sincerity.¹⁴³ Joined in mission by his bride, Hester Ossewaarde Bovenkerk, a pastor’s daughter and a teacher, Bovenkerk arrived in Japan in 1930. He had been a member of the Reformed Church in America (hereafter, RCA) and received his education at the RCA’s Western Theological Seminary in Michigan. When the RCA was unable to place Bovenkerk in a missionary position, he transferred to the northern Presbyterian Church, a denomination that shared the RCA’s Calvinist theology but also was eager to use a talented individual like Bovenkerk in its mission enterprise. In 1936, his family spent an experimental year in a rural village where

¹⁴² Howard Hannaford, “The Garden of Comfort,” *Five Continents*, May 1938, n.p., Box 60, Folder 17, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

¹⁴³ Henry Bovenkerk application form, Board of Foreign Missions Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Box 60, Folder 17, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

they gained notoriety as “The Blue-Eyed Farmers.” Their goal was to learn through immersion the life of rural Japanese.¹⁴⁴

The Bovenkerks’ experience in rural Japan contrasts the theological disposition of the younger generation and some of the older missionaries like Ernest Chapman and suggests the generational struggle between Christian imperialism and the more liberal Christian internationalism continued to affect mission work. In an essay published by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in 1936, Bovenkerk wrote that his family’s goal was evangelization by “gradual acquaintance.” He noted that less than one percent of the Japanese population was Christian. The majority of practitioners resided in cities and towns. He believed living in a rural area would provide his family the opportunity to introduce through the witness of their lifestyle the concept of Christianity to a community, while also allowing his family to learn more about rural Japanese culture and customs.¹⁴⁵ His family immersed themselves in the community from the beginning. They engaged in the traditional welcoming rituals of the village, which included an official welcome by the village chief official, a good cleaning of the house by the local women before they arrived, and a ceremonial exchange of gifts. The Bovenkerks intentionally refrained from holding public Bible classes or worship services, fearful that efforts at proselytization would “arouse blind opposition before Christianity could get a fair hearing.”¹⁴⁶ In his essay for the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Bovenkerk stated that his family remained throughout the year on a “distinct guest relationship with the villagers.” His humble

¹⁴⁴ Henry G. Bovenkerk, “Thatch-roofed Japan,” (New York: The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., 1936), Foreign Mission Personnel Files, Series 3, RG 360, Foreign Missionary Personnel Files, Henry Bovenkerk.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

recognition of his contingent status in Japan, reliant upon the grace of his hosts fit squarely with Bovenkerk's embrace of internationalism, and his belief that people of all races and nations were "neighbors" with a distinct claim upon one another.¹⁴⁷

Bovenkerk's sociological approach to missions differed from the door-to-door evangelization practiced by Ernest Chapman. Raised in Lakeport, California by missionary parents and educated at the University of California and Columbia University, twenty-nine-year-old Chapman arrived in Japan in 1917 ready to be an "instrument that God can use in reaching men and in leading them on in the Christian life."¹⁴⁸ The strong-chinned and likeable Ernest Chapman was concerned about the receptiveness of other missionaries toward him. He considered himself "old-fashioned" because he eschewed higher criticism in favor of literal interpretations of the Bible and an evangelical, pre-millennial theology.¹⁴⁹ Chapman and his wife Katherine Asbury Chapman, who was already serving in Japan when they married, spent most of their years in Japan in rural Wakayama Province on Honshu Island. Working with other missionaries and lay men and women, Chapman spent much of his time trying to be that instrument of God. He followed the model of an older missionary and made systematic visits to every household in his district, distributing Bibles and tracts, forming small groups of inquirers, and helping to start churches.¹⁵⁰ What linked Chapman to younger, more theologically progressive missionaries like the Bovenkerks and Hannafords was his willingness to work cooperatively with Japanese Christians, and to even accept their leadership, and his unwillingness to speak negatively of other religions even when he

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁴⁸ "Name: Rev. Ernest Newell Chapman," n.d. [1917], Box 27, Folder 34, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

¹⁴⁹ Ernest Chapman to Rev. Orville Reid, 4 May 1917, Box 27, Folder 34, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

¹⁵⁰ Memorial Minute, Rev. Ernest Newell Chapman, 1888-1972, Box 27, Folder 34, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

believed that Christianity was the only path to salvation. These traits suggest the power of Christian internationalism to transform missionaries and their approach to work and point toward the challenges both generations of missionaries would face in their work with Japanese Americans during World War II.

Openness to elements of truth and goodness in other faiths marked many of the Japan missionaries in the interwar years. Fisher wrote approvingly of this transformation in *Creative Forces in Japan*. Because missionaries traveled to other lands not to “destroy but to fulfil[!],”¹⁵¹ they would judge other religions by “every evidence of their power to bless human life and bring forth the unmistakable fruits of the Spirit.”¹⁵² Episcopal theologian and mission expert James Thayer Addison pointed to this growing openness toward other faiths, or the belief that God bore responsibility for everything good in non-Christian religions, and called it a “virtuous circle.”¹⁵³ The *Re-Thinking Missions* report pushed the idea even further and suggested that Christianity could gain from the best of other faiths; for example, attention to Buddhism’s strengths would add “both a greater cosmic depth and a more searching appeal to the motives of the heart” and a meditative alternative to Protestant Christianity’s emphasis on activity.¹⁵⁴

Missionaries who hoped to spread their own love for Japan to their supporters at home focused in their writings on their search for the fruit of the Spirit in the majority Buddhist population. Fisher commented on the humaneness of the Japanese, and credited Buddhism for “saturat[ing] them with tenderness and pity.”¹⁵⁵ In 1939, after the Imperial

¹⁵¹ Matthew 5:17.

¹⁵² Fisher, *Creative Forces in Japan*, 108.

¹⁵³ James Thayer Addison, “The Changing Attitude toward Non-Christian Religions,” 115-116.

¹⁵⁴ Quoted in Lian Xi, *Conversion of Missionaries*, 193. Lian Xi notes this shift among China missionaries in the late 1920s as well.

¹⁵⁵ Fisher, *Creative Forces*, 88.

Diet required all Japanese to participate in reverence at the Imperial Shinto shrine, Ruth Emerson Hannaford intimated that sincere prayers from a “longing heart” made before the shrine reached the “universal Father God.”¹⁵⁶ Another woman who led the chemistry department at Kobe College participated in Shinto and Buddhist rites and found her Christian faith “broadened and deepened,” because “God’s spirit comes into the hearts of all of us when our own hearts long to have Him do so. The outward expression for this need and longing is universal and takes many forms.”¹⁵⁷ Not all missionaries agreed with these views, but most leavened their insistence on the primacy of Christianity with softer words for Buddhism and Shinto. Charlotte DeForest, who was born in 1874 to American Board missionaries and raised in Japan, had become the president of Kobe College by 1915 and never relinquished her belief that ultimate truth could not exist outside of Christianity. However, she made efforts to interpret Buddhism and Shinto for American audiences. She called the deities of both faiths folklore “relics” and concluded that “the attitude of the intelligent Christian was to discriminate between the superstitious relics of animism in Shinto, and the noble element of hero-worship or reverence,” the latter congruent with aspects of Christianity.¹⁵⁸

A more positive disposition to other faith traditions and a deeper engagement with a broader range of Japanese through social services helped develop world-minded missionaries who to varying degrees unlinked their faith claims from the exceptionalist claims of Western culture. Yet the interwar years affected more than the missionary

¹⁵⁶ Mrs. H. D. Hannaford, Abridged Personal Report, 1939, Box 60, folder 18, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

¹⁵⁷ Olive Hoyt, quoted in Noriko Kawamura Ishii, *American Women Missionaries at Kobe College, 1873-1900: New Dimensions in Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 183.

¹⁵⁸ Quoted in Ishii, *American Women Missionaries*, 184.

understanding of Christianity's relationship to Western values; populations in colonized nations responded to President Woodrow Wilson's elucidation of his Fourteen Points, which included the right of self-determination for people living under imperial rule. In Korea, annexed by Japan in 1910, a nationalist independence movement known as the March First Movement pulled missionaries into a controversy that spread to Japan, China, and the United States. Recently returned to the United States, Galen Fisher used these events as a springboard to comment on appropriate public responses by missionaries to political events in their host countries. Similarly, Frank Herron Smith, a Methodist missionary among Japanese immigrants in Korea who later teamed with Fisher to organize the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, published a series of articles in the English language *Seoul Press* that upheld Japanese actions and defended missionary work in Korea. These articles by Fisher and Smith demonstrate the shifting grounds of missionary identity toward deeper self-understanding of the missionary's role in local and national events in the postwar rubble.

Many Americans, including missionaries, celebrated Japan's annexation of Korea as proof of the country's modern, westernized impulses.¹⁵⁹ In the view of the Japanese as well as many Americans, Korea was a corrupt country, and Japan's role was to "elevate a people reduced by ages of oppression and spoliation to the lowest abyss of unrelieved misery and hopeless poverty."¹⁶⁰ Under the dictatorship of Resident-General Terauchi Masatake and his successor, General Hasegawa Yoshimichi, Korea became an "armed camp" in which

¹⁵⁹ For the argument that Americans saw a kindred historical experience in modernizing Japan, see Sidney Pash, *The Currents of War: A New History of American-Japanese Relations, 1899-1941* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014), 4-5. On Japan's colonizing efforts in Korea, Taiwan, and Micronesia, see Mark R. Peattie, "The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945," in *The Cambridge History of Japan*, ed., Peter Duus, 217-270.

¹⁶⁰ Joseph M. Longford, *The Story of Korea* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1911), 350, quoted in David Brudnoy, "Japan's Experiment in Korea," *Monumenta Nipponica* 25, no. ½ (1970): 158.

military gendarmes harassed, arrested, and tortured civilians, and Japanese immigrants, absentee landholders, government appointees, and the Japanese government extracted resources and wealth while providing only limited opportunities for Koreans.¹⁶¹ Freedom of speech disappeared in Korea; authorities disbanded Korean newspapers that criticized the regime. In 1910, the English language *Seoul Press*, created in the same year to advocate on behalf of Japan to the English speaking world, declared that “the present requires the wielding of an iron hand rather than a gloved one in order to secure lasting peace and order. . . . [Japan] must be prepared to sacrifice anybody who offers her obstacles to her work.”¹⁶² At the same time, Japan portrayed the relationship between the two countries as a sibling relationship; Japan was the elder brother guiding his younger brother in a relationship of “mutual respect.”¹⁶³ Such a relationship was not the brute dominance of a colonizer over the colonized. Instead, Japan wished to be seen as a sympathetic and more mature nation gently helping a less-developed nation navigate the path to maturity.

Many Koreans did not share this view of their status under Japan. Instead, resentment of inequities and brutalities in the system pushed to the fore the strong nationalism and independence of Koreans. Desire to free their country of Japanese rule erupted in a peaceful series of demonstrations that started on March 1, 1919, and continued through the year. At least two million people participated in the demonstrations, which involved waving Korean flags, shouting *manse* (which was a rallying cry similar to “viva” in Spanish) and *taehan tongnip manse* (long live Korean independence), and reading a Korean Declaration of Independence. The military and gendarmes brutally suppressed this

¹⁶¹ Brudnoy, “Japan’s Experiment in Korea,” 165.

¹⁶² Quoted in Brudnoy, “Japan’s Experiment in Korea,” 163.

¹⁶³ Korean Annual Report of 1911-1912, quoted in Brudnoy, “Japan’s Experiment in Korea,” 166.

movement.¹⁶⁴ The military gendarmes intimidated participants through rape, torture, burning, and the massacre of village populations.¹⁶⁵ Japanese sources indicate that nearly 47,000 demonstrators were arrested, more than 15,000 injured, and 7,000 killed.¹⁶⁶ As an end result of the March First Movement, however, the newly instated Governor-General Admiral Baron Saito Makoto instituted some reforms, including an end to discrimination in salaries between Japanese and Korean government employees, the abolition of flogging, and the move to civilian police instead of gendarmes.

Missionaries, who tried to take some credit for the reforms, came under fire because the Japanese suspected they instigated the uprising. Always suspicious of the motives of the missionaries, the Japanese government in Korea had long monitored and limited missionary activities, using the carrot and stick approach to try to control their activities. Wanting to co-opt the missionaries to support Japanese aims in Korea, the government also worried that missionaries would “use the call for freedom and friendship with America as a proselytizing device.”¹⁶⁷ Missionaries, however, tended to support the Japanese government; they believed that Japan offered a service to Korea by modernizing it, even if they resented regulations and licensing policies that made mission efforts to offer education and medical services in Korea more difficult.

¹⁶⁴ Brudnoy, “Japan’s Experiment in Korea,” 169.

¹⁶⁵ See Brudnoy, “Japan’s Experiment in Korea,” 155-195; Richard Devine, “Japanese Rule in Korea after the March First Uprising: Governor General Hasegawa’s Recommendations,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 52, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 523-540; and Donald N. Clark, “‘Surely God Will Work Out Their Salvation’: Protestant Missionaries in the March First Movement,” *Korean Studies* 13(1989): 42-75.

¹⁶⁶ Devine, “Japanese Rule in Korea after the March First Uprising,” 525.

¹⁶⁷ Quote from Governor-General Hasegawa’s recommendations to his successor, translated and cited in Devine, “Japanese Rule in Korea after the March First Uprising,” 539. On the missionary relationship with the Japanese government in Korea, see Clark, “‘Surely God Will Work Out Their Salvation.’” In 1919, approximately 400 Protestant missionaries worked in Korea. Most came from the United States, although there were also missionaries from Canada, Australia, and Great Britain, and Roman Catholic missionaries (who were not suspected of fomenting revolution).

Because sixteen of the thirty-three signers of the Korean Declaration of Independence were Christian leaders, the government immediately assumed that missionaries must have assisted or encouraged the demonstrations. As Donald N. Clark argues, the outside agitator theory was “the most convenient way of accounting for the otherwise inexplicable dissatisfaction of the Koreans with the Japanese regime.” He also suggests that since most of the missionaries were American, they “absorbed some of the hostility against [American President Woodrow] Wilson.”¹⁶⁸ Records show that missionaries probably did not know about the demonstrations in advance; their students, colleagues, and congregants probably sheltered them from their plans. While few missionaries actually supported Korean independence they were shocked by the brutality of the suppression. Many tried to protect Koreans in the ongoing demonstrations.¹⁶⁹ Some hid demonstrators from the gendarmes, while others tried to keep students under their care from participating in demonstrations. Others treated the wounded. Likewise, some missionaries met with government officials, including the new Governor-General Saito, and pressured the American embassy to seek from the United States relief for Koreans. Some missionaries used their voices and pens to rally support in other Asian countries and the United States, an effort that unintentionally contributed to a rise in anti-Japanese attitudes in these nations.

Galen Fisher paid avid attention to the activities of the missionaries in Korea. Upon his return to the United States in 1919, he obtained a master’s degree in sociology from Columbia University, and with John Mott’s influence, obtained a position with John D. Rockefeller, Jr.’s Institute of Social and Religious Research where he conducted research on

¹⁶⁸ Clark, “‘Surely God Will Work Out Their Salvation,’” 53. Wilson enjoyed a cult of personality in Korea after World War I, as many Koreans embraced the goal of self-determination. Authorities transferred their concerns about Wilson’s popularity onto the missionaries.

¹⁶⁹ Clark, “‘Surely God Will Work Out Their Salvation.’”

missions and ecumenical work. An avid supporter of Japan, he believed that liberalism would prevail over militarism in the country. Fisher's view of the March First Movement and subsequent fallout was tempered by his support of Japan, his experiences working with Korean students in Japan, the international focus of the YMCA, and his studies in the growing field of sociology. Fisher attempted to remove himself from the political events in Korea and focused instead on the activities of the missionaries. In late 1920, the *International Review of Missions* published an essay by Fisher in which he considered appropriate responses of missionaries to political events in their host country.

Fisher outlined three potential reactions for missionaries to events like the March First Movement. A missionary might make a public declaration of his or her position, maintain strict neutrality, or influence individuals through private counsel. Fisher dismissed the first option as one that would only lead to charges of partisanship and strained relations with the nation of residence. He sympathized with the missionary who like a "fond parent" suffered from "complete identification with the people for whom he is working."¹⁷⁰ Referring to the situation in Korea, Fisher suggested that a missionary avoid publicizing his or her opinions because he or she also represented the mission, the denomination to which he or she belonged, and the church universal. He urged individuals who felt their integrity compromised by silence to resign from their positions before speaking.¹⁷¹ Nor should individuals maintain complete neutrality, he argued, because Christians were compelled by the gospel to transmit the Kingdom of God to individuals and nations. The best option, according to Fisher, was to privately encourage indigenous allies to be politically active in

¹⁷⁰ Galen M. Fisher, "Missionaries and International Political Questions," *International Review of Missions* 9, no. 4 (October 1920): 519.

¹⁷¹ Fisher, "Missionaries and International Political Questions," 524.

the service of their faith, and to get the private ear of officials instead of criticizing them publicly.¹⁷² In 1923, Fisher referred again to the suppression of the March First Movement. He endorsed the criticism of Japan's actions in Korea by Christian and non-Christian professionals as "the fruit, directly and indirectly, of Christian ideals, of the triumph of liberalism over military-imperialistic ideals."¹⁷³

Fisher focused on missionaries who criticized the colonial government (namely, Japan), and not on those who would criticize the colonized. From the safety of American shores, Fisher remarked on the Japanese government's attempt to get the missionaries to encourage Koreans to submit to Japanese rule. This, he said, was a moral question with which missionaries must grapple. "It is certainly not the duty of Christian missionaries to insist upon submission to glaring injustice and oppression, even though it subject them to the distrust of the government concerned." Missionaries had a right to remain autonomous and not become accomplices of the government. Fisher followed this statement with the suggestion that missionaries take a fulsome view of what the official powers did. "It seems equally clear," he wrote. "That they . . . should be so magnanimous in appreciating every progressive step of the government as to demonstrate that Christianity at bottom is the strongest ally of every just government."¹⁷⁴ Fisher believed that Christianity tempered the harshness of colonial enterprises; the truism espoused frequently by American Protestants was that Christianity, unlike other religions, recognized the value and dignity of individuals.

¹⁷² Fisher, "Missionaries and International Political Questions," 526, 522.

¹⁷³ Fisher, *Creative Forces in Japan*, 59.

¹⁷⁴ Fisher, "Missionaries and International Political Questions," 525. He echoed this sentiment *Creative Forces in Japan*, 58.

Therefore, without any irony, he could positively compare Japan's actions in Korea to that of the United States in the Philippines and the British in Ireland.¹⁷⁵

Fisher may have taken a generous view of the actions of the Japanese in Korea, yet he held his own country to stricter standards. This might be unsurprising, given Fisher's eager support of the Japanese imperialist efforts in 1905. Missionary policy also demanded that missionaries sympathetically educate and interpret for Americans the nations where they served. However, his silence on Japan's brutal treatment of the independence demonstrators and the readiness with which he might criticize American actions speaks more to his understanding of the missionary's position as a guest in a host country, and his or her job as a missionary to safeguard the mission enterprise against the anger of the host government. As Americans, missionaries could freely critique the ways in which their own government and neighbors failed to live up to Christian ideals. Fisher described the double-edged sword thus: a missionary could always "criticize his own nation, especially where moral principles are prominently involved. But he should be chary of taking up the cudgels in defense of his own nation, except as he may do so by implication in the course of his exposition of Christian principles."¹⁷⁶ The missionary could only use the United States as a positive example when it lived up to Christian standards.

Among the missionaries who practiced private advocacy while using the press to publish positive views of Japan's response to the uprisings and critique the United States was Frank Herron Smith. A polio survivor who was as noted for his beautiful tenor voice as his mission work, Smith briefly served in Japan as a Methodist missionary before the Methodist bishop for Japan and Korea sent him to Korea in 1905 to start churches among

¹⁷⁵ Fisher, *Creative Forces in Japan*, 58-59.

¹⁷⁶ Fisher, *Creative Forces in Japan*, 528.

Japanese immigrants. Although most missionaries in Korea could speak and read Korean, Smith was among the few who were also fluent in Japanese. He was also, according to one historian, one of the few “Japanophiles” among the missionaries.¹⁷⁷ Identifying himself with Japan missionaries, Smith charged Korea missionaries with provincialism and an ungrounded distaste for Japan. These missionaries misguidedly believed that “to defame Japan is to do God’s service.”¹⁷⁸ In other words, those like Smith who supported Japan’s colonial rights were aligned with God’s divine plan. In order to counter the negative portrayal of Japan’s rule of Korea by missionaries in Korea, Smith wrote a series of articles for the *Seoul Press*. The paper reprinted them as a booklet in 1920.¹⁷⁹ While Smith intended his articles to convey the complexity of the situation around the uprisings, he provided propaganda in Japan’s public relations battle.

Smith’s writings indicate not only the extreme admiration and affection engendered among Japan missionaries for that country but the paternalism that continued to shade missionary perspectives of the people among whom they lived. Smith primarily evangelized among the Japanese who entered Japan as agricultural colonists for the Oriental Development Company. Resident-General Marquis Ito Hirobumi created the company in 1907 as an “extra-governmental agency of economic exploitation.”¹⁸⁰ Smith’s focus on Japanese Christians shaded how he viewed Japan and Korea. Because the Japanese colonists had higher yields of rice on the land they leased than did the Korean tenants, Smith held them up as “teachers” of the Koreans, much as elder brother Japan taught Korea in the ways

¹⁷⁷Clark, “‘Surely God Will Work Out Their Salvation,’” 65.

¹⁷⁸ Frank Herron Smith to Sidney Gulick, 16 October 1919, quoted in Clark, “‘Surely God Will Work out Their Salvation,’” 58.

¹⁷⁹ Frank Herron Smith, *The Other Side of the Korean Question: Fresh Light on Some Important Factors, Reprinted by the “Seoul Press” from the “Japan Advertiser”* (Seoul, Korea: Seoul Press, 1920), accessed September 15, 2014, <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015013507952#view=1up;seq=5>.

¹⁸⁰ Brudnoy, “Japan’s Experiment in Korea,” 160.

of modernization.¹⁸¹ Contending that Japan was the only imperialist nation to subsidize a colony, Smith argued that Japan had benevolent intentions toward Korea. Japan, he quoted renowned mission leader Robert Speer as saying, was the “only strong and virile nation trying to bring” a weaker colonized country to an “equal place in her Empire.”¹⁸² He admitted the Japanese response to the March First uprising was cruel. At the same time, he departed from Fisher’s uncritical comparison of imperial behavior of Western nations and Japan when he criticized British dealings with the Indian independence movement and American brutalities during recent race riots. He suggested individuals from those nations might deal with their own imperial failings before criticizing Japan. Through this comment, Smith revealed the emerging tendency of missionaries to question the Christian pretensions of their home country even as they appeared to bless the efforts of Japan to mimic the masters of imperialism.

Smith inverted his critique of imperialism, however, by placing the blame for any brutalities squarely at the feet of Koreans who “made themselves revolutionaries and rebels” by declaring independence. In Smith’s opinion, “thinking men could not have confidence in their judgment” once they decided to contest Japanese rule.¹⁸³ As far as Smith was concerned, the Koreans who advocated independence may have been stirred by Wilson’s Fourteen Points but they were premature.¹⁸⁴ He compared the cry for independence to “an American youth yelling to vote. Korea is a fine, healthy youngster of great promise and without doubt has a bright future.”¹⁸⁵ Smith’s diatribe placed Japan in the ranks of other

¹⁸¹ Smith, *The Other Side of the Korean Question*, 3.

¹⁸² Smith, *The Other Side of the Korean Question*, 35.

¹⁸³ Smith, *The Other Side of the Korean Question*, 5-6.

¹⁸⁴ Smith cleverly shifted the finger-pointing away from the missionaries and back onto President Woodrow Wilson, and “self-exiled Korean agitators,” *The Other Side of the Korean Question*, p. 20.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

colonizing powers like the United States and Great Britain, while minimizing its failures; Korea remained in the role of a rebellious adolescent.¹⁸⁶

Believing himself much more sophisticated than the Koreans he belittled, Smith rendered judgment on the actions of the imperial government toward missionaries after the uprising. He publicly took a much more lenient view toward the government than missionaries who primarily served the Korean population although he privately protested to authorities. The government suspected missionary involvement in the independence movement and hoped to entice missionaries to help efforts to quash it instead. Officials recognized the ability of missionaries to arouse public opinion in the West and preferred to retain missionaries as supporters, not dissenters, of the colonial government.¹⁸⁷ Within a week of the first demonstrations, officials met with leaders of the three most prominent missions—the Presbyterian, Methodist, and YMCA—hoping to discern what happened and to get their cooperation. While the missionaries refused to answer the questions, they provided instead a brief that outlined desirable changes in the government toward missionaries and the Christian church. Shocked by police activities, including troops who beat and killed the Christian men of the village of Che'am-ni suspected of supporting the demonstrations, and then herded them into the local church and set it on fire, Smith and other senior missionaries met with Governor-General Hasegawa Hoshimichi to protest the

¹⁸⁶ Understandings of race shifted in the first four decades of the twentieth century from biological to cultural/social/environmental explanations. While not as deterministic as biological understandings of race, the cultural or social theory of race still relied on a value spectrum for different characteristics ascribed to different populations, and proponents of social race theory tended to hold white, or Anglo-European, cultural values as the norm to which other groups ought to aspire. Robert E. Speer, *Race and Race Relations: A Christian View of Human Contacts* (London: Fleming H. Revell Company; New York: Negro Universities Press, 1970) shows how a leader in the Protestant mission community attempted to spread an enlightened view of race. Cultural anthropologists trained under Franz Boas were critical for the dissemination of the cultural race theory. Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993); and Elazar Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism: Changing Concepts of Race in Britain and the United States between the World Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

¹⁸⁷ Brudnoy, "Japan's Experiment in Korea," 176.

treatment. Hasegawa responded with an apology and the promise of Y1500 (\$750) from his discretionary funds to help rebuild the church.¹⁸⁸ Likewise, on arriving in Seoul in the summer of 1919, Governor-General Saito promptly began fostering relations with missionary leaders and Korean pastors through lunches, dinners, and private meetings. Smith wrote glowingly of these efforts. Baron Saito, he contended, “has shown great kindness” to missionaries and pastors. “Such close acquaintanceship will help solve the problems we face here.” He continued in words that echoed the earlier contention that the Japanese-Korean relationship was marked by mutual respect: “Good will and love are the sine qua non.”¹⁸⁹

Having absolved the government publicly of much of its responsibility, Smith practiced what he preached: the private airing of concerns. Smith participated in the meeting with Governor-General Hasegawa about the massacre in Che’am-ni. Yet he did not mention the visit with Governor-General Hasegawa in his articles, as Hasegawa’s granting of an indemnity to the Che’am-ni church appeared to his superiors in Japan as if he were admitting guilt. Instead, Smith praised the efforts of Japanese officials to bring the light of modernity to a recalcitrant younger sibling who chomped prematurely at the bit for independence. As far as Smith was concerned, what the situation needed was more Japan missionaries like himself stationed in Korea to “bridge the chasm” between the Korea missionaries and Japanese officials.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ Clark, ““Surely God Will Work Out Their Salvation,””57; and Brudnoy, “Japan’s Experiment in Korea,” 177.

¹⁸⁹ Smith, *The Other Side of the Korean Question*, 12. Smith’s paternalistic attitude surfaced in his work with Japanese Americans, leading one young woman in a Japanese American incarceration camp to refer to him and another missionary as “the Great White Fathers.”

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

Yet not all missionaries in Japan or Korea responded favorably to Japan's treatment of Koreans in Korea or in Japan. Two Presbyterian missionaries in Japan, brothers Ernest and Gordon Chapman, ministered to Koreans brought forcibly to Japan as indentured servants; these men found ways to share their concerns about Japanese aggression with audiences in the United States. Raised by domestic missionary parents in rural Northern California, they both held more conservative theological views than some of the other missionaries who arrived in Japan after World War I. This made them in many ways more comfortable with the older generation of missionaries like Smith. One reference for Gordon Chapman's mission application noted his bulldog-like personality, calling him a "man who would readily make a martyr in any cause which he believed to be God's cause."¹⁹¹

Primarily evangelists and teachers, both of these men concerned themselves with the Korean living as second-class citizens in the urban centers of Japan. While some came as indentured servants, others traveled to Japan in hope of a better life than they could find in Japan-occupied Korea. Most found work as unskilled laborers while a few came as university students; all faced discrimination.¹⁹² Both Gordon and Ernest worked among the Koreans, and by the late 1930s had visited Manchuria, North China, and Korea. Colleagues going to the United States smuggled the Chapman brothers' reports of "Japanese economic and other kinds of imperialism" to their mission board and helped them publish anonymously in *The Christian Century*.¹⁹³ While critical of the activities of their host

¹⁹¹Mr. E. L. Devendorf, 4 November 1920, The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Candidate Blank for Men, Candidate Gordon Chapman, Box 27, Folder 36, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

¹⁹² Charles W. Iglehart, *A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan* (Rutland, Vermont, & Tokyo, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1959), 202.

¹⁹³ Gordon Andrews Chapman, "A Son's Thoughts on Gordon Kimball Chapman," February 1989, Box 27, Box 27, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

country, the Chapman brothers recognized Fisher's admonishment to be careful about criticizing Japan publicly.

The willingness of the Chapman brothers to condemn Japanese imperialism reflected in part the changes in the global narrative by the 1930s. By that time, Japan had emerged as a military and colonial power in Asia. Korea became known as the recalcitrant child in Japan's realm. Taiwan, Manchuria, Kwantung, the South Sakhalin, the Ryukyu Islands, and parts of Micronesia fell under Japanese control in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the 1920s, Japan practiced, in theory at least, a liberal form of colonization that assumed the gradual assimilation of colonized populations as Japanese subjects equal in rights and privileges to the Japanese. By the 1930s, the pressures of economic and social changes in Japan combined with a more aggressive nationalism and the resurgence of militarism and resulted in renewed expansionist policies. Japan tightened its control over its colonies and encroached upon Manchuria and China in moves that outraged the national community.¹⁹⁴

Using Christian Internationalism as a Model for Peace (1938 to December 7, 1941)

While missionaries continued to support Japan, they worried about the ascendancy of the totalitarian, military element in the country. Their publications and letters home continued to positively interpret Japan to Americans, but these exhortations usually focused on differentiating Japanese individuals from the policies and actions of the Japanese government. As an advisor to the Institute of Pacific Relations in San Francisco, an institution he helped found with other former Japan YMCA missionaries to foster education and communication among the Pacific region nations, Fisher published frequent essays in

¹⁹⁴ Peattie, "The Japanese Colonial Empire," esp. 236-244.

the late 1930s aimed to promote a better understanding among Americans about Japanese political and military motives. By 1941, as Japan and the United States teetered toward open hostilities, Fisher aided efforts initiated by missionaries and Japanese Christians to use Christian displays of unity to influence both governments, culminating in the unprecedented Riverside Conference. Their efforts ultimately failed, impelling individuals like Fisher in the United States to counter heightening hysteria about Japanese Americans, and missionaries still in Japan to urge their stateside friends to pray for peace and make manifest the ideals of Christian internationalism in their relationships with Asians. This final effort to forestall war between America and Japan demonstrated missionaries' use of Christian world-mindedness to develop friendships between estranged communities and the ways in which pragmatism tempered their idealist visions as they tried to influence public opinion and national policies.

Although Fisher mainly published in academic journals, his Christian internationalism underlay each article. In 1937 and 1938, Fisher published essays about the challenges faced by tenant farmers in Japan and efforts at economic cooperative movements in Japan. Both of these essays resonated with the difficulties endured by Americans during the Great Depression and potentially created common ground, although they were published in journals aimed at intellectuals and policy makers.¹⁹⁵ Fisher invoked Toyohiko Kagawa in these articles; Kagawa's enthusiastic embrace by Midwestern cooperative movements that used his labor and cooperative efforts in Japan as models meant an audience potentially receptive to Kagawa's pacifist views as well.¹⁹⁶ By 1940, Fisher focused on explaining the motives behind Japanese policy. He argued that Japanese and Americans misunderstood

¹⁹⁵ Galen M. Fisher, "The Landlord-Peasant Struggle in Japan," *Far Eastern Survey* 6, no. 18 (September 1, 1938): 201-206; and Fisher, "The Cooperative Movement in Japan," 478-491.

¹⁹⁶ Schildgen, "How Race Mattered."

each other because of a “sharply contrasted social heredity” and called for more sympathy between the two nations.¹⁹⁷ In a 1941 article, Fisher explicitly drew commonalities between Japan and America. He suggested that both shared a feudal past, but that Japan remained more fully shaped by its feudalism than the United States. He pointed to the importance of Shinto and Buddhism, language patterns, and the unity of the social order in creating a society that deferred to family and superiors, and encouraged a formal etiquette that contrasted with American’s “slapdash rudeness.”¹⁹⁸ Fisher attributed the current militaristic and autocratic thrust in Japanese imperial policies to these influences. Japan sought a New International Order dominated by Japan because it believed that it was the superior race and master-state. Fisher compared this belief to the “Pan-American doctrine of the United States,” and justified the desire of Asian nations to put “the greedy and intolerant white races in their places.”¹⁹⁹ Having long fought prejudice against Asian immigrants in the United States, Fisher interpreted Japan to his readers while rationalizing its feelings about the United States.²⁰⁰

Other missionaries maintained the belief that liberal forces in Japan would triumph over the military class. As early as 1920, Frank Herron Smith blithely told the General Methodist Conference that Japan was not a “military menace” and that “Demokurashi”

¹⁹⁷ Galen M. Fisher, “Understanding and Misunderstanding Japan,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 215, America and Japan (May 1941): 122.

¹⁹⁸ Fisher, “Understanding and Misunderstanding Japan,” 123-126.

¹⁹⁹ Galen M. Fisher, “Main Drive Behind Japanese National Policies,” *Public Affairs* 13, no. 4 (December 1940): 388.

²⁰⁰ In a 1940 article in the widely read *Christian Century*, Fisher went even further. He noted the alliance of Japan with Germany and Italy and while suggesting that few policies remained for the United States that would be palatable to “the Christian conscience,” he stated that “we, the American people, must take the bulk of the blame.” Galen M. Fisher, “The Revolution in East Asia,” *The Christian Century* 57, no. 43 (October 23, 1940): 1309.

(democracy) was the most popular word in Japan.²⁰¹ In 1933, he told the Oxnard, California, Lions Club that the militarists controlling the Japanese government were not dangerous because they were “nationally narrow” and “intensely patriotic” men of the “purest type.” He bemoaned that suspicion of Americans toward Japan.²⁰² Bovenkerk echoed Fisher in his letters to supporters. In October 1941 he sent an early Christmas greeting home in which he mourned the “seeds of selfishness and imperialism” sown by Americans as well as by Japanese and encouraged readers to ignore American religious magazines which portrayed Japanese Christians “wholly caught up with the spirit of the times, and excitedly bowing in obeisance [sic] to all outside pressure.”²⁰³ His note did sound a less optimistic tone than he had a few years earlier. In a 1938 missive, Bovenkerk joked about the deprivations of war by sharing the lyrics of a song that another missionary wrote called “Nothing of This and Nothing of That.” The song listed all of the items scarce in Japan: leather, steel, cotton goods, woolens, gasoline, and tin cans, and ended with the conclusion “we’ll be living on ‘nothing.’”²⁰⁴

Other missionaries continued with Fisher, Smith, and Bovenkerk in their efforts to educate the American public about Japan and to encourage sensitivity and compassion on the part of their audience towards Japanese. Howard Hannaford, who with his wife taught at mission schools and worked among factory laborers, frequently published essays on Japan-

²⁰¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Japanese Sick of Militarism: Dr. Frank Smith Tells Methodists Japan is not Military Menace-Democracy Sweeping the Empire,” May 9, 1920, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Atlanta Constitution (1868-1945).

²⁰² *Oxnard Daily Courier and the Oxnard Daily News*, “No Reason for U. S. Japanese War-Dr. Smith Head of Japanese M. E. Missions Speaks to Oxnard Lions,” September 22, 1933, accessed September 24, 2014, <http://access.newspaperarchive.com/us/california/oxnard/oxnard-daily-courier/1933/09-22/page-5?tag=Frank+Herron+smith&rtserp=tags/?pf=frank&pl=herron-smith&pr=20&page=3&psi=14&pci=7>. This article was above the fold line on the front page of the paper, suggesting the interest people in Oxnard placed on the issue, at least.

²⁰³ Henry Bovenkerk to Friends, 21 October 1941, Series 3, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

²⁰⁴ Henry Bovenkerk to Friends, 16 September 1938, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

US relations. In a 1938 article in *Women and Missions*, Hannaford linked the treatment of Japanese Americans to animosity stirred up by the war in Asia. He challenged churchwomen to remove the “unpleasant sound” of the term “Jap” from their vocabularies because the term connoted contempt, “kindly condescension,” or hate. He called for cooperation and humility instead of resentment, condemnation, and “righteous indignation”; churchwomen could attain the positive attitudes by an honest “evaluation of the great social and economic forces” underlying the current conflict between Japan and China. The article aimed to improve attitudes toward Japan and Japanese Americans.²⁰⁵ In 1938, Hannaford argued that signs of friendship in the midst of war would strengthen the faith and courage of Japanese Christians. His appeal to his readers sounded like a definition of Christian internationalism. Hannaford noted the difficulty of effectively sharing the Christian message when “an atmosphere glorifying force and exalting militarism offers a challenge to the missionary to teach and preach Christ’s gospel of love, with all of its rich meaning of personal and national righteousness, brotherly love transcending national boundaries, service to God as supremely important, and salvation from personal and social sin through the cross of the loving Christ.”²⁰⁶ As war loomed, Ruth Hannaford begged American Christians to withhold judgment and instead offer friendship to their Christian brothers and sisters in Japan. She alluded to the story of Jesus and the woman caught in adultery, writing, “This sad world of ours needs less of condemnation, and far, far more of prayer, and true repentance. Who among us dare hurl the first stone?”²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ Howard Hannaford, “Are They ‘Japs?’” *Women and Missions*, March 1938, Box 60, Folder 17, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

²⁰⁶ Howard Hannaford, “Japanese Christians in War Time,” *Five Continents*, 1938, Box 60, Folder 17, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

²⁰⁷ Ruth E. Hannaford to Friends, 9 October 1940, Box 60, Folder 18, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

Belief that prayer could affect the course of international relations led missionaries and church leaders in Japan to instigate a gathering of leading lights in the American and Japanese Protestant communities in the spring of 1941. Missionaries comprehended the tenseness of US-Japan relations; like their home missionary organizations, some of which were already calling their missionaries back from Japan by mid-1940, and diplomats in both countries, the missionaries feared imminent war.²⁰⁸ As a result, they attempted to use what clout they had to call Americans to action for peace. In February 1941, a telegram signed by 190 Japan missionaries arrived at the New York City headquarters of the Federal Council of Churches and the Foreign Missions Council (hereafter, FMC) demanding action:

WHILE RECOGNIZING FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES ARE INVOLVED IN PRESENT TENSION BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND JAPAN WE CANNOT BELIEVE THAT BASIC AND PERMANENT SOLUTIONS CAN BE SECURED THROUGH ARMED CONFLICT. RATHER THE TRAGEDY OF WAR WILL GREATLY AGGRAVATE THE ISSUES AND AUGMENT AND PROLONG PRESENT DISTURBED RELATIONS. WE FACE CRISIS WHICH THREATENS TO DESTROY MUCH THAT IS OF SUPREME VALUE TO CHRISTIANS. WE THEREFORE EARNESTLY APPEAL TO OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS IN AMERICA TO EXERT THEMSELVES ANEW TO PRESERVE UNBROKEN THE EIGHTY YEARS' PEACE BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ *Chicago Daily Tribune*, "Episcopalians of Japan oust Foreign Bishops: Britons Out; Americans Expected to Resign," August 25, 1940; and William L. Sachs, "'Self-Support': The Episcopal Mission and Nationalism in Japan," *Church History* 58, no. 4 (December 1989): 500.

²⁰⁹ Quoted in Samuel McCrea Cavert to FCC Executive Committee, 17 February 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, National Council of Churches (NCC) RG 18, Federal Council of Churches Collection, Presbyterian Historical Society (hereafter cited as FCC Papers).

The message from most of the Protestant missionaries remaining in Japan in early 1941 included the signatures of nearly all of the missionaries who would work on behalf of Japanese Americans while stateside during the war. Their message moved to action the ecumenical agencies that received it. To the executives of the Federal Council of Churches and the Foreign Missions Council, the telegram “reflect[ed] a state of mind bordering on anguish” and created for them “an obligation which has not existed heretofore.”²¹⁰ The telegram added to pleas by American churchmen who had recently visited Japan and by Japanese Protestant leaders to bring the two nations together through prayer and conversation; the pressure of the missionaries proved indispensable.

One week later, the National Christian Council in Japan (hereafter, JNCC) cabled its American counterpart, the FCC, requesting a conference of ordained and lay leaders from each country for “prayer and [to] explore ways preserve peace.”²¹¹ To mission executives in New York, this call presented an “almost desperate cry for help. . . . We ought to meet this request of the Christians if at all possible.”²¹² Convinced by the pleas of missionaries, visiting dignitaries, and the Japanese Christian leadership of the moral urgency of the request, the American groups began to plan a private conference on the West Coast. Despite misgivings, the belief in the mandate for international Christian friendship and in its power to change prevailing attitudes prompted church leaders on both sides of the Pacific to approve of a conference dreamed up in the midst of conflict.²¹³

²¹⁰ Walter W. Van Kirk to John Foster Dulles, 18 February 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²¹¹ Federal Council of Churches and Foreign Missions Conference, Press Release, “American and Japanese Christians to Meet for Prayer and Conference,” n.d. [March 1941], Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²¹² Luman Shafer to Dr. Galen Fisher, 10 February 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²¹³ I have found only two brief references to the Riverside Conference in secondary sources: Robert Schwantes, *Japanese and Americans: A Century of Cultural Relations* (New York: Harper & Brothers, for the Council on Foreign Relations, 1955), 277; and Charles W. Iglehart, *A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan*, 237.

The desire to bring Christians from both nations together to work toward peace grew out of the shared belief that Christians not only had the ability to guide their governments but the obligation to do so. In separate letters to the executive secretaries of the FMC and the FCC, Reverend Tsumetaro Miyakoda commented on the recent extended visit to Japan by two Methodist luminaries. Their gracious visit, Miyakoda asserted, “demonstrates anew the truth that Christians are still God’s chosen channel of holding the world together.” He contended that Christians in both countries had “an inescapable responsibility” and “should leave no stone unturned in their effort to relieve the present tension and to find constructive solutions” to end the alienation between the two nations.²¹⁴ In the current situation, “the only comprehensive groups whose relationship remains unchanged and cordial are the Christians of both lands.”²¹⁵ Even though Christians represented an infinitesimally small percentage of Japan’s population, and few, if any, Christians remained in the militarist government, Japanese Christians shared with American Christians the belief that only a world ruled by Christ could realize peace and unity. In light of the adjudged unchristian policies and practices of the current Japanese government, the JNCC fervently hoped that together American and Japanese Christians might discern the mind of Christ and witness enough spiritual power to dissuade their respective governments from the path toward war.

While Japanese Protestant leadership and the missionaries supported a conference, leaders in the United States including Galen Fisher debated the wisdom and effectiveness of such a venture. They recognized the unlikeliness that Christian leaders from the United States and Japan could affect Japanese politics. Japan was not a “Christian nation”; few

²¹⁴ Rev. Tsumetaro Miyakoda to Dr. J. W. Decker, 20 January 1941, and Rev. Tomita and Rev. T. Miyakoda to Dr. Samuel Cavert, 20 January 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²¹⁵ Rev. M. Tomita and Rev. T. Miyakoda to Dr. Samuel Cavert, 20 January 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

Christians held positions in the Diet or elsewhere in the government. They also noted that the tensions pointing toward war involved more than the United States and Japan. Japan's invasion of China, its alliance with the Axis powers, and the continued imperial presumptions of both Japan and various Western nations created a multilateral situation involving China as well as the entire world order.²¹⁶ More bodies than Japan and America needed to be brought into the conversation if they hoped for success. Methodist Luman Shafer, recently returned from Japan, believed it unlikely that a gathering would achieve what the Japanese Christian community hoped it would. He recognized that "political channels are clogged absolutely. . . . As I see it, the situation is eighty per cent fixed by what has taken place."²¹⁷ The rest of the leadership concurred with his view. Perhaps the best that could be done was to issue a "Call to Prayer" to constituent churches and prepare worship materials that could be used by congregations to better understand an appropriate Christian response to the issues.²¹⁸

Furthermore, while in their opinion, spiritual issues underpinned many of the problems in East Asia, these men questioned the effectiveness of a small conference. Several individuals called for a more clearly defined mission for the deputation. Galen Fisher concurred with the evaluation of the executive secretary of the International Missionary Council who asked, "How can Christian principles influence politics? Can a Christian message be delivered if divorced from realities of world situation?" and suggested the purpose of such a deputation might be to change "atmosphere and attitudes," and to "lift

²¹⁶ A. L. Warnshuis to Drs. Dawber, Shafer, and Van Kirk, 24 January 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²¹⁷ Luman Shafer, "The Christian's Position in regard to the Problems of the Far East," February 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²¹⁸ Federal Council of Churches and Foreign Mission Council, Press Release, "American and Japanese Christians to Meet for Prayer and Conference," n.d. [March 1941?], Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

discussion to plane where statesmen may begin to propose action.”²¹⁹ When asked to serve as part of the deputation, Fisher also asked for clarification of the intent and purpose of the deputation, as well as the needed skills of delegates.²²⁰ Despite his many connections with Christian leaders in Japan and his advocacy of peace, understanding, and justice between Japan and the United States, Fisher only reluctantly agreed to serve on the deputation, questioning his fitness for such a task.

Although the conference would lack any political clout, the mission councils agreed that whoever served as delegates needed to elicit respect and prestige in both countries. Besides Galen Fisher, they considered Dr. John Mott, who demurred claiming age and ills. Another luminary invited was John Foster Dulles, who declined. Future secretary of state under President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Dulles in 1941 was chairing an ecumenical group seeking the means to ensure a “Just and Durable Peace.” Although he would become what biographer Mark Toulouse calls a “priest of nationalism,” in 1941 Dulles subscribed to a Niebuhrian form of Christian realism that combined Christian internationalism with a strong accounting for the sinfulness of nations and the need for “realpolitik.”²²¹ The seventeen American delegates would include Bishop Herbert Welch who had been the resident bishop of the Methodist Church in Japan for twelve years and who had “access to circles both within and without the [c]hurch,” influential historian and missiologist Kenneth Scott

²¹⁹ A. L. Warnshuis to Drs. Dawber, Shafer, and Van Kirk, 24 January 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²²⁰ Galen Fisher to Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk, 2 February 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²²¹ Mark G. Toulouse, *Transformation of John Foster Dulles: From Prophet of Realism to Priest of Nationalism* (Mercer, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985); and Richard H. Immerman, *John Foster Dulles: Piety, Pragmatism, and Power in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1999).

Latourette, several seminary presidents, and male and female leaders of mission and church societies.²²²

Interestingly, the American organizers chose not to include a Japanese American leader on their delegation. US planners encouraged the Japan delegation to invite a prominent Issei (first generation) located in the United States to participate with its group.²²³ The JNCC deputation eventually included Dr. Hachiro Yuasa, former president of a Japanese university who was in political exile in the United States. Yuasa would later join with renowned missionary and evangelist Stanley Jones on preaching missions to the Japanese American incarceration camps. That the US leadership failed to include any Japanese Americans in its delegation is even more surprising after the results of a late March meeting in Los Angeles of individuals involved with the domestic mission among Japanese Americans. More than three hundred people, including thirty Japanese American pastors, attended the meeting to discuss Japan-American relations. Rather than invite any of those pastors to attend the Riverside Conference, organizers relayed to New York the request of the Christian Mission organizers for a series of meetings between the conference attendees and Japanese American leaders during the week prior to the conference.²²⁴ No record exists that such meetings occurred.

Although conference planners and participants noted the concerns of many about the utopian, idealist nature of the meeting, they believed they were firmly grounded in the tenets of Christian internationalism. William Axling commented that during the cross-Pacific sailing he felt like the party aboard Henry Ford's 1915 "peace ship" expedition to Europe

²²² Walter Van Kirk to John Foster Dulles, 18 February 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²²³ Dr. J. W. Decker to Walter Van Kirk, 26 March 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²²⁴ Bishop James C. Baker to Walter Van Kirk, 27 March 1941, Box 37, folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

“trying to stem the onrushing storm. They were criticized and laughed at. So are we. They were opposed, and obstacles put in their way. So with us.”²²⁵ Yet Axling and his fellow Japan delegates firmly believed that Christians “should serve as the mystic bond holding our shattered world together,” and held faith in the “God of the impossible.”²²⁶ Like the Japanese delegates, Galen Fisher deplored the failure of both Christians and the American government to use their influence to help forge a “positive and supra-national solution of East Asian problems.”²²⁷ One unnamed Japanese American observed that the trip was an act of faith on the part of the Japanese church, but joined the sentiments of the FCC and FMC organizers that the trip would act as a manifestation of the unshakeable bonds of Christian fellowship and if nothing else, boost the morale of the Japanese church.²²⁸ Even if the actions of the participants in the conference failed to sway military and political leaders in their respective countries, they sent a message to the world of the need for Christians to cooperate with one another and to challenge injustice and violence.

Conference leaders questioned the prudence of enabling political discussions at the gathering. In all of their public pronouncements and correspondence with individuals outside of the close planning group, planners stressed that they intended the project to “promote the spirit of peace and goodwill between the United States and Japan,” with an

²²⁵ Quoted in Leland D. Hine, *Axling: A Christian Presence in Japan* (Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1969), 141. Apparently neither Axling nor his biographer correctly remembered Ford’s expedition. Axling wrote that Jane Addams and Henry Ford sailed in 1914. The trip actually started on Christmas day 1915; Ford’s party included some 115 peace activists, progressive leaders, artists, and statesmen. Addams fell sick right before sailing and did not make the trip. See Allan Nevins and Frank Ernest Hill, *Ford: Expansion and Challenge, 1915-1933* (New York: Scribner, [1954-1963]); excerpted in “Henry Ford and His Peace Ship,” *American Heritage* 9, no. 2 (February 1958), accessed January 9, 2014, <http://www.americanheritage.com/content/henry-ford-and-his-peace-ship>.

²²⁶ Quoted in Leland D. Hine, *Axling*, 143.

²²⁷ Galen Fisher to Walter Van Kirk, 1 March 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²²⁸ The writer of these notes may have been Dr. Hachiro Yuasa, former president of Doshisha College, or Toru Matsumoto. Anonymous, “Confidential Notes by a Japanese Christian Leader Now in America: Notes on the Japanese Christian Delegation,” n.d. [March 1941], Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

emphasis on the “spirit” found in the “bonds of fellowship.”²²⁹ They recognized the inevitability of some political discussion even if the meeting was Christian in nature and spirit. In fact, these men (and a few women) insisted that the spiritual infuse and inform the political order. In order to maintain cohesive fellowship and to protect participants from negative publicity, Fisher suggested that they limit political discussions to the private sessions that excluded observers including the press.²³⁰

The planners of the conference on both sides of the ocean firmly maintained that Christian values needed to shape the public square and political decisions. They also realized that individuals and organizations not invested in their particular view of the world would continue to split the spiritual and political realms. As a result, the press in particular would misunderstand the nature of this venture. For example, the *New York Times* ran a story posted from Tokyo about the planned trip of the nine Japanese Christians to the Pacific coast conference. The article evidenced the way the press could mangle a story; instead of speaking to participants about the trip, the four paragraph article included two paragraphs and a lengthy quote from John Foote of the American Bible Society excoriating Japanese Christians for spending their funds on this trip instead of following through on a promise to fund the Japanese Bible Society. According to Foote, “in these times of international friction, deeds count more than words.” A frivolous trip to the United States did less to convince Americans of the integrity of Japanese intentions than following through on an earlier financial agreement made with the American and British Bible Societies.²³¹

²²⁹ Walter Van Kirk to Frank P. Graham, 12 March 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²³⁰ Galen Fisher to Walter Van Kirk, 1 March 1941, Box 36, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²³¹ Walter Van Kirk to Bishop James Baker, 19 March 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers; and “Japanese Christians to make tour of the U. S.,” *The New York Times* (1923-Current File): March 16, 1941, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2009), pg. 21, accessed January 9, 2014.

Organizers realized it was better to shape the news than to be shaped by it. More negative publicity like the *New York Times* article, which represented “irresponsible and cynical journalism,” could “wreck the entire conference and ‘appeasement policy.’” Instead of allowing the press to come to the conference, planners needed to take the initiative and create a climate that protected all participants, but especially the Japanese who faced language challenges, from “unguarded interviews and inaccurate reporting.”²³² Fisher argued in favor of a pre-conference press statement that would underline the religious and “unofficial” nature of the Japanese deputation. He hoped such a statement would “spike the guns of the sensation-seekers.”²³³

The letters and memos from the weeks prior to the conference indicate planners put a lot of thought into creating a venue that allowed for candid, thoughtful conversation about potentially contentious issues. The spirit of internationalism and world-mindedness that increasingly informed missionaries in their work also informed the format of the conference. They hoped to avoid some issues like the timing of the withdrawal of missionaries from Japan. On this topic “quite a difference of opinion” existed among the various denominational foreign mission boards. Discussion of the matter was likely to raise the blood pressure of delegates from both Japan and the United States invested in the mission enterprise and concerned that the return of missionaries to the United States would symbolize the capitulation of the church to the inevitability of war.²³⁴ During a March meeting, the planning committee agreed that the conference needed to address issues that led to “friction,” including questions of economic opportunities, self-determination,

²³² “Notes on Publicity Concerning the Los Angeles Conference,” n.d. [March 1941], Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²³³ Galen Fisher to Walter Van Kirk, 1 March 1941, Box 36, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²³⁴ J. W. Decker to Dr. William Axling, 7 April 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

extraterritoriality, and the United States' immigration quota system. At the same time, planners contended that attendees should not directly address "imperialistic ambitions . . . the intense nationalism and hatreds of peoples, especially of Japanese and Chinese and of Americans and Japanese," or the need for a strong indigenous government in China. They agreed that certain Christian attributes could contribute to a peaceful settlement of existing disputes in Asia, including "the willingness to confer . . . forbearance, patience, and obedience to the command in the Epistle of James, 'Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not to the righteousness of God.'"²³⁵

The planners took seriously this injunction from the New Testament to spend more time listening than speaking. An anonymous Japanese Christian leader living in the United States submitted his thoughts to the planning committee. He encouraged the American delegates to allow the Japanese deputation to present their case first. The Americans needed to listen carefully and ask ample questions to be sure they understood the Japanese position, recognizing both language and cultural differences might impede clarity. Only after hearing from the Japanese should the Americans present "the realistic situation" of the American church, so that conference attendees might jointly share in a "fellowship of penitence" and cooperative exploration of peaceful solutions to the conflict facing their countries.²³⁶ The American planners agreed wholeheartedly with these suggestions, noting that "it will be

²³⁵ Kenneth S. Latourette, memo, "A Possible Basis for settlement of the present conflict in the Pacific Confidential- not to be published in whole or in part," 15 March 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²³⁶ Anonymous, "Notes on the American Christian Peace Delegation," n.d. [March or April 1941], Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

important to ask questions and to make every effort to understand fully and clearly the Japanese views and to obtain as complete an appreciation of the situation as possible.”²³⁷

They decided on several other ways to influence the tone of the conference. In order to encourage parity and mutual confidence, the committee held off on planning all details of the conference, deciding to appoint upon the arrival of delegates a program committee made up of joint American and Japanese chairs and an equal number of American and Japanese delegates. The conference would be bookended with worship services that included celebrations of the Lord’s Supper, a literal and symbolic display of the fellowship of Christians in the body of Jesus Christ. A Japanese pastor and an American pastor would jointly preside over the service. A devotional committee would plan regular prayer services throughout the service. Finally, the American organizers suggested limiting formal sessions to five hours each day in order to maximize “as much opportunity as possible” for “groups of two or three to talk privately” and freely in a way that built up trust among the participants.²³⁸ Soon after the April 2 meeting at which these decisions emerged, delegates began arriving on the West Coast from Japan. Twenty days later, the historic meeting at the Riverside Mission Inn in California quietly convened.

The participants of the conference settled into a quiet, cloistered five days of conversation and prayer. The extreme interest generated about the conference was evident in the bound volume of greetings from several hundred individuals, congregations, denominations, college presidents, and other organizations that the American delegation

²³⁷ A. L. Warnshuis, “Suggestions regarding the meeting of Japanese and American Christians,” 2 April 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²³⁸ Ibid.

presented to the Japanese participants at the start of the conference.²³⁹ The American Bible Society, which had earlier questioned the integrity of Japanese Christians for planning this conference, made amends by providing a handsome copy of the New Testament inscribed with the signatures of the American participants. As a sign of solidarity with conference aims, Japanese Christians through the JNCC sent daily telegrams with prayers and Bible verses for conference participants to share. These messages corroborated that “it is a most encouraging thing to know that the Church of Christ is big enough to stand alone. . . . The arm of brotherhood can reach across the borders of nations with a stronger tie, than any other agency in the world. It does my heart good to know that in all of the nations there are those who live above the petty turmoils of political leaders.” These messages bolstered the spirits of attendees and surrounded them in the prayers of many.²⁴⁰ More than the gathering of Japanese and American Christians at the Riverside Inn, this outpouring of support displayed the spirit of Christian internationalism.

The worship and prayer services that dominated the meeting set the tone for all conversation. Although minutes of the meeting were not kept, one prayer by Dr. Hachiro Yuasa remains in the files of the Federal Council of Churches.²⁴¹ Yuasa’s prayer exemplifies the attitude of these Christian men and women and their missionary cohorts about Christian responsibility for global issues. Dr. Yuasa lamented that “in confusion and defeatism, we are again substituting the false protection of our steel and our dogmas for the true security of Thy truth and Thy mercy. Once more we are about to crucify our Christ.” Admitting the

²³⁹ Press Release, “Riverside Conference Creates Better Understanding,” Federal Council of Churches,” n.d. [May 1941], Box 12, Folder 3, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²⁴⁰ Albert B. Denton to Walter Van Kirk, 27 March 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²⁴¹ The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America was an ecumenical organization started in 1908 and dedicated to promoting Christian social issues on behalf of its constituent organizations. In 1950 it became the National Council of Churches in a reorganization planned before the United States entered World War II.

idolatries of modern Christians who turned to government and military as the highest powers instead of to their faith in God, Yuasa pleaded with God for the “wisdom and strength to resist hatred with love, to overcome evil with good. . . cost what it may.”²⁴² Prayers like Yuasa’s helped participants dialogue about difficult topics.²⁴³

As conference organizers had intimated during planning sessions, various issues that had created misunderstanding between American and Japanese Christians were discussed at the meeting. These conversations happened in part because attendees were “singularly unified in spirit at the outset.”²⁴⁴ Americans feared that the recent unification of thirty-four Protestant denominations had been forced upon Japanese Christians by a government intent on dictating and controlling the Christian movement.²⁴⁵ Many Americans also questioned how Japanese Christians could remain faithful to their religion while participating in the state-mandated obeisance at Japanese state Shinto shrines, which for many American Christians with little understanding of Shintoism reeked of idolatry.²⁴⁶ The Japanese participants explained both of these developments to their American audience. According to records of the conference, both sides listened carefully and respectfully to each other, increasing understanding. For example, Bishop Abe explained the difference between official state Shinto shrines and religious Shinto shrines, noting that ‘it was perfectly clear that ceremonies taking place at the state shrines in which the Christians participate are

²⁴² Hachiro Yuasa, A Prayer for the Riverside Conference, n.d. [April 1941], Box 12 Folder 3, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²⁴³ The prayers of both Buddhist and Protestant pastors at interfaith services in the Japanese American incarceration camps shared similar themes of forgiveness and love overcoming evil and estrangement.

²⁴⁴ Galen Fisher, “The Riverside Japanese-American Christian Conference,” n.d. [April 1941], Box 12, Folder 3, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²⁴⁵ Henry G. Bovenkerk, “A Century of Protestantism in Japan,” *Far Eastern Survey* 22, no. 13 (December 1953): 176; and Sheldon M. Garon, “State and Religion in Imperial Japan, 1912-1945,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1986): 273-302.

²⁴⁶ Garon, “State and Religion in Imperial Japan,” 273-302; and Hans Martin Kramer, “Beyond the Dark Valley: Reinterpreting Christian Reactions to the 1939 Religious Organizations Law,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 38, no. 1 (2011): 181-211.

patriotic and not religious,” and that Christians refused to participate at religious Shinto shrines. Although this may have felt like parsing to some of the attendees, Galen Fisher noted that the American group “was inclined to the view that the question of appropriate conduct of the Japanese in the shrine matter is one for the Japanese Christians to determine,” a bold statement of faith in the maturity of the Japanese Christian church to faithfully contextualize and address issues of syncretism.²⁴⁷ This faith also marked the maturing of Christian internationalism into a world view that would increasingly accept religious pluralism.

Although organizers pledged before the conference not to address the issue of the withdrawal of missionaries, participants did discuss the relationship of the missionary enterprise to the United Church of Japan in light of national laws that prohibited the Christian churches from receiving foreign aid and required all foreign workers to be under the supervision of indigenous leadership. Again, Bishop Abe sought to allay the anxieties of participants who believed these policies jeopardized the mission movement in Japan. The Japanese constitution guaranteed religious liberty, recognized Christianity as a national religion along with Buddhism and Shintoism, and had not interfered in the work of the church, he assured them. Missionaries with proper training and of “sterling Christian character and of adaptable disposition” would still find opportunities to serve under the direction of the United Church.²⁴⁸ The formal message presented by the Japanese Christian Fellowship Deputation, as they called themselves, relayed the deep gratitude and debt felt by

²⁴⁷ Galen Fisher, “The Riverside Japanese-American Christian Conference,” n.d. [April 1941], Box 12, Folder 3, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers. Fisher had earlier stated that American Christians need not be overly alarmed by these developments. Fisher, “The Revolution in East Asia,” 1308.

²⁴⁸ Galen Fisher, “The Riverside Japanese-American Christian Conference”; and Press Release, “Riverside Conference Creates Better Understanding.”

Japanese Christians for the historic and continued assistance and friendship of missionaries over the previous eighty years.²⁴⁹

A press release sent out by the FCC after the conference underlines the importance of missionaries to the formation of the conference and to the content of the conference. It proclaimed that the conversations about difficult issues in Japan “made a profound impression upon the American members. . . . They recognized in the formation of the Church of Christ in Japan an achievement of Christian statesmanship, the realization of two generations of missionaries, and the beginning of an epoch in the history of Christianity in Japan.” The press release continued in a florid tone:

Many decades ago the Christians of the United States sent their missionaries to Japan. And today, our spiritual children from across the vast stretches of the Pacific have come to our shores to bear witness to their faith that the issues at stake between their country and our scan be resolved if only the spirit of Christ is permitted to guide the thinking of the two peoples. If the missionary movement had done nothing more than to make possible this week’s conference . . . it would be worth all of the expenditures of time and money and sweat that Christians of the United States have invested in the pilgrimage of the disciples of Christ from our own country to the cherry blossom land on the outer rim of the Pacific Ocean.”²⁵⁰

Although the press release still promoted the paternalistic view of mission churches as “spiritual children,” a view many of the Japan missionaries would challenge as they

²⁴⁹ Yoshimune Abe, Chair, Formal Message of Appreciation to American Churches, to the Mission Boards and Our Brothers and Sisters in Christ in the United States, n.d. [April 1941], Box 12, Folder 3, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²⁵⁰ Press Release, “Riverside Conference Creates Better Understanding.”

helped their denominations envision the nature of mission work postwar, the statement shows the belief of participants and prominent Protestant leaders in 1941 that the missionary movement proved pivotal in shaping international relationships.

At the conclusion of the conference, attendees formulated several joint statements, including recommendations for action by the Federal Council of Churches and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America.²⁵¹ As these two bodies served nearly thirty denominations in the United States, the recommendations of the Riverside Conference were widely disseminated throughout the Protestant world in North America and covered in the press by publications like *The Christian Century*, *The New York Times*, *The Atlanta Constitution*, and *Time* magazine. The religion editor for *Time* noted that he was the only such editor present and the only one who was able to interview the American and Japanese conference delegates, a sign of the care organizers took to control publicity. Although Samuel Welles wrote a six-page article for *Time*, only a short blurb appeared in the magazine.²⁵² These statements affirmed a commitment to the power of the global fellowship

²⁵¹ The Foreign Missions Council (1893-1952) was an ecumenical association of denominational foreign mission boards in Canada and the United States that helped denominational mission boards plan and cooperate on mission projects. It also participated in the International Mission Conference with more than twenty similar organizations from other countries.

²⁵² David A. Hollinger discusses another overlooked meeting in 1942 sponsored by the Federal Council of Churches to find consensus between the Christian Realist and pacifist factions of the liberal Protestant community. The Delaware Conference, as it was called, looked at some of the same issues as the Riverside Conference, including racism and colonialism, suggesting these issues were at the forefront of liberal Protestant concerns in the 1940s. In this period, the Protestant church believed in the viability of such conferences, and the sweeping statements that emerged from them, to effect change in the national polity and local congregations. Much of the invited participants list reads identically to that for the Riverside Conference: John Foster Dulles, Reinhold Niebuhr, John Mott, Luman Shafer, A. L. Warnshuis, and Kenneth Scott Latourette. David A. Hollinger, "The Realist-Pacifist Summit Meeting of March 1942 and the Political Reorientation of Ecumenical Protestantism in the United States," in David A. Hollinger, *After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Protestant Liberalism in Modern American History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 56-81. Samuel G. Welles, Religion editor, *Time*, to Dr. Van Kirk, 28 April 1941, Box 36, Folder 8, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

Allan A. Hunter, "U.S. Churchmen meet Japanese: delegates from Nippon confer with American leaders—reach understanding—missions continue," *Christian Century* 58, no. 19: 630; Thorburn Taylor Brumbaugh, "Japanese to use apostle's creed: platform of new national church accepted—not yet recognized by

of Christians to effect policy change. They pushed Christians in positions of power to use their influence to challenge discriminatory and inflammatory activities at the state, industry, and congregational levels. In their expressions of the nature of Christian relationships, the statements widened the mission umbrella to include regular Christians in the ministry of reconciliation. The formal message from the conference addressed Christians worldwide (although it is not clear the extent to which it was disseminated). Participants spoke of the fellowship, penitence, and humility that shaped their time together and asserted their contention that the conference formed a model for world leaders as a path to peace. “Renewed in faith by our experience together, we express our conviction that if the problems which harass the world could be faced in conference by the leaders of the nations in the spirit of Christ, there is no obstacle that could not be overcome.”²⁵³ They invited other

government—delegates visit Atlanta,” *Christian Century* 58, no. 19:630-531; Harold Edward Fay, “Kagawa revisits America,” *Christian Century* 58, no. 21:684-686; Maurice W. Fogle, “Disciples demand: keep peace pledge: over 6,200 vote to ask president to keep out of war—Kagawa interprets Japanese church,” *Christian Century* 58, no. 21: 694; E. K. Higdon, “Japanese explain union of churches: visiting delegation describes basis of union—missionaries may return—some money welcome,” *Christian Century* 58, no. 21:697-698; Henry J. Carpenter, “Kagawa calls for redemptive love: Japanese evangelist addresses large audiences in New York—Methodists act on war issues and labor,” *Christian Century* 58, no. 22: 729-730; *New York Times*, “Japan’s Christians Discount U. S. War,” May 15 1941, accessed April 10 2015, <http://exproxy.tcu.edu/docview/106056148?accountid=7090>; Louie Newton, “Good Morning,” *The Atlanta Constitution* (1881-1945), May 7, 1941, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://exproxy.tcu.edu/docview/503734738?accountid=7090>; “Peace Talk with Japan,” *Time* 37, no. 16: 79, *Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost*, accessed April 10, 2015, http://lib.tcu.edu/PURL/EZproxy_link.asp?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=cookie,ip,uid&db=a9h&AN=54826987&site=ehost-live&scope=site; “Christianity in Japan,” *Time* 37, no. 18: 56, *Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost*, accessed April 10, 2015, http://lib.tcu.edu/PURL/EZproxy_link.asp?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=cookie,ip,uid&db=a9h&AN=54827123&site=ehost-live&scope=site; and Luke Green, “Japan’s Envoys of Christianity to Visit Atlanta: Four Avoid Political Topics, Emphasize Goodwill Aims,” *The Atlanta Constitution* (1881-1945), May 6, 1941, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/503739109accountid=7090>.

²⁵³ “Formal message from the Conference,” From the Conference of Christians from Japan and the United States at Riverside, California, 25 April 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

Christians to join them in a renewed dedication to “a ministry of love, forbearance [sic] and reconciliation with people of all lands,” and to faith in the triumph of God’s will.²⁵⁴

The conference provided more concrete recommendations to the FCC and FMC. Participants requested that the FCC use its influence to disseminate accurate information about the nations “bordering the Pacific basin,” and to try to get the state superintendent of public instruction in California to do the same. This recommendation suggests the awareness of delegates that much of the derogatory information about Japan emerged from California politicians and organizations with ulterior motives, as politicians and anti-Japanese organizations had been fomenting against Japanese immigrants for years and considered war with Japan as a way to further limit the economic and cultural impact of Japanese Americans on the West Coast. Participants hoped the FCC would pressure the film industry to stop creating films that “incite racial and international misunderstanding and ill will,” and to encourage US churches to reach out to Japanese students in their neighborhoods in “an effort to interpret to them the nobler aspects of American life.”²⁵⁵

These requests addressed two major concerns of missionaries and liberal Protestants. The film industry persisted in creating films that negatively depicted both the Japanese and Japanese Americans.²⁵⁶ Missionaries like Galen Fisher had long argued that in doing so Hollywood promulgated anti-Japanese prejudice. In a similar vein, the deputations recommended that the FMC through its Committee on International Relations discern ways

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ “Recommendations made to the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America by the Conference of Japanese and American Christians, held at Riverside, California, April 20-25, 1941,” 25 April 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²⁵⁶ See John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 19-20; and Brian Locke, *Racial Stigma on the Hollywood Screen from World War II to the Present: The Orientalist Buddy Film* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

to foster the exchange of youth, scholars, and missionaries between America and Japan.²⁵⁷ They believed that such exchanges would increase cultural knowledge between both countries and that these programs would develop personal relationships between the people of Japan and the United States; as the missionaries knew, friendships tended to increase intercultural understanding and a desire for peaceful relations. This recommendation illuminates the extent to which the participants desired equal exchange between their respective countries; not the United States only, but Japan, had services to offer for the good of the other country, including missionaries. The final request made by the conference to the FCC and FMC recognized the political hopes underlying the conference. Participants asked that if the Japanese ambassador should propose a “courtesy call” by the “visiting Japanese guests” to the president of the United States that the organizations support the idea and “join in introducing our guests to the [p]resident.” While such a meeting did not take place, this appeal recognized their belief in the power of Christian witness to influence foreign policy.²⁵⁸

Following the conference, the Japanese deputation traveled eastward for several conferences and meetings with church groups in thirty cities. As a deputation, they met in Atlantic City, New Jersey with forty-five mission administrators at the Foreign Missions Conference of North America in order to discuss in specific terms various mission issues. They continued from there to Chicago for a small gathering that included individuals like Stanley Jones, a world-famous missionary who was also engaging in high level talks with United States’ administration members about ways to avert war with Japan. They intended

²⁵⁷ “Recommendations made to the Foreign Missions Conference by the Riverside Conference of Japanese and American Christians, held April 20-25, 1941.”

²⁵⁸ “Recommendations made to the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America by the Conference of Japanese and American Christians.”

this meeting to “follow up” the Riverside Conference and continue conversations about positive steps to take toward peace that began in Riverside. In the two weeks between the Atlantic City and Chicago meetings, the deputation split into groups of two and three to visit college campuses, seminaries, church groups, and the national conventions of Presbyterians, American Baptists, Disciples of Christ, and the United Brethren.²⁵⁹ Obeying a promise made to the State Department that they would avoid political speeches, these Japanese women and men focused their conversations on “the question of peace and brotherhood, and love.”²⁶⁰ Letters from the JNCC on return attested to the strength and hope garnered from these visits, and the renewed faith in the ability of Christians to speak for peace and friendship.²⁶¹

Just days before the start of the Riverside Conference, Galen Fisher, the man who would play such a key part in championing the rights of Japanese Americans after Pearl Harbor, reiterated the importance of these gatherings of Japanese and American missionaries and Christian leaders. “If we Christians in both countries cannot rise above nationalistic animus and hold close fellowship, despite the suspicions or opposition of our non-Christian countrymen,” he contended. “We have fallen upon evil days.” Assuming that other Christians held in common the internationalist values espoused by conference participants, Fisher also urged the focus to remain largely on “spiritual objectives” and to avoid partisan political and economic schemes. Even so, Fisher realized, for Christians who believed God was active in all realms of life a narrow line separated the spiritual and political.²⁶² Perhaps the gathering and post-conference meetings failed to alter the path toward war with on

²⁵⁹ Leland D. Hine, *Axling*, 141; and Federal Council of Churches, Press Release: “Riverside Conference Creates Better Understanding.”

²⁶⁰ J. Henry Carpenter to Dr. Kagawa, 11 April 1941, Box 12, Folder 3, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²⁶¹ Yoshumine Abe, Tsunejiro Matsuyama, Soichi Saito, Michio Kosaki, Michi Kawai, William Axling, to “Comrades in Christ,” 20 July 1941, Box 12, Folder 3, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

²⁶² Galen Fisher to Dr. Albert Palmer, 1 April 1941, Box 37, Folder 7, NCC RG 18, FCC Papers.

which Japan and the United States were traveling. But these women and men witnessed to an alternative route, and many remained committed to maintaining solidarity and fellowship even as they came to support their own nations' war efforts.

Conclusion

Not only did missionaries help instigate the Riverside Conference, but the future of the missionary project in Japan remained a high concern for all involved. The years of experience in Japan and the missionaries' desire to protect the bonds of friendship between the two countries and between American and Japanese Christians pushed American ecumenical leaders to organize the conference. The belief among most of the participants that Christians had a duty to hold their country to Christian standards of conduct and their belief in the power of prayer and example shaped the conference activities. The sensitivity of the topics addressed and the attempts to manipulate the media coverage of the event suggest the dangers of such a pursuit in the crisis atmosphere of early 1941, and suggest that the missionaries viewed Japan-American relations differently than the American public. Unlike in World War I when churches ardently joined the war cry believing the cause a crusade for God, by 1941, the missionary movement was wary of such claims. Instead, they claimed a prophetic role and called on both Japan and the United States to atone in humility for their sins of pride and aggression. Their attitudes showed the distance missionary theology had traveled since Galen Fisher eagerly promoted Christian imperialism at the turn of the century.

The changed attitudes of missionaries and other Christian leaders who joined with them in promoting the Riverside Conference, however, were not enough to avoid war. Missionaries began trickling back home in the latter part of 1941 as tensions increased.

Those who remained behind noted the hostility that often greeted them in the street, but rejoiced in the commitment of fellow Christians and co-workers. In California, Galen Fisher organized the Northern California Committee for Fair Play for Citizens and Aliens of Japanese Ancestry. Composed of leading academic, political, and religious individuals, the Committee sought to garner public support for fair treatment of Japanese Americans and to protect their civil rights. As early as 1923, Fisher had called upon the American public to treat Japanese Americans “not only with justice, but with courtesy,” linking the fates of Japan, the United States, and Japanese immigrants to the ability of Americans to welcome Asian faces in their midst.²⁶³ His efforts and the efforts of missionaries in the United States and Japan to cooperate with other Christians and change the course of nations ultimately failed. As the next chapter demonstrates, when war cleaved relations between Japan and the United States, these Protestant missionaries doubled their efforts to find just solutions for the “Japanese problem” on the West Coast, including redefining the nature of the problem in terms suitable for Christian internationalists.

²⁶³ Galen M. Fisher, *Creative Forces in Japan*, 63.

Chapter Two
“If it is merely fear of war hysteria, may we stop and think a minute?”
Missionary Responses to the Movement for Nikkei Removal from the West Coast

Although some of the Riverside Conference participants fondly remembered the Christian fellowship “binding us together in the Cycle of Prayer” in the late fall of 1941, many more realized that American involvement in a war with Japan was imminent and that public opinion was turning strongly against Nikkei.²⁶⁴ In the months before and after Japan’s December attack on Pearl Harbor, Galen Fisher, Gordon Chapman, and Frank Herron Smith worked behind the scenes to garner public support for Japanese Americans. Recognizing that prayers alone would not avert military aggression, these missionaries also acknowledged that certain forces on the Pacific Coast gleefully awaited war with Japan as an opportunity to rid the American West of Japanese Americans who offered economic competition as farmers, fishermen, and small business owners and offended the sensibilities of racists who dreamed of a white utopia in the West. To men and women who had fought the 1924 Asian Exclusion Act, war with Japan seemed a prophetic fulfillment of seeds sown with that legislation.

Both furloughed and active missionaries wholeheartedly agreed with the sentiments of a December 10, 1942, letter released jointly by the three interdenominational organizations responsible for coordinating the domestic and international missions of American Protestant denominations—the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, and the Home Missions Council of North America—which called upon member congregations to “maintain a Christian

²⁶⁴ Abdel Ross Wentz, president, Lutheran Theological Seminary, to Galen M. Fisher, 9 October 1941, BANC 86/179c, Galen Fisher Correspondence, Bancroft Library Special Collections, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter cited as the Galen Fisher Papers).

composure and charity in their dealings with the Japanese among us. . . . [And] to demonstrate a discipline which, while carefully observing precautions necessary to national safety, has no place for vindictiveness.”²⁶⁵ While the task of maintaining discipline and composure belonged to all Americans, the former Japan missionaries believed they were best positioned to battle the reckless malice and race-based hysteria certain to envelop the nation as war with Japan ensued. Just as the missionaries worked prior to December 1941 on means to avert war, they created strategies in the succeeding months to diminish the effects of anti-Japanese sentiments on West Coast Nikkei.

This chapter explores the efforts of the missionaries to address what scholars have termed the “race prejudice, war hysteria and . . . failure of political leadership” that engulfed much of the American West and enough of the federal government and military after Pearl Harbor to lead to the forced removal and mass incarceration of western Nikkei for the duration of World War II.²⁶⁶ Prior to, and coterminous with, the formation of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, missionaries in California sought alternatives to full-scale imprisonment of Japanese Americans. The first section of the chapter details the presentations made by several key missionaries before hearings of the Congressional National Defense Migration Committee (popularly known as the Tolan Committee after its Chair, California Congressman John Tolan). Galen Fisher, Frank Herron Smith, and Gordon Chapman pushed for selective hearings, offered plans for large-scale, inland agricultural cooperatives where Nikkei could voluntarily distance themselves from anti-Japanese forces on the coast while still supporting the war-time economy, and decried the flaunting of

²⁶⁵ Quoted Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, 3.

²⁶⁶ Commission on the Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* (Washington, D.C. : U. S. Government Printing Office, 1982), 459

American and Christian ideals and principles. When these efforts failed to alter federal plans for the West Coast Nikkei communities, furloughed missionaries like Elizabeth Evans and Jeane Noordhoff embedded themselves in Nikkei communities prior to removal in order to provide some stability, assistance, and friendship to congregations in disarray. Frank Herron Smith, Galen Fisher, and Gordon Chapman initiated the Protestant Commission with the intention of becoming the official agent of Protestant Nikkei on religious concerns as a means to decrease the deleterious effects of incarceration. These processes are the focus of the second part of the chapter. These missionaries believed themselves best suited to model for the nation and fellow Americans the ideals of Christian internationalism and to address the crisis of inaction that led to the mass deportation of an entire population based on race. The actions of these Japan missionaries may have felt to them, their intended recipients, and current scholars like inadequate anchors in a tempest, yet their faith in the power of genuinely extended Christian fellowship to challenge the status quo provided a measure of solace to Protestant Japanese Americans facing the upheaval and uprooting of their lives.

The Search for Alternatives to Mass Incarceration

Missionaries took seriously their role as ambassadors and intermediaries between cultures. During their years of service in Japan, they assiduously wrote letters to supporters and articles for mission and religious journals and engaged in strenuous speaking circuits while home on furlough in the United States, consistently interpreting Japanese culture, history, and people for a largely ignorant American public. On their return to the United States, these women and men turned their attentions toward the rumors and perverse anti-Japanese campaigns inciting the West Coast into hysteria and suspicion toward Japanese American citizens and aliens alike. Galen Fisher took the initiative in much of this work by

helping to organize religious, civic, business, and education leaders into a committee focused on a California public relations campaign championing the civil rights of Nikkei. He published articles prodding the American public to higher ideals and coordinated favorable testimony from missionaries before the congressional Tolan Commission hearings. The hearings that occurred in major cities on the Pacific Coast in the weeks after Executive Order 9066 placed the future of Japanese Americans in the hands of the US army. Through these efforts, Fisher and long-time Japan missionaries such as Frank Herron Smith, Gordon Chapman, and Azalia Emma Peet promoted alternatives to the popular drive for mass evacuation of Nikkei from the American West, warned of the dangerous consequences of mass evacuation to both the war effort domestically and overseas and to American democratic principles, and demonstrated their commitment to the values of Christian internationalism and to people of Japanese descent.

Directly following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, newspapers, politicians, and church groups released statements similar to the FCC and HMC joint statement calling on their constituents to remain civil and peaceful in their interactions with Japanese Americans, and no major acts of discrimination against West Coast Nikkei emerged in the first six weeks of America's entrance into World War II.²⁶⁷ Individuals who would oppose mass removal of enemy aliens or citizens believed that the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (hereafter, the FBI) roundup and arrest of several thousand suspect Japanese, Italian, and German enemy aliens in the days after the Pearl Harbor attack handled security concerns. In

²⁶⁷ In his study of Japanese American evacuation and incarceration, Morton Grodzins reports that in the month after December 7, 1941, the California press had 62.5 editorials favoring fair treatment of Nikkei and only 4.5 urging the removal or imprisonment of Japanese Americans. Morton Grodzins, *Americans Betrayed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 380. See also, Gary Okihiro and Julie Sly, "The Press, Japanese Americans, and the Concentration Camps," *Phylon* 44, no. 1 (1st Quarter, 1983): 66-83.

spite of a letter-writing campaign beginning in early January by individuals and organizations urging federal officials to remove Japanese Americans, both alien and citizen, from the coast, the majority of those whom Fisher labeled “thinking” Americans remained complacent; efforts to harm Nikkei appeared isolated and limited so those who should have felt alarmed failed to join the conversation in defense of their Japanese American neighbors.

However, the distribution of the Roberts Commission Report on January 24, 1942, provided the impetus for groups already keen to clear the West Coast of Japanese Americans through mass evacuation.²⁶⁸ The report, commissioned by President Roosevelt and chaired by Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts, scrutinized the attacks on Pearl Harbor and made only a vague reference to “consular spies” who may have passed on information to the Japanese government prior to the attack.²⁶⁹ Other investigations revealed that all apprehended Japanese agents were white Americans, often of German descent, and that no Nikkei assisted the Japanese military in its attack on Hawaii, yet the government delayed broad release of these findings; as a result, rumor and innuendo peddled by public and private figures spread quickly along the Pacific Coast.²⁷⁰ Journalists and politicians jumped on the reference and argued vociferously that potential fifth columnists lurking in the Nikkei community were waiting to commit further acts of espionage on Pacific Coast communities

²⁶⁸ For more about the history and build-up of anti-Japanese American sentiment prior to and directly after Pearl Harbor, see Robinson, *By Order of the President*, 89-94; Carey McWilliams, *Prejudice. Japanese Americans: Symbol of Racial Intolerance* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1944); and Roger Daniels, *Concentration Camp U.S.A.: Japanese Americans and World War II* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.: 1972), 26-41.

²⁶⁹ “Attack on Pearl Harbor by Japanese Armed Forces” or “Report of the Commission Appointed by the President of the United States to Investigate and Report the Facts Relating to the Attack Made by the Japanese Armed Forces upon Pearl Harbor in the Territory of Hawaii on December 7, 1941,” 77th Cong., 2d sess., 1942, S. Doc. 159.

²⁷⁰ McWilliams, *Prejudice*, 111.

and military installations.²⁷¹ Regular editorials and reporting in West Coast papers, particularly those owned by William Randolph Hearst and James McClatchy, news of continued Japanese victories in the Pacific, and jeremiads by groups like the California chapter of the American Legion and the Sons of the Golden West created an atmosphere of fear and hostility toward Japanese Americans until, in early February 1942, the Pacific Coast congressional delegation petitioned the president for the immediate removal of all Nikkei from “all strategic areas.”²⁷²

Events moved quickly following the release of the Roberts Report.²⁷³ Not only did members of Congress pressure the president to exclude Japanese Americans from the coast, but Lt. Gen. John DeWitt, the commanding general of the Western Defense Command, sent a memorandum on February 14 to Secretary of War Henry Stimson advising the removal of all Nikkei and other “subversive” persons from the Western Defense Command. Acceding to pressure, President Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, signed Executive Order 9066, which enabled the secretary of war or any military commanders to establish military zones from which the military could exclude any persons, on February 19, 1942. Between February 14 and March 2, 1942, when General DeWitt issued Proclamation No. 1, which made the western half of California, Oregon, Washington, and Arizona a military area from which the military would eventually remove everyone of Japanese descent (see Figure 5), a group of

²⁷¹ Max Everest-Phillips demonstrates that Americans had believed in an “orchestrated espionage campaign” by Japan in the inter-war period which fed into the frenzy on release of the Robert’s Report. Max Everest-Phillips, “The Pre-war Fear of Japanese Espionage: Its Impact and Legacy,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 42, no. 2 (April 2007): 243-265.

²⁷² On the Pacific Coast Congressional delegation, see Galen Fisher, “Japanese Evacuation from the Pacific Coast,” *Far Eastern Survey* 11, no. 13 (29 June 1942): 146; and McWilliams, *Prejudice*, 112-113. On the press response, Okihiro and Sly, “The Press, Japanese Americans, and the Concentration Camps”; McWilliams, *Prejudice*, 118, 234; Greg Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy: Japanese Confinement in North America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 19, 85; and Daniels, *Concentration Camps: North America*, 30.

²⁷³ For a detailed analysis of the events and decisions that led to the removal of all aliens and citizens of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast, Robinson, *By Order of the President*; and Commission on the Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied*, 47-116.

liberal congressmen purportedly received the support of Roosevelt to conduct a series of hearings on the West Coast. Invited by Carey McWilliams, chief of the Division of Immigration and Housing of the California Department of Industrial Relations and a liberal dedicated to improving both labor and race relations, the purpose of the Committee was to reduce tensions and offer alternatives to a mass roundup of Nikkei.²⁷⁴ Congress appropriated \$300,000 for the Tolan Committee, to hold hearings in major West Coast cities between February 21 and March 12.²⁷⁵ Although the Tolan Committee hoped to allay hysteria, by the time the group began hearings, the decision to force all people of Japanese descent from the West Coast was essentially a fait accompli.²⁷⁶ Still, as the rest of this section shows, missionaries took the lead in organizing what small protests erupted over the decision for mass evacuation and incarceration.

The furor successfully played on the pre-existing fears and prejudices of many on the West Coast, yet missionaries were among the few who recognized the dangerous implications of anti-Japanese baiting for both Japanese Americans and democratic practices and deplored the willingness of elected officials to concede to popular attitudes.²⁷⁷ One returned missionary who deemed mass removal unnecessary wrote: “The slumbering embers

²⁷⁴ DeWitt would make the eastern portion of California a military zone in early June.

²⁷⁵ Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy*, 84; Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 107.

²⁷⁶ As Robert Shaffer points out, when Congress appointed the Committee, no clarity existed as to how EO 9066 would be implemented. Shaffer, “Opposition to Internment,” 601. That mass evacuation was the intended outcome, at least for DeWitt, of EO 9066 became apparent first when he gave forty-eight hours to the Nikkei living on Terminal Island, San Pedro, California to evacuate. A fishing community, most of the adult men had already been rounded up and arrested following December 7, 1941; primarily women who worked in the fish factories and their children remained in the community. For a personal record of the Terminal Island experience, see, Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*. The Commission on the Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians notes that members of the Committee, like the public in general, believed that Nikkei in Hawaii had participated in the Pearl Harbor attack by committing espionage. *Personal Justice Denied*, 95.

²⁷⁷ The Office of Facts and Figures in the Office for Emergency Management conducted an opinion survey across the nation from March 28 to April 7, 1942, and found nearly unanimous support for removing Japanese residents from the West Coast, and 59% approval for removing Japanese American citizens. The Commission on the Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied*, 112.

of public antagonism” were “deliberately fanned . . . until a conflagration threatened, but at any time it could have been quenched if the authorities had shown the proper firmness.”²⁷⁸



Figure 5. Map of Exclusion Zones and Incarceration Camps. Open source.

Galen Fisher also noted that no local, state, or federal authorities stepped in to correct misperceptions about the threat of espionage, to reaffirm the propensity toward loyalty among Nikkei, or to promise to protect Japanese Americans from threats of violence.²⁷⁹ When the government failed to provide direction, small groups of concerned citizens organized to protest efforts to indiscriminately remove Japanese Americans from the

²⁷⁸ Charles Iglehart, “Citizens Behind Barbed Wire,” *The Nation* (June 6, 1942): 649.

²⁷⁹ Fisher, “Our Japanese Refugees,” 424-426.

West Coast.²⁸⁰ Often, missionaries led these endeavors on behalf of the Nikkei. Their presence before the Tolan Committee, though small in number, presented a stark contrast to the anti-Japanese vitriol spewed by the majority of witnesses. Their willingness to serve as witnesses in support of Japanese American rights put them in a minority group at the hearings.²⁸¹

The three men who would become the leaders of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service coordinated positive testimony at several of the Tolan hearings.²⁸² Although witnesses like Fisher, Frank Herron Smith, and Gordon Chapman were in the minority of white individuals providing testimony that supported the civil rights of Japanese Americans, they made their influence felt throughout the hearings in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Their three goals were to make a public statement about the explicit loyalty of the vast majority of Japanese Americans and to press for a policy of selective hearings to

²⁸⁰On the failure of several high profile officials to support Japanese Americans, see the following work on then California District Attorney and future governor and Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren, Los Angeles mayor Fletcher Bowron, and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Charles Wollenberg, "'Dear Earl': The Fair Play Committee, Earl Warren, and Japanese Internment," *California History* 89, no. 4 (2012): 24-55, 57-60; Abraham Hoffman, "The Conscience of a Public Official: Los Angeles Mayor Fletcher Bowron and Japanese Removal," *Southern California Quarterly* 92, no. 3 (Fall 2010): 243-274; Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 115-131; and Robinson, *By Order of the President*. Greg Robinson argues in *A Tragedy of Democracy* that only a limited protest emerged among liberal groups in the West, and that was largely among a "small circle" of progressive churches. Robinson, *Tragedy of Democracy*, 108.

²⁸¹Stephanie Bangarth and Robert Shaffer have documented the lead former missionaries took in protesting the incarceration of Japanese Americans. Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest*, 72-78, 94-95; Shaffer, "Cracks in the Consensus," 84-120; and Shaffer, "Opposition to Internment," 597-619. As Robert Shaffer's analysis of the hearing transcripts demonstrates, of the non-Japanese American witnesses at the hearings forty-five supported the removal of Nikkei and expressed anti-Japanese American bias, twelve questioned the necessity of mass evacuation, and thirty-four opposed mass evacuation. Shaffer does not include statements (versus testimony) that favored evacuation, those who presented only facts related to evacuation, or witnesses who spoke about the Italian- or German- American populations. His research counters that of Sandra Taylor, who asserts that only ten percent of the witnesses at the hearings stood up for Japanese American rights. Sandra Taylor, "'Fellow-Feelers with the Afflicted,'" 124.

²⁸²On March 1, 1942, Galen Fisher wrote to a colleague that "I have been busy night and day in connection with Japanese problems. . . . Last weekend it was the Tolan Hearing, for which several of us prepared memos, and then appeared to testify, -- although they got so rushed at the end that we only had thirty minutes for the five of us." Galen Fisher to Rev. Clark P. Garman, 1 March 1942, Box 54, Folder 1, RG 1259, Charles Kikuchi Papers, 1941-1948, Charles E. Young Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter cited as the Kikuchi Papers).

determine loyalty, to warn the congressmen of the dangers that the mass removal of a group based on racial identity posed to both the war effort and the American project, and to stand up for their convictions that a Christian and democratic nation should not trample on the civil rights of any minorities. To further these goals, the three men testified at the February 28 hearings in San Francisco and provided documents and ideas that became the framework for a presentation by former missionaries and religious leaders in Los Angeles.

Furthermore, each of these men claimed expertise on the situation by virtue of their experience in Japan and in the United States. Smith and Chapman testified as experts on the loyalty of Japanese Americans among whom they worked as denominational representatives of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches, respectively. They also drew upon their years of experience in Japan to speak to the effect of American discriminatory policies toward Japanese Americans on Asian attitudes toward the United States. Similarly, Fisher utilized his decades of experience in Japan and the United States to warn of the dangers mass evacuation posed. While he testified in company with Smith, Chapman, and several other San Francisco Bay Area religious leaders, Fisher used his minutes before the Tolan Committee to present a statement on behalf of another organization he helped organize, the Committee on National Security and Fair Play (hereafter, the Fair Play Committee), and to present alternative plans to mass evacuation that emerged from the Japanese American community.

The men first asserted their confidence in the loyalty of the vast majority of Japanese Americans. The language they carefully chose in their testimony countered the claim made by anti-Japanese forces that it was impossible to determine the loyalty of individual Japanese Americans. Fisher contended that the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) had

detained the few potentially dangerous Nikkei in December and argued that the Nisei were as loyal at that moment as they had been in the weeks before the release of the Roberts Report when California Governor Culbert Olson and other leaders had “paid tribute to their loyalty and civic devotion.” In this argument, Fisher subtly but masterfully contrasted his high opinion of Japanese Americans with his disgust for the views of individuals like the governor which shifted based on political expediency and self-interests, as the governor was among those who had initially been allies in Fisher’s efforts to support Japanese Americans.²⁸³

Smith and Chapman furthered the argument for the loyalty of Nisei to the United States by claiming Nisei “Americanism.” Frank Herron Smith pointed toward a group of young Nisei men waiting to testify and stated that he had known them for fifteen years, performed the weddings of several of them, and found them as American as his and the hearing chair’s own sons.²⁸⁴ He argued that their parents bought war bonds, encouraged their sons to serve in the army, sent their children to public schools, and would become citizens if federal law allowed their naturalization.²⁸⁵ Chapman used another tactic to prove the loyalty and American orientation of the second generation of Japanese Americans. He claimed that Nisei were more completely Americanized and loyal than the children of some other groups of immigrants. As a group they were “mentally alert and very well versed in American

²⁸³ Statement by Galen M. Fisher, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 29, 11199. Smith broke the ice at the hearings by noting he had been an underclassman at Kansas University when John Tolan was a debate champion there.

²⁸⁴ Testimony of Rev. Frank Herron Smith, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 29, 11208; and Ellen Eisenberg, “‘As Truly American as Your Son’: Voicing Opposition to Internment in Three West Coast Cities,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 104, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 551.

²⁸⁵ Testimony of Rev. Frank Herron Smith, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11208.

ideals. . . . They [had] proven that they can become loyal Americans and drink . . . deeply of our culture.” The immersion of so many of the second generation in American cultural practices including schooling, youth culture, and for many, Christianity, as well as their willingness to sacrifice their lives and their physical and financial comfort for the war effort demonstrated their commitment to the United States (Figures 6 and 7).²⁸⁶



Figure 6. Children Pledge Allegiance to the Flag in San Francisco. Reproduced from the National Archives.

²⁸⁶ Testimony of Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 29, 11206.



Figure 7. Very American family in front of farmhouse, pre-evacuation. Reproduced from the National Archives.

The claim that Japanese Americans had dedicated themselves to American values and culture ran counter to the claims for biological determinism spouted by the anti-Japanese forces that dominated the Tolan hearings. Instead, these missionaries voiced progressive ideas about race and culture that were beginning to gain currency among liberals but that were also a more inclusive, less racialized definition of Theodore Roosevelt's civic nationalism, which created national unity based on a "shared set of political practices and values" but had limited that national community to ethnic European Americans.²⁸⁷ In 1942, sociologists Ashley Montagu and Ruth Benedict published best-selling books that challenged biological racism, and in 1944, Gunnar Myrdal would publish *An American Dilemma* in which he defined "The American Creed" as the "fundamental equality of all people." Myrdal defined American's basic tenets as the "inalienable rights to freedom,

²⁸⁷ Michael Ignatieff, quoted in Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 45. See also Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, Third Edition (New York: Routledge, 2015), 25-29.

justice, and fair opportunity.”²⁸⁸ When Smith and Chapman argued for the American identity of Japanese Americans, they implied that these individuals supported the values Myrdal identified. Smith linked these values to Christianity, by attesting to the loyalty of “90%” of the Christian Nikkei while averring that his lack of familiarity with the Buddhist population meant that he could only believe in their loyalty “in spite of their un-American practices and leadership.”²⁸⁹ According to these sociologists and the missionaries, Americanism was based upon values and principles, the very values and principles for which the country was fighting, and not race or ancestry.

If rational, thinking individuals like the missionaries could determine the loyalty of individual Japanese Americans, then according to these men, the government could easily institute hearing boards for Nikkei as it had for Italian and German enemy aliens. Although no one knew what direction the military would ultimately take in its policies toward Nikkei, the missionaries recognized the force of the pressure groups that clamored for the removal of all alien and citizen Japanese Americans from the Pacific West. They intended their insistence on the loyalty of Japanese Americans, and especially the Nisei, and their own ability to judge that loyalty, to counter the movement for mass removal.²⁹⁰ When he

²⁸⁸ Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 192-193; and Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*, 31-32. M. F. Ashley Montague, *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942); Ruth Benedict, *Race and Racism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1942); and Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York & London: Harper & Brothers, 1944).

²⁸⁹ Testimony of Rev. Frank Herron Smith, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11208.

²⁹⁰ In a similar way, the men's references to Italian and German resident aliens worked to create a commonality between Japanese resident aliens and the other groups of enemy aliens; if the government could determine the loyalty of European enemy aliens, why not also Japanese aliens? The references to German and Italian aliens also subtly destabilized the hearings. While some Italian and German interest groups and individuals testified on behalf of Italian and German aliens, it was clear that the emphasis of the hearings was on ridding the West Coast of Japanese Americans. Smith, Chapman, and others who linked the three enemy alien groups reminded those present that the United States was at war with the Axis powers as well, and that fascist groups were alive and functioning among the Italian and German American communities. Fisher actually said that Nazi partisans

testified, Fisher submitted as evidence a proposal he and several other leaders had prepared in early February for Lt. Gen. John DeWitt that outlined a way to institute selective hearing boards in Japanese American communities. He believed that such hearing boards could determine the loyalty of the Nisei in six weeks. If DeWitt were unwilling to defer evacuation, the proposal urged setting up the hearing boards in the assembly areas, but deplored the expense incurred to the Japanese Americans who would unnecessarily have to break up their homes and leave their jobs.²⁹¹ Chapman also called for selective hearings for Nisei as a “fair and constructive policy” that fell within the scope of EO 9066.²⁹²

At the hearings, the men presented alternatives to involuntary removal. Chapman noted with some frustration that churches located inland of the prohibited areas were ready to provide shelter, food, and work for those evacuated from strategic military areas, yet were “obstructed because of local antagonisms” from helping. The ugliness of the anti-Japanese propaganda meant that local congregations received threats but also that protestors often prevented Nikkei groups from resettling in communities.²⁹³

Fisher presented another alternative to involuntary removal that he had been working on with several Nisei pastors. Galen Fisher explored with several Nisei the possibility of inland cooperative farming, a plan that would enable Japanese Americans to move freely and voluntarily and continue to contribute to the wartime economy instead of being placed

were a bigger risk for sabotage than Japanese Americans. Testimony of Galen M. Fisher, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11200.

²⁹¹ Selective Evacuation of Japanese-American Citizens, Proposals Presented to Lt. General John L. DeWitt by the Committee on National Security and Fair Play, San Francisco, Calif., March 9, 1942, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 29, 11201-11202.

²⁹² Testimony of Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 11207.

²⁹³ Testimony of Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 11204.

in detention at government expense. Cooperative farming had a long history in the United States; most recently, the New Deal Resettlement Administration (hereafter, RA) considered cooperative farms one prong in its efforts to address rural poverty, some rural Americans embraced cooperatives as an alternative to what seemed to be the failures of rampant capitalism as evidenced by the Great Depression.²⁹⁴ The Japanese theologian and activist Toyohiko Kagawa had strongly influenced missionaries like Fisher. Kagawa championed in Japan England's nineteenth-century Rochdale cooperative model, which sought to meld a cooperative philosophy of equality with the ideas of competitive capitalism.²⁹⁵ Similarly, some of the Issei had formed agricultural cooperatives based on their religious beliefs and their desire to assist one another economically when they arrived in the United States.²⁹⁶ Although alien land laws passed in California, Oregon, and Washington between 1913 and 1923 denied residents ineligible for citizenship the right to purchase or enter into long-term leases of land, Issei had found ways around the restrictions by buying or leasing land in the names of their Nisei children, forming corporations to buy the land, or using white

²⁹⁴ By 1943, however, government involvement in cooperative farms had come under assault in Congress as the work of Communists. J. Rebecca Thompson, "Deshee Farm: A New Deal Experiment with Cooperative Farming," *Indiana Magazine of History* 91, no. 4 (December 1995): 380-406; J. A. Baker, review of *Research Guide on Cooperative Group Farming* by Joseph W. Eaton and Saul M. Katz (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1942) in *The Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics* 19, no. 2 (May 1943): 247-249; and Victoria Saker Woeste, *The Farmer's Benevolent Trust: Law and Agricultural Cooperation in Industrial America, 1865-1945* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998). For an example of extant Japanese American cooperative agricultural ventures in California at the time of World War II, see Valerie J. Matsumoto, *Farming the Home Place: A Japanese American Community in California, 1919-1982* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); and Timothy J. Lukes and Gary Y. Okihiro, *Japanese Legacy: Farming and Community Life in California's Santa Clara Valley* (Cupertino, CA: California History Center, 1985).

²⁹⁵ Iglehart, *A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan*, 210; Fisher, "The Cooperative Movement in Japan," 478-491; Eric Hopkins, *Working-Class Self-Help in Nineteenth Century England: Responses to Industrialization* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); and Woeste, *The Farmer's Benevolent Trust*, 20-21.

²⁹⁶ For example, Gordon Hirabayashi's parents formed a cooperative in Washington in 1919 with Nagano Prefecture compatriots and fellow practitioners of a Christian non-denominational sect that shared many pacifist and cooperative values with the Quakers. Gordon Hirabayashi, with James Hirabayashi and Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, *A Principled Stand: The Story of Hirabayashi v. United States* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013): 15-17.

intermediaries to purchase or lease land on their behalf. By 1940, at least 17,000 Nikkei, and half of the adult Nikkei males, engaged in some form of agriculture in California.²⁹⁷ While a cooperative farming venture would not address the needs of all Japanese Americans who needed to move from military exclusion zones, it would help some of them.

Hideo Hashimoto, a Methodist pastor in Fresno, K. Imai, a Presbyterian pastor in Dinuba, and Hi Korematsu, a Protestant Nisei nurseryman in San Francisco, located a ghost town in eastern Fresno County that seemed perfect for establishing a cooperative farming venture and drew Fisher in as an advisor to the Cooperative Farms, Inc., project.²⁹⁸ The men envisioned a cooperative community that would include three farms and a fully functional town with a post office, school, church, community center, community cooperative stores, and a branch line of the Santa Fe railroad.²⁹⁹ As far as the organizers were concerned, their idea would prevent the area from being claimed by rapaciously competitive Japanese American farmers in the evacuation rush; instead, their cooperative plan would ensure economic success for all participants and provide vital services to the war effort. They intended to work closely with farm management and soil experts at the Farm Security Administration (hereafter, FSA), hoped to get loans from the FSA to start the project, and hoped that Fisher and his colleagues could gain traction for the idea among army and federal officials. A key component of their argument was that the founders of the project were all college-educated, Christian Nisei; they hoped that promoting the cooperative farms as the

²⁹⁷ Robert Higgs, "Landless by Law: Japanese Immigrants in California Agriculture to 1941," *The Journal of Economic History* 38, no. 1, *The Tasks of Economic History* (March 1978): 207; Lukes and Okihiro, *Japanese Legacy*; and Matsumoto, *Farming the Home Place*.

²⁹⁸ There was one of several plans for large-scale resettlement. See Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy*, 111-112.

²⁹⁹ On farming colonies in Fresno County, see Virginia E. Thickens, "Pioneer Agricultural Colonies of Fresno County," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (March 1946): 17-38; and Virginia E. Thickens, "Pioneer Agricultural Colonies of Fresno County (Concluded)," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (June 1946): 167-177.

project of Christian citizens would derail anxiety about large colonies of potentially subversive aliens.³⁰⁰

Fisher expressed pleasure at the initiative of these men yet had reservations about the ultimate success of the venture. His concerns ranged from practical issues with the chosen site to potential resistance from the local population to any large settlements of Nikkei. Fresno County was a dry inland area reliant on irrigation for farming. Fisher expressed his concern about reliable water supplies to Hashimoto and urged the men to consider sites for farming colonies east of the Sierra-Nevada Mountains. Fisher recognized the vehemence of public opposition to Japanese American presence on the West Coast and feared that even army protection could not guarantee the safety of any Nikkei settlement in California. He encouraged the men to maintain secrecy about the potential location of the future cooperative farm and enjoined similar confidentiality from his colleagues with whom he shared the plan, “lest an [sic] hysterical and ignorant opposition be stirred up.”³⁰¹

Fisher hoped that such ideas as large-scale farming settlements would provide an alternative to incarceration for many of the Nikkei. He recognized that farming would not provide an antidote for all Japanese Americans, since many lived in urban areas and had little or no agricultural experience. However, for those who did, he saw cooperative farms or other forms of agricultural communities, and the willingness of religious, civic, and social

³⁰⁰ Hideo Hashimoto to Dr. Galen M. Fisher, 13 March 1942, Box 54, Folder 1, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers; and “Objectives for Cooperative Farms,” statement included in the Testimony of Frank S. Gaines, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 29, 11096-11101. At this point, cooperative ventures were still viewed as positive parts of New Deal programming and not as subversive, potentially communist activities. In fact, several of the incarceration camps had robust cooperative ventures, including general stores. Individuals like Hashimoto were key to getting these venues started in the camps.

³⁰¹ Galen Fisher to Hideo Hashimoto, 16 March 1942, Box 54, Folder 1, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers; and Galen M. Fisher, “The Labor Shortage and Resettling Japanese Evacuees,” a Memorandum by Galen M. Fisher, Secretary of Committee on National Security and Fair Play, of which Dr. Henry F. Grady is Chairman, 17 March 1942, Box 54, Folder 1, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

organizations to help find farming or gardening work outside of the military exclusion zones for Nikkei as solutions to calls for full-scale evacuation.³⁰² He ultimately blamed the failure of the plan which had been “zealously promoted” and had the support of numerous governmental agencies on the inability to locate land with adequate water far from sensitive military installations and in an area in which current inhabitants were not absolutely hostile to Japanese Americans.³⁰³ Yet his support of Hashimoto’s idea buoyed the pastor in the dark days of evacuation that followed, prompting the Nisei to write that the help and sympathy of white friends like Fisher made the “real meaning of friendship, and of the Christian fellowship that transcends the barriers of raced and nations stand out in clear-cut relief in these heart-breaking days.”³⁰⁴

At the Tolan hearing, Fisher submitted the proposal for the cooperative farms.³⁰⁵ He did not, however, elaborate on the plan. This was a tactical decision on Fisher’s part.³⁰⁶ He hoped for the success of the idea, but at the hearings he wanted to press the need for selective hearings that would, if implemented, make unnecessary the evacuation of many Japanese Americans from the West Coast. If hearing boards found almost all Japanese Americans loyal, they could stay in their current homes and support the war effort through their current employment, while the few disloyal Nikkei residents would join those already

³⁰² Galen M. Fisher, “The Labor Shortage and Resettling Japanese Evacuee”; and Testimony of Galen M. Fisher, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11197-11198.

³⁰³ Galen M. Fisher, “Our Japanese Refugees,” 426; and Boes, “Other-Directed Protest,” 115. Another Nisei, Fred Wada, successfully established the only Japanese American farm cooperative in Keetley, Utah, during the war; Fisher gets credit for convincing Wada to organize it as a non-profit cooperative. Galen M. Fisher, “Japanese Colony: Success Story,” *Survey Graphic: Magazine of Social Interpretation* 32, no. 2 (February 1943): 41-43.

³⁰⁴ Hideo Hashimoto, “Epistle to America,” 18 April 1942, Reel 83, BANC MSS 67/14c, Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Records, Bancroft Library Special Collections, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter cited as JERS).

³⁰⁵ Farm Cooperative Proposals, 13 February 1942, Folder A16.259, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

³⁰⁶ Robert Shaffer calls Fisher and the other missionaries who protested mass removal “tactically flexible” activists who shaped their arguments to the context and with the goal of providing the best help to Japanese Americans in each given situation. Shaffer, “Cracks in the Consensus,” 92.

interned by the Justice Department.³⁰⁷ He was willing to submit the cooperative farming proposal as an exhibit, yet his testimony downplayed the idea because he believed mass evacuation of a predominantly loyal group unnecessary and dangerous.

The missionaries tied selective hearings aimed at identifying potentially dangerous Japanese Americans to their concerns about the negative ramifications of a mass evacuation based on racial profiling. Fisher stated repeatedly that mass evacuation was impractical, but he emphasized the sense among the missionaries that mass evacuation also “hinder[ed] . . . attainment” of national security goals; Chapman agreed and instead charged that prohibited zones created unnecessary hardships for a loyal group of people.³⁰⁸ They emphasized the fear that removing from homes and jobs all citizen and alien Nikkei would foster deep resentment and bitterness, especially among those loyal citizens, creating a disaffected population that could potentially become subversive and deepening America’s racial divisions postwar. They used their years of immersion in Japan and other parts of Asia to speak as experts on the reaction in Asia to such a policy. As Fisher declaimed, violating the “equal rights of our fellow citizens” made a mockery of America’s “pretensions of fighting to defend democracy” and fed the propaganda-machine in Japan that America was “arrogant and race-based.”³⁰⁹

Chapman intensified the argument by stating that during his years in Japan he had been treated with respect and kindness; all reports coming out about missionaries interned in Japan suggested they were being treated fairly. If the United States were to implement a

³⁰⁷ Boes, “Other-Directed Protest,” 80.

³⁰⁸ Statement by Galen M. Fisher, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11199; and Statement by Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11206.

³⁰⁹ Statement by Galen M. Fisher, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11199.

racially motivated policy of removal from the West Coast, he stated, Japan might change how it treated American citizens, and might alienate America's allies in China.³¹⁰ In turn, Smith compared mass evacuation of all Japanese Americans to Nazi policies toward Jews.³¹¹ In the view of these men, the United States risked resembling the fascist forces against which it fought. Their arguments echoed those made by African Americans in the "Double V" campaign.³¹² When pushed for clarification by the chair of the Committee, the men unanimously voiced their desire that the government treat Japanese Americans in exactly the same manner as Germans and Italians, while Fisher went further and stated that he believed the United States government and military should treat Japanese American citizens in the same manner as "white Americans."³¹³

The concerns for the political ramifications of mass removal could not completely overshadow the missionaries' humanitarian concern for the Japanese American community. All of the men expressed distress over the difficulties Nikkei already had to deal with: curfews, limits to the distances from their homes they could travel, and arbitrary lines drawn through communities that designated prohibited zones.³¹⁴ Smith expressed his belief that the

³¹⁰ Testimony of Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11205; and Statement by Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11207.

³¹¹ Allen Hunter, "Nazism in America," *The Christian Century*, (March 18, 1942): 365.

³¹² Thomas Sugrue, "Hillburn, Hattiesburg, and Hitler: Wartime Activists Think Globally and Act Locally," in *Fog of War: The Second World War and the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. by Kevin M. Kruse and Stephen Tuck (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 87-102; and Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008), 157-200.

³¹³ Testimony of Galen Fisher, Gordon Chapman, and Frank Herron Smith, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11210. Fisher's decision to compare Nikkei to white Americans underscores the extent to which whiteness remained the standard by which many Americans measured all other groups of people. Even though individuals like Fisher were more progressive in their understandings of the relationships among race, cultural and intellectual development, and ability to belong to the civic polity, they remained ensconced in the linguistic framework of the era.

³¹⁴ Attorney General Frances Biddle established prohibited zones from which all enemy aliens had to evacuate on January 29, 1941, including the San Francisco waterfront; on February 4, the US army declared twelve "restricted areas" in which enemy aliens had to obey a curfew and refrain from traveling more than five miles

military should leave in their residences women, children, and old and ill men as they posed no danger. He expressed shock at the unnecessary deaths in detention of two Issei men, one from tuberculosis, and the other from cancer.³¹⁵

Ultimately, however, a Methodist missionary who located in a Japanese American farming community in Gresham, Oregon, when she returned to the United States in 1941 after twenty-five years as a social worker in Japan provided the most heart-felt plea for Japanese Americans during the Tolan hearings in Portland. A week after the San Francisco hearings, Azalia Peet appeared briefly before the Tolan Committee and peppered her testimony with questions which the committee did not answer.³¹⁶ Peet questioned the necessity of mass evacuation, asked for proof of wrong-doing, wondered if the “law-abiding, upright” Nikkei community were truly such a menace to society, and tied it all together with the financial costs to the government and taxpayers, the denial of citizen’s civil liberties, and the suffering of those in hospitals, vulnerable newborn babies and pregnant women, and young people whose schooling would be disrupted.³¹⁷ Like Smith, who spoke of his personal relationships among the Christian Nikkei community, Peet drew upon her social work

from their homes. “Chronology of Japanese American History,” in Daniels, Taylor, and Kitano, ed., *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, xvi.

³¹⁵ Testimony of Frank Herron Smith, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11211.

³¹⁶ Instead, committee members peppered her with tautological questions designed to confuse and discredit an older woman: if there had been no sabotage in Hawaii until the attack on Pearl Harbor, would not the Pacific Coast Japanese American community wait until an attack on the coast to prove their disloyalty and commit sabotage? If she, a non-Japanese citizen, was removed from a strategic area in Japan, shouldn’t the American government also remove non-American citizens, and even those citizens with Japanese “blood” still be removed? When she challenged the questions by noting that it was the American government and not the Japanese government that had evacuated her from Japan, and that she was not sure the Japanese government would have removed her from sensitive areas if she were a Japanese citizen with “American blood,” the committee quickly ended her testimony. Testimony of Miss Azalia Emma Peet, Methodist Missionary, Gresham, Oregon, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., Part 30, Portland and Seattle Hearings, 11386-11387.

³¹⁷ Ibid. According to Ellen Eisenberg’s analysis of the Portland hearings, Peet was the only individual who “presented a clear, principled statement against removal. Eisenberg, ““As Truly American as Your Son,”” 547.

ministry among Japanese Americans in Oregon. While she had to admit that she could not vouch for the loyalty of every single Nikkei on the West Coast, she hoped to paint a picture of those she knew who were indisputably loyal and whose lives the relocation would irreparable and negatively affect.

Similarly, Chapman expressed concern for the Protestant churches. Hoping that the military would remove only Issei from the coast, which was a slim hope given the extent of the pressure upon the government to force all Nikkei from the West, Chapman worried about the loss of the leadership of Issei pastors and older members to the health of the churches. Such an act would destroy the “centers of Christian-American culture and it will be a great pity to drive out these Japanese Christians from their church homes,” he lamented.³¹⁸

Chapman’s linkage of Christianity and the United States implied a strong connection between Christian and American values that the missionaries fought to establish in the hearings. By emphasizing the number of Nikkei who practiced Protestant Christianity, particularly among the Nisei, or citizen group, the missionaries hoped to make an indisputable claim for the allegiance of Japanese Americans to the United States. These women and men believed, as did many Protestant Christians at the time, that Protestant belief in the intrinsic worth of the individual and the equality of each individual before God shaped America’s democratic values. Therefore, Christ-professing Japanese Americans could not profess fidelity to the Christian God and to the emperor-worshiping, militaristic government in Japan. Christian faith lent itself to loyalty toward the United States; even if the United States imperfectly embodied either Christian ideals or American ideals, in the

³¹⁸ Statement by Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11206.

eyes of individuals like these missionaries, it was the closest replication of Protestant Christian values of any nation.

Linking Christian and American values also positioned the missionaries to act as prophetic witnesses, to speak from a position of moral superiority to call citizens and government back to America's Christian ideals of equality and liberty. In the proposal Fisher and others had submitted to General DeWitt in early February, the argument against mass removal spoke to the "acute distress" such an action would cause "many white citizens like ourselves" over the violation of democratic standards.³¹⁹ Such distress was no small concern; forcing all individuals of Japanese ancestry out of the West Coast would disrupt their lives, but it would also flout everything for which the United States stood. Chapman emphasized this point several times in his testimony and written statement before the Tolan Committee. The policies being considered by the military were "unnecessarily drastic, contrary to our American principles of fair play, destructive of some of our best human resources," and "likely to appear as a repudiation of the rights of human freedom at a time when we are having a difficult enough time proving to the world that we are actually fighting such a battle for the world."³²⁰ In the opinion of the missionaries, the battle that the United States fought was a cosmic battle against internal forces of greed, discrimination, and intolerance as well as a war against fascism abroad.

Not all of the individuals aligned with Fisher, Chapman, and Smith who provided testimony or statements to the Tolan Commission presented the same united opposition to

³¹⁹ Selective Evacuation of Japanese-American Citizens, Proposals Presented to Lt. General John L. DeWitt by the Committee on National Security and Fair Play, San Francisco, Calif., March 9, 1942, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 29, 11202.

³²⁰ Statement by Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11207.

mass removal, though others used material provided by the three missionaries. Although Fisher gave his testimony with a small group of pastors and missionaries that included Frank Herron Smith and Gordon Chapman, he submitted statements on behalf of the Fair Play Committee.³²¹ The Fair Play Committee formed in reaction to growing anti-Japanese sentiment on the West Coast in the late fall of 1941.³²² A group with a broad base of membership drawn from the ranks of academia, religion, government, and ordinary citizens, the Fair Play Committee focused on challenging public opinion toward Japanese Americans, influencing policy at the local, state, and federal levels, and later collaborating with groups like the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service.³²³ Funding their cause through

³²¹ Frank Gaines, the mayor of Oakland and a member of the Committee on National Security and Fair Play, first submitted the Cooperative Farms proposal. Statement by Frank Gaines, "A Master Plan for Cooperative Farms, Inc.," *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 29, 11097-11101; Testimony of Dr. W. P. Reagor, Testimony of Galen M. Fisher, Statement by Galen M. Fisher, Testimony of Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, Statement by Rev. Gordon K. Chapman, and Testimony of Rev. Frank Herron Smith, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11195-11208. While several members of the Committee for National Security and Fair Play testified, they did not testify as a group. Girdner and Loftis, in *The Great Betrayal*, note the testimony of Fisher, Smith, and Chapman, whom they term "prominent churchmen" and "influential Westerners," although they misidentify Chapman as "Warren Chapman." Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 108, 101.

³²² The organization began in the fall of 1941 as the Northern California Committee on Fair Play for Citizens and Aliens of Japanese Ancestry, and in late February 1942, after the evacuation of West Coast Nikkei became a fait accompli, changed its name to the more politically palatable Committee for National Security and Fair Play. As it expanded regionally (detainees at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center created the only Fair Play committee in an incarceration camp), the original group became known as the Pacific Coast Committee for American Principles and Fair Play. In 1945, the Committee sponsored a conference on Inter-Racial Cooperation, the outgrowth of which was the California Federation for Civic Unity, or Council for Civic Unity, which focused on building coalitions for interracial civil rights issues. Wollenberg, "'Dear Earl': The Fair Play Committee, Earl Warren, and Japanese Internment," 24-55, 57-60; Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 25; Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 22-27; Daniel Martinez Hosang, *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 29-30; and Shana Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in Twentieth Century Los Angeles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 81.

³²³ Members included Robert Gordon Sproul, president of the University of California; Ray Lyman Wilbur, Chancellor of Stanford University; Monroe E. Deutsch, vice-president of the University of California; Aurelia Reinhardt, president of Mills College; Frank Gaines, Mayor of Berkeley; Arthur C. McGiffert, president of the Pacific School of Religion; Karl Morgan Block, Episcopal Bishop of California; Ralph T. Fisher, Vice-president of the American Trust Company (and brother of Galen Fisher); Gerald Hagar, former president of the California State Bar Association; George C. Kidwell, Chairman of the State Department of Industrial Relations and leader of the AF of L; and James K. Fisk, Adjutant of the California Department of the American Legion.

membership subscriptions and some individual gifts, the Fair Play Committee focused on issuing press releases to newspapers and organizations throughout the West and heightened its efforts after December 7, 1941.³²⁴ In its first press release in October 1941, the group made its stance clear, calling race-baiting “un-American . . . [and] a menace to public welfare.”³²⁵ According to Ruth Kingman, a member of the committee, former missionary to China, and wife of the influential general secretary of the University of California, Berkeley chapter of the Young Men’s Christian Association, after the United States officially entered the war the federal government fairly freely shared information with the Fair Play Committee (and later with the Protestant Commission) and counted on these groups to undertake the public relations efforts that embattled government entities like the War Relocation Authority felt unequipped to handle.³²⁶

Fisher’s presence on both the Fair Play Committee and the later-formed Protestant Commission was essential for both the direction and the collaboration between the two organizations. Kingman later remembered Fisher as the instigator and “heart and conscience” of the Fair Play Committee’s work, while a brief history of the Fair Play

California Governor Cuthbert Olsen originally agreed to serve as the acting chairman of the group, although he became an advocate of mass evacuation of Japanese Americans after the release of the Roberts Commission Report.

³²⁴ The Committee distributed more than 100,000 items, from press releases to brochures, through the course of the war, including reprints of some of Galen M. Fisher’s articles. A Brief Historical Report of the Pacific Coast Committee on American Principles and Fair Play, October 1, 1941-December 15, 1945, n.d. [1945], Box 1, Folder 4, BANC MSS C-A 171, Pacific Coast Committee on American Principles and Fair Play Records (Fair Play Papers), Bancroft Library Special Collections, University of California, Berkeley; and Ruth Kingman interview by Rosemary Levenson in Rosemary Levenson, Amelia Fry, and Miriam Feingold Stein, *Japanese-American Relocation Reviewed: Volume II, The Internment*, The Earl Warren Oral History Project Series Berkeley: University of California, Bancroft Library, Regional Oral History Office, 1976), <http://content.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft1290031s&brand=calisphere>. As an example of its publicity, see “Protect Aliens in the U. S.: Organization Seeks to Guard Japanese in the United States,” *The Christian Century* January 21, 1942: 91, which gives prominence to Galen Fisher’s role.

³²⁵ A Brief Historical Report of the Pacific Coast Committee on American Principles and Fair Play, BANC MSS C-A 171, Fair Play Papers.

³²⁶ Ruth Kingman interview by Rosemary Levenson, 29b.

Committee noted Fisher's leadership and "tireless efforts."³²⁷ Fisher wrote many of the statements that the Fair Play Committee released and numerous articles for publications like *The Christian Century* and *Far Eastern Survey* in which he challenged popular understandings of the decision to incarcerate the entire Pacific Coast Nikkei population.³²⁸ A true educator, Fisher continued his work in the vein of his earlier writings that intended to broaden the understanding of the American public about Japan; in this case, Fisher made impassioned pleas on behalf of the loyalty and decency of Japanese Americans and demanded fairness and justice for them. Fisher also used his connections to obtain a free California clipping service for the Fair Play Committee, which gave them an overview of public reactions in California to issues regarding Japanese Americans throughout the war.³²⁹

One way in which Fisher differed from the other board members of the Fair Play Committee (who, other than Kingman, had no missionary experience) was his insistence that anything other than a very selective evacuation and internment of Japanese Americans was a threat to democracy and the civil rights of all Americans. Committee members made the

³²⁷ Ruth Kingman interview by Rosemary Levenson 25b; and A Brief Historical Report of the Pacific Coast Committee on American Principles and Fair Play. Other chroniclers of the anti-incarceration efforts have shared Kingman's estimation of Fisher's role on the Committee. See Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest*, 94-95; and Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 25, 101.

³²⁸ For example, Fisher, "Our Japanese Refugees," 424-426; Fisher, "Japanese Evacuation from the Pacific Coast"; Galen M. Fisher, "Seams that have Gaped under Wartime Heat," *Religious Education* 37, no. 5 (September-October 1942): 273-277; Galen M. Fisher, "Drawing a Balance Sheet on Japanese Evacuation 1, Untruths About Japanese-Americans," *The Christian Century* 60, no. 33 (August 18, 1943): 937-939; Galen M. Fisher, "Drawing a Balance Sheet on Japanese Evacuation 2, Our Two Japanese-American Policies," *The Christian Century* 60, no. 34 (August 25, 1943): 961-963; Galen M. Fisher, "Drawing a Balance Sheet on Japanese Evacuation 3, Are the Evacuees Being Coddled?" *The Christian Century* 60, no. 35 (September 1, 1943): 984-986; Galen M. Fisher, "Drawing a Balance Sheet on Japanese Evacuation 4, What Race-Baiting Costs America," *The Christian Century* 60, no. 36 (September 8, 1943): 1009-1011; Fisher, "Japanese Colony: Success Story," 41-43, 58-59; Galen M. Fisher, "Unsnarling the Nisei Tangle," *The Christian Century* 61, no. 45 (November 8, 1944): 1285-1287; Galen M. Fisher, "Resettling the Evacuees," *Far Eastern Survey* 14, no. 19 (September 26, 1945): 265-268; Galen M. Fisher, "Justice for the Evacuees," *The Christian Century* 62, no. 43 (October 2, 1945): 1198-1199; and Galen M. Fisher, "Our Debt to the Japanese Evacuees," *The Christian Century* 63, no. 22 (May 29, 1946): 683-685. *The Christian Century* had 29,177 subscribers in 1941 – a combination of congregational, academic, and individual subscriptions, and reached a sizable portion of the liberal Protestant population in the United States.

³²⁹ Ruth Kingman interview by Rosemary Levenson, 32b.

pragmatic decision to support the government's decision to remove the Nikkei population, but believed they were supporting the war effort by fighting for the democratic stipulation that Japanese Americans be allowed to return to the West Coast as soon as the military declared it safe. Often, Fisher's proclamations skirted the boundaries of what the Fair Play Committee was comfortable with, and he criticized other members for not taking a strong enough stand before the government.³³⁰ The Fair Play Committee also decided to focus on policy issues and to leave social welfare issues to other groups; this decision opened the door for Fisher and other missionaries to create the Protestant Commission, which concerned itself as much with the social welfare issues confronting a displaced people as with the social justice angles of the removal and incarceration.³³¹

The Fair Play Committee statement that Fisher read at the hearings tended to support what the Committee termed the wisdom or judgment of the government and military in evacuation policy, as did the testimony of some of members of the religious communities in cities like Los Angeles.³³² Interestingly, Fisher wrote the Fair Play Committee statement,

³³⁰ "The enclosed Release represents the deliberations of the Committee. . . . Naturally, it could not deal with some of the specific points or state so strongly as you or I might like certain ideas, but it may help to calm the public and influence the authorities." Galen Fisher to George Gleason, 2 March 1942, Box 54, Folder 1, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers. The editor of the *Far Eastern Survey*, the publication of the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations, refused to publish an article by Fisher unless he changed language that seemed to minimize the supposed military necessity for evacuation and incarceration. Stephanie Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest*, 231n110. In another example, Fisher wrote a letter to John H. Tolan, Chairman of the House Defense Migration Committee following Fisher's appearance before the Tolan Committee. In the letter, Fisher challenged the charges made by Attorney General Earl Warren in his presentation before the Tolan Committee in which the Attorney General claimed that Japanese residents had intentionally occupied land around vital military installations in order to commit sabotage. Fisher believed it "provocative only of hysteria to allow alarmist charges against any group to be made until they have been critically checked." He charged the Tolan Committee with investigating the Attorney General's claims to discern if the Japanese farmers had settled before or after the military or strategic industries were developed. Galen Fisher to Hon. John H. Tolan, n.d. [1 March 1942], Box 54, Folder 1, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

³³¹ Ruth Kingman interview by Rosemary Levenson, 32y.

³³² For example, when George Gleason, on behalf of the Los Angeles County Committee for Church and Community Cooperation, and Dr. F. W. Heckleman, Bishop James C. Baker of the Methodist Church, and Dr. E. C. Farnham of the Church Federation of Los Angeles (all of whom had experience in Japan) testified in Los Angeles on March 6, 1941, each gently suggested that selective evacuation would have been a better route than

which contrasted with his own testimony. Likely, Fisher, as the secretary of the Fair Play Committee, wrote a statement that the majority of board members would approve. The statement approved of the president's executive order placing residents in militarily sensitive areas under military control, arguing that the "gravity" of the situation "justifie[d]" such an action, but also called for ultimate civilian, rather than military, control of any groups uprooted from their homes. At the time of the Tolan hearings in San Francisco, groups like the Fair Play Committee still held out hope that the military would focus on all potentially dangerous enemy aliens and not just the Nikkei alien and citizen population; the statement included a concern for the many Italians who practiced agriculture near vital military installations along with Japanese farmers. The one line in the Fair Play Committee statement that rang with the urgency of Fisher's moral outrage declared that if the United States "flouted democratic principles of justice and humanity," its citizenry would be "traitors." While the statement failed to spell out exactly what entity America would be betraying by such actions, it implied a betrayal of Roosevelt's declaration that the nation was fighting for the "Four Freedoms" and suggested that core American beliefs embodied in the Declaration of Independence and Constitution were being sabotaged.³³³

mass evacuation, but accepted mass evacuation as a *fait accompli* and gave their full assent to the "military necessity" driving the government's decision. This decision to mute protests over the mass removal of Nikkei from the West Coast may have been a tactical decision; since DeWitt had issued orders to that effect, Protestant forces seem to have decided to present themselves as resources for the government to draw upon in the tremendous task of removing 110,000 people from the West Coast and resettling them inland. Testimony of Dr. George Gleason, Executive Secretary, Committee for Church and Community Cooperation, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 31, 11623-11629; and Testimony of Dr. F. W. Heckleman, Bishop James C. Baker, and Dr. E. C. Farnham, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 31, 11764-11771.

³³³ Statement by the Committee on National Security and Fair Play, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, House of Representatives, 77th Cong, 2d Sess., San Francisco Hearings, Part 31, 11202-11203.

As the earlier explications of Fisher's testimony show, Fisher held strongly to these beliefs in democratic principles, as did the other missionaries with whom he presented in San Francisco, yet changes in national plans influenced the approach of others who relied on the work of Fisher, Chapman, and Smith to inform their own testimony a week later in Los Angeles. By the time of the March 6 and 7, 1941, hearings in Los Angeles, General DeWitt had forced the evacuation of all Japanese Americans from Terminal Island in southern California. He had also named the western regions of Washington, Oregon, California, and portions of Arizona as Military Areas One and Two from which he could exclude any German, Italian, or Japanese aliens and anyone with any Japanese ancestry. Exclusion of alien and citizen Japanese Americans from portions of the United States became a reality instead of a possibility. As a result, several former missionaries and religious leaders who testified at the Los Angeles hearings softened their positions; likely, they felt strongly the pressure to support the administration during a time of war and wished to believe the veracity of reports issuing from the government about the dangers presented by the Japanese American community. Therefore, when George Gleason, who had served with Galen Fisher in Japan's Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and joined Fisher and Smith in the fight against the 1924 Asian Exclusion Act, presented testimony and the statement of the ecumenical and interfaith Los Angeles Committee for Church and Community Cooperation, he argued for selective hearings and selective evacuation, but he weakened his argument by mentioning without contesting the charges of fifth column activity among Japanese Americans. Gleason also demanded that everyone ordered by the army to leave their residence do so "without further debate."

Gleason placed his trust in the army to make the decision and contravened the assertion by Fisher, Chapman, Smith, and others that “race hatred, prejudice, or selfish business interests” motivated the evacuation of alien and citizen Nikkei. Whereas the three missionaries in San Francisco offered the assistance of themselves and other missionaries with knowledge of Japanese language and culture to assist with selective hearing boards, Gleason offered the help of his committee to “stimulate” the cooperation of churches with any army orders.³³⁴ Upon receipt of a copy of Gleason’s statement, Fisher would thank Gleason for his “excellent and tactically, effective, presentation” but express his wish that the committee had taken a more forceful position in favor of selective evacuation.³³⁵

Fisher’s response to Gleason’s testimony was actually surprisingly placid although in their testimonies Fisher, Chapman, and Smith all strongly refuted the claim of military necessity. In his own testimony, Fisher claimed that the Nikkei were merely “scapegoats” for the enemy in distant Japan. In a memorandum to Colonel Magill, provost marshal and director of evacuation, the three men blamed the decision to remove all Nikkei from the West Coast on politicians, “scheming carpet-baggers,” and “thoughtless and irresponsible people of whom California has its full share.”³³⁶ While others might mute their criticisms of the government, the missionaries who would form the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service would discover ways to work with the government while still holding it and the public accountable for their willingness to trample civil rights.

³³⁴ Testimony of Dr. George Gleason, Executive Secretary, Committee for Church and Community Operation and Statement by Dr. George Gleason, Executive Secretary, Committee for Church and Community Cooperation, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11623-11629.

³³⁵ Galen M. Fisher to George Gleason, 8 March 1942, Box 53, Folder 1, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

³³⁶ Statement by Galen M. Fisher, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11199; and Galen M. Fisher, Gordon Chapman, C. A. Richardson, G. Doubleday, and F. H. Smith, Memorandum to Colonel Magill, Jr., Provost Marshal and Director of Evacuation, February 1942 [March 2, 1942], Reel 8, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

Those who provided testimony to the Tolan Committee after DeWitt had begun to enact the removal of both citizen and resident Japanese Americans found themselves in the difficult position of supporting the government, which they supposed had more vital information than they possessed themselves, and calling for a modicum of decency and respect for the rights of citizens. This bind became even more apparent in the testimony of another group of former missionaries who sat as witnesses in Los Angeles. Using information provided by Fisher, Chapman, and Smith, Dr. F. W. Heckleman, Methodist Bishop James C. Baker, and Dr. E. C. Farnham recognized that the military was going to remove much, if not all, of the Nikkei population from the West Coast. They bemoaned the suffering and financial cost caused by the decision of the military not to avail itself of the services of missionaries and hold selective hearings. Yet, they promised the service of “20 missionaries and 10 women” with long experience in Japan who were ready to travel with the evacuees to “share in their fate, their lives, their fortunes, and for their spiritual guidance and comfort, in order that the soul of Christian America may speak to the soul of our Japanese brethren now in deep distress.”³³⁷ They did not question the military necessity of some evacuation but claimed it the “special mission of the Christian forces” to serve as a moral compass for the country by demanding the protection of the “cherished freedoms” of American institutions for everyone.³³⁸ Like Fisher and Chapman, these men emphasized the connection between Christian and American principles and used their positions as missionaries who knew Japanese Americans to provide moral guidance to the Tolan Committee. They also used figures of available missionaries gleaned from the San Francisco

³³⁷ Testimony of Dr. F. W. Heckleman, Bishop James C. Baker, and Dr. E. C. Farnham, *Hearings before the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration*, 11764-11771.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 11764.

missionaries. The Los Angeles testimony provided insight into the frustrated directions of Fisher, Chapman, and Smith who would, with the failure of the efforts to provide viable alternatives for the army, look for ways to bring the “Christian forces” to bear upon the entire removal and incarceration process.

Although the Tolan Committee had formed with the express hope of alleviating the tensions and pressures against Japanese Americans on the West Coast, by the time the group began its hearings the situation had come to a seething boil. Unable to shift the debate, the congressional committee did not file a report on the wisdom, constitutionality, or necessity of removing all Japanese Americans from the West Coast. Instead, the Tolan Committee limited itself to issuing recommendations on evacuation and relocation plans and policies.³³⁹ The removal of Nikkei from their homes and lives on the West Coast was a fait accompli by early March. Having failed to convince the government to change its course, Galen Fisher and his colleagues decided to shift their approach and create an organization that would become an important voice in shaping government policy in the relocation process, attempting to provide moral guidance to the government and spiritual succor to Japanese Americans.

“It is certainly a grand opportunity”: Forming the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service³⁴⁰

Galen Fisher noted with grief the failure of efforts to keep Japanese American citizens and loyal aliens on the West Coast. The army had “dashed our hopes for hearing boards to pass on loyalty, even of citizen Japanese,” he wrote in mid-March 1942. The Fair Play Committee was working with lawyers to create a plan for hearing boards in the

³³⁹ Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy*, 109; Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 108; McWilliams, *Prejudice*, 117.

³⁴⁰ Galen Fisher to Roswell Barnes, 16 March 1942, Box 54, Folder 3, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

assembly centers, and Fisher hoped to create a movement among churches east of the Sierra-Nevada Mountains to find specific jobs for evacuees. In early March, the military appeared relieved to get help from religious groups to find voluntary settlement situations for Nikkei, and Fisher proclaimed it a “grand opportunity for our churches to show that we are not fighting the poor innocents who, because of racial connections, are being herded out of home and work.” Getting churches involved would be part of the work of a new group that Fisher said ecumenical executives in New York had charged Frank Herron Smith to initiate. The executive committee, which included Fisher, Smith, and Chapman, met for the first time on March 15, and Fisher was hopeful that it would take on the task of caring for the thousands of displaced Japanese Americans.³⁴¹

Officially created in April 1942 after the military removal of Japanese Americans from California, and western Oregon, Washington, and Arizona had already begun, the West Coast Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service emerged from the concern that no mass movement arose on the West Coast to counter the hate- and fear-mongering anti-Japanese lobby and from a desire among missionaries active among West Coast Japanese Americans to ameliorate the physical and emotional suffering caused by internment. As the previous section argues, however, the Commission’s work started much earlier as the Japan missionaries coordinated with their Japanese American contacts, denominational headquarters, and influential figures in California to mobilize public opinion and congregational support on behalf of Nikkei. Commissioned by ecumenical Christian organizations located in New York to address the needs of the Nikkei population in California, Washington, and Oregon as they moved into relocation centers, the Commission

³⁴¹ Ibid.

focused its early efforts on developing a working relationship with both the military leadership involved in the evacuation of Japanese Americans and the War Relocation Authority that ultimately took on the job of housing and tending to the incarcerated population. In its efforts to provide spiritual and physical sustenance to Nikkei and in its communications with federal authorities, the Commission focused on limiting the negative effects of incarceration on those detained and on creating an atmosphere in which their visions of democracy and Christianity might prevail.

Toru Matsumoto notes in his frequently cited work, *Beyond Prejudice: A Story of the Church and Japanese Americans*, that Frank Herron Smith took the lead coordinating the efforts of other missionaries and church leaders to assist Japanese Americans along the West Coast in the early months of 1942. According to Matsumoto, Smith formed what was originally called the Western Area Protestant Church Commission for Wartime Japanese Service with the assistance of Mark Dawber, who was the executive secretary of the Home Missions Council, the New York-based ecumenical organization that directed the domestic mission work of various Protestant denominations.³⁴² While other origin stories exist for the Commission, Smith was a central figure in the work on behalf of Japanese Americans.

Smith was indeed busy collaborating with colleagues including Galen Fisher and Gordon Chapman on providing services to Japanese Americans and protesting plans for mass evacuation prior to the formation of the Commission. Since his return to the United States in 1926, Smith had served as the Methodist superintendent of Japanese churches in America, of which the vast majority were on the Pacific Coast. As congregations struggled

³⁴² Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, 13. The Commission shortened its name in June 1942 to the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, judging that the name was “far too long for all practical purposes.” Report on a Meeting of the Western Area Protestant Church Commission for Wartime Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

with curfews, job losses, and arbitrarily drawn exclusionary zones that often cut across neighborhoods, Smith worked with religious leaders and white and Nikkei churches to provide for the needs of displaced families. Like Fisher and Chapman, he also wrote numerous letters of support for the pastors and congregants under his care who the FBI arrested raids on Nikkei communities, and visited the Issei detained in Justice Department detention centers.³⁴³ Just as Fisher published articles supporting Japanese Americans, Smith went on the radio in late February 1942 “appealing to Californians for patience and consideration” during evacuation.³⁴⁴

Besides their visible presence at the Tolan Committee hearings, Smith, Chapman, and Fisher, who formed the core of the Protestant Commission, worked behind the scenes to affect federal policy. Before appearing before the Tolan Committee, the men submitted a letter to Gen. John L. DeWitt pressing for selective evacuation and offering the assistance as interpreters of eighty returned Japan missionaries and able Nisei.³⁴⁵ On February 27, a week after they appeared before the Tolan Committee, the three men, along with a member of the Society of Friends and a superintendent of the Methodist Board in New York, tried to secure a meeting with DeWitt at the Presidio in San Francisco. DeWitt demurred and shuffled them to his provost marshal in charge of evacuation, Col. J. W. Magill. At this meeting, the missionaries again pleaded their case for selective hearings. As if offering their aid as

³⁴³ Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, 11-13; Frank Herron Smith, Some Results Achieved by the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, February – December 1942, December 1942, Box 12, Folder 11, RG 301.7, BFM Church Strategy; Clarence Gillett, The Gillett Porthole, 6 June 1942, Reel 8, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS; Frank Herron Smith, Japanese Evacuation, 25 April 1942, Box 719, Folder 21, RG 6, YWCA Papers; and Memorandum of a Conference called by Mrs. Edith Terry Bremer, National Institute of Immigrant Welfare, to discuss appeals from California to National Agencies for pressure on Washington RE Japanese Situation, 1:00 PM, Saturday, February 29, 1942, Town Hall Club, 29 February 1941, Box 719, Folder 19, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

³⁴⁴ Memorandum of a Conference called by Mrs. Edith Terry Bremer, National Institute of Immigrant Welfare, to discuss appeals from California to National Agencies.”

³⁴⁵ Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, 14.

interpreters were not enough, the men also offered the use of church buildings for the hearings.³⁴⁶

In a memo following up on the meeting, the men again offered the services of thirty missionaries, more than three hundred Nisei, and several Issei as interpreters to “prevent friction and mistakes.” They encouraged employing local teachers on hearing boards, as the teachers would have a deeper knowledge of Nisei than “any other white American.” They again deplored mass evacuation as propaganda for the Japanese, reminded their audience that American law barred the Issei from attaining the American citizenship they desired, declared that the “hearts of the fathers are with their sons and *not* with their nephews in the Japanese Army,” and called the “hysteria” for mass evacuation a ploy of political and financial schemers. Finally, they offered their services if mass evacuation became a reality. They and Japanese Christian pastors could “keep up morale, provide religious and moral guidance,” and offer educational services until the military could institute a school system. They encouraged the army to develop a “comprehensive” plan and to share it with the Japanese American community to allay anxieties. Their hope in writing this statement, according to Fisher, was to “humanize” and “modify” the army’s plans so that the distressing, humiliating, and undemocratic act of removing an entire population on the basis of their race might at least evidence some compassion for that suffering.³⁴⁷ Colonel Magill referenced this memo in a meeting a week later with Fisher and other representatives of the

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Galen M. Fisher, Gordon Chapman, Channing A. Richardson, G. Doubleday, and F. H. Smith, Memorandum to Colonel Magill, Jr. Provost Marshal and Director of Evacuation, February 1942, Reel 8, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS; and Galen Fisher to Rev. Clark P. Garman, 1 March 1942, Box 54, Folder 1, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

Fair Play Committee, during which he outlined plans for resettlement and heard their last minute plea for selective evacuation.³⁴⁸

These early interactions with key authorities in the removal process may have spurred Smith, Chapman, and Fisher to formalize their work into the Protestant Commission. While Matsumoto contends that the organization started under the auspices of the HMC, and some scholars cite its creation in February 1942, Commission notes suggest a slightly different beginning.³⁴⁹ Members of the Commission indeed began their earnest work seeking selective hearings and voluntary movement of Japanese Americans in February, and they received authorization to organize an interdenominational effort to address the Japanese American issues at that point, but they seemed to function as an ad hoc group under the leadership of Smith that called itself the Executive Committee on Service to Evacuees until April 1942.³⁵⁰ Perhaps the group needed a title in order to secure appearances before military authorities, but records report that this group encouraged military authorities to form hearing boards and secure work and resettlement plans for small groups of Nikkei in February and early March.³⁵¹ At that point, the small group met weekly to organize plans, and brought a few other individuals into the fold, including Bishop Charles Reifsnider, who was residing in Los Angeles after his return from Japan. In late March, Reifsnider described the group as a “Committee [sic] set up by the Federation of Churches, with direct

³⁴⁸ Evacuation Problems, Resume of Conference with Col. W. L. Magill, Jr., Director of Evacuation, at Presidio, San Francisco, on March 10, 1942, by representatives of Committee on National Security and Fair Play, following up an earlier conference between him and other government officials and Chairman Henry F. Grady, 1942, Box 1, Folder 4, BANC MSS C-A 171, Fair Play Papers.

³⁴⁹ For example, Stephanie Bangarth states the Commission formed in February 1942. Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest*, 77.

³⁵⁰ Frank Herron Smith, Chairman, and Gordon K. Chapman, Memorandum on Protestant Work in Assembly and Reception Centers, Committee of the Federal Council of Churches, 9 April 1942, Reel 8, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

³⁵¹ The Executive Committee on Service to Evacuees, Placement of Japanese Evacuees by Protestant Christians East of the Sierras, 18 March 1942, Box 719, Folder 20, RG 6, YWCA Papers; and Memorandum of a Conference called by Mrs. Edith Terry Bremer.

responsibility for the many problems in connection with the evacuation of Japanese from the West Coast into non-military zones.”³⁵² Ultimately the men converged on a plan for the Protestant Commission for Japanese Services, which they organized with the support of the HMC and the FCC.

The newly formed Commission sought the involvement of representatives from the Protestant denominations and organizations that had been involved in religious work among Japanese Americans prior to evacuation. This group included the Methodist Episcopal, northern Presbyterians, Congregational, Baptist, Society of Friends, Protestant Episcopal, Christian (Disciples of Christ), Nazarene, Holiness, Free Methodist, and Reformed Church in America (Dutch) denominations plus the Salvation Army, the YMCA, and the YWCA.³⁵³ Of the original seventeen members of the Commission, seven had served in Japan, and these individuals took the leadership of the organization and did the majority of the work of the Commission. They included Frank Herron Smith, who served as the chair of the Commission, Gordon Chapman, who was the executive secretary for the duration of the Commission’s life, Galen Fisher and Charles Reifsnider, who were both vice-chairs, Methodist Clyde Burnett, and Congregationalist Clarence Gillett.³⁵⁴ While the Commission

³⁵² Bishop Charles Reifsnider to the Most Rev. Henry St. George Tucker, D. D., Presiding Bishop, 27 March 1942, RG 71, Episcopal Mission to Japan, Bishop Reifsnider, The Archives of the Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas (hereafter cited as the Reifsnider Papers).

³⁵³ The Methodist Episcopal is today known as Methodist, and the Protestant Episcopal is the Episcopal Church. Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, 3; and Gordon K. Chapman, Memorandum on the Scope, Function, and Policies of the Western Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 9 December 1942, Box 12, Folder 11, RG 301.7, BFM Church Strategy.

³⁵⁴ Gordon K. Chapman, Memorandum on the Scope, Function, and Policies of the Western Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service. Other furloughed missionaries who served on the Commission over the years included American Baptist Mrs. Willard Topping; Lutheran S. O. Thorlaksson; American Baptist Royal Fisher; Episcopal Reformed W. Carl Nugent. This list is made in consultation with the minutes of the Protestant Commission and the list of missionaries serving in Japan as of Charles Wheeler Iglehart, ed., *The Japan Christian Yearbook 1939* (Tokyo: The Christian Literature Society (Kyo Bun Kwan), 1939). Chapman may have emphasized the small number of missionaries on the Commission (he notes that only two of the

claimed that it had made efforts to enlist Roman Catholic and Buddhist participation in the group, they found that theology and polity differences were too great to allow for cooperation.

The Commission held its first meeting on April 23, 1942, after evacuation was well under way. Initially nonplussed at his assignment to the Commission as the Episcopal representative, Reifsnider described the agenda of the first meeting to be to determine a plan for religious work in the assembly centers and relocation camps and to discuss negotiations with the War Relocation Authority for religious and educational work.³⁵⁵ In the preceding months, the key leaders of the group had met almost weekly with military and government officials. At the meeting, the members approved a constitution drafted by Fisher and elected their slate of officers.³⁵⁶ They met with Joseph Conard, the secretary of the Student Relocation Committee; Commission members commissioned Smith and Chapman to represent the Commission in interactions with Conard's group and promised their full cooperation.³⁵⁷ Commission members distributed the needs for visitation, worship, and Sunday school leadership at the camps among themselves, instituting what would be a heavy round of travel to the numerous assembly centers, Justice Department camps, and relocation camps for the next three years. They then met with a representative of General DeWitt, who

members of the Executive Committee had been in Japan in the previous sixteen years) in order to counter criticisms of the missionaries by various entities.

³⁵⁵ Bishop Charles Reifsnider to the Reverend George A. Wieland, STD, Executive Secretary, Department of Domestic Missions, 20 April 1942, RG 71, Reifsnider Papers.

³⁵⁶ Western Area Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service Constitution, April 1942, Box 3, Folder 8, Japanese American World War II Relocation, San Francisco Theological Seminary Library, San Anselmo (SFTS). The initial minutes also include a list of 50 organizations or individuals across the country designated to receive copies of the Commission minutes. Most of these people were either in charge of denominational or ecumenical units with an interest in Japanese American issues, or, like *The Christian Century* editor Samuel Cavert, in positions to influence public opinion. For a history of the magazine, although the book fails to discuss the *Christian Century's* involvement in Japanese American issues, see Elesha J. Coffman, *The Christian Century and the Rise of the Protestant Mainline* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

³⁵⁷ For more information on the Student Relocation Council, see Okihiro, *Storied Lives*; and Austin, *From Concentration Camp to Campus*.

responded to Commission concerns about securing formal recognition of the Commission and of the Japanese Church Federation (the union of Protestant churches in each of the camps), the need for designated chapel buildings in both assembly and relocation camps, and their desire that the authorities allow white religious workers to live in the centers. Finally, the group encouraged General DeWitt to issue a statement “to curb irresponsible anti-Japanese agitation, especially in unprohibited or resettlement areas.” In response, DeWitt’s representative encouraged the group to present formal credentials to the army’s Western Area Command; formal credentials might secure them proper representation and enable them to push forward their hopes to create churches and assume “full authority over the choice and introduction” of white religious workers in the camps.³⁵⁸

The responses of the General to Commission questions determined the immediate direction of its work. The Commission realized it needed formal credentials in order receive government recognition and to become the official mediating agent for both denominations and Japanese American Protestants in the camps. They had gained recognition from the Commission to participate in Sunday services in the assembly centers run by the military, yet they needed to undergo credentialing by the newly created War Relocation Authority, which President Franklin Roosevelt had created to run the ten long-term incarceration camps.³⁵⁹ By the next meeting, Fisher, Reifsnider, Chapman, and Smith, as the executive committee, had drafted a memo on the Commission’s work in relocation centers. The

³⁵⁸ Minutes of the Western Area Protestant Church Commission for Wartime Japanese Service, Regular Meeting No. 1, 23 April 1943, Box 3, Folder 8, Japanese American World War II Relocation, SFTS.

³⁵⁹ In large part because of the hostility of communities outside the restricted zones, but also because few Japanese American families could uproot their lives and voluntarily relocate elsewhere—with jobs and housing—on short notice, DeWitt forbade voluntary evacuation on March 27, 1942. Having recognized the need for a longer term solution to the wholesale removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast, on March 18, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9102 which created the civilian-run War Relocation Authority.

Commission gave the executive committee authority to complete the memo and to coordinate it to information received from the newly formed War Relocation Authority.³⁶⁰

As a result, the statement of the Commission's scope and purpose resembled closely the expectations of the WRA for religious freedom and practice in the camps. The memo described the Commission as the "fully recognized" agent of the Protestant Japanese American churches and pastors, the FCC, and the HMC. The Commission underscored its acceptance of "the American principles of the sacredness of private conscience and religious freedom. . . . [and] to the democratic principles" of the separation of church and state. It discouraged the use of Japanese in the camps except to convey the "highest American and Christian ideals."³⁶¹ In a later version of the memo, the Commission recognized the need to defend against "all subversive activity, such as the propagation of Japanese nationalism, which is contrary to American democratic principles."³⁶² The Commission made clear to the government that it would be a partner in the fight to preserve the principles which the government had already destroyed in its decision to abrogate the civil rights of Japanese American citizens.

One effect of the Commission's thorough and regular meetings with authorities was its ability to begin to get some answers about the plans for their Japanese American friends and neighbors. In the spring of 1942, few knew what the military or federal government intended for Japanese Americans. As the numerous tactics Fisher and the other missionaries

³⁶⁰ Minutes of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, Regular Meeting No. 2, 25 May 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA Secretaries' Files, Board of Foreign Missions, Presbyterian Historical Society (hereafter cited as UPCUSA BFM Papers).

³⁶¹ See Chapter Three for a more in-depth discussion of how the Commission addressed these concerns.

³⁶² Frank Herron Smith, Chairman, and Gordon K. Chapman, Memorandum on Protestant Work in Assembly and Reception Centers, Committee of the Federal Council of Churches, 9 April 1942, Reel 8, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS; and Memorandum on the Work of the Protestant Churches in Japanese Relocation Centers and Settlements, 20 July 1942, Reel 8, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

used in the weeks before and after the Tolan hearings demonstrate, confusion reigned about the nature of evacuation.³⁶³ None knew what areas would become exclusion zones, or if the military would include citizens as well as aliens in the orders. Even as the military began moving Nikkei out of parts of Military Zone Number One in mid-March, Reifsnider bemoaned the uncertainty and secretiveness of the plans. He noted that the local army authorities explained that they lacked “sufficient information” to answer his questions. They only knew that the military would remove Nikkei to assembly centers, and from there, a civilian group would take over.³⁶⁴ As Commission members got information, they shared it with their Japanese American congregations and encouraged federal authorities to practice clarity as well.

Alongside its desire to determine the religious landscape of the incarceration camps, the Commission charged itself with helping to maintain the morale and spirits of incarcerated persons. The missionaries in charge of the Commission considered the maintenance of ties between incarcerated persons and the outside world vital to supporting not only the Christian faith of the Nikkei who embraced Christianity, but a robust commitment to American values among all incarcerated persons. They planned to visit the centers regularly and to supply them with hymnals, worship and Sunday school material, pianos and organs, and recreational materials. These priorities became important means to reinforce the connection of Japanese Americans to the whole of America and to Protestant congregations in particular. While the missionaries were progressive in their desire for racial equality, they still considered Caucasians the American norm, and this understanding is apparent in their

³⁶³ Galen Fisher to Rev. Clark P. Garman, 1 March 1942, Box 54, Folder 1, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

³⁶⁴ Bishop Charles Reifsnider to the Most Rev. Henry St. George Tucker, D. D., Presiding Bishop, 27 March 1942, RG 71, Reifsnider Papers.

communications about the need to promote and protect the “Americanization” of incarcerated. Regular contact with white Americans, they believed, was necessary to prevent the incarceration camps from becoming ethnic ghettos. Therefore, the Commission pressed the military and then WRA authorities to enable qualified white workers, and particularly missionaries who could impart both Christian and American values, into the camps where they could participate in the Japanese American churches, schools, and daily life.³⁶⁵ For this work, the Commission relied upon its own members, who barely rested throughout the war in their efforts on behalf of Japanese Americans. The Commission also turned to other missionaries more recently returned from Japan who embedded themselves in Nikkei communities in the days after Pearl Harbor and tried to follow their new neighbors into the camps.³⁶⁶

Solitary Signs in a Hostile Landscape: Missionary Acts of Compassion and Friendship

One individual who tried to help her Japanese American neighbors as they prepared for removal from southern California poignantly described the ethical murkiness of her assistance. She compared herself to a billy goat she had witnessed at a ranch leading lambs into a cattle car which would take them to market and eventual slaughter. After the goat herded the lambs into the cattle car, it leaped over them and escaped.³⁶⁷ Those who worked with Japanese American communities in the winter and spring of 1942 felt like that goat, who by virtue of his different coat, could avoid the fate of the lambs; this sense of having unfairly dodged the suffering experienced by the Nikkei may have been especially poignant

³⁶⁵ Galen Fisher, Japanese Evacuation and Resettlement: Objectives and Some Methods of Attaining Them, A Memorandum, 15 April 1942, Reel 81, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS; and Gordon Chapman, Memorandum on the Scope, Function, and Policies of the Western Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Services.

³⁶⁶ The work of missionaries in the camps is covered in Chapter Four.

³⁶⁷ Lou Shuman to Ruth Kingman, Box 4, Folder 4, Ruth Kingman Papers, RG 2010, Japanese American Research Project Collection of Material about Japanese in the United States, Charles E. Young Special Collections, UCLA (hereafter cited as the Kingman Papers).

for missionaries like Azalia Peet, who saw themselves as evacuees from their homes and work in Japan. Two of the women, Elizabeth Evans and Jeane Noordhoff, who would look to the Protestant Commission for help finding positions in the incarceration camps, placed themselves in transitioning Japanese American communities in the months after Pearl Harbor because they believed it was their vocation as Christians to endure the anxious agony in fellowship with Japanese Americans.³⁶⁸

After Pearl Harbor, several denominations placed furloughed female missionaries into Japanese American communities to assist and support church members. Restrictions on the movement and finances of Japanese Americans increased after Pearl Harbor and the departure of more than four thousand Nikkei from their homes in California's Military Zone One threw communities into disarray. It became more difficult for pastors and their lay leaders to fulfill their ministerial duties. Denominations that needed to quickly send a missionary to a community favored female missionaries who were more likely to be single and easily relocated and who could help with women's ministries in a congregation. Jeane Noordhoff, a Reformed Church in America missionary, returned to the United States from Japan in April 1941 and served as the assistant to the pastor of a Japanese American congregation in Watsonville, California, until the Japanese American community went to the Salinas Assembly Center a year later. The Presbyterian Foreign and National Mission Boards appointed furloughed missionary Elizabeth Evans to move to southern California to assist and support Japanese American congregations there in February 1942. Both women

³⁶⁸ For more on the efforts of Protestant female missionaries to assist Japanese Americans in this period, see, Beth Hessel, "How Did Female Protestant Missionaries respond to the Japanese American Internment Experience during World War II?" in Kathryn Kish Sklar and Thomas Dublin, eds., *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000* 18, no. 2 (September 2014); and Linda Popp DiBiase, "Neither Harmony nor Eden: Margaret Peppers and the Exile of the Japanese Americans," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 70, no. 1 (March 2001): 101-117.

detailed in letters the confusion, fear, and difficulties faced by Japanese American communities in early 1942 as rumors swirled about the government's plans for them.

Both communities served by these women faced the dislocation caused by DeWitt's declaration of prohibited and military zones and the army's early encouragement of Japanese Americans to voluntarily resettle outside those restricted areas. In Watsonville, a primarily agricultural area near Santa Cruz in northern California, most of the Nikkei were farmers or agricultural workers. When the military used the highway that ran through the town as a demarcation line for a prohibited zone in February 1942, many of the families discovered that their crops lay west of the line, as did the Japanese Presbyterian Church and manse.³⁶⁹ As Noordhoff worried about her displaced co-religionists, Evans rejoiced that her denomination was sending her to the San Joaquin Valley, an inland agricultural region of southern California where she would help both long-term residents and a congregation that had voluntarily relocated from the coastal town of Monterey in the hope that the army would not bar them from Military Zone Two.³⁷⁰

The letters the women wrote to other missionaries demonstrate the concern these women missionaries felt for the Japanese Americans as well as the tentative nature of their relationships with each congregation, spurred perhaps by linguistic and cultural differences and by some wariness on the part of Japanese Americans toward missionaries. Noordhoff's

³⁶⁹ Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon Chapman, 16 February 1942, Folder 40, Gordon K. Chapman: Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service Collection, Sylvia Lamson Hewlett Library, Graduate Theological Union (hereafter cited as the Chapman Papers).

³⁷⁰ Elizabeth Evans to My Dear Friends, 25 June 1942, Box 45, Folder 5 (2 of 2), RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files; and Elizabeth Evans to Gordon and Katharine Chapman, 24 February 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers. DeWitt had made assurances early that Nikkei who relocated outside of Military Zone 1 would not have to move again. While about half of the Japanese Americans who voluntarily relocated in February or March 1942 moved east of the Rockies, about 2,000 moved into eastern California. These individuals would soon find themselves uprooted once again. Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 115-120; Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy*, 122-124; Lukes and Okihiro, *Japanese Legacy*, 116-118; and Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied*, 100-104.

and Evans's correspondence with Commission Executive Secretary Gordon Chapman revealed their own heartsickness for the suffering of their Japanese American friends. Noordhoff felt ineffective when faced with thirty displaced families and a homeless pastor. She moved into the manse as the congregation was unable to rent it but wished she could do something more concrete. Noordhoff raged that the white pastor of the First Presbyterian Church refused to help the Japanese American pastor and congregants and begged Chapman to let her know of any feasible resettlement locations. Noordhoff's letters brim with passion for the pain experienced by her congregants at being unable to earn their living; she wrote of a woman who washed her work clothes and wanted nothing more than to "raise her vegetables" and of parents fearful of the shame incurred if the military honorably discharged their sons and banned them from service to their country.³⁷¹

Evans reflected later that her three months with the congregations in the San Joaquin valley brought her "thrilling heights and depressing depths" as she underwent the joys and sorrows of the Japanese Americans with whom she worked and worshiped.³⁷² She felt warmly welcomed by one congregation but held at a distance by another, never sure if it was because she was white, because she was a woman, or simply because of the difficulties imposed on the pastor by military curfews and travel bans. Evans experienced some of the prejudice her congregants faced as she tried to find housing where she could also host her new Japanese American friends; many people would not rent to her because she worked with Nikkei.³⁷³ Her grief at the narrow-mindedness of many valley residents encompassed

³⁷¹ Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon Chapman, 16 February 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

³⁷² Elizabeth Evans to My Dear Friends, 25 June 1942, Box 45, Folder 5 (2 of 2), RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

³⁷³ Elizabeth Evans to Gordon Chapman, 7 April 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers; Rev. Shosaku Asano to Elizabeth Evans, 28 April 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers; Elizabeth Evans to Gordon Chapman, 29 April 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers.

her sorrow that such prejudice existed and the realization that the blind hatred affected her Japanese American friends even more than it affected her. The evacuation experience laid bare to these missionaries the existence of two Americas and the true power of the America which viewed Japanese Americans and their supporters through suspicious and hate-clouded lenses.

Noordhoff and Evans continued to correspond with Chapman during this time of dislocation. The government staggered the evacuation of various communities to assembly centers; Noordhoff's congregation moved before Evans's congregations. Noordhoff wrote about the homesickness of Japanese Americans forced into assembly centers. She worried about the disintegration of communal norms and values among the young people who engaged in gambling to combat boredom.³⁷⁴ Her concerns echoed those of the Commission members who feared that prolonged detention would destroy the higher values and ideals of the Nikkei. Evans noted the increasing distrust among white Americans of Japanese Americans after Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066. She had difficulty finding housing near her congregants in Visalia, and documented the hostility of white church women when she encouraged them to provide refreshments to departing evacuees. Some churches even refused to allow the dwindling Japanese American congregations space to meet and worship.³⁷⁵

These two women on the front lines of the forced evacuation worked tirelessly to alleviate the situation. Both women busied themselves visiting Japanese Americans as they prepared for evacuation. They assisted Japanese American pastors with worship services, Bible studies, and counseling. They advocated on behalf of Japanese Americans in the local

³⁷⁴ Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon Chapman, 15 May 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

³⁷⁵ Elizabeth Evans to Gordon Chapman, 10 May 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers.

communities. Noordhoff remained in Watsonville to protect the church and manse from vandalism but traveled several times per week to the Salinas Assembly Center to visit and bring needed supplies. They sent care packages and engaged in regular correspondence with individuals in the assembly centers, often expending their own funds to provide treats and necessities for their friends.³⁷⁶ In a letter to her supporters, Evans shared an amusing story of misunderstanding a request for “stick candy,” and buying steak instead. After discovering the mistake, and enduring a ninety-minute round trip by train and bus, Evans was able to return the steak and send a gift of fruit instead. Her main complaint in the affair was that the guards only allowed her a thirty minute visit with her friends.³⁷⁷ Both women remained frustrated at assembly center policies that restricted the access of religious workers to the centers.³⁷⁸ Their incarcerated friends also resented government rules that refused permits to these women and wrote to the Commission seeking its help with the authorities.³⁷⁹ As Figure Eight suggests, Japanese American Protestants embraced the ethic of love and transcendent kinship with other Christians as the basis of their faith.

³⁷⁶ Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon Chapman, 20 May 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

³⁷⁷ Elizabeth Evans to My Dear Friends, 25 June 1942.

³⁷⁸ Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon Chapman, 20 May 1942; and Elizabeth Evans to my Dear Friends, 25 June 1942.

³⁷⁹ Kiyoshi Noji, Kohei Takeda, and Kenzo Yashida to Gordon Chapman, 16 June 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers. The Commission wrung its hands over the mean-spirited attitude of the authorities running the assembly centers. Although they tried to work with WCCA authorities to ease restrictions on the activities of white visitors to the centers, by the summer of 1942, they decided not to lodge any more protests. Taking the long view instead, they put their focus on the imminent move of the Nikkei to relocation camps, where the authorities were “men and women of different spirit.” Gordon K. Chapman to Lawrence Norrie, 12 August 1942, Folder 44, Chapman Papers.



Figure 8. Sacramento Japanese Christian Center two days before evacuation of persons of Japanese ancestry from this area. Reproduced from UC Berkeley, the Bancroft Library.

Missionaries and Japanese Americans understood the importance of the relationships they built during this difficult juncture. Evans felt deeply moved by the way the Hanford congregation quickly accepted her and took her “into their midst, as an old friend,” especially as she experienced homesickness for Japan. Their patience, lack of bitterness, and “deep sadness” as they awaited evacuation, which was a second move for many who had hoped they could start new businesses and lives in the valley, impressed her.³⁸⁰ Noordhoff praised the “Christian spirit” with which so many of the Nikkei faced evacuation even as she empathized with the unpleasant changes.³⁸¹ Both women labored to find work in the incarceration camps with these communities they had come to love.³⁸² Similarly, some of the Nikkei voiced their gratitude for the signs of friendship they received from missionaries like Fisher, Chapman, Evans, and Noordhoff, which provided them with “the much needed moral bolstering in otherwise a hopeless and a helpless battle for our rights,”

³⁸⁰ Elizabeth Evans to Gordon Chapman, 7 April 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers; and Elizabeth Evans to My Dear Friends, 25 June 1942.

³⁸¹ Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon Chapman, 15 May 1942.

³⁸² See Chapter 4.

and hope when they felt “that the future is indeed very dark, and democracy and justice is just mockery.”³⁸³ The varied efforts of missionaries suggested the extent to which the values of Christian internationalism could challenge undemocratic behavior in the United States.

Conclusion

Missionaries like Galen Merriam Fisher and Frank Herron Smith had dedicated years in the United States prior to Pearl Harbor challenging anti-Japanese attitudes; leading the fight against the unconstitutional denial of Japanese American civil liberties in the early months of 1942 seemed a natural extension of their earlier advocacy. The frustration of their hopes for a selective and fair evacuation process pressed the missionaries to create an interdenominational organization through which they could influence federal policies toward Japanese Americans and provide spiritual and moral sustenance to incarcerated Nikkei. While these men created the Protestant Commission, other missionaries like Jeane Noordhoff and Elizabeth Evans stepped into the trenches by living and working with Japanese American Christians who were facing the unknowns and uncertainties of voluntary and involuntary evacuation. Through these efforts, these life-long missionaries promoted alternatives to the popular drive for mass evacuation of Nikkei from the American West. Warning of the dangerous consequences of mass evacuation to both the war effort domestically and overseas and to American democratic principles, they demonstrated their commitment to the values of Christian internationalism and to people of Japanese descent.

³⁸³ James Murano to Dr. Galen Fisher, 20 November 1942, Reel 83, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

Chapter Three
**“Where the rich heritage of justice and freedom shall be denied to none”:
The Protestant Commission, the War Relocation Authority, and Japanese
Americans Negotiate Religious Freedom in the Camps**

As the military removed West Coast Japanese Americans from their homes during the spring of 1942 and the civilian War Relocation Authority prepared to take over administration of the incarcerated population from the military, authorities drew up a policy to guide religious activities in the euphemistically termed “Assembly and Relocation” centers. The six-point policy promised that the WRA would adhere to the principle of religious freedom and would “tolerate no discrimination against any religious denomination which the Japanese constituency or group within the Center have requested.”³⁸⁴ While the WRA embraced the idea of religious freedom, most authorities believed that religious organizations strengthened and stabilized communities, and thus were worthy of promoting; the WRA had to negotiate the fine difference between encouraging and coercing “approved” religious practices. Government administrators, social scientists, members of the Protestant Commission, and Japanese Americans remained on high alert throughout the incarceration years about the negative effect incarceration had on community and family structures, generational relationships, and the psychological well-being of the prisoners. The government wanted to encourage religious practice as a means to pacify and “normalize” the incarcerated population. Ironically, even as the federal government disregarded constitutional rights and processes for West Coast Japanese Americans, the WRA claimed to adhere to contemporary constitutional understandings of proper church and state separation.

³⁸⁴ “Policy-Religion within WCCA Reception and Assembly Centers,” 20 May 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

Each of the six points in WRA Administrative Instruction No. 32 (hereafter, Instruction 32) would come under fire in the ensuing months and years as Japanese Americans and members of the Protestant Commission questioned the limitations each point made on the free exercise of religion in the camp or challenged policies that they believed gave an advantage to non-Protestant groups. The WRA and its employees also found reason to renegotiate as situations pointed to wrinkles in the policies. These regulations exposed a complex of issues facing incarcerated that the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service addressed in its work as mediator between the Protestant Japanese Americans, their respective denominations, and War Relocation Authority administrators. The ways in which the Protestant Commission handled concerns also brought to the fore the limits of the internationalist commitments of its missionary leadership. The interventions by Gordon Chapman, Frank Herron Smith, Charles Reifsnider, and Galen Fisher with incarcerated and the federal government revealed the extent of their openness to ecumenical and interfaith cooperation; their efforts often belied their expressed desire to move away from paternalistic patterns. Ultimately, much of their behavior falls into that murky region of “anti-racism” in which motives and actions are often full of contradiction and ambiguity.³⁸⁵

This chapter considers three areas related to religious practice that the Commission tried to negotiate. While many WRA authorities shared with Commission leadership and incarcerated Japanese Americans a desire for a robust religious landscape in the camps, these three parties struggled with the boundaries of what constituted acceptable religious practices and which religious sects would be allowed a presence in the camps. An early controversy arose over the question of who would be responsible for paying the salary of

³⁸⁵Okhiro, *Storied Lives*, xiii.

religious workers in the incarceration camps: denominations or the federal government. An ongoing issue for Protestants, Catholics, and Buddhists in the camps was finding adequate and permanent space for their worship and religious activities. These varied questions aligned with the Commission's stated function as intermediary, coordinator, and clearing house. The negotiations and clarifications that arose in each situation brought to the forefront the tangled nature of religious freedom for an imprisoned population, the proper relationship between church and state, and the desire of Japanese Americans to determine their own religious landscape.

Religion in the Camps: Three Controversies

The WRA administrators walked a fine line between their desire to promote vibrant religious practices within the incarceration camps while maintaining the constitutional separation of church and state. Many WRA personnel considered religion a positive reinforcer of stability and the "American" values and ideals the government wanted to inculcate among the imprisoned population.³⁸⁶ While some personnel accepted Buddhism as a valid vehicle for fostering loyalty and patriotism towards the United States, many considered Christianity, and particularly Protestant Christianity, the force that had shaped and continued to shape American society. At least some of the WRA administrators shared with the missionaries who led the Protestant Commission and the Japanese American Protestant clergy a belief in the power of Christian internationalism to reform government and society. Indeed, as pastors and Commission members addressed issues confronting the ecumenical camp congregations, they proclaimed the salvific nature of Protestantism for

³⁸⁶ Colonel E. F. Cress to Commander K. D. Ringle, Memo, Subject: Americanization of Nisei, 4 June 1942, Reel 19, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS. On the Americanization emphasis of the WRA, see Mae Ngai, "An Ironic Testimony to the Value of American Democracy", 330-357; and Richard Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps: Dillon S. Myer and American Racism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

individual and society, arguing that the “bonds of Christian fellowship . . . shall someday bless this nation with the fruition of true Democracy: Where the rich heritage of justice and freedom shall be denied to none, where the victor of truth shall make a lasting conquest.”³⁸⁷ WRA, Commission members, and religious adherents hoped the free and open practice of a variety of religions might help the concentration camps become “a haven of blessing and justice” that would crush “selfishness, violence, fear, distrust, disorder, pessimism, gangsterism, and all manner of evil” that threatened to pervade the camps.³⁸⁸

Personnel, sociologists, and incarcerated alike recognized the negative effect the loss of privacy and routine in the camps had on family structure and generational relationships.³⁸⁹ Soon after their expulsion from their home communities, Japanese Americans began decrying the growth of social disorder and community breakdown among a population better known for sobriety, hard work, and compliance. During the four years that Japanese Americans resided in the camps, they faced uncertainty about their future in the United States. Many dealt with anger that their country denied them their civil rights and questioned their loyalty and despair at the loss of property and livelihood. The WRA’s efforts to replace Issei leadership in the camps with Nisei leadership and the imposition of communal dining halls where children preferred to eat with friends instead of with their family units undermined the traditional Japanese cultural emphasis on family cohesion and reverence of elders.³⁹⁰ In the early days of dislocation, young adults with few outlets for

³⁸⁷ J. K. Tsukamoto, “Prayer for Topaz Protestant Church,” n.d., Box 724, Folder 22, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Dorothy Swaine Thomas and Thomas Nishimoto, *The Salvage*; Daisuke Kitagawa, *Issei and Nisei: The Internment Years* (New York: Seabury Press, 1967); Houston and Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*; Yoshiko Uchida, *Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese-American Family* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982); and Gruenewald, *Looking Like the Enemy*.

³⁹⁰ For example, the WRA only allowed citizens to hold office on community councils and to vote, essentially disfranchising the Issei who had led their communities for years. Kitagawa, *Issei and Nisei*, 84-88.

their energies or feelings turned to risky behavior like gambling and sexual promiscuity.³⁹¹ Some parents refused to let their daughters leave their barracks, and fears of illegitimate pregnancies emerged. At Tanforan Assembly Center, the proposition that the authorities should provide birth control for married couples at the commissary failed to gain traction. Ministers, whom many expected to zealously uphold community morals, also refused to pass out condoms.³⁹² Although the WRA prohibited alcohol in the camps, determined detainees made sake by fermenting rice. Issei men used to serving as the breadwinners and decision makers of their families found their authority challenged as they could no longer support their families. Depression, resentment, and cynicism were understandable responses to the unjust displacement of an entire population by its country. Camp authorities, sociologists observing the detainees, Commission members, and pastors agreed that church members adjusted better to their situations than individuals who did not actively practice religion.³⁹³ This observance heightened WRA concern to foster and regulate religion.

The fact that the guidelines for religious practices were only the thirty-second set of the hundreds of policies that the WRA issued to run a complex system of ten brand new “cities” suggests the importance the administration placed on the proper establishment of religion in the camps. The readiness with which the WRA created an official relationship with the Protestant Commission also underscores its desire for an orderly and efficient expression of religious enterprises.³⁹⁴ The WRA did not always acquiesce to Commission or

³⁹¹ Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon K. Chapman, 15 May 1942, Box 1, Folder 40, Chapman Papers; and John Modell, ed., *The Kikuchi Diary: Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp, the Tanforan Journals of Charles Kikuchi* (Urbana and Chicago: The University of Illinois Press, 1973), 214.

³⁹² Modell, ed., *The Kikuchi Diary*, 214.

³⁹³ WRA Semi Annual Report, January 1 to June 30, 194, Box 7, Folder 11, RG 130, Gillett (Clarence) Papers, 1942-1948, Charles E. Young Special Collections, UCLA (hereafter cited as the Gillett Paper).

³⁹⁴ While no comparable Roman Catholic or Buddhist commission existed, the WRA created interfaith church councils in each of the camp comprised of clergy from each of the three groups.

incarcerated clergy requests for policy changes that better reflected the needs and desires of religious groups. Even so, in many ways the WRA and religious entities had a symbiotic relationship. As the Episcopalian priest Daisuke Kitagawa, who served the Tule Lake Church and worked closely with both the Protestant Commission and the Tule Lake administration, noted,

It is to be remembered that the WRA as a US Government agency had nothing to do with the Church, neither the Church with the WRA. And still the Church cannot exist outside of the Project, neither the Project can exclude the Church activities. In rather intricate and touching ways the Administration and the Church had to have various kinds of contact. Not only the Church looked for assistance from WRA, but also the WRA . . . asked the Church leaders for their advice, suggestions, and recommendations pertaining to the civic and moral affairs in the Colony.³⁹⁵

Some camp administrators relied upon the knowledge and influence Christian and Buddhist clergy had in their communities.³⁹⁶ The WRA recognized the importance of religious entities in American society. While not set in stone, Instruction 32 provided a map for project directors, religious groups, and their allies to organize religious life in the camps.

The initial guidelines outlined in Instruction 32 enabled incarcerated to “promote their religious activities” and obtain “Caucasian assistance” as needed within certain parameters.³⁹⁷ While promoted as freedom, in reality the guidelines gave the directors of each camp a lot of power to determine when and where religious groups could meet, how

³⁹⁵ Daisuke Kitagawa, History of Tulelake Union Church, n.d. [late 1943, early 1944], Box 3, Folder 4, p. 3, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

³⁹⁶ Seigel, “Incarceration and the Church: An Overview,” 17.

³⁹⁷ WRA Administrative Instruction No. 32, 24 August 1942, Box 54, Folder 3, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

they could advertise their programs, and even what language they could use. The religious groups needed to coordinate with the chief administrator of each center for access to facilities for their worship and activities.³⁹⁸ The administrators in turn held the responsibility of ensuring that religious services did not become propaganda vehicles for pro-Japanese factions, did not use Japanese unless deemed by the administrator vital for participant comprehension, and did not include educational activities which might compete with government-provided educational programs.³⁹⁹ Furthermore, internal religious publications could only announce “routine matters” including notice of service times and locations. These first instructions left to the discretion of project directors the framework under which religious organizations in each camp would function.

The WRA intended other parts of Instruction 32 to protect the incarcerated from undue influence from outside forces. At the same time, the policies maintained a degree of WRA control over faith groups in the camps. For example, white religious workers would be allowed into the centers, although not to live within their boundaries, only if suitable Japanese American leaders could not be found.⁴⁰⁰ The goal of the WRA was to foster indigenous leadership. The WRA felt that allowing white clergy to reside in the camps would open the floodgates for any other non-Japanese Americans and non-WRA personnel who might wish to live in a poorly insulated wooden barrack or would open the

³⁹⁸ Charles Reifsnider recognized the limits to autonomy for Japanese Americans in the camps when he wrote, seemingly without irony, that the administration had a policy of letting Japanese Americans “manage their own affairs” and of “setting up committees to be chosen” by incarcerated with responsibilities for camp activities “of course in consultation with the Civil Administrators.” Reifsnider seemed unaware of the linguistic contortions in his description of the supposed freedom in the camps. Charles Reifsnider to the Most Rev. H. St. George Tucker, 14 April 1942, RG 71, Reifsnider Papers.

³⁹⁹ Louis Fiset, *Camp Harmony: Seattle's Japanese Americans and the Puyallup Assembly Center* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 135; and “Public Address system,” n.d. [1942], Reel 20, p. 46, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

⁴⁰⁰ Chapter 5 discusses the relationship between the missionaries who served as clergy or personnel in the camps, WRA personnel, and the Japanese American population.

administration to charges of favoritism. The fourth point of the instructions proved vital to the Protestant Commission: the WRA only recognized as representatives of a religious group in the camps any “church federation, committee, or group” authorized by Nikkei participants. Vague in its construal, this point could require the Commission to get the permission of each of the Japanese American Protestant churches in order to represent them. More likely, the policy intended to avoid undue friction in the camp from internal groups claiming without proof to represent, and therefore make decisions for, larger religious entities. The WRA, Protestant Commission, and Nikkei each used this stipulation at various times to promote their particular interests; for example, Nisei at one camp protested attempts by the Commission and Issei clergy to bring an Assemblies of God missionary onto the religious worker team by claiming that their camp had no Assemblies of God constituents and therefore, that particular missionary could not claim to represent any group in the camp.⁴⁰¹ Point four of Instruction 32 also compelled the Commission to furnish proof through formal credentials to the WRA that it was the designated external agent for the Japanese American federated churches. This proof enabled the Commission to pursue its work on behalf of the churches.

From the beginning, the administration tried to limit friction by announcing that it would recognize three religious “sects”: Protestants, Buddhists, and Catholics. This decision ignored the differences in theology and polity among different Protestant denominations and Buddhist sects. Instead, the WRA expected Episcopalians and Baptists with disparate worship practices and sacramental theology to cooperate in worship and other religious activities; the WRA expected the same of the various Buddhist groups, with often

⁴⁰¹ Blankenship, “Steps to a New World Order,” 206.

regrettable results.⁴⁰² Just as the different Protestant denominations had different theological understandings about the meaning of the Lord's Supper and Baptism, and took different approaches to biblical scholarship, the Buddhists also had different sects that interpreted Buddha's teachings in different ways. The largest Buddhist group in the United States by World War II was Amida Buddhism, represented largely by the Jodo Shinshu. This sect believed in salvation by faith, a belief that found similarities with Protestant Christianity.⁴⁰³ Smaller groups included Zen Buddhism, which claims that individual salvation comes through enlightenment or perfection, attained by meditation; Shingon, Nichiren Buddhism, which believes that continuous chanting of the *Hokke* sutra will lead to Buddhahood during one's life; and Tendai Buddhism, which was an eclectic and esoteric form of Buddhism. These groups usually worked well together, as did the Christians, but theological, political, and financial differences at times created problems.⁴⁰⁴

While the different Protestant denominations learned to get along, even forming church constitutions that allowed for differences in sacramental theology, and the Buddhists in most camps found ways to co-exist in spite of deep philosophical divergences,

⁴⁰² For more on the ecumenical and interfaith challenges Japanese Americans faced in the incarceration camps, see: Beth Hessel, "Contested Constructions: Federated Churches in WWII Japanese American Incarceration Camps," American Society of Church History Spring Meeting, Portland, OR, April 2013 (Author's personal papers); Blankenship, "Steps to a New World Order,"; Jane Chase, "'My Dear Bishop': A Report from Minidoka," *Idaho Yesterdays* 44, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 3-6; Linda Popp DiBiase, "Neither Harmony nor Eden: Margaret Peppers and the Exile of Japanese Americans"; Shizue Seigel, "The Japanese American Churches," *Nikkei History* 11, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 5, 15-16; Duncan Ryuken Williams, "Camp Dharma: Buddhism and the Japanese American Internment Experience," *Nikkei History* 11, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 8-9, 15; Kashima, *Buddhism in America*, 47-68; and Community Analysis Section, Manzanar Relocation Center, "Buddhist Sects at Manzanar," 12 April 1944, Box 28, Folder 7, RG 122, Manzanar WRA Records, Charles E. Young Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter cited as the Manzanar Papers).

⁴⁰³ Because they were the largest group, Jodo Shinshu's (also known as Pure Land Buddhists) often dominated Buddhist churches in the camps. The Jodo Shinshu's created the Buddhist Church of America during the war when they separated from the Buddhist Church in Japan and ceased to be the Buddhist Mission of North America. See Kashima, *Buddhism in America*, 4-9, for a short primer on differences among the Buddhist sects; and Seigel, "The Japanese American Churches"; and Community Analysis Section, Manzanar Relocation Center, "Buddhist Sects at Manzanar," for information about the different Buddhist denominations in the United States and in the camps.

⁴⁰⁴ Kashima, *Buddhism in America*, 54-57.

ecumenical cooperation could feel like a burden placed upon the sects instead of a joyful opportunity to “stand together regardless of religion and cooperate peacefully.”⁴⁰⁵ In reality, the interaction among the religious leaders remained sporadic. Rather than regular cooperative efforts to strengthen the overall religious life in the camps, the different groups cooperated occasionally on interfaith services, Christmas projects, and other affairs, but the WRA mandated interfaith councils existed primarily to ensure “no unnecessary competition . . . in using recreation and mess halls for religious meetings [with no] real effort to understand each other’s religion or beliefs.”⁴⁰⁶ The tendency for the WRA to view Protestants, Catholics, and Buddhists as three distinct entities also points to the difficulties engendered trying to determine the number of adherents for each sect.

Little consistency exists between various accountings of the number of adherents of each religious group in the incarceration camps. While the Protestant Commission trumpeted that a majority of the Nisei were Christian, the WRA surveys showed a higher percentage of Buddhist adherents among both first-and second generations. The Commission asserted that seventy percent of the Nisei practiced Christianity.⁴⁰⁷ In 1942, the WRA estimated that 42.5% of incarcerated Japanese Americans were Buddhists, 42.5% Protestants, and 15% Roman Catholics, while two camps had small populations of Seventh Day Adventists. A year later, the WRA revised its estimates and divided the Nikkei by generation in its survey. In 1943, the WRA claimed that two-thirds of the Issei were Buddhist and only one-third Christian. It further claimed that while 35 percent of the Nisei

⁴⁰⁵ Rev. Nagatomi, “Prayer on the First Anniversary of the Christian Church in Manzanar Center,” 13 June 1943, Box 28, Folder 7, RG 122, Manzanar Papers.

⁴⁰⁶ Suzuki, *Ministry in the Assembly and Relocation Centers of World War II*, 329.

⁴⁰⁷ Luther A. Weigle, president of Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, G. Pitt Beers, president of the Home Missions Council, and Almon R. Pepper, Chairman of the Commission on Aliens and Prisoners of War, to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 29 April 1942, quoted in the Minutes of the Committee on Resettlement of Japanese Americans, 13 April 1943, Box 3, Folder 1, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

were Christians, mostly Protestant, and 49 percent practiced Buddhism, at least 16 percent were unaffiliated with any religion.⁴⁰⁸

Both organizations likely underestimated the number of Buddhists. Prior to Pearl Harbor, Issei often attended Christian churches after immigrating, or sent their children to Christian Sunday school in the belief that associating with Christianity would help them assimilate into American society. Similarly, in the camps incarcerated might attend a mixture of Catholic, Protestant, and Buddhist worship services and activities either out of curiosity or boredom. Participating in services or activities did not indicate to them either religious apostasy or religious assent. After Pearl Harbor, many Japanese Americans either claimed “no religion” or Christianity out of fear of reprisals for being Buddhist.⁴⁰⁹ Although the WRA claimed to be blind to religious differences, this concern about bias had some basis in fact; the “loyalty” questionnaire gave military volunteers who claimed to practice Christianity “+2” points and those who said they were Buddhist “-2” points.⁴¹⁰ In its efforts to remain open to the majority religion of the incarcerated population, the WRA retained its inherent bias toward Protestant Christianity. This bias became more apparent in its reliance upon the Protestant Commission to help it determine the boundaries of religious freedom in the camps.

⁴⁰⁸ WRA Quarterly Reports, Quarterly Report October 1 to December 31, 1942, Box 7, Folder 10, RG 130, Gillett Papers; and War Relocation Authority, Community Analysis Section, “Nisei Assimilation,” Community Analysis Report No. 6, 21 July 1943, Box 6, Folder 19, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

⁴⁰⁹ WRA Community Analysis Section, Community Analysis Report No. 9, “Buddhism in the United States,” 15 May 1944, Box 28, Folder 7, RG 122, Manzanar Papers; and David K. Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei: Race, Generation, and Culture among Japanese Americans of California, 1924-1949* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 101.

⁴¹⁰ Seigel, “Incarceration and the Church,” 19.

The Commission agreed with the War Relocation Authority on the “sacredness of private conscience and religious freedom.”⁴¹¹ However, both Commission and government selectively practiced this proclamation. Although Galen Fisher and his cohorts had made progress in recognizing the virtue of free religious practice and in the need to be educated about differences among groups before painting a broad brush of condemnation across them, they still functioned out of a primary concern for the primacy of Protestantism. They recognized the allure Buddhism and other faith practices would have on a displaced, anxious population and wished to increase the likelihood that Protestants would flourish in the camps. Indeed, the Commission existed in order to help the Protestant congregations and their pastors. Any advice the Commission provided the WRA about other faiths overstepped Commission boundaries. Still, ensuring access for Issei to Japanese-language books was an issue that Commission members, with their unique competency in both English and Japanese, could provide the government. In this work the Commission helped all Japanese-speaking incarcerated regardless of religious standing. In its pronouncements on the acceptability of other sects, the Commission overstepped its calling and exercised instead out of prejudice, ignorance, and fear, the very characteristics for which Commission members faulted the American public.

The commitment to religious freedom foundered initially on WRA and military paranoia about use of the Japanese language and Japanese language materials in the camps.⁴¹² Many Japanese Americans destroyed personal artifacts connected with Japan right after Pearl Harbor, when families waited each night for the FBI to knock on their door, rifle

⁴¹¹ Gordon K. Chapman, Executive Secretary, “Memorandum on the Scope, Function, and Policies of the Western Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service,” 9 December 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴¹² Kashima, *Buddhism in America*, 53.

through their belongings for signs of subversive activities, and arrest husbands and fathers.⁴¹³ Individuals destroyed their collections of Japanese language books and newspapers at that time. Others brought reading material which they judged safe—Bibles, philosophical works, traditional Japanese literature, and non-Japanese literature translated into Japanese—with them to the “Reception centers” and camps. The military police at the assembly centers conducted regular sweeps of the barracks and confiscated all of these materials except the Christian Bibles. Episcopalian priest Daisuke Kitagawa wrote ominously about the effect of this practice in a series of letters. He thanked Mrs. Ralph Mitchell, a member of the Fresno Fellowship of Reconciliation, for sending Japanese language Bibles to Tule Lake after all other Japanese reading material was determined “contraband,” a regulation Kitagawa deemed “ridiculous.”⁴¹⁴ He elaborated further in another letter in which he called the books and magazines the “last resort of amusement” for the Issei and warned that the “result will not be any too good.”⁴¹⁵ A group of Nikkei pastors further argued that access to Christian devotional literature was essential for “Americanization” of the Issei. According to them, the more mature in Christian faith Issei became, the more devoted to the values and ideals of the United States.⁴¹⁶

Commission members agreed with Kitagawa’s assessment. They agreed that the policy of confiscating all Japanese language books except Bibles and hymnals had a demoralizing effect on the incarcerated population. At a meeting with WRA and army officials on 26 June 1942, the Commission took up the issue. The officials contended that

⁴¹³ Williams, “Camp Dharma,” 9.

⁴¹⁴ Daisuke Kitagawa to Mrs. Ralph F. Mitchell, 18 June 1942, Box 3, Folder 2, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

⁴¹⁵ Daisuke Kitagawa to Floyd Schmoie. n.d. [June 1942], Box 3, Folder 2, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

⁴¹⁶ Major M. Imai (Salvation Army), Rev. T. Sakaguchi, Rev. K. Inori, and Rev. H. Hashimoto, to Dr. Frank Herron Smith, Galen Fisher, and Gordon K. Chapman, 13 June 1942, Reel 83, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

the decision to consider all Japanese language material contraband emerged from some “pretty significant information” gathered by army intelligence, although no one elaborated on the nature of that information. The Commission argued against the policy. As far as Commission members were concerned, denying Issei reading material while at the same time thrusting them into a period of unprecedented leisure could only lower morale.⁴¹⁷ Several missionaries on the Commission knew the Japanese language and could easily and quickly peruse materials to determine if they contained subversive subject matter. Frank Herron Smith, Gordon Chapman, and Galen Fisher offered their translation services to authorities. They maintained that many of the books held by incarcerated were either Japanese classics or English language classics like *Pilgrim's Progress* that had been translated into Japanese.⁴¹⁸ What they did not mention was that much classical Japanese writing centered on Buddhist philosophy, which might have caused problems with the military, which was less committed than the civilian WRA to the concept of religious freedom.⁴¹⁹

The WRA authorities accepted the Commission's offer and further utilized the Commission to determine the nature of various Japanese language religious tracts circulated in the camps. The Commission used these opportunities to pressure the government to ban religious groups the Commission deemed undesirable from the camps. The Seventh Day

⁴¹⁷ Minutes of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁴¹⁸ Report on a Meeting of the Western Area Protestant Church Commission for Wartime Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers; Frank Herron Smith, “Some Results Achieved by the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, February- December, 1942,” n.d. [Dec 1942], Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers; and Major M. Imai (Salvation Army), Rev. T. Sakaguchi, Rev. K. Inori, and Rev. H. Hashimoto, to Dr. Frank Herron Smith, Galen Fisher, and Gordon K. Chapman, 13 June 1942.

⁴¹⁹ The WRA further compounded issues for clergy by informing them that the WRA would pay the charges to ship their book collections to the camps from their pre-incarceration homes and churches only if the pastors would give them to Community Services for public use; if the clergy wished to maintain their books for private use, they would have to come up with the funds to pay for shipping themselves. George L. Townsend to Nao Kodaira, 21 September 1942, Reel 330, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses, who did not participate in the Commission's work, came under scrutiny for circulating religious tracts in Japanese in the camps. The Commission charged them with "vigorous proselytizing activities." The Jehovah's Witnesses, a group that adhered to pacifism as a religious tenet, passed out material that "openly opposed conscription and war." The Commission charged them with beliefs that were "subversive" to both American and Christian values.⁴²⁰

The Jehovah's Witnesses had a history of acting in ways deemed contrary to popular understandings of patriotism. Besides their pacifist stance, Witnesses placed their religious faith over any allegiance to their country; in particular, Witnesses deemed patriotic rituals to be idolatrous practices that amounted to state worship. In the 1930s, several court cases ruled against the Witnesses who refused to allow their children to participate in the daily salute to the American flag.⁴²¹

The Commission urged the government to bar both of these groups from visiting the incarcerated or circulating material in any language. Because of their pacifist stance, the Commission found the Jehovah's Witnesses inimical and subversive to both Christian and American democratic ideals. Privately, Commission members shared with each other that they feared the activities of these groups would jeopardize the rights of "all Protestant bodies" in the camps.⁴²² While the federal authorities did keep the Jehovah's Witnesses, who had a minimal to non-existent presence among incarcerated Japanese Americans, out of the

⁴²⁰ "Report of meeting of Commission on Aliens and Prisoners of War and Inter-Council Committee on Japanese Christian Work" 14 September 1942, Box 719, Folder 23, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴²¹ Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religions, Volume 2: The Noise of Conflict, 1919-1941* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 355-357.

⁴²² Minutes of the meeting of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service," 22 July 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

camps, Seventh Day Adventists remained active in camps in which they had adherents.⁴²³

The Adventists, however, worshiped separately from the federated community churches (in part because they celebrate the Sabbath on Saturday).

The Commission showed partiality in its assessment of religious groups.

Interestingly, Commission members did not protest the involvement of other pacifist groups like the Quaker American Friends Service Committee, perhaps because they had existing relationships with Quaker missionaries like Herbert Nicholson in Japan.⁴²⁴ On the other hand, the Commission embodied the strong anti-Catholic sentiment that survived into the mid-twentieth century among American Protestants.⁴²⁵ Individuals like Episcopalian Bishop Charles Reifsnider showed their bias against Catholics by using the term “Christians” as an umbrella term to refer to all Protestants.⁴²⁶ This usage excluded Catholic from the realm of Christianity. Missionary leaders of the Commission and missionaries who worked in the camps referred several times to a situation in which a Catholic priest tried to secure WRA positions for two nuns in the camps. Although the correspondence about the nuns does not detail what scandalous thing the nuns did, it is possible that they tried to enforce Roman Catholic theology or beliefs in a public school classroom; on the other hand, the priest may have used heavy-handed means to get the nuns hired and his behavior may have alienated WRA personnel. As a result, the nuns were not hired by the WRA. The missionaries asserted that the behavior of the nuns led to negative repercussions for all religious workers

⁴²³ Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei*, 102.

⁴²⁴ Herbert Nicholson, *Treasure in Earthen Vessels: God's Love Overflows in Peace and War* (Whittier, CA: Penn Lithographics, 1974).

⁴²⁵ Justin Nordstrom, *Danger on the Doorstep: Anti-Catholicism and American Print Culture in the Progressive Era* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); William Issel, *For Both Cross and Flag: Catholic Action, anti-Catholicism, and National Security Politics in World War II San Francisco* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010); and Emmett McLoughlin, *American Culture and Catholic Schools* (New York: L. Stuart, 1960).

⁴²⁶ Charles Reifsnider to Gordon K. Chapman, 17 September 1942, Folder 14, Chapman Papers.

in the camps, as WRA personnel appeared less inclined to hire missionaries and were more suspicious of their agendas.⁴²⁷ The Commission was especially alarmed to learn that the Roman Catholic Church was seeking permission to start a parochial school at the Poston camp. In a meeting with WRA authorities, Commission members stressed the “undesirability of having sectarian schools in such reservations.” As a compromise, they suggested “recommending a policy of weekday religious education” that would allow Protestant, Catholic, and Buddhist children to receive religious education after school from their respective congregations.⁴²⁸

More than anything, Commission members feared that another religious group might gain an unfavorable advantage over Protestants in the battle for the hearts and allegiance of incarcerated. The fear of competition emerged from Commission members’ long experience as a religious minority in Japan; they knew the hard-won privilege Christianity gained when Japan included it in the trinity of state-sanctioned faiths. Commission members also believed the unjust incarceration experience provided an unusual opportunity to further ecumenical unity, or cooperation among different Protestant denominations; not until after the war would many of these missionaries fully embrace interfaith cooperation.⁴²⁹ In spite of their reluctance to champion interfaith activities, however, their response toward Roman Catholics was more vehemently negative than their attitude toward Buddhists. Roman Catholics and Protestants had engaged in a battle for supremacy over the Christian world since the era of the reformation, and Commission members saw the Catholic Church as a threat to their efforts to bring Japanese Americans into the Protestant fold.

⁴²⁷ Elizabeth Evans to Dr. J. L. Hooper, 13 July 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁴²⁸ Minutes of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁴²⁹ Blankenship, “Steps to a New World Order.”

Possibly the Commission felt more positively toward Buddhists than toward fellow Christian Roman Catholics because they believed that assured authorities that Buddhism did not present a threat to the nation. The Commission assured authorities of the benign nature of Buddhism, although it condemned Shintoism as an ultra-nationalistic Japanese cult.⁴³⁰ Its positive assessment of Buddhism stemmed from several factors. First, years collaborating with Buddhist students, neighbors, politicians, and coworkers in Japan convinced many of these missionaries of the benign nature of Buddhism. Second, Buddhists in the United States had worked hard over the years to prove their patriotism and efforts at assimilation.⁴³¹ Because a majority of first and second generation Japanese Americans adhered to Buddhism, neither the government nor Commission members desired to squash the rights of Buddhists to practice their faith; the government had already made Buddhist worship more difficult when the FBI rounded up most Issei Buddhist priests after December 7, 1941 and placed them in Department of Justice camps.⁴³² On the other hand, missionaries viewed all forms of Shintoism as inimical to Christian practices.⁴³³ The Japan state-ordered worship of the Emperor amounted to idol worship in missionary eyes. Furthermore, like the US government, the missionaries agreed that Shinto practices suggested disloyalty to the United States.

⁴³⁰ Minutes of the meeting of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service," 22 July 1942; and Annual Report of the Special Representative for Japanese Work—1942," n.d. [January 1943], Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁴³¹ Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei*; Kashima, *Buddhism in America*; Richard Hughes Seager, *Buddhism in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); and Hayashi, *For the Sake of Our Japanese Brethren*.

⁴³² Fiset, *Camp Harmony*, 105.

⁴³³ Shizue Seigel points out that several new religions emerged in Japan in the nineteenth century that registered as Shinto in order to avoid government persecution. Konko-Kyo, Tenrikyo, and Seicho No Iye were charismatic folk Shinto movements not related to nationalistic *Kokka* Shinto. However, these sects found themselves banned and suppressed in the United States during WWII because they were inaccurately linked to the ultra-nationalistic Shinto. Seigel, "Japanese American Churches," 5.

While the Commission effectively swayed the WRA to ban the open practice of Shinto and Jehovah's Witness faiths in the camps and to ease restrictions on Japanese reading material in the name of religious freedom, the Commission perhaps inadvertently created some situations in which the camp churches seemed to be forcing a particular brand of Protestant Christianity upon the entire camp populations. During the spring of 1945, Chapman invited fellow Presbyterian chaplain Douglas Noble to take a tour of the camps. A cheerful fellow, Noble seemed the right person to bring some cheer and the Christian message to the camps (see Figure 9).



Figure 9. The Reverend Douglas Noble and youth with the Wayside Chapel. Reproduced from the Presbyterian Historical Society.

Noble visited the camps in a mobile church called "The Wayside Chapel." The Wayside Chapel was a converted school bus used for evangelistic purposes by the Presbyterian Board of National Missions among industrial war workers in California. Painted royal blue with the name "The Wayside Chapel" and a cross painted in white on its sides, the bus was equipped with enough folding chairs to seat twenty-five people, a portable altar, a phonograph and records of religious music, a projector and films, Bibles, hymnbooks, and a public-address system capable of broadcasting three-quarters of a mile

away in the barren expanses surrounding the camps (Figures 10 and 11). Noble brought his father-in-law, a naval officer on leave, with him on the six-week journey to the six westernmost camps and two Nikkei settlements in Utah. While Chapman and Noble envisioned the tour as a way to support basic Christian work among Japanese Americans, it raised a furor at most of the camps.⁴³⁴



Figure 10. Wayside Chapel. Reproduced from the Presbyterian Historical Society.

Noble considered his trip a success, reportedly drawing scores of young people to the services he offered at each camp, while Chapman received numerous letters from camp administrators and pastors full of concern for the effect of Noble's style of evangelism. According to Noble, at least sixty-two people made "outright decisions for Christ and His

⁴³⁴ Douglas W. Noble, Report to the Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., On Wayside Chapel Tour to War Relocation Centers, Marcy 15-May 6, 1945, Folder 13, Chapman Papers; "The Wayside Chapel," brochure, n.d. [1942], Box 12, Folder 51, RG 301.7, BFM Church Strategy; and Manual for use of The Wayside Chapel, n.d. [1942], Box 12, Folder 51, RG 301.7, BFM Church Strategy.

Way” during his tour and close to 5,000 people participated in his programs.⁴³⁵ He found the Nisei the most receptive to his program, perhaps because many young people enjoyed the diversions from the monotony of camp life. Noble’s programs sounded reminiscent of church camp: an hour of music followed by a film like “The Nobleman’s Son,” which was likely a dramatization of one of Jesus’ parables by Hollywood filmmaker James Friedrich; a sermon and altar call; and more hymn singing.⁴³⁶ At the Gila River and Tule Lake camps, young people piled into the Chapel and briefly escaped the confines of their barbed-wire wrapped communities for hikes and picnics in the surrounding deserts. At times, Noble squeezed eighty youth into the bright blue bus and delivered each youth to his or her home while the sound of their voices singing popular Christian music blared from the loudspeakers.⁴³⁷



Figure 11. Interior of the Wayside Chapel. Reproduced from the Presbyterian Historical Society.

⁴³⁵ Douglas W. Noble, Report to the Board of National Missions.

⁴³⁶ Douglas Noble to Gordon K. Chapman, 26 March 1945, Folder 13, Chapman Papers. Cathedral Films, a Hollywood film company started by James Friedrich in 1936 that produced and distributed Christian evangelistic films in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s produced “The Nobleman’s Son.” Accessed April 9, 2015, <http://www.imdb.com/company/co0017127/>.

⁴³⁷ Douglas Noble, Report to the Board of National Missions.

These events must have felt like adventurous novelties to the young people, but to others in the community, the events felt like an intrusion and Noble's style abrasive and divisive. Chapman received irate letters from administrative personnel and pastors at several of the camps complaining of the about the disturbance of the Wayside Chapel's loudspeakers. At Gila Rivers, Noble "insisted on 'testing'" his equipment next to staff housing and the hospital. Because people a mile away—at the opposite end of the camp—reported being able to hear the music from the Chapel, undoubtedly its noise was unbearable for patients sleeping in the hospital.⁴³⁸ From Minidoka and Topaz arrived complaints about Noble's cultural insensitivity. The young people felt that Noble spoke to them as if they were "Japanese from Japan," a sensibility that the very American Nisei resented.⁴³⁹

Noble stirred up more than cultural issues; he also appeared ignorant of both the desire to maintain a positive fellowship between the Buddhists and Christians in each camp and the WRA prohibition on proselytization. Considering that at least half of the residents in each of the camps was Buddhist, any negative statements about Buddhists were in poor taste. Therefore, people who attended his services found abhorrent comments that he "did not like the Buddhists." One of the Japanese Americans who heard him make this remark commented that Noble should "use common sense." Chapman merely advised Noble that "long experience with Japanese in Japan and in this country leads me to believe that it is best to refrain from all reference to Buddhists," and focus on a positive Christian message.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁸ L. H. Bennett, Project Director, Gila Rivers Project, 10 April 1945, Folder 13, Chapman Papers.

⁴³⁹ Jacob A. Long to Gordon K. Chapman, 1 May 1945, Folder 13, Chapman Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to Douglas Noble, 4 May 1945, Folder 13, Chapman Papers. For more on the sensitivity of Nisei to those who treated them as if they were Japanese, see Chapter Four.

⁴⁴⁰ Gordon K. Chapman to Douglas Noble, 4 May 1945.

Even a positive Christian message could offend individuals who felt they were a captive audience. When Canadian James Cuthbertson, an evangelist with the British-originated Japan Evangelistic Board who spent thirty-three years leading revivals and spiritual retreats in Japan prior to the war, received invitations to provide services in various incarceration camps, he received a mixed reception. According to Cuthbertson's press release, he was an "exceedingly gifted speaker . . . filled with the Holy Spirit." Under his influence, "the unsaved are converted and Christians blessed in needed ways."⁴⁴¹ Cuthbertson's revivalistic style appealed to the Protestant Issei who were theologically conservative and biblical literalists in camps like Manzanar, but Nisei reacted bitterly to his manner, calling it the "same revivalistic diet" they "had been fed." At Manzanar, Henry Bovenkerk lamented at the "excesses" of emotion Cuthbertson's message elicited from the Issei and feared that "such demonstrations" were destructive to the ability of Christians to have any influence in the tense atmosphere of the camp, where Buddhists and Christians found themselves divided as much by politics as by faith.⁴⁴² While some of his presentations were technically not evangelical in nature, as his talk on the status of various parts of the British Empire in the war effort before all 1500 youth at the Heart Mountain High School, his audience often had no choice to listen to what he had to say, as did those subjected to the Wayside Chapel's loudspeakers.⁴⁴³ Although the Commission vigorously defended the right of the incarcerated population to be free from proselytization by religious sects with which the Commission disagreed, Commission members helped men like Noble and Cuthbertson spread their evangelical messages in the camps. When it came to religious messages, the

⁴⁴¹ Statement regarding Mr. James Cuthbertson, n.d. [1942], Folder 33, Chapman Papers.

⁴⁴² Henry Bovenkerk to Gordon Chapman, 6 May 1943, Folder 1, Chapman Papers.

⁴⁴³ Gordon Chapman to Henry Bovenkerk, 10 October 1943, Folder 1, Chapman Papers.

Commission tended to support the furtherance of Protestant Christianity even as it claimed to support religious freedom for all groups.

The proper financial support of camp pastors so that they might be liberated from other duties and able to fully focus on ministerial duties became another hot question of religious freedom for the Commission, WRA personnel, and incarcerated. Japanese American congregations in the makeshift incarceration camp communities found themselves unable to provide the salaries for their pastors, priests, and youth leaders. In Protestant congregations and Buddhist churches, congregants had traditionally raised the money to pay salaries by taking offerings during worship services or through the tithes of members. Once in the camp, few incarcerated had enough money to tithe. Administration leadership also decided that offerings proved divisive in ecumenical and occasional interfaith settings and banned the practice. The WRA also convinced pastors and priests suspend their practice of charging fees to perform weddings and funerals in the camps. Confusion further arose as the WRA and the Protestant Commission, serving as an intermediary for the various denominations, began arguing about who was responsible for paying the wages and allowances of religious workers in the camps. Over the summer and autumn of 1942, the Commission, denominational mission boards, Japanese American clergy, and the WRA untangled the confusing web of concerns about clergy pay. At issue was not only who was responsible for compensating religious workers but who would determine an equitable rate for pastoral pay.

At first, the Commission understood that the WRA would provide clergy remuneration in the camps. The Episcopal Church, for one, expected that the government would support their “Japanese missionary clergy” as they called their Japanese American

pastors, and voted to withdraw salaries once Episcopalian clergy entered the camps.⁴⁴⁴ The Commission noted at its June 1942 meeting that the WRA would employ clergy as religious workers except when “the church objects,” and then pastors might work another position for the WRA pay and receive pastoral wages from their denomination for the church work, in essence, working two jobs.⁴⁴⁵ In some situations, the assembly and relocation center administrators put the Japanese American religious workers on staff as social workers or educational leaders in order to provide them with the wages and clothing allowance provided to other individuals who did work for the centers.⁴⁴⁶ This practice appeared to be on a center-by-center basis. In some centers, the government and denominational authorities both assumed the other entity was caring for religious workers.⁴⁴⁷ By August 1942, the Commission noted pushback from the WRA and recognized that at least part of the ministerial support would need to come from denominations.⁴⁴⁸ The WRA, citing its policy of separating church and state, issued administrative instructions prohibiting it from compensating religious workers. The government would provide clergy and their families the same subsistence services—food, housing, medical care, and basic education—as all incarcerated.⁴⁴⁹ However, The WRA would not extend the monthly pay and incidental allowances as well as the annual basic clothing allowances for employee and family to

⁴⁴⁴ The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA, Original Minutes, Meeting of the National Church, 28-30 April 1942, Box 6, Folder 6, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

⁴⁴⁵ Report on a Meeting of the Western Area Protestant Church Commission for Wartime Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴⁴⁶ John Powell to John Provinse, 2 January 1943, Reel 214, Frame 115, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

⁴⁴⁷ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 2 December 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴⁴⁸ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 21 August 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴⁴⁹ WRA Administrative Instruction No. 32, noted in the Minutes of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 14 October 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

religious workers or their families.⁴⁵⁰ Authorities required clergy to work an approved job for the WRA or go without basic remuneration. This policy meant that religious workers lost access to both government wages for themselves, and clothing allowances for their families. Because of the expedited manner by which the government removed Japanese Americans from their homes, farms, and businesses and because the government also froze all assets owned by Japanese Americans and held in Japanese-operated banks after December 7, 1942, few families had adequate savings to tide them through the years in the incarceration camps without the minimal help WRA wages provided.

The Protestant Commission began investigating the issue of pay for Protestant pastors while most Japanese American communities were still moving into the assembly centers. An early survey of the various denominations found that the domestic mission boards which took responsibility for the Japanese American congregations were, for the most part, paying a “nominal sum” averaging \$25 per month to each pastor.⁴⁵¹ While this pay was higher than the highest professional pay of \$19 per month provided to incarcerated Japanese American workers by the government, it actually represented less monthly remuneration because it did not include the incidental and clothing allowances provided to each member of a family unit. The Episcopalians addressed this imbalance by providing a

⁴⁵⁰ The WRA paid incarcerated workers who worked for any of the WRA provided services in the camps a monthly salary ranging between \$12 for unskilled labor to \$19 for professionals like doctors and social workers. The WRA also provided these workers and their families “clothing and incidental allowances” ranging between \$3.75 and \$2.25 depending on the age of the dependent, and an annual “basic clothing allowance” of \$45 for the head of the family, \$39 for the wife and each child between the age of 8 and 16, and \$27 for children under eight years of age. This larger clothing allowance recognized that few of these families forcibly removed to the extreme desert conditions of most of the camps from the temperate Pacific West had appropriate clothing to survive the bitterly cold winters; as they were only allowed to bring with them “what they could carry” in suitcases, few lacked adequate supplies of clothing to span the seasons. Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 2 December 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴⁵¹ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 22 July 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

\$25 monthly stipend to single clergy and \$35 monthly to married clergy, regardless of family size; the denomination also continued to cover the \$7.50 minimum pension premiums for these priests.⁴⁵² Other denominations provided no funds to their Japanese American clergy. Some Japanese American congregations had been self-supporting prior to the war, or supported with the assistance of nearby white congregations as a mission project. For these clergy, their denominations often failed to pick up the salaries as they moved into the camps. The Commission worried that pastors did not receive a uniform pay across denominations, but determined to wait to address the issue until the entire West Coast Nikkei population was settled in the long-term incarceration camps.

Remuneration parity for religious workers meant more than ensuring each received the same amount of pay; it also involved the differential between Japanese American salaries and white American salaries in the camps. Pay for all professional incarcerated workers in the camps was well below the wages they would earn on the outside and below what War Relocation Authority personnel earned. In 1943, for example, prevailing wages for white-collar women hovered around \$125 per month, or \$1500 annually. Louis Fiset notes that at the Camp Harmony Assembly Center in Puyallup, Washington, the civil staff members made decent wages. Truck drivers received \$1,500 annually and management level staff earned \$3,600 annually.⁴⁵³ WRA personnel received higher pay and lived in nicer barracks with better food service than the Nikkei to “compensate for the hardships of living in inhospitable surroundings” at the ten “relocation centers”; the assumption underlying this adjustment was that the involuntary prisoners of the camps needed no extra compensation to

⁴⁵² The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA, Original Minutes, Meeting of the National Church, 28-30 April 1942, Box 6, Folder 6, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

⁴⁵³ Fiset, *Camp Harmony*, 107.

work for a pittance.⁴⁵⁴ Like much of the doublespeak of the government about the camps, the reality was that most professional white workers had the choice to take more lucrative positions in more “hospitable” situations because of the wartime economy.

The WRA claimed that capping the pay of incarcerated labor at \$19 was a public relations tactic. Originally, the government planned to pay incarcerated labor “‘security wages’ of between \$50 and \$95 a month, with \$15 a month deducted for subsistence.”⁴⁵⁵ A furor arose when this news became public, as anti-Japanese protestors argued that Japanese Americans should not be treated better than soldiers who risked their lives for American democracy, an argument whose jingoism was lost in the post-Pearl Harbor hysteria. By limiting the top monthly salary of incarcerated Nikkei to \$19 per month, they ensured that none of these wards of the government would earn more than the lowest paid soldier. A private-in-training earned \$21 per month. This argument, of course, ignored the years of specialized education, training, and experience acquired by teachers, medical professionals, and social workers in favor of the desire of the WRA to oppose claims that it treated “enemy aliens” and suspect citizens better than the soldiers in the trenches. The WRA also overlooked the numerous Issei who served in the US military during World War I, and the Nisei currently working for the military in its language schools. Nor did the WRA change its policy when the government began recruiting Nisei soldiers in the spring of 1943.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁴ Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei*, 109.

⁴⁵⁵ Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 70.

⁴⁵⁶ Esther Briesemeister and Winona Chambers, War Relocation Authority Visit, 6-7 July 1944, Box 720, Folder 4, RG 6, YWCA Papers; WRA Administrative Instruction No. 73, Subject: Community Activities, 26 December 1942, Box 723, Folder 3, RG 6, YWCA Papers; John H. Provinse, Chief, Community Management Division, to Mrs. William H. Chambers, 22 December 1943, Box 723, Folder 3, RG 6, YWCA Papers; Esther Briesemeister, general letter, 15 January 1945, Box 720, Folder 5, RG 6, YWCA Papers; Testimony of Arthur J. Altmeyer, Chairman, Social Security Board, Before Special Senate Committee of Wartime Health and Education, 28 January 1944, accessed September 19, 2013, www.ssa.gov/history/aja144.html; and Esther

These inequities provoked irate responses from incarcerated and sympathetic outsiders. Workers at the army camouflage net factory at the Santa Anita Assembly Center went on strike, unsuccessfully requesting regular army pay of \$41 per month and other compensation and protections.⁴⁵⁷ Paul Kusuda, incarcerated at Manzanar, wrote about the situation to President Roosevelt: “Time and time again, I have argued that America is not a democracy for white people only. Was I wrong? God help us all if I am or was because what a future is in store for everyone in a false democracy.”⁴⁵⁸ Similarly, Los Angeles YWCA board member Winnifred Wygal was discomfited by a visit at the home of Manzanar Project Director Ralph Merritt and his wife Varina. There during the summer of 1943 to inspect for truth of the rumors that the WRA coddled inmates, Wygal discovered no sign of pampering of any but the white administration personnel. She noted the running water, servants, and comfortable living quarters enjoyed by the Merritts, and reported to the National Branch of the YWCA that white professionals received salaries comparable to those made by teachers, social workers, and doctors in California. On the other hand, she considered “very niggardly” the minimal compensation of \$8 to \$19 per month, plus communal room and board, paid to all incarcerated, including trained and skilled medical and social work professionals.⁴⁵⁹ The ACLU reported on a “slave labor racket” at Tule Lake that enabled white personnel to pay a minimal fee to a recreation club in exchange for incarcerated domestic servants who received \$19 per month from the WRA.⁴⁶⁰

Briesemeister, Gila River Relocation Center, Rivers, AZ, 16 February 1943, Box 723, Folder 5, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴⁵⁷ Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 179-182.

⁴⁵⁸ Quoted in Yoo, *Growing up Nisei*, 109.

⁴⁵⁹ Winnifred Wygal, Report on Manzanar—July 22-27, 1943, Box 723, Folder 16, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴⁶⁰ Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 241; and Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps*, 46-47.

The pastors in the camps felt similarly to other highly trained professionals. In order to be ordained by their respective denominations, most of these men had received three to four years of schooling beyond the bachelor's degree. They provided vital services to an estranged, uprooted population. Although congregational ministers tended to earn less than other professions, they desired the respect accorded with a decent salary. Some of the pastors felt their salaries should be "approximately equal to that of professional workers . . . with a suitable clothing allowance added." Some pastors and their supporting denominations believed they should "receive much more." The Commission dithered over this quandary, for they believed that differences in opinion and pay could "create an unfortunate situation in the projects."⁴⁶¹ Clergy and Commission agreed that clergy compensation should come from their denominations. Most clergy refused the option of applying for public assistance from the WRA as below the office of the ministry. Clergy wished to be recognized for their contributions to the spiritual and mental health of the imprisoned population and would not rely on what they deemed charity.⁴⁶²

Clergy wives also requested that their contributions to church life be recognized with wages. Congregations and denominations long considered minister's spouses, like the wives of missionaries, de facto unpaid employees of the church. The pastor of a church was able to carry out his administrative, pastoral, and worship responsibilities because his wife added to her manifold household duties tasks like visiting the needy and sick, running women's Bible studies and missionary societies, teaching in the Sunday schools, playing the piano, and

⁴⁶¹Minutes for the Executive Committee of the Congregational Christian Committee for Work with Japanese Evacuees, Box 1, Folder 1, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

⁴⁶²Gordon K. Chapman to the Members of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service who represent Boards which are members of the Home Missions Council and have Japanese Churches, 6 January 1943, Box 4, Folder 3, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

leading the choir. This trend continued in Japanese American congregations. For example, Seda Suzuki assisted her husband, Lester Suzuki, who was the assistant pastor for the English language services at Centenary Methodist Church in Los Angeles from 1934 to 1942. For their work, Lester Suzuki received thirty dollars per month; at times, the church treasury failed to pay the full amount.⁴⁶³ As long as clergy families had their congregations to fall back upon for support, denominations could ignore this issue. However, in the camps, pastor's wives discovered that without the monthly allowance that working women received, they had difficulty providing for their families.

In the late 1942, the Commission took action to rectify the situation when they requested that the denominational mission boards covering the salaries of the camp pastors also provide for clergy wives. With the support of WRA administrators, the Commission recommended a twelve dollar monthly allowance for pastors' wives, retroactive to the time the boards began paying camp clergy remuneration. The Commission argued that women employed by the WRA had time only to work and attend to household duties. Because of a shortage of "qualified [church] women workers, it is desirable that the minister's wife be free to help with the pastoral and other church work." They feared that without "this additional source of income, an average minister's family" would not earn enough in the camps to cover family expenses.⁴⁶⁴ The concern of the male-dominated Commission clearly lay with the minister's ability to provide for his family, and not with the right of clergy wives to receive recognition and fair pay for their services. As with the pay for pastors, the

⁴⁶³ Yoo, *Growing up Nisei*, 59.

⁴⁶⁴ Minutes of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 2 December 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

Commission agreed with the WRA's "conservative and reasonable" assessment of minimal remuneration instead of pushing for salaries comparable to outside pay.⁴⁶⁵

Pastor's wives quickly claimed this pay as their due. One woman, Yoshiko Kawamorita, described her work as comparable to that of her husband, her eighteen-year-old son, and her clergy son-in-law, while detailing the difficulties of feeding and clothing a growing brood of children. Arriving in the United States with eight years of high school and seminary education from the Presbyterian Miyagi College, Kawamorita was a highly educated and capable wife for her minister husband. Kawamorita worked beside her husband for twenty-five years before they entered Heart Mountain Relocation Center. Her duties as a missionary worker, pastor's wife, and mother of six did not ease within the confines of the camp. Unlike some Issei who saw their first vacation in decades turn into an extended retirement in the centers, Kawamorita remained busy visiting the "sick or lonesome," helping the poorest of the poor in the camps, and taking care of the four children who still lived at home.

Because of their work, the Presbyterian Church provided Kawamorita and other clergy wives with a monthly twelve-dollar allowance in the camps, the first salary they ever received. Presbyterian pastor T. Horikoshi of Heart Mountain wrote to the Presbyterian Mission Board thanking them for "recognizing the status" of his wife as a "regular religious worker." He mentioned the growing popularity of her work; Mrs. Horikoshi's speaking engagement calendar was full for the coming month.⁴⁶⁶ As far as Horikoshi was concerned, justice had been served his family. Kawamorita, on the other hand, pushed for a clothing allowance as well. Her husband used his own nineteen-dollar salary for his work, leaving

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Rev. T. Horikoshi to Jacob Long, 15 June 1943, Box 12, Folder 3, RG 301.7, BFM Church Strategy.

her with little to provide food for her children between the communal camp mealtimes or to clothe them. On the advice of Gordon Chapman, who shared her family's small barrack during a four-day visit in June 1943, Kawamorita wrote a letter to the head of the Presbyterian Home Missions office seeking assistance. After apologizing for speaking of money, she wrote, "I need clothing money. (Methodist family got clothing money for Oct-Dec)." In limited English, Kawamorita interspersed her careful accounting of the shortfall owed her by the Presbyterian Church with accounts of the efforts made by her, her ordained son-in-law, and her eighteen-year-old son to be servants "of Christ and for people." Kawamorita did not forget to connect faith and patriotism in her plea; she ended with an account of a soldier who showed kindness "By the Name of Jesus Christ" to Japanese Americans sent to Department of Justice Camp Livingston in "Louisia."⁴⁶⁷

Against the desires of some of the pastors and the practices of some of the denominations, the Commission haggled with mission boards and the WRA to come to a uniform pay policy for Protestant clergy in the camps. By October, the assorted groups had agreed on a uniform standard of remuneration. The WRA felt strongly that outside groups needed to conform to the pay structure created by the government. Besides the aforementioned publicity concern, authorities claimed to worry that individuals receiving WRA rates might resent individuals paid market rates by private organizations.⁴⁶⁸ Therefore, with the Commission's assistance, denominations agreed to pay their ministers \$19 per

⁴⁶⁷ Mrs. Yoshiko Kawamorita to Jacob Long, 10 June 1943, Box 12, Folder 3, RG 301.7, BFM Church Strategy.

⁴⁶⁸ The WRA later used the argument that the churches followed WRA standard remuneration policies to strong arm organizations like the Y.W.C.A. into following suit for its employees in the camps. Esther Briesemeister and Winona Chambers, War Relocation Authority Visit, 6-7 July 1944, Box 720, Folder 4, RG 6, YWCA Papers; Esther Briesemeister to Harry Black, 27 July 1944, Box 720, Folder 4, RG 6, YWCA Papers; and Annie Clo Watson, memo to Misses Gerard, Frizzell, Russ, et al., "Report of Conference with Mr. Marks of the War Relocation Authority, Esther Briesemeister and Annie Clo Watson," 21 January 1943, Box 427, Folder 12, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

month with a \$3.50 incidentals allowance. Clergy wives would receive \$12 and a \$3 monthly incidentals allowance so that they would not have to work extra jobs. Families also received \$2.50 in monthly incidental allowances for children between the ages of thirteen and seventeen and \$1.50 for children under the age of thirteen. In creating this policy, the Commission highlighted Instruction 32 that forbade the centers from compensating religious workers for their performance of religious duties.⁴⁶⁹

In December, the Commission revisited the policy. Issuing thanks that the various denominations agreed to the policy, Commission members further requested that the mission boards remember to pay the wives' monthly \$12 "allowance." They also asked the mission boards to make all salaries for clergy retroactive to October 1942, when the policy was created. This modest request ignored the six months prior to October that many clergy spent in assembly and relocation centers. Recognizing this reality, the Commission worried that these clergy had exhausted their "personal resources . . . and are facing the winter without the ability to secure the necessary wardrobe, not to say meet other obligations."⁴⁷⁰ The Ministers' Council at Heart Mountain brought this concern to the Commission's attention with a petition asking mission boards to bestow clothing grants of \$50 for pastors and their wives and \$15 for each of the children. Their request was slightly more than the amount the

⁴⁶⁹ Minutes of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 14 October 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93 UPCUSA BFM Papers; and Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 2 December 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers. By forcing denominations to provide the salaries of camp pastors, the WRA unintentionally created territorial divisions among denominations. Several clergy were ordained by one denomination, but pre-incarceration had served churches in other denominations. Once in the camps, denominations refused to provide salaries for clergy they had once supported through their congregations. For example, the Rev. Sato had served a Congregational church pre-incarceration, but had standing in the Baptist church. The Congregational mission board argued that it "should not assume to help other than our own men" and would not pay Sato's salary. Minutes of the Japanese Committee, Southern California Congregational Conference, 11 August 1942, Box 1, Folder 1, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

⁴⁷⁰ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 2 December 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

WRA provided to adults and less than half that provided for children. In response, the Commission noted the WRA annual basic clothing allowance schedule and requested that mission boards provide the appropriate amount to each clergy family.⁴⁷¹

In practice, the Commission struggled to get each of the denominations to support their clergy. A minister holding ordination status in one denomination who had served congregations of a different denomination prior to the war often found himself stranded as the respective denominations bickered over which held responsibility for him. Originally, some denominations provided more liberally for their clergy than did others.⁴⁷² The challenge of convincing denominations to provide for their clergy left the Commission with no ability to address the needs of Buddhist priests who lacked any outside support. While the Commission argued that the low pay structure of workers in the camps made it impossible for congregations to support their pastors through tithes and offerings, they quietly acquiesced to the sense of WRA officials who argued that Buddhists “may suffer, but no doubt . . . can arrange to collect considerable sums” through offerings in worship. While the WRA thought that “liberal Christian groups outside” might help cover remuneration for Buddhist priests, this did not happen.⁴⁷³

After the December discussion, the issue of remuneration for clergy in the camps never reappeared in Commission minutes or correspondence, although the issue of pay for

⁴⁷¹ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 2 December 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴⁷² H. L. Stafford, Minidoka Project Director, to Mr. Dillon Myer, “Reply to questions on religious policies,” 30 March 1943, Reel 330, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

⁴⁷³ John Provinse cited in Galen M. Fisher, Notes of Conferences with WRA Heads at Washington and with Messrs. Barnes, Dawber and Rundquist in New York, November 1942, Box 54, Folder 3, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers. However, the Congregational Church Council for Social Action did \$5000 to support a Buddhist Priest on a six-month trial to relocate to the Midwest and start a Buddhist congregation; the Congregationalists hoped situating priests in resettlement areas would encourage more Buddhist families to leave the camps. Edwin G. Arnold, Chief, Relocation Division, WRA, to Mr. L. T. Hoffman, Project Director, Central Utah Relocation Center, Topaz, Utah, 15 June 1944, Box 1, Folder 20, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

religious workers was not permanently settled. The Commission, led by Chapman, Fisher, and Smith, joined the YMCA and YWCA in pushing back against the WRA's decision to pay different rates to white and Nisei college students who came to the camps in the summer of 1944 to provide recreational and educational services. The WRA justified its decision to pay white college students \$100 per month while still offering the Nisei students the top rate allowed incarcerated by arguing that the other Nikkei workers in the camps would resent the Nisei college students if they earned more. This tired trope prioritized racial ethnic affiliation over educational affiliation and over issues of equity, and also ignored the fact that Nisei college students usually had fewer resources to cover the cost of college, since their parents were usually stuck in the low wage jobs in the camps, than white college students.⁴⁷⁴ The Commission, the YMCA, and the YWCA refused to recruit workers for the WRA and lodged their complaint with WRA authorities. Instead, they offered to provide student volunteers to help with activities sponsored by their organizations. The following summer, the WRA lashed back at this coalition which had thwarted the government the previous year. Even though the WRA faced huge budget cuts by Congress and a dwindling staff as able Nikkei and white personnel moved elsewhere for more remunerative work, the WRA determined that it would not hire summer workers, and that Nisei students returning to a camp as summer volunteers must live off grounds. This effectively destroyed the volunteer program. In response, the groups decided to sponsor sixteen Nisei students, one boy and one girl for the eight camps still open, for two or three months, and pay each one \$200.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷⁴ Austin, *From Concentration Camp to Campus*; and Okihiro, *Storied Lives*.

⁴⁷⁵ Minutes of Meeting, Y. M. C. A. -Y.W. C. A. Coordinating Committee on Services to Persons of Japanese Ancestry, 13 June 1944, Box 721, Folder 9, RG 6, YWCA Papers; Conference with Mr. John Provinse and Mrs. Dunbar of the War Relocation Authority, Washington, D. C., 15 June 1944, Box 720, Folder 3, RG 6, YWCA Papers; Minutes of meeting of the Y. M. C.A.-Y.W.C.A. Coordinating Committee on services to Persons of Japanese Ancestry, 4 January 1945, Box 721, Folder 9, RG 6, YWCA Papers; Bruce Maguire,

While the Commission and its affiliate organizations proved slow to resist WRA policies, the administrative personnel at one camp registered its complaint about the WRA's decision to practice the separation of church and state by refusing to provide a minimal salary and clothing allowance to religious workers. John Powell, educational director at Poston, wrote an impassioned appeal to John Provinse, WRA Chief of the Community Management Division in early 1943.⁴⁷⁶ In his letter he made four points that argued for the reconsideration of WRA policy. First, Powell noted that religious workers offered services "of vital moment in the internal stability and in the maintenance of customary American community forms." If part of the WRA project in the camps was to inculcate American values upon the imprisoned population, faith communities needed to operate at full mast. Fewer than fifty individuals worked as pastors, priests, "assistants and young people's executives." Yet religious workers provided invaluable service to the 5,000 incarcerated at Poston, who did not want to see their religious activities curtailed along with their other rights.

In his second point, Powell pointed out that the WRA had banned the practice in Christian congregations of taking up an offering or "tithing," a practice not customary among Buddhists, and viewed as a potential and unnecessary source of discord. Congregations under normal circumstances rely upon their tithes and weekly offerings to cover the church budget, including paying staff members. The practice had created issues at the assembly centers already. At the Tulare Assembly Center, a disagreement emerged over

memo to YM-YWCA Committees of Japanese American Work, n.d. [1945], Box 721, Folder 9, RG 6, YWCA Papers; and Minutes of YMCA-YWCA Coordinating Committee on Services to Persons of Japanese Ancestry, 10 April 1945, Box 721, Folder 9, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁴⁷⁶ John Powell was a minister's son, and regarded by the Commission as an ally of both the missionary project and Japanese Americans. Gordon K. Chapman to Jeane Noordhoff, 18 June 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

the use of collection plates during worship. The Rev. Tajima argued before the administration that the offering was a theologically and economically “necessary point of worship,” a moment when worshipers return to God a portion of the gifts received from God. The administration countered that any “cash transaction” in worship was a bad practice.⁴⁷⁷ Powell noted this attitude of the WRA and further pointed out that not all Buddhist and Christian religious workers had denominations capable of supporting them in the absence of offerings. Without internal support, ministers found themselves in a difficult situation. According to Powell, they faced the options of “be[ing] paid by the Project [for religious work], or compelled to work for nothing, or required to put in full time work at some other task and give their religious work as overtime.” Powell believed the final two options were “unfair, and unrealistic” and urged the WRA to pay religious workers.

He further challenged the WRA’s delineation of church and state. Just as the Works Progress Administration had no issue with government “established theatre or established arts” that “allowed actors and artists to be employed at their usual and socially desirable occupations” with federal funding in lieu of private support, the WRA was not ““establishing a [c]hurch. It is proposing to give the emergency relief wages to all essential community-activities leaders and workers—including those working in the faiths, Buddhist, Catholic, Protestant, evangelical or other, as they may prove desirable to the residents.” Powell noted the hypocrisy of the WRA which provided without cost basic food and shelter to religious workers without counting that as remuneration while denying any monetary allowance. Either the WRA “cut these workers off from subsistence, or restore the pocket-

⁴⁷⁷ “Church collection,” p. 60, n.d. [1942], Reel 20, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

money allowance which everyone else on the projects receives. . . This is not the situation that Tom Jefferson contemplated.”⁴⁷⁸

Powell alerted Provinse that WRA personnel at Poston, at least, would not comply with regulations. The Community Services Director at Poston labeled a number of the religious workers as social workers for pay purposes, while Powell employed others in the adult education program. His stipulation was that the ministers and priests actually offered classes and discussion groups and reported to Powell on their programs. However, Powell defined classes loosely; he considered midweek prayer meetings acceptable as classes in order to qualify the clergy as government employees. He argued that the WRA needed to pay religious workers because “not to have them at work would be project suicide, and we cannot make them volunteer to sacrifice that much. Little as it is, it is all the money they get.”⁴⁷⁹ Powell’s defense of Poston’s support for religious workers appealed to the concept of freedom of religion and the overwhelming belief that religion in its various guises supported the work of the state:

To deny the religious worker who already gets housing and food the extra allowance which permits his working on an equal basis with those he serves, in a situation where many faiths are helping the Administration maintain order and morale, under conditions where self-support is impossible, and where the Christian group has even agreed not to accept fees for funerals and weddings—this is to make this Project either defy or belie the governing regulations. . . is to maintain, not the

⁴⁷⁸ John Powell to John Provinse, 2 January 1943, Reel 214, Frame 115, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

separation of church and state! But the . . . affirmative doctrine that the churches must go without that which the community receives.⁴⁸⁰

Although the directors of services at Poston opposed WRA regulations about pay, and claimed to speak on behalf of congregants at the center who also opposed the policy, the WRA maintained its policy throughout the war. No Commission members took the same strong stand that Powell took. None argued strongly that incarcerated workers should receive the same pay as religious workers outside of the camps. In this fight, the Commission seemed to take the pragmatic route instead of striving for justice and equality. The Commission continued to work with denominational home missions boards to obtain minimal remuneration and allowances for Protestant pastors and their wives; Catholic priests received their support from their home diocese, and Buddhist priests had to work double-time at both religious work and work recognized by the WRA. The efforts extended to ensure that religious workers received remuneration for their labor transferred quickly to the issue of appropriate space for religious entities to lead worship, education, and fellowship activities.

Religious leaders worried about proper facilities and resources for worship and religious programming as much as the source and amount of their remuneration. Nikkei pastors and Protestant Commission members recognized intuitively what architectural historians argue, that buildings provide stability, structure and durability to social institutions and serve as sites that foster or inhibit interpersonal relationships.⁴⁸¹ The

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ Thomas F. Gieryn, "What Buildings Do," *Theory and Society* 31, no. 1 (February 2002): 35; William Whyte, "How Do Buildings Mean? Some Issues of Interpretation in the History of Architecture," *History and Theory* 45, no. 2 (May 2006) 153-177; and Ewa Domanska, "The Material Presence of the Past," *History and Theory* 45, no. 3 (October 2006): 338-39.

overwhelming sense of moral disintegration of families and communities compelled pastors and sympathizers to insist that properly designed and appointed church buildings would increase the effectiveness of Christian witness in the camps. Set aside church buildings properly equipped with liturgical furnishings and with adequate worship, learning, and fellowship spaces would help Nikkei overcome many of the challenges they faced in the incarceration experience. Pastors and Commission members worked with WRA personnel and denominational entities to create such spaces. In their attempts to erect church buildings, they encountered numerous hurdles that delayed or prevented most of the federated churches from providing their members with sanctuaries that resembled the churches they left behind on the West Coast. The barrack churches reflected instead the continued, improvisational efforts of Japanese Americans to create spaces of hope and stability in the dusty, barren prisons in which they lived.⁴⁸²

Commission members and church leaders recognized the symbolic value of functionally and liturgically equipped church facilities. Church buildings simplified efforts to coordinate activities, deepen relationships, and maintain a visible presence in the community. One Nisei pastor early on celebrated the “creative challenge” of forming an ecumenical congregation. He commented, “Through a united effort we have been able to reach a considerable number of non-Christians and indifferent church goers. . . . It is our hope that from the portals of the [c]hurch will flow a stream of able Christian leaders who will replace those who settle and re-enter American life.”⁴⁸³ Inherent in this view of a steady

⁴⁸² In this way, the camp churches reflect the regionalism in church architecture identified by Peter Williams in *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

⁴⁸³ Quoted in Gordon K. Chapman, “Meeting the Unexpected: Annual Report of the Special Representative for Japanese Work—1942,” 3 March 1943, Box 17, folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

cycle of leadership development was the concept of a concrete church building through whose doors Christians would move into the wider American society. At the end of 1943, more than eighteen months into incarceration, Chapman celebrated the “Japanese Church of Christ in America” as a “vital, responsible, self-propagating organism” in spite of the lack of church facilities, yet he continued to push for the erection of churches in the camps.⁴⁸⁴

The need for worship space became quickly apparent to Nikkei and Commission members. In the assembly centers, many of which were located at racetracks and county fairgrounds, Protestants, Catholics, and Buddhists took turns using the grandstands for worship services. Charles Reifsnider participated with Presbyterian missionary Ernest Chapman and a Congregationalist Japanese American pastor on an ecumenical worship service in Japanese and English at the Santa Anita camp in early April 1942. He noted that fifteen hundred of the forty-two hundred incarcerated at Santa Anita attended the service. One Nisei later recalled that the stadium at Santa Anita, which “once seated screaming horse race fans, was now echoing songs in praise of God lifted up by our young voices.”⁴⁸⁵ Ernest Chapman observed the “rather primitive” state of the makeshift worship space but found the camp authorities “most cooperative and show a really kindly interest in the spiritual welfare of those committed to their charge,” a hopeful sign.⁴⁸⁶ In contrast to Chapman’s observations, Nisei young adults working on interfaith activities noted friction over shared space and resources at the Tulare camp among Buddhists and Christians.⁴⁸⁷ Requests by the church council at Tulare for a designated chapel met with opposition from camp personnel,

⁴⁸⁴ Gordon K. Chapman, “Report of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service,” December 1943, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁴⁸⁵ Midori Watanabe Kamei, quoted in Seigel, “Incarceration and the Church,” 17.

⁴⁸⁶ Charles Reifsnider to the Most Reverend H. St. George Tucker, 14 April 1942, RG 71, Reifsnider Papers.

⁴⁸⁷ “Buddhist Service,” n.d. [1942], Reel 20, p. 63, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS; and “Public Address system,” n.d. [1942], Reel 20, p. 46, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

who instructed religious groups to use the open air bleachers and platform for worship needs.⁴⁸⁸

The desire for a designated meeting place that resembled the churches they left behind increased as Japanese Americans moved into the “relocation centers.” One high school student at Manzanar expressed the stark contrast between the imagined “church” and her community’s experience of church in a poem that compared worshipping in churches made of marble, furnished with rich damask, warm carpets, pipe organs, stained glass windows, and golden candlesticks to her worship experience “each Sunday morning / When we give to God our gloom, / We see Him much more closely / In our church, a barrack room.”⁴⁸⁹ Echoing the poem, the Rev. Royden Susu-Mago, a Nisei pastor at the Gila River camp in Arizona, eloquently spoke of the connection between edifice and mission in a letter to the editor of the camp newspaper in October 1942. After expressing his gratitude for the people who built benches, pulpits, and altars for the several worship spaces used by the federated church in the camp, he wrote, “In keeping with the humble aspect of our homes here, our new churches have little in common with the great cathedrals of the big cities,” except that both were erected by the contributions of the faithful, and both contained the symbols of faith. As to the symbols, Susu-Mago explained that “we hold in common with our sister churches a spirit of communion which does not depend upon silver and gold and velvet, but rather on a unity of like minds and the presence of Him whom we worship.” Susu-Mago further recognized that lacking permanent quarters the churches remained far

⁴⁸⁸ “Facilities for church groups,” n.d. [1942], Reel 20, p. 77, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

⁴⁸⁹ Tokiko Inouye, “My Church,” included in a letter from Charlotte DeForest to Friends, 21 January 1944, Box 153, Folder 5, DeForest (Charlotte B.) Papers, 1942-1945, RG 2010, Japanese American Research Project Collection of Material about Japanese in the United States, Charles E. Young Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter cited as the DeForest Papers).

from completion. Even still, he encouraged church members to “make the Rivers Church a beacon pointing the way to faith in Christ and loyalty to His life.”⁴⁹⁰ While the churches would strive to transform camp life, they needed properly designated buildings to be complete.

By July 1942, the Commission noted in its minutes that the government had offered to build one inter-faith building at each relocation camp for shared use by the three recognized religious bodies: Buddhists, Protestants, and Catholics.⁴⁹¹ The Commission encouraged the Protestants to oppose the plan. It reasoned that the building would be too small and inadequate. In such a space, the three religious groups would compete for worship space on Sunday mornings, and pastors would not be allocated a church office. Furthermore, the Commission argued, “many people attach high value and sentiment” to their church buildings. This attachment and ensuing positive associations might dissipate if Christians had to worship in a non-descript interfaith space or a space that held both cross and *butsudan* (Buddhist altar).⁴⁹² The potential for conflict, or at least competition, among the different religious groups emerged when Charles Reifsnider visited the Gila River camp in September 1942. At Gila River, the administration assigned different recreational buildings for different weekly religious services. The Buddhists furnished their appointed barrack with a *butsudan*, altar, and enough benches for four hundred worshipers (Figure 12 shows a Buddhist worship space).

⁴⁹⁰ Royden Susu-Mago, letter to the editor, *Gila News Courier* 1, no. 10 (October 14, 1942).

⁴⁹¹ WRA Administrative Instruction No. 32, 24 August 1942, Box 54, Folder 3, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

⁴⁹² Minutes of the meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 22 July 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.



Figure 12. Interior of Manzanar Buddhist Church. Reproduced from Library of Congress.

Reifsnider reported the contrast with the Christian building in alarm. The Protestants “have not yet made much progress in making it look churchly,” he opined. He called upon the Commission to address the issue, “as the contrast as to religious atmosphere between the meeting place of the Buddhists and the [Protestants] is quite pronounced.”⁴⁹³ Without cross, communion table, liturgical vestments and a differentiated space, the Protestants could lose the race for primacy to the Buddhists. Pastors and church leaders also worried about the lack of proper space and adornments for worship.

Complaints poured into Commission offices about the dire need for proper space to run church activities. The Chairman of one Community Church Council wrote of the difficulties faced by its Protestant church. Because the administration of each camp decided the availability of camp space for religious activities, most administrators placed religious

⁴⁹³ Reifsnider seemingly ignored the “Christian” status of Catholics, who would have received a third recreational space for their worship needs. Charles Reifsnider to Gordon K. Chapman, 17 September 1942, Folder 14, Chapman Papers.

needs as a low priority after housing, education, and recreation. The chairman of the church council lamented that church members had to haul by hand organs, pianos, benches, and other equipment between barracks, mess halls, and recreation rooms, depending on which location the administration assigned them each week and to store the items in family barracks in between worship services. He also noted the lack of space for pastoral or church offices.⁴⁹⁴ Worshipers sat on “makeshift wooden benches or boxes.” Lacking hymnals, they sang hymns from memory, often accompanied by a “portable organ that had to be pumped with both feet . . . like a sewing machine.”⁴⁹⁵ Typical spaces provided by the WRA for worship were 20' by 100' barracks “unequipped and unadorned, except as [incarcerees] or their friends” could provide furnishings.⁴⁹⁶ Facilities and resources appeared less than ideal.

Other pastors echoed the inconvenience of sharing space with other camp activities. At Heart Mountain, the council chair observed that the church’s loss of recreational halls it had previously used forced church members into an itinerant lifestyle. The constant reassignment of rooms for weekday activities made scheduling and holding such activities difficult and confusing for leadership and participants. It was “fundamental,” the chair opined, “to the life and activities of our church that we should have a definite place of worship.” At another camp, the educational board displaced the church from five recreational halls it had used, leaving the Japanese-language church without meeting space. Other pastors remarked on the lack of adequate space for programs.⁴⁹⁷ Clergyman J. Fujimori at Manzanar reported that the Protestant church held Sunday schools for eight

⁴⁹⁴ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 14 October, 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁴⁹⁵ Frances Kaji, quoted in Seigel, “Incarceration and the Church,” 18.

⁴⁹⁶ Gordon K. Chapman, “Meeting the Unexpected: Annual Report of the Special Representative for Japanese Work—1942,” 3 March 1943, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

hundred students at eight buildings, and had five hundred youth and five hundred adults at Sunday services, besides holding daily morning services and nine weekly Bible studies throughout the camp. “We are always faced with a lack of proper rooms and buildings for the church meeting. If such a church is built for us, we are confident we can carry on our work more efficiently,” he assured Gordon Chapman.⁴⁹⁸ At Rohwer, Arkansas, a pastor worried that the facilities used by the English-language services were too small to fit all attendees. Crowded accommodations deterred individuals from participating in worship. The Topaz, Utah church shared its buildings with other community programming. As a result, “Sunday school classes have to be held in close proximity [in] rooms without partitions, so that each teacher has to shout in order for the scholars to hear at all, and then there are all kinds of distractions which sap a great deal of the teacher’s power.”⁴⁹⁹ Kenny Murase, the acting city editor of the Poston Camp III *Press Bulletin*, lamented to Galen Fisher that the scarcity of buildings and equipment “extremely handicapped” incarcerated efforts to organize churches, schools, and social institutions.⁵⁰⁰ Clergy continued to express their dissatisfaction with the circumstances and pressed the Commission to seek solutions.

By mid-fall 1942, Commission members hammered out an agreement with the Home Missions Council, denominational representatives, the War Relocation Authorities, and other interested agencies that would allow the erection of church buildings for the Protestant congregations in each camp. The Commission tried to sweeten its proposal by offering to include facilities that WRA personnel could use in recreational work with college-age

⁴⁹⁸ J. Fujimori to Gordon K. Chapman, n.d., Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁴⁹⁹ Gordon K. Chapman, “Meeting the Unexpected.”

⁵⁰⁰ Kenny Murase to Galen Fisher, 14 September 1942, Box 54, Folder 3, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

students.⁵⁰¹ The lack of space and supplies for recreational activities appalled Commission members and Japanese American incarcerated who feared the emergence of “juvenile delinquency, moral problems and misdemeanors of anti-social nature” without proper outlets for youthful energies. The Commission’s overture included canvassing congregations throughout the United States for donations of supplies for churches, a community library, children’s playgrounds, and music, arts and crafts, and sports programs.⁵⁰²

Perhaps because of these accommodations to WRA needs, the WRA stipulated that “any denomination or group” could build a church at its own expense. While the WRA would furnish water, light, and heat, the religious group would pay a one dollar annual lease for the land. The WRA refused to pay workers to build the units; groups had to use “local labor on a voluntary basis.” The WRA further stipulated that religious groups should use materials indigenous to the location to build their facilities. As most of the camps except the two in Arkansas were in arid regions, this meant adobe or stone, and possibly squared logs. According to the plan, for each 5,000 inhabitants in each camp, the Commission could sponsor one \$5000 building capable of seating five hundred people. With approximately 10,000 people in each camp, this would mean two or three chapels in each camp.⁵⁰³

⁵⁰¹ Siehi Kowta to Gordon K. Chapman, 3 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; Gordon K. Chapman to Sohei Kowta, 9 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Lucy W. Adams to Dillon S. Myer, memo, “Building and equipping of church units by the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service,” 29 December 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵⁰² Kenny Murase to Galen Fisher, 14 September 1942; Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, “Equipment and Supplies Urgently Needed in Japanese Relocation Centers,” [November 1942], Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁵⁰³ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 14 October 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers. The \$5,000/500 person auditorium cap set by the WRA caused confusion in the planning process. The Poston Church Council originally sought plans for one auditorium that could seat 15,000 instead of three smaller buildings, and the architects Chapman worked with thought he asked for a 5,000 person capacity building. Sohei Kowta to The Department of Architecture, The Federal Council of Churches, New York City, 26 August 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; A. B. Wheeler to Gordon K. Chapman, 12 November 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to E. M. Conover, 23 November 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

At the same time, the Commission members approached their respective denominations for financial support. The church construction plan called for denominations to take responsibility for “one or more units, in proportion with their relative strength and interest.” Likely because he wrote the minutes as the executive secretary of the Commission, Chapman boasted in the October 1942 minutes that his own denomination, the Presbyterian Church, had promised \$20,000, enough for four units. But, this money was not assured. In early 1943, Chapman received notice from the Presbyterian Board of National Missions rescinding funds because of “many urgent needs pressing upon us.” The Board could not continue to reserve money originally set aside for camp churches. As a means of justifying its decision, the BNM contended that it did not make sense to expend money on buildings that were temporary in nature. Chapman tried to buy time. He responded that he was in negotiations with churches and authorities in four camps (Heart Mountain, Rohwer, Poston, and Manzanar) where he believed construction would soon begin. The commitment to fund churches was a moral and political issue for Chapman: “The churches are very short even of the minimum equipment, and a gesture of this kind is very much needed in order to brace their morale, and to prove to the WRA authorities that we are ready to cooperate with them.”⁵⁰⁴ This exchange suggests that denominations feeling the constraints of numerous wartime needs placed the spiritual life of incarcerated Japanese Americans as a lower priority, while missionaries like Chapman considered the treatment of Japanese Americans during the war one of the highest concerns facing church and country.

⁵⁰⁴ A. L. Roberts, Assistant Secretary, Department of Missionary Operation, Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church in the USA, to Gordon K. Chapman, 15 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to A. L. Roberts, 20 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

The Commission obtained permission from federal authorities and some from denominations but plans for church buildings remained tentative. Ernest Chapman, reporting on behalf of an indisposed Frank Herron Smith, shared with “friends” and supporters of the Commission’s work that the WRA representatives who met with Commission leadership remained lukewarm about church projects. Assistant WRA Field Director Robert Cozzens and Harvey M. Coverly, who became the Project Director at Tule Lake, questioned the viability of Commission desires as early as August 1942. The WRA competed with other federal departments and war-oriented industries for scarce resources like lumber and metal-based building supplies. From the beginning, the WRA lacked adequate facilities to house all of the organizations needed for a functioning city. Detainees arrived at camps that often still did not have enough barracks to house each family in 20' by 20' units, and the existing ones lacked insulation, heating, or complete partitions between each small room. The WRA hoped to begin schools for children immediately, but lacked space, furniture, and such basic supplies as paper and textbooks.⁵⁰⁵ As the WRA struggled to get approval from the War Priorities Board in Washington for materials for “essential projects like school buildings and residences” Coverly and Cozzens warned Commission members not to get their hopes “too high.” The WRA could not secure any priority for materials like lumber, wiring, plumbing, nails, bolts, or hinges for religious purposes.⁵⁰⁶ Paul Taylor, the Project Director at Jerome, informed clergy there that the camp had just enough lumber to build an auditorium to be used by the schools, recreational department, and churches. He hoped that “the time may

⁵⁰⁵ For excellent descriptions of the sub-par conditions greeting incarcerated, see the following memoirs, which depict, respectively, the conditions at Tule Lake (CA), Topaz (UT), and Minidoka (ID). See, Gruenewald, *Looking Like the Enemy*, 63-67; Kitagawa, *Issei and Nisei*, 75-76; Uchida, *Desert Exile*, 102-115; and Monica Sone, *Nisei Daughter* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1953), 190-197.

⁵⁰⁶ Ernest Chapman (for F. H. Smith) to “friends,” 25 August 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

come” when church buildings could receive priority.⁵⁰⁷ The churches could only make plans for edifices and remain hopeful that one day they could construct them.

Although the Commission encouraged federated church leaders to take charge of plans for church buildings, Chapman in particular found it difficult to refrain from meddling. The Commission agreed to “incorporate various suggestions made by” Japanese American Protestants in “tentative plans” that it would send to camp church councils “with a view to encouraging local churches to proceed with plans to secure an early fulfillment of the project.”⁵⁰⁸ In October 1942, as the Commission was ironing out these details about church buildings with the WRA, Chapman encouraged Rev. Koji Onoura of the Heart Mountain federated church to “go ahead and do some original planning.”⁵⁰⁹ The buildings, Chapman assured Onoura, would be “for your use, and not ours, and therefore it is well for you folks to have as much to do with this as possible.” Even so, Chapman promised to forward a copy of building plans and speculations he had obtained from the Presbyterian National Board’s architectural unit (Figure 13).⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁷ Hideo Hashimoto to Gordon K. Chapman, n.d. [Fall 1942], Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵⁰⁸ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 14 October 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁵⁰⁹ In the same letter, Chapman also encouraged the Heart Mountain congregation to “refrain from having a Caucasian minister from outside acting as chairman” of the church council. He may have been referring to Inoura’s own reference to a clergy from Cody, Wyoming who was providing them with advice about locating necessary supplies for church construction. While Chapman encouraged autonomy among the Japanese American pastors, he liked to retain for himself the role of advisor. Gordon K. Chapman to Kojiro Onoura, 20 October 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵¹⁰ Gordon K. Chapman to Kojiro Onoura, 20 October 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers. Brian Christopher Zugay has researched the development of denominational architectural offices during the inter-war years and their influence on twentieth century church architecture. Brian Christopher Zugay, “Towards a ‘New Era’ in Church Building: Architectural Reform in American Protestantism in the Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth Centuries,” (Dissertation, Brown University, 2004).

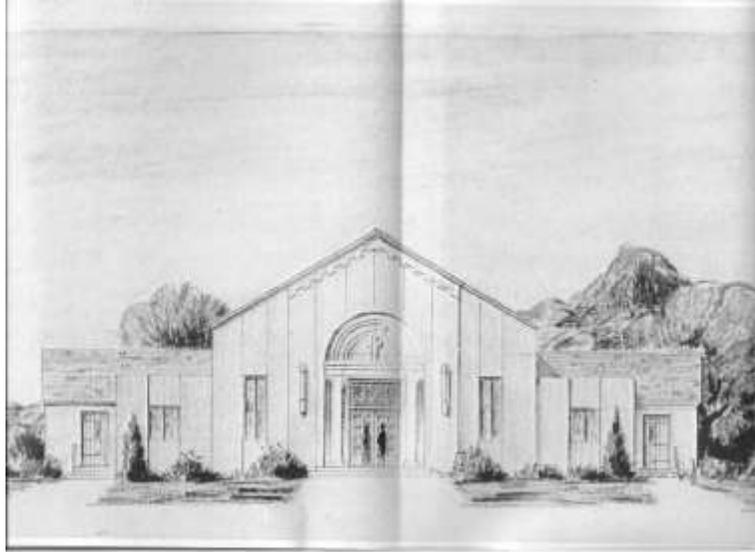


Figure 13. Proposed Blueprint for Protestant Church at Heart Mountain. Reproduced from the Graduate Theological Union, Sylvia Lamson Hewlett Library.

Commission members had already determined priorities for camp church buildings in consultation with the Home Missions Board and representatives from denominational agencies. They desired to build facilities with worship spaces or multi-purpose “auditoriums” capable of seating five hundred people with staff offices, a bedroom for visiting white clergy or missionaries, a small prayer chapel, and Sunday school rooms opening onto the auditorium.⁵¹¹ This plan reflected contemporary trends in church buildings that emphasized “flexible spaces, rooms that opened into other rooms, radiating classrooms, [and] folding doors and partitions” that enabled Sunday school participants to shift between plenary sessions in the main worship space and age-gradated classes.⁵¹²

⁵¹¹ Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 14 October 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; and Ernest Chapman (for Frank Herron Smith) to “Friends,” 25 August 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵¹² Zugay, “Towards a ‘New Era’ in Church Building,” 241.

The plans may have worked well for the needs of the federated churches in the camps, but they reflected primarily Commission member concerns about the stipulation in Instruction 32 prohibiting non-Japanese American clergy from residing in the camps. Commission leadership like Reifsnider, Gordon Chapman, Fisher, and Smith traveled extensively to the various camps. Without guest rooms attached to the church, they had to stay in the crowded barrack units of clergy families, as Chapman did when he visited Rev. and Mrs. Kawamorita at Heart Mountain. Whether or not it was a priority for the federated congregations, Commission members placed the sending of “special speakers and counselors” among its top four priorities for the churches.⁵¹³

Galen Fisher and Gordon Chapman intervened with architects for church drawings and plans. While Fisher focused on using the talent within the Japanese American community, Chapman preferred to use denominational architects. A number of Japanese American architects were in the camps. A Mr. Hayano, who had experience designing Japanese American churches in southern California, offered to design an adobe construction for Poston.⁵¹⁴ Harold Kimura cooperated with a Mr. Goodrich at Heart Mountain to draw up plans for a church at Heart Mountain.⁵¹⁵ Fisher asked the architects Yuasa and Saito who were at the Tanforan Assembly Center to provide sketches for chapels. Two months later a disgruntled Chapman sent an inquiry to the Presbyterian Board of National Missions about plans similar to structures erected in defense areas. Referring to the various Japanese American architects, Chapman grumbled that “there were folks out here who claimed to be

⁵¹³ In order of priority, the Commission wanted to provide: seats, pianos, and supplies; a small chapel, guest room, consultation rooms, and offices; special speakers and counselors; large auditoriums. Ernest Chapman (for Frank Herron Smith) to “Friends,” 25 August 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵¹⁴ Sohei Kowta to Frank Herron Smith, 8 September 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵¹⁵ Kojiro Onoura to Gordon K. Chapman, 19 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Kojiro Onoura to Gordon K. Chapman, 6 February 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

working on” plans for the center churches. As they were not “forthcoming . . . I shall have to cease counting on these gentlemen and turn to you.”⁵¹⁶ The Board of National Missions official connected Chapman with Wenner & Fink, an architectural firm in Philadelphia that worked with the Presbyterian Church’s architectural department.

By the end of 1942, the architects had supplied Chapman with blueprints for camp churches that grew from the architects’ experience building “tabernacles for city-wide [evangelism] campaigns.” Designed as temporary units, these plans envisioned a low-slung A-frame building with window space for ventilation and light between two roof levels, an auditorium capable of seating four hundred, and two wings jutting out comprising Sunday school or meeting rooms with movable partitions to open up the rooms to the auditorium. With a round stained glass window over double doors and a cross gracing the roof, the blueprints resembled a New England chapel (Figure 14).⁵¹⁷ Sohei Kowta of the Poston center churches had requested plans from the Federal Council of Churches department of architecture several months prior; his letter recognized that “we are peculiarly situated and ordinary architectural plans and designs might not be able to be applied to” our situation.⁵¹⁸ A traditional church construction did not work in the makeshift and desert situation at Poston. While the Commission encouraged center congregations to make their own plans and the WRA suggested churches economize by using local materials, the blueprints

⁵¹⁶ Gordon K. Chapman to Rev. A. B. Wheeler, Board of National Missions, 5 November 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵¹⁷ E. M. Conover to Gordon K. Chapman, 9 December 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; Hensel Fink, Suggestion of Relocation Center Church 2 December 42, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Wenner & Fink, Architects, Philadelphia, PA, Blueprints, Proposed Church for Heart Mountain, n.d. [December 1942], Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵¹⁸ Sohei Kowta to The Department of Architecture, The Federal Council of Churches, New York City, 26 August 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

provided by the Commission reflected Euro-American ideals of sacred spaces. Even with blueprints in hand, church buildings faced numerous obstacles.

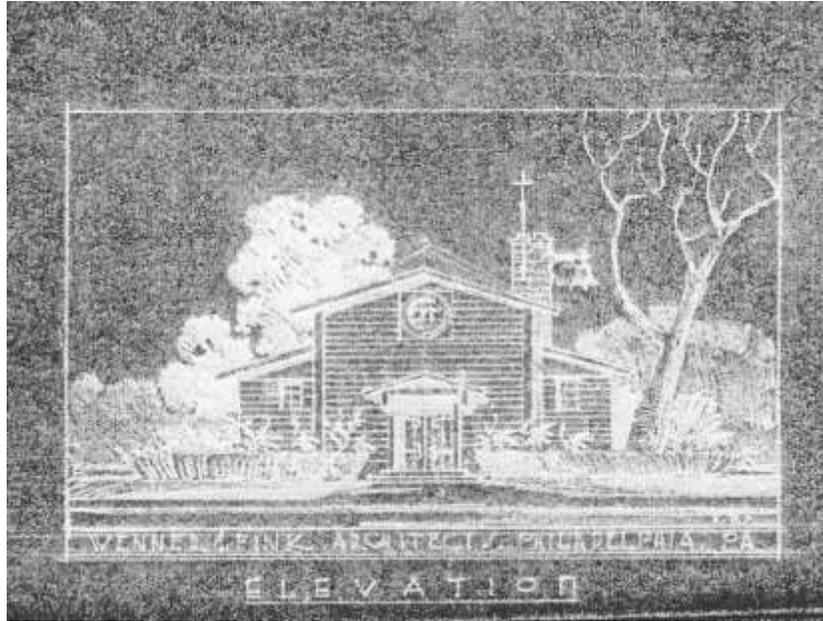


Figure 14. Religious Center for Japanese Concentration Camp, Venner & Fink, Architects, Philadelphia, PA. Reproduced from the Graduate Theological Union, Sylvia Lamson Hewlett Library.

Various WRA personnel tried to assist the Commission's crusade. John Powell, who had contravened WRA policy on paying religious leaders, also believed proper church facilities were "one of the necessary ingredients here; action toward the realization of hope would be of inestimable value."⁵¹⁹ He asked Gordon Chapman if, in lieu of constructing new facilities, the Commission might be able to locate disused church buildings and move them to the camps. Although Chapman believed he knew of a Presbyterian facility that could be used, this idea proved prohibitive.⁵²⁰ An administrator at Rohwer pushed Chapman to locate

⁵¹⁹ John Powell to Gordon K. Chapman, 22 December 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵²⁰ Gordon K. Chapman to Sohei Kowta, 9 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

the funds for a “permanent house of worship” to support the work of center clergy.⁵²¹ Lucy Adams, who worked in the San Francisco office of the WRA tried to grease the wheels in Washington on behalf of the Commission.⁵²² The Commission secured \$30,000 in pledges from various denominations for camp church buildings in 1943, which according to Adams, would be used to build and furnish four community churches. She sent a memo to WRA director Dillon Myer urging him to use his influence with the War Priorities Board. She hoped he could get the needed supplies for building churches, and would change the policy about using “project labor” to erect the facilities. Adams recognized the challenges faced by religious groups in the camps. Like John Powell, she considered faith-based organizations central to the WRA’s “Americanization” project. Inadequate facilities in the camps led to “competition for space, between schools, churches, recreation and the rest [which] has meant alternating and conflicting uses of the rooms with no chance to equip them for any specific purpose.” Gordon Chapman took heart from the “very favorable” support of western regional WRA personnel like Powell and Adams. He informed Rev. Sohei Kowta at the Poston camp that he had “reason for believing” that church buildings would soon emerge from the arid land within the various camps.⁵²³ Even with the support of individuals within the WRA, however, the Commission and camp congregations faced difficulties creating adequate spaces for worship, study, recreation, and pastoral care for the Protestant communities.

⁵²¹ Joseph B. Hunter to Gordon K. Chapman, 30 December 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵²² Adams joined the WRA from her position as director of the Navajo reservation school system, where she was a proponent of progressive education; like the other former Indian Service staff in the WRA, the incarcerated “were a familiar quantity: a dependent population under federal authority.” Thomas James, *Exile Within: The Schooling of Japanese Americans, 1942-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 37.

⁵²³ Lucy W. Adams to Dillon S. Myer, Memo, “Building and equipping of church units by the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service,” 29 December 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to Sohei Kowta, 9 January 1943, Chapman Papers.

The experience of the Heart Mountain Protestant Federated Church as it tried to acquire permanent church buildings suggests the challenges faced by the Protestant congregations. In early Fall 1942, Rev. Kojiro Onoura heralded the Heart Mountain church as “a matter of reality rather than a speculation.” The church would formally incorporate the following Sunday. Inoura had high hopes for the future of the church, marred only by the lack of a consistent, properly equipped location. Inoura bemoaned that the church currently conducted its activities in six recreational halls. The “uncertainty of meeting places from week to week jeopardizes our Christian activities very greatly.”⁵²⁴ Although during the winter of 1943 several architects in residence at Heart Mountain would draw up plans for a church plant, Onoura initially asked Chapman to obtain sketches and specifications for a building from the Presbyterian National Mission Board.⁵²⁵ While the Protestant congregations in the Arizona camps considered building with adobe bricks, the Heart Mountain incarceration camp had opened a lumber mill.⁵²⁶ A minister in Cody, Wyoming who visited the camp also knew a private mill owner who he thought might be able to supply the congregation with lumber. Onoura believed the congregation would soon break ground on a building for worship and church activities.⁵²⁷

Lumber, however, was not forthcoming. Heart Mountain, like the other nine camps, faced a shortage of building supplies. The War Priorities Board was slow to grant the WRA necessary materials to build and equip schools, let alone projects deemed non-essential like

⁵²⁴ Kojiro Onoura to Gordon K. Chapman, 14 October 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵²⁵ It is unclear if the Heart Mountain architects simply altered the plans prepared by Wenner & Fink to work for their situation, or if the plans were so unviable that the Heart Mountain architects had to start from scratch.

⁵²⁶ On the challenges faced at Poston and Gila to construct with adobe bricks (let alone to make the bricks), see: Girdner and Loftis, *The Great Betrayal*, 225-226.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.* The construction needs at Heart Mountain created an economic boom for the nearby towns of Powell and Cody. Mike Mackey, *Heart Mountain: Life in Wyoming's Concentration Camp*, 2nd Edition (Powell, Wyoming: Western History Publications, 2000), 25-34.

places of worship for prisoners.⁵²⁸ In January 1943, Onoura updated Chapman on the Heart Mountain Christian Church's plans. After numerous meetings with WRA personnel at Heart Mountain, the question of clearance for building supplies and labor had been referred to Washington for an official statement. Onoura wryly commented, "As you know, when matters are referred to Washington, it takes months before one gets results."⁵²⁹ He wrote that the church council did have partial answers to its many questions. The administration planned to create a Civic Center zone in which it would place administration headquarters, educational, and recreational buildings. The Protestant church hoped to procure a "vacant spot on top of a hill directly across" from the administrative headquarters, although Onoura realized that the Buddhists and Catholics might object to the Protestants appropriating the most "centrally located" lot.

While the administration sanctioned the use of voluntary labor to build the church and hinted that the Protestants could use project trucks for a small fee, securing building materials remained an issue. The administration reminded church representatives that the school had the "right of way" for critical materials. Personnel expected the school building to be finished by the end of March, eight months after the first incarcerated arrived at Heart Mountain.⁵³⁰ Likewise, the chair of the church council at the Poston camp worried about securing enough material to build a church in each of the discrete camps at the center; the time-consuming and leviathan efforts by incarcerated labor to make enough adobe bricks to build the schools continued for months, leaving the church to realize the impossibility of building a church with adobe. The clergy hoped the Commission could help them get

⁵²⁸ On the state of schools, see: James, *Exile Within*, 46-47; and Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei*, 107.

⁵²⁹ Kojiro Onoura to Gordon K. Chapman, 19 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵³⁰ Kojiro Onoura to Gordon K. Chapman, 19 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Mackey, *Heart Mountain*, 59-60.

sufficient lumber requisitioned, although Gordon Chapman referred them back to the WRA.⁵³¹

Labor issues ultimately derailed plans for school construction; insufficient space for expanding school and recreational programming meant that religious activities were further shunted to the side. Apparently the WRA contracted with an outside firm to build the schools at Heart Mountain using incarcerated labor. The construction workers formed a union that demanded pay comparable to prevailing rates in the area. In response, the WRA cancelled its plans for a high school and auditoriums for two elementary schools. Students would continue to use barrack space.⁵³² While these circumstances heightened administration support for a church facility to provide “facilities for such needed phase of our community life,” it could not overcome resistance in Washington to greenlight priority for supplies.⁵³³ Furthermore, the Protestant church found itself scrambling for rooms for its activities. Both the education board and recreation departments moved to push “the social religious activities out of these [existing] recreation halls and concentrate them in the [future] Civic Center Area.”⁵³⁴ Onoura reported that the Japanese-speaking services were especially hard hit, being asked to move twice in as many weeks. The paper-flower-making group and the Bohemian Artists took over several rooms assigned to the Protestants for

⁵³¹ Sohei Kowta to Frank Herron Smith, 8 September 1942, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; Sohei Kowta to Gordon K. Chapman, 3 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to Sohei Kowta, 9 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵³² The WRA noted at the end of 1943 that it had originally planned “inexpensive but modern school buildings,” but because of shortage of materials and plans, only Unit 1 in Colorado River built an elementary school. Only the other camps that already had contracts, material, and construction started were able to complete planned high schools. Instead, the WRA moved toward barrack models for its schools. WRA Semi Annual Report, July 1 to December 31, 1943, Department of the Interior, WRA, Washington, DC, Box 1, Folder 113, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

⁵³³ Kojiro Onoura to Gordon K. Chapman, 6 February 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Kojiro Onoura, “Community Christian Church Monthly Report,” 28 February 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵³⁴ Kojiro Onoura to Gordon K. Chapman, 6 February 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Civic Center Plans, Supplement to *The Irrigator*, 11 January 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

Sunday services. In several letters, Onoura expressed the urgent need for a “new edifice” for the Protestant church “otherwise we would find ourselves in great difficulty.” Even more direly, without a church home, “we shall never be able to serve our Christian group nor the community adequately.”⁵³⁵

Ultimately, the Heart Mountain congregation, like the congregations at the other centers, gave up on the hope of “churchly edifices” supported by denominations. Onoura realized that none of the other religious groups planned to build churches in the camps. Instead they used abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps (hereafter, CCC) camp buildings supplied by the WRA. By March 1943, Onoura inferred that Chapman was also “discouraged by the WRA authorities on the question of granting priorities on building materials for the proposed edifice,” and asked him to find the means to lease or buy at least two CCC buildings for the church to use. He expected the educational and recreational departments to reclaim all available space for their own uses within a few months; the movement of “able-bodied” incarcerated out of the camps through resettlement programs and the army draft would also make construction of a new building more difficult. Inoura recognized that in light of resettlement initiatives, the Commission might question the wisdom of investing “so much money” on a new church building, but asked for “certain assurance by way of financial aid to proceed at least with minimum requirement.”⁵³⁶

Although the WRA reported in its 1942 end of year report that the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church had sent to the Heart Mountain Community Christian

⁵³⁵ Kojiro Onoura, “Community Christian Church Monthly Report,” 28 February 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; Kojiro Onoura to Gordon K. Chapman, 6 February 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers; and Kojiro Onoura, 13 February 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁵³⁶ Kojiro Onoura to Gordon K. Chapman, 8 March 1943, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

Church an appropriation of \$10,000 for “the erection of an attractively planned church,” the BNM had apparently rescinded the funds in the face of inaction and other priorities.⁵³⁷

Ultimately, although the Commission tried to grease the wheels of government and denominations to assist the Protestant congregations in building white clapboard churches with elegant crosses, soft carpeting, and stained glass windows, bureaucracy and the “low priority” placed on Japanese Americans and on their religious needs by both the federal government and denominations quashed those dreams. Commission members did obtain Sunday school materials, hymnals, pianos, organs, and some liturgical adornments for the churches. Church members created fabric partitions for the barracks and CCC buildings they eventually requisitioned as camp populations dwindled with resettlement, and build simple backless benches, crosses, and Communion tables with scraps of lumber.⁵³⁸ These spaces remained makeshift and improvised, created from the scraps and donations incarcerated could obtain, with facades as brown and severe as their locations (Figures 15 and 16). The Reverend Susu-Mago recalled the church that incarcerated created at the assembly center at the Tulare fairgrounds race track. His description fit the churches that emerged from the deserts of incarceration camps:

We wanted to erect a church, but these bare, barnlike structures were only the skeletons of churches. There remained the task of dragging scrap lumber several blocks in the hot sun from the scrap pile to the church sites, and of building platforms, benches, pulpits, lecterns, and altars, wooden candlesticks, and crosses.

The barracks had no inner walls or ceilings, and in the first church we set a spotlight

⁵³⁷ WRA Quarterly Report, October 1 to December 31, 1942, Box 7, Folder 10, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

⁵³⁸ Minutes of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 25 May 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; and Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Services, 2 December 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

behind the last rafter beam, which lighted the cross on the altar. The women of the church bought wine-red material for a curtain to hang behind the altar—and behold, a house of worship!⁵³⁹

The ingenuity of the Japanese Americans in the face of such obstacles suggests their perseverance as well as the limits of the Commission leadership to overcome resistance and the lethargic support of the WRA for the free practice of religion in the camps.



Figure 15. Federated Church at Amache Camp.
Reproduced from UC Berkeley, the Bancroft Library.



Figure 16. Sunday School at Manzanar.
Reproduced from the Library of Congress.

⁵³⁹ Quoted Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, 28.

Conclusion

Although the WRA early on stated as one of its guiding principles its “faith in the American democratic way of life with equal rights, privileges, and responsibilities for all, regardless of race, creed, or national origin,” the experience of incarcerated Japanese American was of a fettered religious experience. While the WRA relied in many ways upon the religious organizations to entertain, educate, and uplift the incarcerated population, the agency could not, or would not, grease the wheels for smoother experiences for churches and clergy. The leadership of the Protestant Commission saw the unjust incarceration of Japanese Americans as an opportunity to make manifest the bonds of brotherhood and yoke of peace espoused by Christian internationalism by strengthening the Protestant churches in the camps. Yet neither the WRA nor the Commission could guarantee or provide Japanese American religionists with appropriate worship spaces that symbolically or theologically resonated with the physical, psychological, and economic anxieties that pervaded the camps. The pragmatism of Commission members converged with the resistance in the government about paying religious workers to create a situation in which clergy and clergy wives received minimal remuneration from their denominations for the essential work of tending to Japanese American congregations while incarcerated. In an overt show of paternalism, the Commission collaborated with federal authorities to determine exactly what the parameters of “freedom of religion” were in an effort to exclude Shintoists and Jehovah’s Witnesses and minimize the power of Roman Catholics and Buddhists. The next chapter turns to the furloughed Japan missionaries who sought employment in the camps as religious workers or federal employees and considers the tensions that existed between their proclaimed Christian

internationalism and their residual paternalism and limited understanding of second generation Japanese Americans and non-Christians.

Chapter Four

“Cast[ing] our lot with the people we’ve come to love”: Missionary Internment and Missionaries in Japanese American Incarceration Camps

The Swedish ship *MS Gripsholm* steered into the port at Jersey City on a mild August day in 1942 with most of its fourteen hundred passengers crowding the decks eagerly awaiting a glimpse of their homeland after nearly nine months in internment camps in Japan and a long two months at sea.⁵⁴⁰ The passenger list included diplomats and seven hundred Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries and their families. These religious workers had ignored earlier pleas by the United States government to return to America before hostilities broke out between the United States and Japan. Instead, they had remained in militarized Japan because they believed their “continued presence . . . gives vital testimony to world mission of [c]hurch ministry of good will and indissoluble bond of Christian fellowship.”⁵⁴¹

Many of these missionaries, including Presbyterians Henry Bovenkerk and Howard and Ruth Hannaford, professed their desire to use their linguistic skills and knowledge of the Far East to aid their country in war work in any way possible.⁵⁴² Despite their months interned as enemy aliens, these individuals hoped to use their talents to further peace between the two countries and assist beleaguered Japanese Americans in order to hasten their own return to the land in which they lived out their vocation. Even as Bovenkerk and

⁵⁴⁰ The United States and Japan brokered several diplomatic prisoner exchanges in the first two years of war with the help of Sweden. The missionaries who served in the camps returned on the 1942 exchange or the December 1943 exchange on board the *Gripsholm*. David Miller, *Mercy Ships* (London, New York: Continuum, 2008).

⁵⁴¹ Presbyterian Church in the United States of America Foreign Mission Board telegram, February 1941, quoted in Alice Grube, “Record of Alice Grube, 8 December 1941-June 1942,” [August 1942], Box 7, Folder 23, RG 81, UPCUSA COEMAR Secretaries’ Files, Presbyterian Historical Society (hereafter cited as COEMAR Papers).

⁵⁴² “Missionaries, Back, to Aid War Work,” *New York Times* (1923-Current File), August 28, 1942, accessed March 1, 2013, <http://exproxy.tcu.edu/docview/106422519?accountid=7090>.

the Hannafords were undergoing physicals and debriefings by the Presbyterian Mission Board, they received warm letters from the indomitable Elizabeth Evans encouraging them to head to the Japanese American incarceration camps.⁵⁴³ It was “the *most* important work” and a “marvelous opportunity,” she insisted.⁵⁴⁴ After visiting several camps in March 1943, Evans wrote a letter to her supporters in which she elaborated on this belief. She insisted that the wholesale deportation of the Nikkei population into prison camps constituted “one of the biggest opportunities we have in America for expanding the Kingdom, strengthening and comforting these people who are facing these problems.”⁵⁴⁵

Many missionaries agreed with Evans’ estimate and did spend the war years in the Japanese American incarceration camps or running the hostels or other social services for Japanese Americans who resettled in the Midwest.⁵⁴⁶ Intensively schooled in Christian internationalism, the challenges of religious pluralism, and a progressive vision of race relations, they considered themselves uniquely situated to help Japanese Americans. They viewed themselves, like the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, as mediators between the ignorant, unenlightened public, especially the Protestant public, and the

⁵⁴³ I introduce and discuss Evans in Chapter 2, as one of the early responders to Japanese American exclusion from the West Coast. She had returned to the US from Japan before hostilities broke out between the two countries, staying with her elderly mother and sister in Minneapolis until the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America sent her to southern California to assist Japanese American congregations that had relocated further inland when it was thought that only the coastal areas of California would fall under the exclusion order.

⁵⁴⁴ Elizabeth Evans to Gordon K. Chapman, 8 October 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers.

⁵⁴⁵ Elizabeth Evans to Dear Friends, 19 March 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁵⁴⁶ I have compared the 1940 *Japan Christian Year Book* with names that arise in books and primary sources to roughly tabulate the number of missionaries who were in Japan directly prior to the outbreak of hostilities between the United States and Japan who then worked in some way on behalf of Japanese Americans during the war. Including the missionaries like Gordon K. Chapman, Galen Fisher, Charles Reifsnider, and Frank Herron Smith who returned to the United States earlier than 1940, I have found more than 70 individuals. This list does not include missionaries who served outside of Japan and returned to work in the camps as teachers, social workers, or other personnel during the war years. If I had a complete list of WRA personnel at each of the ten camps, the number of identified former missionaries would undoubtedly expand. Charles Wheeler Iglehart, ed., *The Japan Christian Year Book 1940*, 348-430.

incarcerated population that resembled the friends and colleagues the missionaries left behind in Japan. For some of the missionaries who had spent the vast majority of their adult lives in Japan, the chance to work among Japanese Americans may have felt more comfortable and familiar than seeking jobs in schools and churches in white America; identifying with Japanese culture more than American culture created uncomfortable dissonance for some. Like West Coast Japanese Americans, repatriated missionaries left behind their personal belongings and lost their savings deposited in overseas banks; like the incarcerated, some of the missionaries felt like aliens in their homeland. Like the Japanese Americans, the missionaries found themselves in forced exile. Even though they were white American citizens who could freely choose where they wanted to go, many found it seemed natural to them to migrate toward the incarceration camps.⁵⁴⁷

Although numerous missionaries desired to work among the Nikkei, obtaining jobs was not easy, and those who made their way onto the payroll of the War Relocation Authority or in religious leadership positions in the camps had to navigate WRA personalities and Japanese American cultures. To the extreme frustration of some missionaries, the Protestant Commission insisted that all applications must route through the Commission; its Executive Secretary Gordon Chapman appeared to hold more power to bestow assignments than he actually had. The missionaries faced the bureaucratic hurdles

⁵⁴⁷ While their experience overseas and their religious convictions motivated missionaries to work with Japanese Americans during the war, the WRA camps drew an assortment of individuals with a variety of backgrounds. Some had previous work in New Deal programs or the Office of Indian Affairs and saw the camps as an extension of their previous work managing people or projects; social scientists viewed the camps as treasure troves for studying the relationship between race and culture; pacifist Christians who were members of groups like the Society of Friends (Quakers) or the Brethren, which had not previously done evangelical work among the Japanese American community viewed service to Japanese Americans as an alternative to military service and a way to express their faith in an oppressed minority. Lower level administrators at camps were often drawn from the available employee-pool of nearby localities. Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 16-39. See also, Hessel, "How did Female Protestant Missionaries Respond?"

imposed by the federal government and at times the resistance of the very population they wanted to help. Female missionaries faced gender-specific obstacles. While their own internment experience, knowledge of the Japanese language and customs, and commitment to racial justice created bridges that helped many of these women and men connect with incarcerated, presumptions of cultural competency and lingering paternalism limited the full expression of Christian internationalism's vision of interracial kinship among missionaries and Japanese Americans.

From Internees in Japan to Incarceration Camp Employees

While some of the Protestant missionaries in Japan returned prior to December 7, 1941, those who remained in Japan faced immediate arrest by the Japanese military police (hereafter, MP) as enemy aliens. Female missionaries tended to face house arrest, while the male missionaries found themselves in make-shift camps at local jails or schools where they created community with other internees. Their internment experiences strengthened the faith of the missionaries in their Protestant God, the bonds of Christian fellowship, and the basic humanity of the men and women of Japan. Contemporary newspapers trumpeted the atrocities Japan committed against American military and civilian prisoners of war.⁵⁴⁸ POWs faced extreme conditions of forced labor, hunger, isolation, and torture.⁵⁴⁹ Politicians and Japan-baiters used this news to encourage harsh treatment of alien

⁵⁴⁸ For example: *Chicago Daily Tribune*, "Diplomats Tell of Indignities in Custody of Japs: Worst Treatment Ever Recorded, Says One," August 26, 1942, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Tribune (1849-1990): 5; *Los Angeles Times*, "U. S. Pledges Revenge on Japs: Speed-up of Pacific Offensive Demanded, 'Demons' Will Pay for Their Crimes, Hull Says, as Enraged Congressmen Urge Nippon be 'Blown off Map,'" January 29, 1944, *Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File)*, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times 1881-1990): 1; Gwen Dew, "Slaves of Japs Free Today as Liner Arrives," December 1, 1943, *Chicago Daily Tribune (1923-1963)*, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Tribune (1849-1990): 2.; and *Chicago Daily Tribune 1923-1963*, "Avenge Flyers, Angry Chicago Leaders Cry: Executions by Japanese Called Fiendish," April 22, 1943, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Tribune 1849-1990): 9.

⁵⁴⁹ Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. missionary Theodore Walser, who spent 28 years in Japan before

and citizen Japanese Americans, including mass deportation.⁵⁵⁰ Few of the missionaries who eventually returned through the prisoner exchange program underwent torture or harsh interrogations, and none endured forced labor.⁵⁵¹ Unlike those who believed in retribution, the missionaries recognized that unjust treatment of Japanese Americans played poorly overseas and hurt the war effort. As they shared their experiences back home, they emphasized the consideration of their Japanese captors and the concern and care expressed by Japanese colleagues, friends, and co-religionists who risked their own safety to ferry messages and food to the internees. The missionaries used their experiences to identify with the plight of Japanese Americans and to press for an end to racially motivated injustices.

returning on the August 1942 prisoner exchange, compiled the testimony of the missionaries on board the *Gripsholm*. He offered the stories to the head of “one of the great American newspaper agencies” with whom Walser had been interned. The journalist replied that the stories were not news. American newspapers preferred sensationalistic “horror” stories, which Walser called “misleading.” Theodore D. Walser, Testimony, 23 November 1942, Box 7, Folder 23, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

A growing body of scholarship, memoirs, and popular writings on the experience of POWs in Japanese territories exists. I have not located any that look at the experiences of those interned within Japan proper; most focus on POWs in Japanese occupied territory. Theresa Kaminski, *Prisoners in Paradise: American Women in the Wartime South Pacific* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2000); Brian MacArthur, *Surviving the Sword: Prisoners of the Japanese in the Far East, 1942-1945* (New York: Random House, 2005); Frances B. Cogan, *Captured: The Japanese Internment of American Civilians in the Philippines, 1941-1945* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2000); and Bernice Archer, *The Internment of Western Civilians under the Japanese, 1941-1945: A Patchwork of Internment* (New York: Routledge Press, 2004).

⁵⁵⁰For example: John Fisher, “Hit Japs, Senators Demand, Join in Plea to Hurry Aid to Gen. MacArthur: Internment of All Nipponese Now in U. S. Asked,” April 23, 1943, *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1923-1963), ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Daily Tribune (1849-1990): 1; *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1923-1963), “Japs for Yanks Swap Urged by Californians: Exchange Asked in 6 Point Plan,” May 13, 1943, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Daily Tribune (1849-1990): 13; A Times Staff Correspondent, “Exchange Urged of Jap and U. S. Prisoners,” May 13, 1943, *Los Angeles Times* (1923- Current Files), ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times (1881-1990): 19; and Warren B. Francis, “Biddle Urges Law to Oust Disloyal Japs: Act for Revoking Citizenship Viewed as Constitutional,” December 10, 1943, *Los Angeles Times* (1923-Current File), ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times (1881-1990): 1. Also, selected quotes from Congress in Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps*, 64.

⁵⁵¹ John Coventry Smith, a United Presbyterian Church missionary who served in Japan under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America beginning in 1927, was close friends with Henry Bovenkerk and considered Howard Hannaford one of his mentors. Like Bovenkerk, Smith sent his young family home in early 1941, and was on board the ship that returned to Yokohama after the attack on Pearl Harbor. In his memoirs, he notes that several civilians, including a few missionaries like Bovenkerk, were removed from their internment camp at Yokohama by police and taken for investigation. While the missionaries survived, several of the other men were suspiciously reported to have committed suicide. He also notes that three of the male missionaries in Korea underwent water torture. John Coventry Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community: The Church's Pilgrimage* (Philadelphia: The Geneva Press, 1982), 84, 101.

Just as the FBI stormed the homes of suspect enemy aliens the day after the Pearl Harbor attack, Japanese police arrived early on the doorsteps of missionary homes that day with arrest orders. While Japanese Americans remembered the days and weeks following Pearl Harbor as a time of heightened fear and documented the rough searches of their homes completed by government authorities looking for evidence of treason or disloyalty, many missionaries found the MPs who arrested them more courteous and even a bit apologetic. Howard Hannaford recalled that the two detectives who arrived on December 8, 1941, allowed him to pack a suitcase and to eat a substantial breakfast before taking him to a Roman Catholic girls' school set up as an internment center for forty-five enemy aliens of various nationalities, including thirteen Americans.⁵⁵² Likewise, the chief police detective who arrested Theodore Walser and his wife patiently waited in the "cold December dawn" for the household to awake, "obviously loath to perform an unpleasant task" of arresting a missionary with whom he had developed a "warm friendship" over the previous twelve years.⁵⁵³

Others were not so lucky. The elderly Jesse Riker, in Japan as a kindergarten teacher and pastoral assistant since 1904, fumed that the police who arrested her on December 9 denied her any privacy to dress before hauling her off to a narrow jail cell that she initially shared with a man.⁵⁵⁴ Henry Bovenkerk sent his pregnant wife, Esther, and their three children home when the US government issued a third warning to Americans to leave Japan in January 1941. Bovenkerk made arrangements to leave Yokohama on the liner *Tatsuta*

⁵⁵² Howard Hannaford, "Internee No. 11-No Visitors Allowed," 1942, The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Box 60, Folder 17, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

⁵⁵³ Theodore Walser, Testimony, 23 November 1942, Box 7, Folder 23, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

⁵⁵⁴ Jessie Riker, "Testimony of Miss Jessie Riker," 31 March 1943, Box 7, Folder 23, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

Maru on December 2, 1941, after the United States issued its fourth warning. Turning back mid-ocean after the captain learned of the onset of war between the countries, the *Tatsuta Maru* arrived in Tokyo Bay on December 15. Bovenkerk briefly found himself in a civilian internment camp in Yokohama; he was transferred to Osaka and finally Kobe before participating in the prisoner exchange program and returning to the United States on the *Gripsholm*.

During their year or so of confinement, the missionaries experienced both cruelty and kindness. Bovenkerk spent two months of his imprisonment in solitary confinement. The Japanese military interrogated him and accused him in the Osaka district court of four charges of espionage.⁵⁵⁵ Bovenkerk endured six to fourteen hours of interrogation in Japanese each day he was in Osaka. He received threats that his family in the United States was starving and ill and that he would never see them again. In court, Bovenkerk refused to sign a false confession. The judge agreed to read the extensive document aloud. His reading was frequently interrupted by Bovenkerk's vociferous protests about the claims made against him. Midway through the reading, the judge "stood up, slammed the gavel, and said, 'Stop! This man has not been given a fair trial,'" and dismissed the charges against Bovenkerk.⁵⁵⁶ In contrast to the harsh questioning that Bovenkerk endured, Alice Grube, who was also placed in solitary confinement in Osaka, believed the interrogations were conducted "with a remarkable degree of detachment on the part of the examining officials. Only one exhibited a decidedly hostile attitude toward Christianity but seemed interested in

⁵⁵⁵ According to John Coventry Smith, the police questioned Bovenkerk about his work in Japan, his understandings of Christianity, and the reasons behind his year-long experiment living with his family in a rural Japanese village. They also tried to connect him to the American consulate in Osaka through his role as the treasurer of the Japan Mission. Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community*, 84.

⁵⁵⁶ *The Daily Journal*, "Ex-missioner's memories of Japan mix the pleasant with the painful," *The Daily Journal*, Elizabeth, NJ, April 21, 1980, Series 3, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

the viewpoint I expressed and allowed me to express myself freely.” After four months, officials remanded Grube to the school campus where she taught; she was interned with two other female missionaries at the home they shared. Grube had befriended one prison guard who sent her a letter after she was released that expressed “his admiration for the Christian spirit” of the missionaries and his “hope to do all in his power to make happy their remaining days in Japan.” The guard kept his promise, bringing his young son to visit Grube several times.⁵⁵⁷

Other guards developed relationships with the missionary prisoners that altered both parties. According to Grube, the female guards at the Osaka prison managed little courtesies to the prisoners without breaking any rules. A male guard whose brother had died on the battlefield sought out Grube for mutual prayers and support.⁵⁵⁸ At the Sumire camp, a detective risked punishment to help Walser and his wife meet for a brief two minutes. Walser held up this man’s act as an example of Jesus’ injunction to “love your enemies.”⁵⁵⁹ A missionary held in Yokohama with Bovenkerk noted that his guards were civilian policemen who were more likely than military police to follow the Geneva Convention rules for treatment of civilians.⁵⁶⁰ Helen Palmer, who returned on the December 1943 *Gripsholm* exchange, noted the attitudinal transformation of the guards at the Kobe internment camp. Initially, the guards evinced disgust for the missionaries, but over the course of their regular contact with the missionaries, the guards decided they were “sincere good people.” One probably violated the rules by taking English lessons from the missionaries. He used the

⁵⁵⁷ Alice Grube, “Record of Alice Grube, 8 December 1941-June 1942,” August 1942, Box 7, Folder 23, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁹ Theodore D. Walser, “Testimony.”

⁵⁶⁰ Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community*, 79.

New Testament as a textbook. Several days after learning of his brother's death in the Solomon Islands, the guard told Palmer that he believed no one country bore responsibility for the war. Instead, "the whole world has gone wrong. The whole world needs to pray until we find a way back to peace."⁵⁶¹ The opportunity of the missionaries to witness to their captors matched the testimony of Japanese to the bonds of compassion and humanity that connected them.

All the missionaries reported that the generosity of Japanese individuals spared them the worst consequences of inadequate food supplies while interned. Imprisoned Europeans and Americans received more generous rations than Japanese citizens but still suffered.⁵⁶² Bovenkerk remembered that he and fellow prisoners had "minimal clothing and rapidly lost weight because of inadequate food," while Hannaford noted that the food was "poor, insufficient, and badly prepared." However, a regulation allowed family and friends to deliver supplementary food to the internees.⁵⁶³ This practice ameliorated the physical and mental health of internees like Hannaford who were imprisoned in the towns where they had lived, worked, and built relationships.⁵⁶⁴ For reasons not explained, some missionary wives remained free after their spouses were interned. These women worked tirelessly with Japanese friends and colleagues to obtain extra food and goods on the black market for

⁵⁶¹ Helen Palmer, "Report from Japan," 6 December 1943, Box 7, Folder 24, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

⁵⁶² Theodore D. Walser, "Testimony."

⁵⁶³ John Coventry Smith noted that the internment camp followed the same patterns it did for regular prisoners: the prison provided the bare minimum of food and expected family to provide the rest. This worked well for internees who had family in the area around the camps, but not so well for internees like Smith and Bovenkerk who were interned far from their home communities. Tokyo-based Japanese friends of Smith and Bovenkerk, as well as Gladys Walser and Ruth Hannaford made regular trips to Tokyo to bring supplies, food, and clean laundry. Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community*, 77-81, 92.

⁵⁶⁴ *The Daily Journal*, "Ex-missioner's memories of Japan mix the pleasant with the painful"; and Howard Hannaford, "Internee No. 11—No Visitors Allowed."

imprisoned spouses and colleagues.⁵⁶⁵ At the Sumire Internment Prison, Walser received sixty eggs from a friend who had saved them up for the imprisoned Americans. Although one-third of the eggs had spoiled by the time they reached Walser, he still considered them a “beautiful gift” because so rare.⁵⁶⁶

Japanese friends and colleagues offered more than caloric sustenance to the interned missionaries. Putting their own safety at risk, Japanese individuals tried to get messages about family and friends to the prisoners. Occasionally, friends managed to get interviews with the internees. Walser remembered that twenty-four Japanese Christians attempted to visit him to express their fellowship with American Christians.⁵⁶⁷ The women missionaries who eventually returned to their homes for the duration of their internment managed occasional visits from friends, colleagues, and neighborhood children. Just as the detective at Sumire prison allowed a discrete visit between the Walsers, another officer at the camp allowed Hannaford to stand next to an open window in order to receive greetings from members of the Japanese church he served as they passed on the street below.⁵⁶⁸ Although they could not receive visitors to their home on their school campus, Alice Grube, Martha Ann Wilson, and Helen Palmer appreciated the “cheery smiles” and “glad shouts” that they shared with the schoolchildren through windows. Servants continued to serve home-interned women, perhaps out of faithfulness, and perhaps because they had nowhere else to go.

Women like Grube and Palmer rejoiced in the “rich fellowship of the spirit” in their households and considered their maids “heroines” of courage and devotion who proved in

⁵⁶⁵ Theodore D. Walser, “Testimony”; Howard Hannaford to Friends, 9 October 1942, Box 60, Folder 7, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files; and Howard Hannaford, “Internee No. 11—No Visitors Allowed.”

⁵⁶⁶ Theodore D. Walser, “Testimony.”

⁵⁶⁷ Theodore D. Walser, “Testimony.”

⁵⁶⁸ Howard Hannaford, “Internee No. 11—No Visitors Allowed.”

the words of one maid that “we are showing” President Roosevelt and Premier Tojo that Japanese and Americans could “get on together.”⁵⁶⁹ Jessie Riker called the pastor with whom she worked “very nationalistic,” but declared that political differences did not interfere with a warm friendship between them during her months of house arrest.⁵⁷⁰ She also received periodic visits from her Japanese foster daughter, son-in-law, and grandson. In their post-internment testimony, the missionaries raised such visits as hope-inspiring and spirit-raising. Grube expressed the depth of these connections when she recalled that the teachers who came to say good-bye to her, Palmer, and Wilson joined in a prayer service and closed with the song, “Blest be the Tie that Binds.”⁵⁷¹

The missionaries recognized that efforts to consort with “the enemy” put Japanese civilians in the scope of the military police as potential subversives, or “fifth columnists.”⁵⁷² Hannaford noted the courage of the Japanese who tried to visit him in the camp. Even though they were denied visitation rights, they had to sign a register; if they brought gifts, they had to fill out an official form.⁵⁷³ As soon as they placed their names in the register, they potentially came under police scrutiny. When the police escorted the missionaries to the port as they left the country, Walser spied four friends in the “silent crowd.” The young working woman, a man with a doctorate from Harvard, the director of the settlement house where Walser worked, and a “half-paralysed young saint” who ran a slum settlement on whose board Walser and Dr. Kagawa served had disobeyed police orders and shown up to witness the missionaries’ departure. Walser bowed in their direction as he passed; police

⁵⁶⁹ Alice Grube, “Record of Alice Grube”; and Helen Palmer, “Report from Japan.”

⁵⁷⁰ Jessie Riker, “Testimony of Jessie Riker.”

⁵⁷¹ Alice Grube, “Record of Alice Grube”; and John Fawcett (1739-1817), “Blest be the Tie that Binds.”

⁵⁷² Howard Hannaford to friends, 9 October 1942.

⁵⁷³ Howard Hannaford, “Internee No. 11—No Visitors Allowed.” John Coventry Smith makes this observation, too. Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community*, 91-92.

then tapped three of them on the shoulder and led them away.⁵⁷⁴ Jessie Riker recalled that twenty-five women and men came to see her off when she departed her house for the port and recognized that such a showing was a big deal.⁵⁷⁵ Hannaford called these efforts proof that “Christian fellowship triumphed over the hate and divisiveness of war”; likewise, another missionary noted the surprise of other internees and police at the visitors received by missionaries because American businesspeople did not tend to have Japanese friends. In his view, Christian fellowship had “stood the test.”⁵⁷⁶

Imprisonment and solitary confinement proved a winnowing fork for the missionaries, a clarifying ordeal that demonstrated the primacy of the values underlying Christian internationalism. Alice Grube defied prison rules and reprimands and sang for two hours each day of her confinement as a way to bear witness to the “exaltation of the spirit” she felt and to her awareness of the solidarity she felt with thousands of Christian kin who prayed with her. She linked her experience with other missionaries when she confidently stated that their long days of solitary confinement “in spite of hours of ennui and some sleepless nights, was a tremendous challenge to test the spiritual fibre of my soul . . . I thought that I could make no better witness than by bearing my cross with grace, with dignity, with patience, and with gentleness under all circumstances and conditions.”⁵⁷⁷ Bovenkerk also turned to hymns as a source of strength. He kept one hymn on constant repeat in his mind: “O Love that wilt not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee; I give thee back the life I owe, That in thine ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be.”⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁵ Jessie Riker, “Testimony of Jessie Riker.”

⁵⁷⁶ Howard Hannaford to friends, 9 October 1942; and Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community*, 93.

⁵⁷⁷ Alice Grube, “Record of Alice Grube.” Spelling in original.

⁵⁷⁸ “Ex-Missioner’s memories of Japan mix the pleasant with the painful”; and George Matheson (1842-1906), “O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go.”

Bovenkerk's friend and fellow internee at Yokohama, John Coventry Smith, turned frequently to a translation from I Peter: "Learn to pay the same tax of suffering as the rest of your brotherhood throughout the world."⁵⁷⁹ Like Bovenkerk and Grube, Hannaford found the knowledge of spiritual bonds with Japanese Christians a "steady stream of spiritual communication which cheered and strengthened" him. Soon after his internment, Hannaford received a letter from a former student, a young deaf woman, which confirmed his assessment. The war, she assured him, "does not make you and I [sic] enemies, for you and I are Christians."⁵⁸⁰ Christian fellowship overrode any declarations of hostilities among nations.

The missionaries likened their experience to that of Japanese Americans. Grube called the Japanese "very friendly enemies," and prayed that the imprisoned Japanese American population might have "as many joyful experiences" as she had in Japan.⁵⁸¹ Bovenkerk assured the Japanese Americans he met in Manzanar that just as they were truly American, under his white skin, he was Japanese, unmoored and out-of-place in exile.⁵⁸² He explicitly linked his time in a Japanese internment camp to his ability to empathize with the needs of Japanese Americans when he told Ralph Merritt, the Project Director at Manzanar, that his experience taught him that only "patience and sincerity" would help improve incarcerated attitudes.⁵⁸³ Martha Ann Wilson's insights served for the larger missionary group when the *Foreign Affairs Bulletin* of the Presbyterian Church reprinted without attribution

⁵⁷⁹ I Peter 5:9-11: "Learn to pay the same tax of suffering as the rest of your brotherhood throughout the world. Once you have suffered for a little, the God of all grace who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will repair, recruit, and strengthen you. The dominion is his for ever and ever, Amen." Smith, *From Colonialism to World Communion*, 95.

⁵⁸⁰ Howard Hannaford, station letter, Tokyo—Japan Mission, October 1942, Box 60, Folder 17, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files

⁵⁸¹ Alice Grube, "Testimony of Alice Grube."

⁵⁸² *The Daily Journal*, "Ex-missioner's Memories of Japan Mix the Pleasant with the Painful."

⁵⁸³ Henry Bovenkerk to Ralph P. Merritt, 20 March 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers.

her testimony after her return on the 1943 *Gripsholm*. Wilson insisted that all of the missionaries shared the conviction that “retaliation and harshness should have no place in American treatment of Japanese internees.” Interestingly, Wilson referred to them as “political enemies,” but he argued that if the United States “deserve[d] to be known as a Christian nation,” it must offer fair and “efficient” treatment to its internees.⁵⁸⁴

Spiritual strengthening through imprisonment, expressions of friendship and fellowship, and knowledge of the sacrifices made by many Japanese on their behalf propelled missionaries like the Bovenkerks, Hannafords, and Grube to join with missionaries already in the United States in service to Japanese Americans. Their own experience of injustice and the grace of Christian fellowship shaped their attitudes toward both the incarceration of Japanese Americans and towards Japanese Americans. However, after enduring months of detention in Japan, missionaries had to persevere through another season of bureaucratic procedure in order to find work in the incarceration camps.

Navigating the Red Tape

The Protestant Commission, primarily composed of former Japan missionaries, saw the value of missionary service among exiled Japanese Americans and tried to pave a smooth path for the missionaries’ entry into the assembly and relocation camps. Several factors, however, led to inordinate and frustrating wait times for missionaries seeking work in the federated churches or WRA agencies in the camps. Commission Secretary Gordon Chapman’s micro-managing of the job search process at times worked against speedy placement, power struggles in the Nikkei churches and unclear communication lines in the

⁵⁸⁴ Martha Ann Wilson, “Report from Japan,” 7 December 1943, Box 7, Folder 24, RG 81, COEMAR Papers, as quoted in N.A., “Faith is an Anvil Which has Worn Out Many Hammers,” *Foreign Affairs Bulletin of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, Special Number, December 1943, Box 7, Folder 23, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

WRA structure created additional problems, and men and women faced different, gendered expectations from their potential employers at the camps. The Commission assiduously gained WRA approval for missionary workers in the camps, yet Commission Secretary Gordon Chapman continued to maintain tight control of the process by retaining the Commission as a “clearinghouse” for potential mission workers. The federated churches in the camps had to manage denominational and generational differences while dealing with the policies of their primarily white overseers in the WRA and the pressure from the Commission to use missionaries. Ultimately, the disorganization and factionalization of the WRA, marginalized in a governmental machinery primed to fight a global war and stymied by a civil service process unsuited for the rapid decision-making necessary to create and run cities that had been built overnight, led to confusion and delay. Throughout this experience, female missionaries faced gender-based obstacles that made them more likely than male missionaries to join the WRA payroll as teachers or social workers instead of remaining on denominational mission salary as religious workers. For missionaries who believed they were called by God to spend the war in the Japanese American incarceration camps, the bureaucratic mess they had to wade through in order to make their way into a camp felt like unnecessary impediments.

In a meeting in June 1942 with WRA officials, Commission leadership pressed the desirability of increasing access for Commission members and other missionaries to the detained Japanese American communities. With their knowledge of Japanese and their purported better understanding of Japanese American culture and psyche, missionaries could provide counseling services and help maintain morale and “true Americanism.” Commission members also believed missionaries were individuals in whom Japanese Americans would

have confidence because the missionaries understood Japanese culture, were sympathetic toward Japanese Americans, and had a history of opposing discriminatory policies against Japanese Americans.⁵⁸⁵ While Commission minutes do not expand on member views about what such a true Americanism entailed, the testimonies given at the Tolan hearings by Commission founders Galen Fisher and Frank Herron Smith suggest that these men and women remained committed to the belief that the majority of the incarcerated were already American in their hearts, loyalties, and culture—even the Issei who were barred from citizenship.⁵⁸⁶ They feared, as did WRA Director Dillon Myers, that the incarceration camps would become laboratories breeding resistance, demoralization, and subversion instead of flourishing sites for loyalty and democracy.⁵⁸⁷ In an unpublished letter to the *New York Times*, Fisher expressed fears that confinement in “colonies under military guard” would

⁵⁸⁵ Minutes of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; Ruth Kingman to Roy Nash (WRA), 20 August 1942, Box 154, Folder 4, Kingman Papers; and Dillon Myer to Ruth Kingman, 28 August 1942, Box 154, Folder 4, Kingman Papers.

⁵⁸⁶ I discuss the Tolan hearings and the part that these individuals played in it in Chapter 2. A WRA Community Analysis Report defined assimilation as “the acquisition of the culture traits of a particular society by people of foreign origin or parentage.” This cultural definition of assimilation enabled WRA and Commission members to identify most Nikkei, Nisei in particular, as American, regardless of their religious adherence or citizenship status. The Buddhist Church in America had adopted many American religious practices; indeed individuals who rejected all faith traditions expressed the American tradition of agnosticism. War Relocation Authority, Community Analysis Section, Community Analysis Report No. 6, “Nisei Assimilation,” 21 July 1943, Box 6, Folder 19, RG 130, Gillett Papers. Dillon Myer gave a telling statement about this cultural understanding of Americanism in a 1943 speech to social workers—a friendly audience—to be sure: most Nisei “wholeheartedly American in all their fundamental attitudes and loyalties. . . . [They] have absorbed Americanism almost as naturally as they breathe. To claim otherwise is equivalent to asserting that American institutions exercise a less potent influence over the youthful mind than the transplanted institutions of the Orient. Dillon S. Myer, “A Test Case for Democracy—Japanese Resettlement,” address delivered before the 39th annual session of the MA Conference of Social Work, 1 December 1943, Box 1, Folder 16, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

⁵⁸⁷ “We believe loyalty grows only when it is given a chance to grow, and it doesn’t flourish in an atmosphere of suspicion, discrimination, and denial of opportunity to practice that loyalty.” Dillon Myers, quoted in Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 25; and Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps*, 39-42. Toru Matsumoto claimed that WRA Director Dillon Myer and other WRA employees viewed the camps as inherently un-American. Matsumoto, *Beyond Prejudice*, 53. This belief explains the efforts on the part of the WRA to encourage resettlement of Japanese Americans outside of the camps, but not the paternalistic oversight of all aspects of incarceration camp life that made the “democratic” veneer of some of the institutions (i.e. elected community councils, the camp newspapers) questionable.

“de-Americanize” the Nisei.⁵⁸⁸ The missionaries believed their unique skills and attitudes made them the ideal tools for Americanization and that they should have ready access to the camps.

Because of their insistence that missionaries could play a vital role inculcating American values in the camps, both the Commission and the government shied away from any missionaries who held suspicious views. Although all of the missionaries had protested America’s entry into the war and like many American Protestant congregations, had helped sustain a robust peace movement in the interwar years, once the United States declared war in December 1941, most missionaries silenced their views and supported the war effort, deeming unpatriotic those who held to their pacifist stances.⁵⁸⁹ Just as the Commission decried the presence of Jehovah’s Witnesses in the camps, deeming their views both un-American and un-Christian, they eschewed missionaries who vocalized concern about the war. Presbyterians Ted and Gladys Walser, who had worked closely with Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa in student ministries in Japan for nearly three decades, and Protestant Episcopalian Paul Rusch were persona non grata because they advocated “advanced social doctrines” about Japan and were “ardent” pacifists who brought up “taboo” issues and invited the suspicions of military and civilian government officials. Basically, the men continued to express views held by many of the missionaries pre-war that the United States helped to

⁵⁸⁸ Galen M. Fisher, unpublished letter to the *New York Times*, “The Bottle-Neck in Japanese Resettlement,” 22 April 1942, Box 1, Folder 49, BANC MSS C-A 171 (The Pacific Coast Committee on American Principles and Fair Play), Bancroft Library Special Collections, Berkeley. On the “re-education” purposes, or the Americanization project, of the camps see Ngai, ““An Ironic Testimony to the Value of American Democracy,”” 237-257; and Howard, *Concentration Camps on the Home Front*, 150-156.

⁵⁸⁹ See Chapter One on missionary efforts to avoid a war between the U. S. and Japan. On the Protestant peace movement see, Patricia Applebaum, *Kingdom to Commune: Protestant Pacifist Culture between World War I and the Vietnam Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Joseph Kip Kosek, *Acts of Conscience: Christian Non-Violence and Modern American Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); and Lawrence S. Whittier, *Rebels against War: The American Peace Movement, 1933-1983*, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984).

create the militaristic culture in Japan through its racist and colonialist treatment of Japan and other Asian nations and that as the dominant nation in Asia, Japan had as much right to order Asia as did any of the European powers.⁵⁹⁰ John Powell at Poston noted that although many conscientious objectors were better trained for positions in the camps than other applicants, the administration at his camp remained skeptical about them. As a result, he was not going to pursue the employment of several missionaries who had conscientious objector status.⁵⁹¹

At the June meeting, the WRA warmly received the proposed placement of furloughed Protestant missionaries in the camps for “Christian service” and asked Commission Secretary Gordon Chapman to provide a list of potential workers to the WRA. In the spirit of its desire to appear impartial to religion, the WRA’s regional director, E. Reesman “Si” Fryer, welcomed “properly qualified” missionaries who the Japanese American Christian groups in the camps requested. He also promised camp passes for Commission members so they could regularly visit the centers and encouraged the “yeoman services” of Commission members who might accompany camp laborers who helped with crop harvests in the West; Fryer felt Commission members could lift worker morale and

⁵⁹⁰ Gordon K. Chapman to Dr. Herrick B. Young, 2 November 1942; and Gordon K. Chapman to Dr. Herrick B. Young, 27 November 1942, Folder 38, Chapman Papers. Walser eventually went to work for the Student Relocation Council in Philadelphia. When they arrived in the United States via the *Gripsholm*, Henry Bovenkerk, Howard Hannaford, and Ted Walser were culled from the missionaries and taken to Ellis Island for a few days of extra questioning by the FBI. All were cleared, but Walser’s strong condemnation of the war made him suspicious. He had written, with John Coventry Smith, under the auspices of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a letter to the US government urging full cooperation with Japanese peace representatives on their way to America. The letter had been signed by 42 Americans, including an embassy official. Walser’s continued strong stance against the war likely poisoned the more conservative missionaries like Chapman, as well as the officials in charge of the camps. During the Depression in the 1930s, another junior missionary lost his post because he shared a statement he and his Kyoto students had written about the economic situation, likely framed as Christian socialism, in a sermon while preaching in the US on furlough. Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community*, 68, 33.

⁵⁹¹ John Powell to Gordon K. Chapman, 23 February 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers.

help create positive attitudes in the communities in which they worked.⁵⁹² This assertion encompassed the two main goals of the Commission: to help Japanese Americans and to change prevailing anti-Japanese attitudes in the United States.⁵⁹³

Other missionaries endorsed these goals and rushed to express their interest in camp work. By mid-June 1942, two months before the first *Gripsholm* exchange ship had pulled into the New Jersey port, the Commission had applications from forty-one missionaries seeking work in the camp churches.⁵⁹⁴ That list enlarged as missionaries began to return to the United States on the *Gripsholm*. Chapman expressed surprise at the alacrity of furloughed missionaries to find work among Japanese Americans, having assumed they would desire some rest and downtime before starting new employment.⁵⁹⁵ Congregational missionary Mrs. Frank Cary settled in Riverside, California upon return from the Philippines. Even though her husband was imprisoned in the Philippines, now under Japanese control, Mrs. Cary chose to live in southern California before exclusion because of

⁵⁹² Richard Drinnon follows the classification system of sociologist Alexander Leighton, who worked in the Poston incarceration camp; Leighton classified employees as “stereotype-minded,” seeing the incarcerated as “Japanese first and people secondarily,” or “people-minded,” focusing on the incarcerated as holistic people. Drinnon places E. Reesman Fryer in the middle of the spectrum between the two types. See, Drinnon, *Keeper of the Concentration Camps*, 40, citing Alexander Leighton, *The Governing of Men: General Principles and Recommendations Based on Experience at a Japanese Relocation Camp* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1945), 84. Gordon Chapman reiterated the WRA openness to using missionaries at camp churches in his correspondence with denominational leadership and missionaries. Gordon K. Chapman to Marcia Kerr, 8 July 1942, Folder 38, Chapman Papers; and Galen M. Fisher, “Notes of Conference with WRA Heads at Washington and with Messrs. Barnes, Dawber and Rundquist in New York,” November 1942, Folder 6, Chapman Papers.

⁵⁹³ Minutes of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to Clarence C. Gillett, 15 July 1942, Folder 9, Chapman Papers. For a more in-depth discussion of the public relations campaign plan, see the Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 22 July 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁵⁹⁴ Minutes of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁵⁹⁵ Gordon Kimbell Chapman to Members of the Protestant Commission, 15 September 1942, Folder 14, Chapman Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to Howard Hannaford, 13 October 1942, Folder 11, Chapman Papers. Missionaries received three months for rest and vacation on their return. Many of them needed it; John Coventry Smith remembered that for six months after his return from internment, any tension could make him ill. See Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community*, 114.

her concern for Japanese American welfare. Like other missionaries, she believed in the power of “friendly contacts” in a hostile situation.⁵⁹⁶

The desire to congregate with others in the “missionary family” also drew missionaries toward the camps, as individuals like Elizabeth Evans spread the word among returning missionaries of opportunities for work with Japanese Americans.⁵⁹⁷ One missionary who had taught for thirty-six years at Aoyama Gakuin, the Methodist College of Tokyo, quoted the famous poem by Edwin Markham, “He drew a circle that shut me out,” in his application for work in the camps. He eloquently argued that serving Japanese Americans mattered for the future health of the nation as well as the needs of incarcerated; it was a “reconciling service.”⁵⁹⁸ Most missionaries sought positions as religious workers in the camps. They hoped to embed themselves into the federated congregations in one of the ten camps, continuing the kinds of religious leadership and partnership in which they had engaged in Japan. If such positions were unavailable, women in particular were open to teaching or social welfare positions with the WRA.

As applications and letters of interest poured into the Commission’s mailbox, Chapman dedicated a portion of his time to explaining WRA procedure to interested missionaries. He also had to justify his own role as missionaries grew frustrated with the opacity of the job search. The process of matching applicants and camp churches was cumbersome. Howard Hannaford spoke bitterly to other missionaries in the same boat of the “unreasonable amount of time” it took for “the unrolling of Governmental red tape.”⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁶ Clarence C. Gillett to Gordon K. Chapman, 11 July 1942, Folder 9, Chapman Papers.

⁵⁹⁷ Alice Grube to Dr. J. L. Hooper, 8 February 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁵⁹⁸ Resume of Frederick W. Heckelman – M.A., D. D., 16 July 1942, Folder 36, Chapman Papers.

⁵⁹⁹ Howard Hannaford quoted in Sarah Oltmans to Rev. J. Leon Hooper, D. D., and Herrick B. Young, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

Chapman spoke of “considerable misunderstanding” among all involved parties and offered clarifications.⁶⁰⁰ Although the Commission was technically the “clearinghouse,” each step in the hiring process involved the Commission.⁶⁰¹ In order to be considered for a church position, missionaries needed to submit their applications to the Commission which forwarded them to WRA authorities and camp churches; the Commission wrote letters of recommendation and tried to control the movement of missionaries among the various appointments in Japanese American-related work. The Commission served as the intermediary for applicants instead of denominational mission boards or ministry units because the Commission insisted on the ecumenical nature of the camp congregations and argued that its board, based in the West near most of the camps, was in the best position to discern the needs of incarcerated congregations. Religious workers served all Protestants in the camps, and not just the members of their particular denomination. As an ecumenical organization, the Commission could ensure that applicants adhered to this vision.

The application process for church positions involved three parties: the Commission (or, more accurately, Gordon Chapman as the executive secretary), the WRA project directors, and center church ministerial councils. Chapman forwarded applications to the church councils that ran the federated churches and worked in tandem with the project directors. Church councils might express to Chapman their interest in a particular candidate and proceed to interview the individual. According to Instruction 32, a church council, through the civil community council, needed to obtain the approval of the project director of the camp before inviting any white religious workers to join them. These missionaries would

⁶⁰⁰ Minutes of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 14 October 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶⁰¹ For more on the role of the Commission, see Chapter Three.

be paid by their denominational foreign mission's offices, although they pledged to serve Japanese American Protestants regardless of denomination, and they would reside outside of the camps. Although these missionaries would not be on government payroll or working with the government, WRA policies maintained paternalistic oversight of Japanese American private religious activities.⁶⁰² Chapman encouraged the church councils at camp churches to consult with him about any missionary they wanted to engage before approaching the project director. In a strange inversion of the usual hiring process, when a federated church and WRA directors were in agreement about a candidate, the Commission agreed it would write a recommendation for that candidate.⁶⁰³ No good reason existed for this insistence on a proper reference from the Commission instead of mission boards except Chapman's own desire to maintain control of both his fellow missionaries and the Japanese American churches.⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰² This raises the argument that no religious activities in the camps were actually private. The specter of "Big Brother" hung over all religious activities since camp churches were supposed to get permission from the Project Director for use of facilities, advertisement of programs, and even the hiring of outside religious leadership. The Commission and center churches strenuously objected to the original wording of Instruction 32, which gave the civic camp councils the role of selecting outside religious workers and submitting their choice to the Project Director for approval. The process, the Commission argued, denied the initiative of the federated churches to choose their own leadership. The Commission also worried that the process made it unduly difficult for missionaries to find work in the camps and would lead to discouragement and acceptance of other types of work by them. The Commission applied for an amendment to the instructions, placing the task of approving outside religious workers in the hands of church councils, with the Project Director only playing the role of consultant. Although the San Francisco Regional Office of the WRA approved of the change, Chapman ominously noted that "the chief man concerned" (John Provinse) in Washington D.C. was antagonistic to the request. According to John Provinse, and in contradiction to the experience of the Protestant Commission, the current process was in line with the WRA's desire to "encourage access by Caucasians for educational, religious and artistic service," and the current wording of Article II of Instruction 32, Section A maintained the "open door characteristic of American life." Gordon K. Chapman to Ethel Hempstead, 27 November 1942, Folder 36, Chapman Papers; and Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 2 December 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶⁰³ Minutes of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 22 July 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶⁰⁴ Chapman exchanged heated letters with Howard Hannaford over what Hannaford termed an "exercise of irresponsible power" by the Commission over the futures of white Protestant missionaries seeking work with entities unrelated to the Protestant Commission. Chapman pointed to the mandate of the Commission, as the "field agent" of the Home Missions Council, to ensure the "proper distribution" of missionaries and Japanese American pastors in camps and resettlement areas. Hannaford stated that he felt like a "pawn," an assertion

The Japanese American congregations at times felt caught in the middle between the Commission and the WRA. Not all of them had a need for missionary assistance; in fact, many of the pre-incarceration congregations that constituted the new federated churches in the camps had been self-supporting institutions with seminary-educated Japanese American clergy.⁶⁰⁵ Inviting a white missionary to join them may have felt like a step backward for some.⁶⁰⁶ Those most likely to request the help of a missionary were those that had gaps in their staffing: no English-speaking pastor who could work with the young people or clergy wives who could assist the male clergy with the needs of the women's associations and female pastoral care needs. However, the simple act of sending to every incarceration camp congregation a list of available missionaries may have felt less like a query or invitation than an order. The Commission sent the information about potential missionaries to camp churches in the early fall of 1942 as the incarcerated were settling into the jerry-built "Relocation Centers" and organizing their community groups, including the inter-denominational churches. In other words, the list of potential missionary workers arrived just as Nikkei were determining the shape and form of their own churches, making decisions

with which Chapman disagreed. According to Chapman, the Protestant Commission, whose members constantly visited and corresponded with incarcerated and personnel in camps and outside communities, was in the best position to understand the staffing needs in these areas, and its judgment should be respected. Howard Hannaford to Gordon K. Chapman, 3 November 1932, Folder 11, Chapman Papers; Gordon K. Chapman to Howard Hannaford, 7 November 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers; Howard Hannaford to Gordon K. Chapman, 9 November 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to Howard Hannaford, 12 November 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers.

⁶⁰⁵ Among the Issei clergy, some were educated in Japanese seminaries where they may have had men like Gordon Chapman or Charles Reifsnider as teachers. Others, like the Nisei, received their theological training at American seminaries. See Sumio Koga, ed., *'A Centennial Legacy': History of the Japanese Christian Missions in North America, 1877-1977*, Volume I (Chicago: Nobart, Inc., 1977); Michael J. Kimura Angevine, and Ryo Yoshida. "Contexts for a History of Asian American Presbyterian Churches: A Case Study of the Early History of Japanese American Presbyterians," in *The Diversity of Discipleship: Presbyterians and Twentieth Century Witness*, edited by Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 105-125; and Hayashi, "For the Sake of Our Japanese Brethren."

⁶⁰⁶ Some WRA personnel and Nisei disapproved of the use of missionaries. Galen M. Fisher, "Notes of Conference with WRA Heads at Washington."

about how to share leadership among the existing clergy, and deciding how to cooperate in spite of theological, cultural, and regional differences. In the midst of these complicated processes, Japanese American Protestants had one more issue to deal with—deciding whether or not to use any missionaries. Agreeing across denominational and generational differences on one specific missionary might prove impossible.⁶⁰⁷

On the other hand, the churches that decided they did want to call missionaries sometimes felt thwarted by their camp's administration or by the efforts of the Commission to steer particularly popular missionaries like the Hannafords and the Bovenkerks to specific sites. Chapman's correspondence indicates that he tried to direct missionaries to certain centers. He believed his regular contact with all of the centers gave him a panoramic view of all of the camps and their particular needs. Like a human resources director, he tried to match missionary and church. This meant that camp churches had to lobby both Chapman and the individual missionaries whose services they desired.⁶⁰⁸ Sometimes when they issued an offer to a missionary, the WRA personnel overruled that offer. Several missionaries expressed confusion after receiving a verbal invitation from the church council at a camp and then having it withdrawn by the WRA.⁶⁰⁹ Some project directors opposed the presence of missionaries in the camps. Others, in the words of Regional Director Si Fryer, would

⁶⁰⁷ For example, Heart Mountain (WY) Issei wanted to bring Assemblies of God missionary Marie Jeurgensen to the camp to work exclusively with the Issei women. The Nisei in the church vociferously objected to her. Although Jeurgensen did not subscribe to the Pentecostal wing of the Assemblies of God denomination, the Nisei feared that she would bring a Pentecostal spirit with her and create dissension in the congregation. Marie Jeurgensen to Gordon Chapman, 5 December 1942, Folder 20, Chapman Papers.

⁶⁰⁸ Shigeo Tanabe to Gordon K. Chapman, 9 March 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers; Howard Hannaford to Rev. Shinpachi Kanow, 11 September 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers; Gordon K. Chapman to Dr. Herrick B. Young, 2 November 1942, Folder 38, Chapman Papers; [?], Chairman of the Manzanar Christian Church Council, and J. Fujimori, president of the Ministerial Group, to Gordon K. Chapman, 24 February 1943, Folder 1, Chapman Papers; and Elizabeth Evans to Dr. J. L. Hooper, 8 February 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶⁰⁹ Ethel Hempstead to Gordon Chapman, 21 November 1942, Folder 36, Chapman Papers; Elizabeth Evans to Gordon Chapman, 7 January 1943, Folder 38, Chapman Papers; and Gordon Chapman to Dr. Herrick B. Young, 2 February 1943, Folder 38, Chapman Papers.

“consider favorably” any missionaries requested by the Japanese Americans.⁶¹⁰ As always, the final approval remained in the hands of white administrators.

In the thick of the negotiations for missionaries to work in various capacities in WRA incarceration camps, Chapman realized that his Japan colleagues had multiple constituencies to please. Assemblies of God missionary Marie Jeurgensen received the approval of Issei congregants and WRA personnel but was opposed by the Nisei at one camp.⁶¹¹ Another missionary worked on a temporary basis in Poston for two weeks before being unceremoniously removed from the camp for her heavy-handed manner with both staff and incarcerated. On the other hand, Manzanar staff and Protestant, Buddhist, and Roman Catholic incarcerated issued to Henry Bovenkerk the “most united” invitation Chapman had seen.⁶¹² After watching the difficulties various missionaries had in their efforts to find work, Chapman wrote in late 1942 to Elizabeth Evans that successful job applicants “so commend themselves” to personnel and incarcerated that “all concerned mutually desire them.”⁶¹³ Unlike the experience of either religious employees at American Indian schools and reservations, to which some scholars have compared the incarceration camp, or secular WRA employees, missionaries had to navigate a political minefield of sometimes conflicting parties.⁶¹⁴

⁶¹⁰ Gordon K. Chapman to Clarence C. Gillett, 15 July 1942, Folder 9, Chapman Papers.

⁶¹¹ Marie Jeurgensen to Gordon Chapman, 5 December 1942; Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon Chapman, 16 July 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers; and Gordon K. Chapman to Luman G. Shafer, 2 November 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

⁶¹² Gordon K. Chapman to Henry Bovenkerk, 24 February 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶¹³ Gordon K. Chapman to Elizabeth Evans, 14 December 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers.

⁶¹⁴ Drinnon, *Keeper of the Concentration Camps*. On the hiring of educators for the camp schools, see James, *Exile Within*, 49-52. On employment in Native American reservations and schools, see David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 66-67, 83-87; Devon A. Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993); and Cathleen D. Cahill, *Federal Fathers & Mothers: A Social History of the United*

Howard Hannaford and Henry Bovenkerk typify the frustrating experience of missionaries seeking positions with camp churches. Upon their return to the United States, Hannaford and Bovenkerk began casting around for appropriate situations where they could assist Japanese Americans. Through Chapman, their papers made their way to most of the camps. Because the WRA had attempted to group together in camps pre-existing Japanese American neighborhoods and communities, some camps had larger representations of Protestant clergy, or of Issei or Nisei pastors than others, based on the number of Protestant churches in a particular pre-incarceration community. Nisei pastors also had more opportunities than Issei clergy to leave the camps for work opportunities in resettlement areas where they worked in hostels or creating churches for resettling Nisei. As a result, several camps like Tule Lake and Manzanar had virtually no Nisei, or English-speaking, pastors.⁶¹⁵ These churches were very interested in obtaining the services of missionaries like Hannaford and Bovenkerk, whose fluency in Japanese language and culture appealed to Issei and whose relative youth and ability to provide leadership for the English-language church programs augured well for youth and young adult Christians.⁶¹⁶

Several WRA personnel seemed as interested in the benefits of utilizing the services of these two missionaries as the Commission was in convincing them to hire Bovenkerk and Hannaford. Like Commission leadership, the WRA was concerned that the continued exodus of Nisei leadership into outside communities created a leadership crisis in the camps.

States Indian Service, 1869-1933 (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

⁶¹⁵ Gordon K. Chapman to Dr. Herrick B. Young, 18 May 1943.

⁶¹⁶ The Poston, AZ camp wanted an individual with experience as a voice teacher, choir director, biblical scholar, and religious educator who could help in the religious education and Sunday school programs and assist the pastors with their "Bible work." Whether this meant helping translate for Issei pastors or work on exegetical matters, or lead Bible studies is not clear. Chapman initially suggested a Presbyterian woman missionary, but I do not know who, or if, Poston eventually found. Gordon K. Chapman to Marcia Kerr, 8 July 1942.

The WRA had worked to place reliably “loyal” Nisei in positions of leadership in the camps (but still subordinate to the white personnel) and to marginalize the Issei and the Kibei, who were Nisei raised and educated primarily in Japan.⁶¹⁷ The Commission worried that the loss of Nisei leadership in the Protestant churches would lead to an increase of “purely Japanese activities.” They viewed this as threat to the promulgation of “Americanism” in the churches in particular and the camps generally. Missionaries who straddled both the American and Japanese worlds seemed the solution to counteract these Japanese influences for both WRA and Commission leadership.⁶¹⁸

Some reality may have underlay this concern; for example, the Rev. Masatane Mitani, an Issei, reportedly held popular meetings at Poston in the fall of 1944 during which he supported the efforts of Japan’s imperial army.⁶¹⁹ The Chiefs of Community Services at Rohwer and Poston conveyed a desire to secure Hannaford for positions in the Community Welfare departments. John Powell of Poston, who had so vociferously declared his intention to ignore the WRA ban on paying religious workers, wrote to Chapman in early 1943 that he was deeply impressed by the “genuinely distinguished” intelligence and attitude of Hannaford. His “presence, his background, and his judgment” would aid the WRA’s “social-adjustment program.” Hannaford wanted to remain on the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions salary, so Powell suggested “borrowing” him to help create a junior college program for young adults.⁶²⁰ Similarly, Ralph Merritt, the Project Director at Manzanar,

⁶¹⁷ Howard, *Concentration Camps on the Home Front*, 87-92; and Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 160-163.

⁶¹⁸ Gordon K. Chapman to Dr. Herrick B. Young, 18 May 1943.

⁶¹⁹ Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 177.

⁶²⁰ John Powell to Gordon K. Chapman, 23 February 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers. Noting that the WRA increasingly recognized the “desirability of securing volunteer workers,” the Commission also pushed an idea to the WRA of using volunteer missionaries with experience teaching at Japanese colleges and universities for a program of college-level courses for young adults unable to participate in the Japanese American Student

pushed for Henry Bovenkerk to work in that camp's Social Welfare Department as a counselor and mediator who would be responsible for all religious organizations not "strictly speaking" WRA activities.⁶²¹ Bovenkerk would remain on his denominational salary and receive \$1 per year from the WRA as a staff member. This set-up would open more facilities and privileges than available to missionaries who lived outside the camp.⁶²² Chapman wrote to WRA administrator Lucy Adams, who had supported the erection of church buildings as a means to broaden the WRA's services, with a glowing recommendation for Bovenkerk, who he believed would be a "very helpful mediator" in helping Manzanar's church population look toward resettlement.⁶²³ With strong interest from church councils and WRA employers, Bovenkerk and Hannaford must have believed that official job offers would quickly appear.

Already cleared and supported by the Presbyterian Church for missionary service overseas and at home among the Japanese Americans, Bovenkerk and Hannaford hoped upon their return to the United States in August 1942 to quickly move into camp positions. By October 1942, Hannaford was exchanging testily polite letters with Chapman about the search process. Chapman made it sound simple: the Commission supplied church councils with the "names, educational background, experience and special qualifications" of missionary candidates; church candidates took "appropriate actions" to "invite" the missionary they wanted; the project director approved the choice; and "the worker is given

Relocation Program. Gordon K. Chapman to Dr. Herrick Young, 2 November 1942, Folder 38, Chapman Papers. On the "social adjustment program," see Ngai, "An Ironic Testimony to the Value of American Democracy."

⁶²¹ The Social Welfare departments in the incarceration camps had two primary tasks: "administering material help through clothing allowances and Public Assistance Grants; on the other, assisting people with various personal problems or performing the function of counseling." James G. Lindley, Director, Granada Relocation Center Quarterly Report, October 1 to December 31, 1942, Box 113, Folder 4, Melvin P. McGovern Papers, 1942-1945, RG 2010, Japanese American Research Project Collection of Material about Japanese in the United States, Charles E. Young Special Collection, University of California, Los Angeles.

⁶²² Gordon K. Chapman to Henry Bovenkerk, 24 February 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers.

⁶²³ Chapman to Mrs. Lucy Adams, 4 February 1943, Folder 1, Chapman Papers.

access to the Center.”⁶²⁴ All it took were the vaguely defined appropriate actions, invitations, and approval for a missionary to receive a winning ticket to enter the camp. Chapman noted that several camps had already expressed interest in obtaining Hannaford but thought he might have to wait a bit while congregations organized in the camps. Perhaps referring to Japanese concern with ritual order and form in social situations, Chapman joked that Japan missionaries were “accustomed to procedures which involve Japanese initiative.”⁶²⁵ Similarly, Chapman assured Bovenkerk in October that both WRA staff and church leaders at several camps, impressed by Bovenkerk’s papers, desired a visit from him.⁶²⁶ Chapman felt he had done his part in forwarding the men’s papers to the proper people and exchanging copious amounts of mail with interested parties on their behalf. If either had to wait for a job offer, the fault lay not with Chapman or the Commission but with the government or the Japanese Americans.

The men decided to visit the camps that showed interest in them. Chapman in fact encouraged some missionaries to visit camps that expressed interest in them, especially missionaries who did not already have pre-existing relationships with any Japanese American constituencies. He suggested that the Japanese Americans and the camp personnel were leery of hiring individuals they did not personally know.⁶²⁷ Presbyterian missionaries,

⁶²⁴ Gordon K. Chapman to Howard Hannaford, 13 October 1942, Folder 11, Chapman Papers.

⁶²⁵ Ibid.

⁶²⁶ Gordon K. Chapman to Henry Bovenkerk, Folder 1, Chapman Papers. In this letter, Chapman also notes that Manzanar’s Chief of Community Services, Thomas Temple, was a relative of the William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1942 until his death in 1944.

⁶²⁷ Gordon K. Chapman to Dr. Herrick Young, 2 November 1942, Folder 38, Chapman Papers. Chapman admonished other missionaries to avoid contacting Japanese American camp congregations *unless* the churches contacted them. This contradictory response may in part lie in the dual pulls upon Chapman: he was the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America’s designated representative on Japanese American issues during the war and the executive secretary of the Protestant Church Commission. As the Commission secretary, he needed to remain evenhanded in his treatment of all missionaries, regardless of denominational affiliation. In reality, he showed a special interest in placing Presbyterian missionaries. Gordon K. Chapman to Miss Marie Jeurgensen, 12 August 1942, Folder 42, Chapman Papers.

at least, eventually received reimbursement from their mission boards for these trips, although it appears some missionaries of other denominations had to cover the expensive trips across country out of their own pocket. Overwhelmed with letters of interest from church councils at Rohwer, Poston, Tule Lake, and Manzanar, and vexed after waiting for more than five months for a position, Hannaford undertook a train trip to visit the camps in early 1943. Bovenkerk also visited Manzanar. He had asked Chapman if he could visit other centers; even though Manzanar desperately wanted him, he wanted some choices as to which camp to work at so that he could find the best fit for himself and his family.⁶²⁸

Even after deciding to take the jobs at Tule Lake and Manzanar, respectively, Hannaford and Bovenkerk had the difficult task of finding housing for their families near the camps. Barred by the WRA from living inside the camp as a religious worker, Hannaford looked at the few rentals in the nearby area. Most landlords refused to rent to anyone connected with the camps. Prejudice against Japanese Americans bled into suspicion about anyone—particularly “religious” types—who showed sympathy for people who looked like the Japanese enemy. Eventually, Hannaford found a home twenty-eight miles away in Klamath Falls. He and his wife decided to pay the transportation cost between home and work from their “monthly tithe account.”⁶²⁹

⁶²⁸ Bovenkerk’s concern for options echoed a desire that animated many of the Japanese Americans who looked for opportunities to move out of the internment camps and into jobs on the “outside.” They frequently asked for information about the economic, political, and social climate of potential locales, and about different job opportunities. While it was okay for the missionaries to want to maximize their choices, incarcerated were often admonished by the WRA to accept whatever job they could get, even if the position was below their educational and experience level.

⁶²⁹ Howard Hannaford to Gordon K. Chapman, 26 July 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers. Hannaford had the poor luck to arrive in Tule Lake just six days after the WRA decided to turn it into a segregation center. Less than five months later, the Hannafords, finding it impossible to do constructive work in the hostile, lock-down situation that Tule Lake had become, left the center to take on resettlement work with the Chicago Church Federation.

Likewise, Bovenkerk moved to Manzanar first without his young family. Because he was technically a government employee with his dollar per year contact, he could stay in camp housing, but there was none big enough for his family. After eight weeks of searching for a large enough home for his wife and growing brood, Bovenkerk was nearly in tears at the thought of leaving Manzanar. He sighed over the fact that he was not a single, “unencumbered” person free to throw himself into the work at Manzanar.⁶³⁰ He also worried that his mission salary, large enough to support domestic servants who freed his wife from child and house care for her mission endeavors in Japan, would not cover the more expensive help in California. Mission boards expected wives to share in their spouses’ work but without a salary. While Nikkei pastors’ wives attained salaries in the camps after a hard-fought battle, women like Hester Bovenkerk would be expected to care for her family and home in town while regularly traveling to the camp to voluntarily help out with women’s ministries.⁶³¹ The situation seemed daunting. The few houses he found for rent were suddenly unavailable once the landlords knew he worked at the internment camp. Eventually, the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions took an unprecedented step and quietly provided Bovenkerk with extra funds to cover a more expensive furnished rental in nearby Independence being vacated by another WRA employee.⁶³² While this house was still not a sure thing, the Bovenkerks took a leap of faith and returned to Manzanar as a family, five months after offered the position, to “cast our lot with the people we’ve learned

⁶³⁰ Henry Bovenkerk to L. J. Hooper, 30 January 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶³¹ Henry Bovenkerk to Gordon K. Chapman, 12 November 1942, Folder 1, Chapman Papers. Bovenkerk writes, “In Japan we’ve educated the children at home; this was possible because we had abundant household help, but it’s not easy to get maids or cooks in this country and the salaries don’t allow it.” Bovenkerk agonized about the possibility of separation from his family. He had already been separated from them for nearly two years while interned; his wife had given birth to their fourth child during that time and he did not relish the idea of being apart from his wife and children any longer than possible.

⁶³² Gordon K. Chapman to Henry Bovenkerk, 10 October 1943, Folder 1, Chapman Papers.

to love.”⁶³³ The warm reception countered the suspicions of people in the surrounding towns; after experiencing the strong bonds of fellowship that held between Japanese and enemy alien Christians in Japan, these men likely did not expect the vehement prejudice they faced just for their connection with Japanese Americans.

The women who sought religious worker position with camp churches had an even more difficult time than the men. Male missionaries were ordained ministers in their respective denominations; as clergy they could fill vacancies for preachers and pastoral care workers among the Nisei vacancies on federated church staffs. Furthermore, many of the men had graduate degrees and experience teaching at colleges and seminaries in Japan. Men like Hannaford and Bovenkerk may have had some name recognition for their publications in mission journals. Such men were a potential draw for congregations that needed preachers, teachers, and pastoral care providers for underserved populations within their congregations. Women, however, who had worked primarily among children and women in Japan, had to convince churches that their services were needed to work as Sunday school teachers with the youth or pastoral assistants among the women. If a federated church in a camp felt it lacked adequate assistance among the women from clergy wives, it might look to female missionaries. As a result, while some women became religious workers who lived outside the camps and commuted in several days each week, more eventually relied on their missionary networks in the camps to find work with the WRA and helped, as able, with the Protestant congregations on their Sundays off.

Jeane Noordhoff and Elizabeth Evans, who had placed themselves at the service of California Japanese American congregations in early 1942, seemed ideally positioned to

⁶³³ Henry Bovenkerk to Gordon K. Chapman, 24 July 1943, Folder 1, Chapman Papers.

transition into a role in whichever camp their congregations landed, yet they struggled as much as Hannaford and Bovenkerk with the system's red tape.⁶³⁴ Unlike most of the other missionaries, Noordhoff moved to a camp fairly quickly but was just as quickly kicked out of the camp. Evans's experience more closely aligned with that of other women who tried to locate religious work in the camps before consigning themselves to the reality that a position as a WRA employee at a camp was slightly, if not much, simpler to obtain.

Reformed Church of America missionary Noordhoff initially thought it would be simple to follow the Watsonville, California congregation she had served as an assistant pastor after returning from Japan in 1941.⁶³⁵ In June 1942, the leaders of the United Christian Church at the Salinas Assembly Center wrote to Chapman with a glowing recommendation of Noordhoff. They found the woman with thirty years of experience in Japan "very useful and helpful" in the work with Nisei and hoped Chapman would help secure permission for her to follow them to the Poston Relocation Center in Arizona when they moved.⁶³⁶ Chapman believed once the Salinas group settled at Poston, Noordhoff could easily secure permission to join them. Another missionary woman had accompanied an invalid to Poston when it opened in May 1942 and promptly found a teaching job on site.⁶³⁷ Noordhoff maintained communication with her congregation when they moved to Poston in July; she bemoaned the hot and unsanitary situation in which they found themselves. Although the church leaders found Director John Powell amenable to Noordhoff's employment, he did not provide firm consent. Chapman wrote a letter to E. Reesman "Si"

⁶³⁴ I discuss Evans and Noordhoff in chapter 2 when I discuss the efforts of the denominations, through missionaries, to address the escalating anti-Japanese American situation on the West Coast after Pearl Harbor.

⁶³⁵ See Chapter Two.

⁶³⁶ Kiyoshi Noji, Kohei Takeda, and Kenzo Yashida to Gordon K. Chapman, 16 June 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

⁶³⁷ The missionary was Methodist Alice Cheney. Gordon K. Chapman to Jeane Noordhoff, 18 June 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

Fryer, WRA Regional Director, on her behalf. He noted the desire of the members of the Watsonville congregation for her assistance.⁶³⁸

Eventually, Noordhoff left Watsonville, where she had been guarding the church building and belongings of evicted Japanese Americans and speaking on invitation to white and Chinese American congregations about the plight of Japanese Americans. Receiving a warm welcome from John Powell, Noordhoff jumped in to assist the newly resettled population, including the southern Californian groups Evans had worked with, which was suffering from the extreme desert heat and inadequate water supply. When asked, Noordhoff expressed that she was willing to help in any way needed in the camps, whether for social or religious services. The staff had bent the rules to allow Noordhoff, an unassigned worker, space in a personnel barrack.⁶³⁹ Within a few weeks, in spite of a seemingly receptive response to her efforts by most WRA personnel and by the incarcerated, Noordhoff found herself summarily put out of her room and dismissed from the camp without an opportunity to say goodbye to her friends. She returned to her family home in Iowa but continued to press Chapman to look into the dismal situation at Poston.

Chapman's ultimate assessment was damning of both the chaos in the camps and of Noordhoff's resistance to his own advice. It took several months for Chapman to make a full survey of the situation. In early November, he visited with several of the Poston staff who suggested that Noordhoff made a poor first impression on them, contrary to the picture they painted for her of her work. The pastors at the federated churches at the three separate camps in Poston informed Chapman of turmoil in their own ranks; they found it impossible to agree among themselves on any particular missionary. Ultimately, though, Chapman blamed

⁶³⁸ Gordon K. Chapman to E. R. Fryer, 14 August 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

⁶³⁹ Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon K. Chapman, 8 August 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

Noordhoff for disregarding his authoritative advice. He claimed that he had warned Noordhoff, like other missionaries, to practice patience in her quest for a camp assignment. He discouraged missionaries from visiting or pushing the nascent churches and WRA staff for a decision about their placement while camps and churches were being organized. Noordhoff, Chapman stressed, had “felt that the need was great” and had ignored his advice.⁶⁴⁰ In his opinion, Noordhoff’s “strong convictions” had hurt her relationship with some of the Japanese Americans who found her “a little dictatorial.”⁶⁴¹ Yet again, the need to curry the favor of the various factions in a camp proved the best route for missionaries on the hunt for a job.

Winning over the various groups was not an issue for Elizabeth Evans in her search for a position. Consistently described as a gentle, joyful, and bright woman, Evans worked well with a variety of people. Her adolescent years spent on an American Indian reservation in South Dakota prepared her to interact with people different from herself while her years in Japan cemented her cultural flexibility. Yet finding a job in a camp took endless months once she returned to the home of her sister and ailing mother in Minneapolis after the valley residents she had helped in the confusing days of voluntary and forced removal had moved to assembly centers. Evans busied herself on the lecture circuit in the area. Like other missionaries waiting for positions, she spoke about her experiences in Japan, but she focused on the plight of Japanese Americans, seeking to incite the sympathies of church audiences

⁶⁴⁰ Chapman ignored the fact that he provided conflicting messages to Noordhoff; he encouraged her to let the Watsonville people get settled at Poston, but he also told her that Alice Cheney found a teaching position at the camp when she helped an ill incarcerated move in. Gordon K. Chapman to Rev. Luman G. Shafer, Board of Foreign Missions, 2 November 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

⁶⁴¹ Gordon K. Chapman to Luman G. Shafer, 2 December 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers. Such language seems reserved to descriptions of Noordhoff and may have a gendered hue. Interestingly, after the War when many of these missionaries returned to Japan, Howard Hannaford assumed the role of secretary of the Japan Mission, and wrote a harsh assessment of Chapman in which he used similar words to describe Chapman’s leadership style.

and members of service and fraternal organizations.⁶⁴² She wrote numerous letters to the various camps offering her skills as a religious leader and teacher. Until Evans undertook a tour of many of the camps in the winter of 1943 with another missionary woman, she met with closed doors.⁶⁴³

What Evans and other female missionaries discovered in their efforts to obtain work in the camps was that their years of teaching, evangelizing, or doing social work in Japan rarely easily translated into civil service jobs, and geographical complications made religious work problematic. The white personnel enjoyed lassoing the itinerant missionaries into conversations about “Japan and the psychology of the people,” yet they did not readily hire the women.⁶⁴⁴ Even if a federated camp church wanted women’s services, federal policy against allowing non-Nikkei religious workers to live in the camps precluded using women like Evans. Even when missionaries found themselves able to find a landlord willing to rent to someone working with the Japanese Americans in one of the towns scattered around the usually remote camps, few of the women possessed either cars or driver’s licenses that would make it possible for them to travel weekly to the camps.⁶⁴⁵ The women needed to be able to live in the camps. The only positions open to them were as teachers or social workers. The WRA required teachers in the camps to meet federal civil service and

⁶⁴² Elizabeth Evans to Dr. J. L. Hooper, 8 February 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; Elizabeth Evans to Gordon K. Chapman, 10 December 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers; and Sarah Oltmans to Marcia Kerr, 8 February 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers. The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America called this period a “Furlough Fellowship of Service,” and encouraged their returned missionaries to dedicate themselves to educational programs on behalf of Japan and Japanese Americans if not working in an incarceration camp or resettlement project while receiving their mission salary. John Coventry Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community*, 113.

⁶⁴³ Elizabeth Evans to Friends, 19 March 1943, Box 45, Folder 4, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

⁶⁴⁴ Evans to Friends, 19 March 1943, Box 45, Folder 4, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

⁶⁴⁵ Evans had relied on the Issei pastors in Hanford chauffeuring her on her visits to parishioners the previous year. One missionary mentioned taking a driving test and purchasing a used car on his return to the United States on the *Gripsholm*. Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community*, 113. The lack of licenses was not surprising, particularly as most of these missionaries had gone to Japan in the first few decades of the twentieth century, during the early years of the auto age.

state certification requirements.⁶⁴⁶ For women who had obtained permanent and valid teaching certificates prior to their departure for Japan, teaching was a possibility. Many like Evans had only provisional certificates that had expired.⁶⁴⁷ That left social work in the welfare departments, positions for which missionaries with experience providing compassionate pastoral care might seem well-suited. However, some like Evans balked at the idea of working for the government, banned from sharing the Christian gospel with their clients, and able to participate in church life in the camps only during non-work hours.⁶⁴⁸

Ultimately, Evans secured a social work position in the Public Welfare Department at the Amache, Colorado camp (Figure 17), but her experience, like that of other missionaries, was drawn out and frustrating.⁶⁴⁹ Evans wrote letters to the directors of the various camps starting in September, offering her services without any success.⁶⁵⁰ She decided personal interviews with camp personnel might force directors to hire her. Evans's tour of the camps in late January 1943 started at the Arizona and Arkansas camps where members of the southern California congregations she had earlier assisted were located. Housing issues and bureaucratic red tape proved insurmountable at Jerome, Rohwer, and Poston, so Evans traveled to Amache, Colorado at the invitation of fellow missionary Irene Reiser who had a teaching position in the camp.⁶⁵¹ At Amache, Evans impressed the Public Welfare staff, which was severely understaffed; she reported that Reiser's recommendation

⁶⁴⁶ James, *Exile Within*, 51.

⁶⁴⁷ Carrie McCrory to Herrick B. Young, 1 July 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶⁴⁸ Elizabeth Evans to Gordon K. Chapman, 23 September 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers.

⁶⁴⁹ On the work of social workers in the camps, see Yoosun Park, "Facilitating Injustice: Tracing the Role of Social Workers in the World War II Internment of Japanese Americans," *Social Service Review* 82, no. 3 (September 2008): 447-483.

⁶⁵⁰ Elizabeth Evans to Dr. J. L. Hooper, 8 February 1943.

⁶⁵¹ Carrie McCrory to Dr. Herrick B. Young, 17 February 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers. The local WRA administrations seemed hamstrung between their own desires for running their camps, public sentiment in the surrounding vicinity, and battles over funding and policy in Congress, which was swayed by rumors about the camps fostered by West Coast politicians, journalists, and so-called "patriotic" organizations. James, *Exile Within*, 48-52.

helped her also.⁶⁵² She passed the Civil Service exam and received a probationary placement until the director could receive final approval of Evans from Washington, D. C. in a process that took nearly six months. Although Amache lacked adequate housing for non-Nikkei employees for the first several months Evans worked there, she and Reiser shared an apartment in nearby Lamar and took a four-hour roundtrip school bus ride six days per week into Amache.⁶⁵³



Figure 17. Elizabeth Evans with a client at the Amache Relocation Camp. Reproduced from the UC Berkeley, The Bancroft Library.

Other women also took circuitous routes to camp work, and almost all experienced difficulties in their attempts to secure employment. Traveling with Evans, Carrie McCrory bemoaned the expiration of her teaching certificate, which hampered her employability in spite of extensive experience running Japanese kindergartens and the desperate need of the

⁶⁵² Elizabeth Evans to Dr. J. L. Hooper, 8 February 1943.

⁶⁵³ Irene Reiser to Dr. J. L. Hooper, 14 February 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

camps for qualified and competent teachers.⁶⁵⁴ Finally, in November 1943, Carrie McCrory and another former Japan missionary found housing in Dermott, eight miles out of Jerome, where they endured transportation challenges while trying to ascertain the camp director's wishes, and to serve as religious leaders at the invitation of the Jerome federated church.⁶⁵⁵ Sarah Oltmans, recently widowed in Japan, took positions in white congregations while she wrote to every camp offering her services as a teacher.⁶⁵⁶ After a seven-month wait, Oltmans received an offer to be a secondary school social studies teacher at Manzanar. Oltmans credited a former fellow graduate student working at Manzanar who recommended Oltmans to the Manzanar school superintendent for an open summer school position.⁶⁵⁷ Methodists Ethel Hempstead and Nora Bowman embedded themselves with a Washington congregation and hoped to evacuate with them to Tule Lake. Hempstead had taught kindergarten for fifteen years in the United States and twenty-seven years in Japan; she and Bowman wished to engage in religious work, but would take any work they could find, as long as they could live in bicycling distance from a camp.⁶⁵⁸ After the Tule Lake Union Church requested the service of both women, they bought tickets, packed numerous pieces of luggage, and arrived

⁶⁵⁴ One year into the incarceration camps, Gordon K. Chapman expressed hope that more missionaries would find teaching positions as the WRA found it challenging to maintain a teaching staff, citing wartime employee shortages facing schools across the nation, the difficulties of camp life, and the fact that the few Nisei who had teaching certificates (few Nisei obtained teaching credentials because pre-war, school districts would not hire Asian American teachers). Gordon K. Chapman to Sarah Clark Oltmans and Carrie McCrory, 18 June 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; and James, *Exile Within*, 47-52.

⁶⁵⁵ Carrie McCrory to Herrick B. Young, 1 July 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; Carrie McCrory to Dr. J. L. Hooper, 30 September 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; Carrie McCrory to Herrick B. Young, 16 October, 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; Carrie McCrory to Dr. J. L. Hooper, 9 November 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; and Carrie McCrory to Dr. Herrick Young, 9 November 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶⁵⁶ Sarah Oltmans to J. Leon Hooper, 29 March 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; Sarah Oltmans to Rev. J. Leon Hooper, D. D., and Herrick B. Young, 3 May 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; Sarah Oltmans to Herrick Young, 19 June 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶⁵⁷ Sarah Clarke Oltmans to Herrick B. Young, 29 June 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; and Sarah Clarke Oltmans to Herrick B. Young, 21 July 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶⁵⁸ Ethel Hempstead to Gordon K. Chapman, 4 August 1942, Folder 36, Chapman Papers.

at the train station for Tule Lake on October 16, 1942, only to learn at the station that Tule Lake authorities were not accepting missionary help.⁶⁵⁹ Chapman later inferred that a negative experience with another female missionary had soured Tule Lake administration on missionaries.⁶⁶⁰ The women returned home until their efforts to create relationships at Heart Mountain in Idaho resulted in an offer from the church council for them to join a large crew of white religious workers at the camp.⁶⁶¹ In short, employment odysseys could be frustrating.

Even as female and male former Japan missionaries proved eager to work with Japanese Americans during the war, their ability to see the job search process from the perspective of incarcerated was limited. As missionaries looked for positions in the camps, they often spoke of their desire to help Japanese Americans. They spoke of the incarcerated as friends and kin. Occasionally, they enthused about the camps as a new mission field, as so many acres of untested souls ready for ripening by the Christian gospel and picked for the Kingdom of God.

Yet rarely, except when thwarted by the WRA or by a faction of Japanese Americans in a camp, did the missionaries invoke the right of the Japanese American Protestant Christians to choose their own religious leadership without any outside interference. As discussed above, the Commission challenged the WRA interpretation of Instruction 32 that provided veto power of outside religious workers to the civic community councils and the Project Director. The Commission had multiple motives for opposing that section of the policy. They claimed the regulation took the initiative for choosing church leadership from

⁶⁵⁹ Ethel Hempstead to Gordon K. Chapman, 21 November 1943, Folder 36, Chapman Papers.

⁶⁶⁰ Gordon K. Chapman to Ethel Hempstead, 27 November 27, 1943, Folder 36, Chapman Papers.

⁶⁶¹ Gordon K. Chapman to Ethel Hempstead, 4 February 1943, Folder 36, Chapman Papers.

the church members, but they also expressed concern within their board that the policy opened the door for ignorant Project Directors and secular or non-Protestant community council members to invite into the camps representatives of religious groups that the Commission held suspect, like Jehovah's Witnesses. The Commission did not want to compete for souls with religious sects not affiliated with them.⁶⁶² More importantly, the Commission obviously did not trust the incarcerated to make wise decisions about whom to trust.

These missionaries chose to "cast their lot" with imprisoned Japanese Americans during the war, yet it seems only a few recognized the irony of their concern to shape and define their own job prospects among a people who had little control over their own situations.⁶⁶³ Howard Hannaford perhaps best epitomized the missionaries who saw themselves in solidarity with an oppressed minority during his heated exchange with Gordon Chapman over the disorganized bureaucracy that interfered with his job search. According to Hannaford, he and his wife desired one thing: to maintain their self-respect, which meant believing that "we are still free individuals with control over our own future and not mere pawns in the hands of conflicting organizations."⁶⁶⁴ In a letter to another member of the Protestant Commission, Hannaford wrote similarly of his concerns for Nikkei clergy freedoms. Hannaford saw a tendency to treat Japanese American pastors like "children and move them around and make plans for them without due regard for their own sense of

⁶⁶² Minutes of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 2 December 1942, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁶⁶³ Henry Bovenkerk to Gordon K. Chapman, 24 July 1943, Chapman Papers, Folder 1, Chapman Papers.

⁶⁶⁴ Howard Hannaford to Gordon K. Chapman, 3 November 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers.

judgment.”⁶⁶⁵ Noordhoff also wrote sadly of her sense of betraying the people she tried to help at Poston. Her attempts to encourage them met with rebuff because the incarcerated recognized that Noordhoff was free to leave the camps in which they were imprisoned. When she was peremptorily ejected from Poston, she grieved that she had done as they suspected. Noordhoff wrote to Chapman that she felt as awful as she did when she left her students behind in Japan in 1941.⁶⁶⁶

The road to employment in the WRA camps proved winding and weary for most of these missionaries. In their desire to serve Japanese Americans during the war years, these women and men had to play politics with the Protestant Commission run by their former colleagues in Japan, with government authorities at the camps and in Washington, and with the people they believed they were especially suited to assist in a devastatingly difficult situation. Their employment search may have felt like another winnowing fork for those who had endured internment in Japan, yet their time in the Japanese American camps stretched them in new ways as they discovered the extents and limits of their cultural competencies, skills, and abilities to address the needs of incarcerated individuals. Missionaries on the Protestant Commission board, who practiced a regular rotation of visits to the camps in order to provide preaching, teaching, and counseling services, also found their ability to speak on behalf of Nikkei questioned. Christian internationalism required more than faith in a common Christ to connect individuals with widely differing cultural and social experiences.

⁶⁶⁵ Gordon K. Chapman, Executive Secretary, to Executive Committee, Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, Remarks of 29 September 1943 Letter from Howard D. Hannaford, 20 October 1943, Box 4, Folder 3, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

⁶⁶⁶ Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon K. Chapman, 8 August 1942; and Jeane Noordhoff to Gordon K. Chapman, 18 August 1942, Folder 40, Chapman Papers.

The Muddy Waters of Christian Fellowship

With its flawed efforts to embody Christian kinship in its practices, the Protestant Commission and the missionaries who connected with the camps through the Commission provide examples of the difficulty of condemning or mythologizing mid-twentieth-century missionaries. Historian Gary Okihiro's definition of anti-racism as a "slippery and contingent category" that remains in tension with racism proves helpful for this discussion.⁶⁶⁷ Missionaries involved with the Commission believed themselves anti-racist, and endeavored to manifest their commitment to Christian ideals of friendship and communion in their interactions with Japanese Americans. Their affinity for and knowledge of Japanese culture and practices led them to often seek those kinship bonds in ways alien to Nisei. At the same time, the ability of some to straddle two cultures, as did many of the Issei and some Nisei, and their belief in a shared humanity enabled trust between some Japanese Americans and missionaries. Missionaries encountered resistance from members of the Japanese American Protestant community when their zeal to proclaim their solidarity with the incarcerated blinded them to cultural differences, even as white and Japanese American Protestants grappled together over their relationship to the Buddhist majority in the camps.⁶⁶⁸

The familiarity of missionaries with Japanese ways enabled them to sympathize with the difficult circumstances of Japanese Americans. In return, many of the Issei, in particular, responded positively to the missionaries, even stating their debt to American missionaries

⁶⁶⁷ Okihiro, *Storied Lives*, xii. See also: Griffith, "'Where We Can Battle for the Lord and Japan,'" 429-453; and Yu, *Thinking Oriental*.

⁶⁶⁸ The War Relocation Authority officially endorsed a policy of religious freedom within the camps. WRA Administrative Instruction No. 32, R.E.: Religion, 24 August 1942, Box 54, Folder 3, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

who brought Protestant Christianity and Christian educational institutions to Japan in the late nineteenth century⁶⁶⁹ Jovial Episcopalian Bishop Charles Reifsnider relied on his forty years of knowledge of Japanese customs to advocate on behalf of the incarcerated with the WRA. In the early fall of 1942, Reifsnider used his restricted war-time tire and gas allowance to travel from Pasadena, California, to inspect the camps being built in Arizona and Arkansas. When he noted that the hastily built communal bathrooms at the Gila Relocation Center contained only showers, the bishop suggested to the assistant project director that “the Japanese would greatly appreciate bath tubs as it is their custom to soak for some minutes in hot water.”⁶⁷⁰ Reifsnider wanted to honor the older Issei, in particular, by recognizing their need for ritual baths (see Figure 18).



Figure 18. Heart Mountain resident Tak Sugiyama bathing in one of the improvised bath tubs made of sawed off pickle barrels. Reproduced from UC Berkeley, The Bancroft Library.

⁶⁶⁹ “From a Pastor at Tulare Assembly Center to Dear Friends, 17 August 1942,” American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *How Can Christians Help? Our Japanese-American Number XLV*, no. 4, October 1942: 34-35, Reel 200, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS, Bancroft.; and Hachiro Yuasa, “I Chose to Stay in America,” American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *How Can Christians Help?*

⁶⁷⁰ Charles Reifsnider to Gordon K. Chapman, 17 September 1942, Folder 14, Chapman Papers.

Henry Bovenkerk went further in his identification with Nikkei. Reversing the comment so frequently voiced by Nisei, Bovenkerk insisted to Japanese Americans that “You look at me and see a white face and you say that I am an American but if you cut open my heart, you would find that I am Japanese.”⁶⁷¹ Bovenkerk admitted that he felt more comfortable in Japanese culture and among Japanese friends than in the United States. He also knew that no matter how long he lived in Japan, he would never be accepted as fully Japanese. Bovenkerk understood the lengths Nikkei went to in order to prove their American loyalties.

At times this focus on Japanese ways could verge on an over-identification of Nikkei with Japanese culture. Commission Executive Secretary Gordon Chapman urged patience on a recently returned missionary eager to find a position in an incarceration camp. Chapman urged, “Those of us who have been in Japan are already accustomed to procedures which involve Japanese initiative.”⁶⁷² Such a comment assumed that Japanese Americans, including the Nisei, the majority of whom had never even visited Japan, but attended integrated schools and participated in American culture, followed the highly formalized and ritualized decision-making process customary in Japan. Chapman further assured the missionary that his Japanese background made him “excellently fitted to meet the needs of the Centers, where we have all generations represented.”⁶⁷³ Former missionaries who had worked with elderly and young adult Japanese Christians in Japan, in other words, were better suited than the average white American to understand and translate the needs of

⁶⁷¹ “Ex-missioner’s Memories of Japan Mix the Pleasant with the Painful,” *The Daily Journal*, Elizabeth, New Jersey, 21 April 1980.

⁶⁷² Gordon K. Chapman to Howard Hannaford, 13 October 1942, Folder 11, Chapman Papers.

⁶⁷³ Gordon K. Chapman to Howard Hannaford, 11 October 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers.

Japanese Americans to the government.⁶⁷⁴ Other members of the Commission questioned the acceptability of missionary workers to “more sophisticated” Nisei. They expressed concern that Japan missionaries might not be able to present an attractive or relevant version of Christianity to the younger people. Chapman quickly retorted that plenty were well-qualified, deeming suitability more a matter of personality than cultural proficiency.⁶⁷⁵

On other occasions, the missionaries discovered that their experience in Japan did not translate in their work with the Nisei generation. Although the education director at the Jerome camp sought out the opinions of two visiting women missionaries on “Japan and [the] psychology of the people,” hoping such information would shed light on the behavior and needs of incarcerated, missionaries working in the camps soon recognized the limitations of these assumptions.⁶⁷⁶ Howard Hannaford recognized his own unsuitability to work with young adults and teenagers, a limitation he attributed as much to his age and personality as to his training.⁶⁷⁷ Presbyterian Elizabeth Evans worried that another missionary might not understand the American youth in the camps. Evans taught at Japanese girl’s high schools for twenty-five years. She realized nine months into her placement in the Public Welfare department at the Amache Relocation Center that she was only “*beginning* to know the [Nisei] here. They are a new species to me,” she wrote, “so different from our Japanese

⁶⁷⁴ As the government formulated its plans for Japanese Americans after Pearl Harbor, Commission members and other individuals encouraged authorities to utilize the services of missionaries who had experience with Japanese language and culture. i.e. Lou Shuman to Ruth Kingman, 12 May 1942, Box 154, Folder 4, Kingman Papers; Dillon Myer to Ruth Kingman, 28 August 1942, Box 154, Folder 4, Kingman Papers; Galen Fisher to Rev. Clark Garman, 1 March 1942, Box 54, Folder 1, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers; and Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Commission for Work with Japanese Evacuees, 21 July 1942, Box 1, Folder 1, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

⁶⁷⁵ Report on a Meeting of the Western Area Protestant Church Commission for Wartime Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁶⁷⁶ Elizabeth Evans to “friends,” 19 March 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

⁶⁷⁷ Howard Hannaford to Clarence Gillett, 29 September 1943, in Gordon K. Chapman, Executive Secretary, to Executive Committee, Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 20 October 1943, Box 4, Folder 3, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

young folk in Japan and so American.”⁶⁷⁸ Evans had expected Nisei to behave like the demure Japanese girls to whom she taught the rudiments of English. She also commented that the youth were “decidedly American in everything but looks,” belying the tendency of most white Americans to identify other races as less American because of their physiognomy.⁶⁷⁹ As Figure Nineteen shows, Nisei embodied American youth culture and dress.



Figure 19. Youth at Heart Mountain Relocation Camp. Reproduced from the National Archives.

⁶⁷⁸ Elizabeth “Betty” Evans to Gordon K. Chapman, 3 August 1943, Folder 5, Chapman Papers.

⁶⁷⁹ Elizabeth Evans to Friends, 16 March 1944, Box 45, Folder 4, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files. Their attitudes might be compared to the racist maternalism of progressive women as depicted in Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*; and Linda Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999). Gordon claims that the “anti-democratic racial practices” of the white women in Clifton-Morenci were “inseparable from their progressive reform practices” (308). One difference between the missionaries’ racial attitudes, which evidenced as much confusion about the line between Japanese and American cultural practices stemmed from the long history of respect for Japan’s industrial and political revolutions in the early twentieth century that co-existed with both America’s fascination with “Orientalism” and resentment among many whites on the Pacific Coast of the resourcefulness and success of Japanese American communities. On Orientalism see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).

Accustomed to the youth culture she encountered in Christian schools in Japan, Evans failed to see what was obvious to a board member of the Los Angeles Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) who visited Manzanar in 1943.⁶⁸⁰ Winnifred Wygal arrived at the center in time to watch school children practice a traditional dance for a Buddhist festival. Immediately Wygal noticed the juxtaposition between the Eastern dance and the very western, or American, "native dress" of the children. Wygal recognized what Evans may not have: these were not Japanese children following a Japanese custom, but American children participating in rituals foreign to their daily experience.⁶⁸¹ As Evans learned to appreciate Nisei as Americans, she discovered she could use her Japan experience to cross the cultural divide between older Issei and their younger children.⁶⁸² Evans perhaps helped Nisei youth better understand the culture from which their parents emerged when she answered their questions about what seemed like a truly foreign world in Japan. At one event at the Granada Christian Church, Evans shared with the youth group about arranged marriages in Japan and fielded such questions as, "Do the Japanese wear Zoot suits?" and "How are the baths out of doors? I heard that people invite their friends as they come along

⁶⁸⁰ At the outset of World War II, some local YWCA's had been working on racial integration and understanding, although many more remained segregated. The crisis of West Coast Japanese American removal and incarceration prompted the National YWCA to initiate a deep soul-searching of its practices and to press for integration and racial justice at all levels of the organization. For more information, see Beth Hessel, "The Boundaries of Fair Wages: The YWCA and the War Relocation Authority's Conflicting Visions of Economic Justice for Women in World War II Japanese American Incarceration Camps," (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Western History Association Conference, Tucson, AZ, October 2013); Abigail Sara Lewis, "The Young Women's Christian Association's Multiracial Activism in the Immediate Postwar Era," in *Freedom Rights: New Perspectives on the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Danielle L. McGuire and John Dittmer (Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 2011), 71-110; and Nancy Marie Robertson, *Christian Sisterhood, Race Relations, and the YWCA, 1906-46* (Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 2007).

⁶⁸¹ Winnifred Wygal, Report on Manzanar, July 22-27, 1943, Box 723, Folder 16, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁶⁸² Elizabeth "Betty" Evans to Gordon K. Chapman, 24 June 1943, Folder 5, Chapman Papers.

to take a bath with them.”⁶⁸³ Identification with Japanese culture and the assumption that cultural affinity and a shared faith created kinship could be problematic unless the missionaries made the effort to ascertain the culture and custom of those with whom they interacted.

Difficulties developed as the missionaries attempted to use their missionary experiences in Japan as the basis on which to build relationships with Japanese American Christians. A controversy erupted among army and WRA staff and some of the Nisei over missionary use of Japanese and reference to Japanese culture during camp visits. At a November 1942 conference that included members of the Protestant Commission board and the heads of the WRA, discussion turned on incarcerated complaints about “pro-Japanese attitudes” of Commission members. According to charges, these former missionaries were having difficulty “making adjustments to American life and loyalties.”⁶⁸⁴ As a result, they spoke in Japanese to the English-speaking Nisei, and used Japanese history and symbolism as sermon illustrations. In their own enthusiasm for the culture of Japan, the relationships they left behind, and their dis-ease with an American culture they had not encountered in decades, the missionaries treated the Nisei as if they were Japanese. The complaint upended the charges against Nikkei that they were incapable of becoming truly American; in this case, they were the ones accusing missionaries of divided cultures and loyalties. At one camp, the high school students referred to missionary teachers as “the Jungles.” To the

⁶⁸³ *Granada Christian Church News*, Vol II, no. 3, 13 February 1944, Reel 303, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS, Bancroft.

⁶⁸⁴ Gordon Chapman to Galen Fisher, 19 August 1942, Folder 6, Chapman Papers; and Charles Reifsnider to Gordon Chapman, 28 October 1942, Folder 14, Chapman Papers. Home Missions Council Secretary Mark Dawber had earlier expressed concern about the zeal of newly returned missionaries to work in the camps when, he said, they “have to make an adjustment back to this country and are rarely able to meet the needs of the second generation Japanese, who are generally ‘very American’—how much so they are only beginning to realize themselves.” Cited in Ethel Bird to the Consulting Group, Memo, 15 May 1942, Box 719, Folder 22, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

students, missionary teachers, some of whom had served in lesser-developed nations than Japan, practiced out-moded pedagogy and refused to admit mistakes they made in teaching, even when they contradicted class textbooks.⁶⁸⁵ One young woman writing to a YWCA staff member reflected the sentiment of some of the young people. She caustically referred to several of the more prominent Protestant Commission members as “the Great White Fathers,” a sarcastic title reminiscent of the relationship between American Indians and the federal government.⁶⁸⁶ Instead of conveying their sympathy for the suffering of the incarcerated, some former missionaries simply appeared condescending.

The “Great White Fathers” comment did not come out of nowhere, but uncomfortably linked missionaries to the War Relocation Authority. Richard Drinnon has ably illuminated the racist paternalism that underlay the attitudes of even those WRA administrators considered progressive. Manzanar’s Project Director Ralph Merritt and his wife Varina Merritt, an active board member of the San Francisco YWCA, claimed a deep concern for Japanese Americans. Yet in an interview, Merritt claimed that “the only relationship that [Japanese Americans] understand is that of father and child.”⁶⁸⁷ Merritt deemed himself the benevolent father of Manzanar’s inmates. Similarly, a banner at Topaz greeted WRA Director Dillon Myer as “THE GREAT WHITE FATHER” with an irony likely lost on him.⁶⁸⁸ The close collaboration of members of the Protestant Commission and camp administrators, and the employment of some missionaries as administrative personnel likely heightened this sense of paternalistic collusion between government and religious figures.

⁶⁸⁵ J 8/22/44 #z-z, Reel 200, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS.

⁶⁸⁶ Mari Okasaki to Annie Clo Watson, 23 August 23 1942, Box 723, Folder 13, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁶⁸⁷ Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps*, 48.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 68, all-caps in original.

Methodist Frank Herron Smith's interactions with Nikkei demonstrate the difficulties the missionaries faced overcoming their cultural upbringing. At times inspirational and at other moments bombastic and tone-deaf, Smith's actions illustrate the slippery nature of anti-racism; even supporters of civil rights can act in paternalistic and chauvinistic ways. His actions during World War II were reminiscent of his behavior in Korea decades earlier, when he showed definitive preference for the Japanese imperialists over Korean residents.⁶⁸⁹ Over the years, Smith had inspired Nisei like Lester Suzuki to answer the call to ministry and defended the rights of Japanese Americans. Speaking against mass evacuation at hearings on the topic before the Tolan Congressional Committee, Smith maintained that the Nisei he knew were "as truly American as your son, Congressman Tolan."⁶⁹⁰ Lloyd Wake, a young man at Poston, remembered Smith as a man labeled a "Jap-lover" because he lived out his commitment to justice.⁶⁹¹

In spite of these affirmations, Smith also alienated some Nisei. During a meeting between the Protestant Commission and WRA administrators in June 1942, he noted that he had goaded residents of the Tule Lake camp to participate in the temporary leave program instituted by the WRA soon after the Nikkei arrived at the incarceration camps. The WRA encouraged Nikkei to help address an agricultural labor shortage in the West and help harvest crops because it was their "patriotic duty." What Smith seemed to ignore was that when the government labeled all Japanese Americans disloyal and imprisoned them, many of these residents had been forced off of their own highly productive farmland, leaving their crops to rot or be harvested for profit by other people. He also appeared tone-deaf to a

⁶⁸⁹ See Chapter One.

⁶⁹⁰ From the Tolan Committee hearings, quoted in Eisenberg, "As Truly American as Your Son," 551.

⁶⁹¹ Heihachiro Takarabe, et al., *Nisei Christian Journey, Volume III: Its Promise and Fulfillment, Nisei Pastors* (Nisei Christian Oral History Project, n.d.), 136.

difficulty of which other missionaries were well aware: at least half of the Nikkei had no experience in agriculture and no desire to enter into agricultural work as field hands. At the same meeting, Smith complained about some ministers who were “troublemakers.” Without ever defining what he meant by “troublemakers,” Smith boasted that he had taken matters into his own hands and fired one of the offending clergymen.⁶⁹² Presbyterian missionary Howard Hannaford, who worked with the Protestant congregation at Tule Lake, chafed against the way attitudes like Smith’s felt like paternalism toward incarcerated when he complained of the tendency to move the Nikkei clergy around without consideration for their desires.⁶⁹³ His sentiments echoed his pre-war musings about the need for mutuality in missions instead of condescension or a need to “boss” indigenous co-workers.⁶⁹⁴

In late 1942, Smith preached at a youth service at the Granada Christian Church. Smith’s sermon, delivered in a resonant bass voice, exemplifies Nisei concerns that the missionaries were paternalistic and out of touch with American youth. Smith referenced the Japanese socialist Christian Toyohiko Kagawa, whose theology greatly influenced many of the Japan missionaries, but may have had no meaning for American teenagers or young adults.⁶⁹⁵ He proceeded to insist to the audience that they could prove their American patriotism by serving in the armed forces. As a result of their incarceration, he argued, they were “living an artificial life here [and] may lose a grasp on reality.” Smith exhorted the

⁶⁹² Report on a Meeting of the Western Area Protestant Church Commission for Wartime Japanese Service, 26 June 1942, Box 721, Folder 7, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁶⁹³ Excerpt from a letter from Howard Hannaford, quoted in Gordon Chapman to Executive Committee of the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 20 October 1945, Box 4, Folder 3, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

⁶⁹⁴ Howard Hannaford, “Are They ‘Japs?’”: 401.

⁶⁹⁵ The missionaries maintained a close relationship with Kagawa (1880-1960), who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1955. William Axling, considered the elder statesman of the Japan mission, translated Kagawa’s book *Christ and Japan*. Galen Fisher would smuggle contraband items to Kagawa during his visits to Japan. For more information on Kagawa, see his prolific publications, as well as the following biographies: William Axling, *Kagawa* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932, 1946); Robert Schildgen, *Toyohiko Kagawa: Apostle of Love and Social Justice* (Berkeley: Centenary Books, 1988).

Nisei to be “good, not selfish” because their behavior determined how the “outside,” meaning white America, “judged” not only Japanese Americans, but Japan. Smith concluded his speech with platitudes that showed insensitivity to the demoralization and fears faced by people whose citizenship rights had been abrogated and who were living in substandard housing behind barbed wire. “At this Thanksgiving time, give thanks that you have a chance to prove your courage and strength. The life is easy here but you must not be content. Hardships do bring their reward.”⁶⁹⁶ Youth who complained about the paternalistic attitude of missionaries had a basis for their concern.

Rather than ban these former missionaries from participating in worship and service in the centers, some Nisei wanted the Commission members to focus on “an increasing emphasis and program that is American.”⁶⁹⁷ Such a program might address the actual needs and concerns of incarcerated Nisei. These topics included resettlement issues as well as concerns typical to teenagers. Young adults wanted discussions like the one on “Boy and Girl Problems” presented by Gordon Chapman, who had several young adult children himself.⁶⁹⁸ Others appreciated the religious leadership some of the more liberal missionaries could provide in centers that had primarily conservative Issei ministerial staffs. Indeed, one young man urged the Protestant Commission to train Nisei leaders and provide spiritual regeneration, poignantly stating that he was “a lost sheep in a lost generation.”⁶⁹⁹ Another individual informed Betty Evans, “I have an American heart and a Japanese mask that I

⁶⁹⁶ From a partial document, pages 3 and 4 of a report on work in various camps, n.d. [late 1942?], Box 724, Folder 9, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁶⁹⁷ Gordon K. Chapman to Charles Reifsnider, 26 October 1942, Folder 14, Chapman Papers. For insight on Japanese American Protestant experience, see Hayashi, “*For the Sake of our Japanese Brethren*”; and Yoo, *Growing up Nisei*.

⁶⁹⁸ Chapman strongly encouraged the independence of Nikkei congregations in the camps. He only suggested the use of white missionaries when a center lacked adequate Nikkei leadership. Of course, Chapman could come across as officious and condescending, even to other missionaries.

⁶⁹⁹ Akira Kikuchi to Protestant Church Commission, n.d., Box 1, Folder 7, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

can't take off.”⁷⁰⁰ The need of Nisei to be treated as American citizens even as they found themselves imprisoned and shut off from their former lives simply because of their skin color pushed them to challenge the erroneous cultural assumptions of the missionaries associated with the Protestant Commission.

Recognizing their mistakes proved humbling to some Commission members. Bishop Reifsnider agreed that “all missionaries having a long experience in Japan are perhaps unconsciously influenced in their presentation of Christianity by said background. . . . [I]t is a real danger that all missionaries must carefully guard against, especially when speaking to second generation Japanese.” He further reflected on his own behavior, stating that he would stress “American programs and ideals” among the Nisei and “divorce myself as far as possible from my previous missionary background in Japan.” The challenge placed before them was to preach to the Nisei not as if they were Japanese, which they were not, but as if they were “an American congregation here in the United States.”⁷⁰¹ As with Betty Evan’s discovery that Nisei behaved like ordinary American young adults, accepting their American-ness proved a difficult lesson.

Distancing from their missionary experience, while necessary at times, was not an easy thing for Commission members to accomplish. Their many years of experience sharing the Christian gospel in Japan indelibly shaped the Commission members. Many hoped to, and did, return to Japan after the war, and viewed their ministry among Japanese Americans as an extension of their work in Japan. They believed that how the United States treated

⁷⁰⁰ Elizabeth Evans to “friends”, 16 September 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁷⁰¹ Charles Reifsnider to Gordon K. Chapman, 28 October 1942, Folder 14, Chapman Papers.

Japanese Americans could determine the future of Christian missions in Japan.⁷⁰² Evans reflected the tension between her identity as an American and as a foreign missionary when her paycheck started to arrive from the WRA instead of the Presbyterian Foreign Missions Board. “I realize I am just as much a Japanese mishie here as in Japan,” she wrote.⁷⁰³ Yet the missionaries’ love for the Japanese people, which led them to proclaim a Christian universal brotherhood and to fight for the civil rights of Japanese Americans, blinded them to the need of Japanese Americans to be recognized and accepted as Americans. Whether aliens denied citizenship or citizens by birthright, incarcerated Japanese American Protestant Christians resisted attempts to connect them to Japan. They insisted that their worship and Christian programming emphasize American cultural values in order not only to prove to the federal government and the American public that they were American, but because they were American.⁷⁰⁴

While the Commission extended the hand of Christian kinship, however misguided, to the Protestant incarcerated, it is clear they struggled about the place of the Buddhist majority in their cosmic landscape. Most of these missionaries believed that Christianity was the one true path, even if they understood Buddhism better than most non-Asian Americans. In their work with Nikkei they tried to put their preferences aside and focus on the plight of all incarcerated. Their efforts, while laudable, reflected the tension

⁷⁰² For example, among the Presbyterian Church in the United States missionaries working with Japanese Americans during the war, Betty Evans, Gordon Chapman, Howard and Ruth Hannaford, and Henry Bovenkerk returned to Japan as soon as possible after hostilities ceased.

⁷⁰³ Elizabeth Evans, 19 July 1943, Folder 5, Chapman Papers.

⁷⁰⁴ One Nikkei Protestant at Heart Mountain Relocation Center raged that Christians felt that they were treated like “step-children” by the WRA administration, as if they “have no place in the life of the center,” instead of like significant contributors to the health and vitality of camp life. “From a Christian Man at Heart Mountain Relocation Center to Dear Friend, 24 August 1942,” American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *How Can Christians Help? Our Japanese-American Number XLV*, no. 4, October 1942: 34-35, Reel 200, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS, Bancroft.

between their formation as evangelical missionaries and their desire to seek justice for all peoples.⁷⁰⁵ Cognizant that the mass incarceration of a majority Buddhist population represented a prime opportunity to share their Christian message of hope, these men and women urged restraint upon both missionaries and Japanese American pastors eager to evangelize.⁷⁰⁶ At the same time, both Commission members and Nikkei pastors bemoaned the inroads made upon young Japanese American loyalties by Buddhist and Roman Catholic congregations. Although the Commission failed to entice non-Protestants to participate in its work, members still encouraged interfaith cooperation and religious tolerance in the camps, sponsorship of Buddhist families seeking resettlement by congregations in Midwestern communities, and respectful treatment of Buddhists by government personnel.

While the Protestant Christian population in the incarceration camps was a minority, the religious landscape in the camps was markedly different than the one in which the missionaries lived and worked in Japan. In 1936, Henry Bovenkerk estimated that less than one percent of Japan's population professed to be Christian.⁷⁰⁷ In contrast, Christians represented a sizable minority in the camps. The number of adherents to different faiths varied, depending on who made the calculations and when. In May 1942, as military evacuation of Japanese Americans got underway, an article in the influential liberal Protestant journal *The Christian Century* claimed the West coast had eighty Japanese Protestant congregations with 17,500 members.⁷⁰⁸ Assuming membership numbers

⁷⁰⁵ Gordon Chapman, as executive secretary, had to inform many eager missionaries and evangelists of the War Relocation Authority's ban on proselytizing by outsiders. i.e. Gordon K. Chapman to Rev. Owen Still, 5 June 1942, Folder 24, Chapman Papers.

⁷⁰⁶ WRA Instruction No. 32 banned proselytization, and the WRA discouraged the distribution of sectarian brochures to non-participants of groups. George L. Townsend to Mr. W. S. Terazawa, 21 December 1942, Reel 330, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS, Bancroft.

⁷⁰⁷ Henry Bovenkerk, "Thatch-roofed Japan."

⁷⁰⁸ *The Christian Century* 59, no. 20 (20 May 1942), 678.

correlated to adult congregants, the actual number of Protestant church-goers may have been thirty to forty percent higher. Estimates by the War Relocation Authority fluctuated. The number of Issei professing Buddhism remained near seventy percent and of Nisei under fifty percent throughout the war period.⁷⁰⁹ By the final years of incarceration, a sizable minority of Nikkei were willing to identify themselves as religiously unaffiliated. Not until 1944 did a governmental report recognize the reluctance of many Nikkei to admit that they were Buddhist, especially in the early months of incarceration, for “fear of being thought foreign.” In a late-appearing report aimed to educate WRA personnel about the benign nature of Buddhism, the government also noted that many Nikkei saw no ethical conflict participating in both Christian and Buddhist programs.⁷¹⁰ This practice of “double-dipping” probably skewed the numbers somewhat.

Due to their years immersed in a largely Buddhist culture, the Japan missionaries understood Buddhism better than most white Americans. Japan missionary opinions about Buddhism varied, and showed the tension between their faith and practice. Ultimately, their commitment to justice and friendship, while at odds with a commitment to Protestant Christianity, overwhelmed their evangelical leanings. Clearly, some like Chapman could work respectfully with Buddhists even as they found Buddhism a stumbling block to the

⁷⁰⁹ Based on church attendance at all ten WRA run camps in late 1942, the WRA estimated that 42.5% of the incarcerated attended Buddhist services, 42.5% Protestant, and 15% Roman Catholic. In mid-1943, the government broke affiliation down by generation: two-thirds of the Issei were Buddhist, while less than 50% of the Nisei were Buddhist. While officials estimated that 35% of Nisei were Christian, they also noted 16% claimed no religious affiliation. Not surprisingly, after the failed “loyalty questionnaire” and the WRA’s subsequent segregation of all “disloyal” Nikkei at Tule Lake, the number of Buddhists among Nisei edged up to nearly 50%, while those claiming to be Protestant or Roman Catholic dropped to 32.4% and 2.4% respectively. These changed numbers may also reflect that many of the Christian Nisei had by then relocated to military service, or schools or work in the non-restricted areas of the United States. War Relocation Authority, WRA Quarterly Reports, Quarterly Report for October 1-December 31, 1942, n.d., Box 7, Folder 10, RG 130, Gillett Papers; War Relocation Authority, Community Analysis Section, Community Analysis Report No. 9, “Buddhism in the United States,” 15 May 1944, Box 28, Folder 7, RG 122, Manzanar Papers.

⁷¹⁰ War Relocation Community Analysis Section, Community Analysis Report No. 9, “Buddhism in the United States,” 15 May 1944, Box 28, Folder 7, RG 122, Manzanar Papers.

evangelization of Christians who practiced a hybrid-faith.⁷¹¹ Congregational missionary and educator Charlotte DeForest grew up in Japan, and took a critical view of Buddhism. However, she carefully elucidated her beliefs, considering aspects of Buddhism compatible to Christian beliefs, although she called upon the “intelligent Christian” to distinguish between Shintoism’s animist aspects and the “noble element of hero worship.”⁷¹² Some of the younger generation of missionaries were strongly influenced by liberal theology and believed, like Ruth Emerson Hannaford that all well-intentioned prayers flowed to the same, universal God.⁷¹³

Such latitude in their approach to Buddhism reflected not only the growing pluralist thrust of liberal theology, and the friendships, collegiality, and respect that grew out of regular interactions with Buddhist and Shinto co-workers and neighbors in a Buddhist majority country, but also from an expansion of their understanding of Christian universalism. Henry Bovenkerk built on the theme of the Good Samaritan parable to argue to American Protestants that not only the world, but people of all races, counted as neighbors. From his appreciation of his non-Christian neighbors, Bovenkerk might have added “all religions counted as neighbors.”⁷¹⁴ Making no distinctions between Christians and non-Christians, Betty Evans urged other Protestants to welcome Nisei into their homes and churches because they were also “God’s children and our brothers and sisters.”⁷¹⁵

⁷¹¹ Gordon Chapman’s comments, Conference of the Mission of East Asia, March 1943, Box 33, Folder 15, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

⁷¹² DeForest quoted in Ishii, *American Women Missionaries at Kobe College*, 184.

⁷¹³ Ruth Emerson Hannaford, Abridged Personal Report, 1939, Box 60, Folder 18, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

⁷¹⁴ Henry G. Bovenkerk, “Thatch-Roofed Japan.”

⁷¹⁵ Elizabeth “Betty” Evans to Friends, 16 September 1943, Box 45, Folder 4, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

Missionaries took different positions on the ban on evangelization. Howard Hannaford feared the decline of Christian witness among Nikkei at Tule Lake when it became a segregation camp largely filled with Buddhists.⁷¹⁶ Both the WRA ban on proselytization and what Hannaford termed the “psychological attitudes” of the segregees would make evangelistic work impossible in the camp; while he mourned this fact, he hoped only that the administration would allow some Nisei theological students to enter the militarized camp to help with the morale of the youth.⁷¹⁷ When Betty Evans considered the limitations to evangelism placed on another missionary who found administrative work in an incarceration camp, she opined that she herself “certainly wouldn’t promise not to give any religious messages.”⁷¹⁸ In a letter to the congregations that helped support her work, Evans urged them to grab the opportunity presented to them to offer friendship and support to relocating Japanese Americans. She envisioned the period as a brief window in which to “Americanize the older group and Christianize both groups.”⁷¹⁹ Likewise, Charlotte DeForest, raised in Japan and, until the war, president of Kobe College, chafed against the rules. In their positions as social workers in the camps, both Evans and Charlotte DeForest ignored the government’s ban on proselytizing by outsiders and found opportunities to

⁷¹⁶ In early 1943, the WRA and the military created what came to be known as the “loyalty questionnaire,” designed to speed the process of clearing incarcerated for resettlement outside of the camps and to register Nisei for military service (after President Roosevelt launched a campaign to create a volunteer Nisei force that would “let” Japanese Americans “prove” their patriotism). Deeply flawed in its questions, the loyalty questionnaire led to a lot of resistance. Those who did not satisfactorily answer (or refused to answer) the questionnaire were deemed disloyal and removed from the larger camp population. The WRA turned Tule Lake into a segregation camp under heavy military guard, where all of the “disloyal” and their dependents were placed, with plans to send them to Japan after the war. Everyone in Tule Lake who had answered the questionnaire the “right” way were relocated into one of the other nine incarceration camps. See Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*; Lyon, *Prisons and*; and Muller, *American Inquisition*.

⁷¹⁷ Howard D. Hannaford, 29 September 1943, in Gordon K. Chapman, Executive Secretary, to Executive Committee, Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, 20 October 1943, Box 4, Folder 3, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

⁷¹⁸ Elizabeth “Betty” Evans to Gordon K. Chapman, 23 September 1942, Folder 5, Chapman Papers.

⁷¹⁹ Elizabeth “Betty” Evans to Friends, 16 September 1943, Box 45, Folder 4, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

covertly share their religious beliefs with the Buddhists they served even as they spoke respectfully of the inner strength and convictions of these individuals.⁷²⁰ DeForest worked around the ban by using what she considered universal references to a Supreme Being. To a young man struggling to find work outside of the camps while tending to a pregnant wife, DeForest quoted from Psalm 46: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”⁷²¹ By presuming a shared faith in a supreme being and omitting any reference to Jesus Christ, some missionaries felt comfortable sharing aspects of their faith with non-Christians.

The relationship of missionaries to the majority Buddhist residents of the incarceration camps remained a quandary throughout the war. Committed to focusing on the needs of Christian incarcerated rather than on explicitly evangelistic efforts that might create unneeded tension in the centers, yet aware that the civil rights of both Christian and Buddhist Japanese Americans were subverted by their unconstitutional detainment, the Commission did not seem to know what exactly to do with non-Christians. As missionaries covenanted to the Christian mission, they identified most closely with followers of Jesus Christ but felt called by their commitment to justice to pay some attention to the Buddhists.⁷²² The Federal Council of Churches resettlement committee illuminated this quandary when it reminded the Commission in 1942 that “Buddhists as well as Christians

⁷²⁰ Elizabeth Evans to “Friends,” 19 March 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers; and Charlotte B. DeForest, memoir manuscript, n.d., Box 153, Folder 2, DeForest Papers. For more on Charlotte DeForest, see Ishii, *American Women Missionaries at Kobe College*.

⁷²¹ Charlotte DeForest, “Case Work at Manzanar War Relocation Center,” n.d., Box 153, DeForest Papers.

⁷²² A prime example of the non-sectarian assistance provided Buddhists was the coordinated effort of the Protestant Church Commission, the Japanese American Citizens League and other groups to provide Christmas presents to every child in the camps, regardless of their religious affiliation. Frank Herron Smith, *Some Results achieved by the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, February – December 1942*, Box 17, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

should be aided” in resettlement efforts.⁷²³ The ecumenical resettlement committee in St. Louis suggested that some churches might “see the need and importance of helping” and sponsoring Buddhist families who lacked “friendly contacts” on the outside.⁷²⁴ Some of the resistance came from the Japanese American pastors on this front, for Chapman reiterated two years later that provisions had been made “whereby the names of non-Christian settlers are to be furnished regularly to the resettlement committees in the various outside areas. I believe the center churches will be more cooperative in this matter in the future.”⁷²⁵

However, the Commission, while agreeing that both Christians and Buddhists needed resettlement help, insisted that at least at first “only the best candidates,” or those who would best reflect the American loyalties and attitudes of Nikkei, should be placed in outside communities. Implicit in this statement was the belief that Christian Nikkei were more Americanized than Buddhist Nikkei.⁷²⁶

At the same time, the Protestant Commission, like some of the Nikkei pastors, found Buddhism a threat to Christian witness in the camps. One reason missionaries worried about the Buddhist presence in the camps was because the Buddhist churches offered an appealing alternative to both Issei and Nisei. Episcopalian Bishop Reifsnider reported on a September 1942 visit to the Gila River camp that the Project Director at the camp assigned various recreational buildings to be used for religious services. The Buddhists had managed already to furnish their building with a butsudan, an altar, and enough benches to seat four hundred people. On the other hand, he lamented that “the Christians [Protestants] have a similar

⁷²³ Gordon K. Chapman to Galen Fisher, 9 September 1942, Folder 6, Chapman Papers.

⁷²⁴ Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Citizens Committee for Resettlement, 21 January 1944, Box 1, Folder 1, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

⁷²⁵ Gordon K. Chapman to Galen Fisher, 12 July 1944, Folder 6, Chapman Papers.

⁷²⁶ Gordon K. Chapman to Galen Fisher, 9 September 1942, Folder 6, Chapman Papers.

building assigned to them, but as yet have not made much progress in making it look churchly.” He urged outside groups to help remedy the problem, because “the contrast as to religious atmosphere between the meeting place” seemed pronounced enough to entice detainees to worship with the Buddhists instead of the Protestants.⁷²⁷ The competition seemed heightened because Buddhists and Protestants celebrated their primary worship services on Sunday mornings. At the height of camp population in early 1943, the Buddhist Sunday school at the Amache camp boasted an enrollment of two hundred children aged five to sixteen, and the Young Buddhist Association (similar to the YMCA) claimed three hundred members.⁷²⁸ The Project Director at Tule Lake echoed the concerns of many Commission members and Nikkei when he noted that the Buddhist did a much better job than the Protestant churches in adapting their programming to the needs of Nisei.⁷²⁹

Missionaries feared that the failure of the Protestant church in the camps foreshadowed the decline of the Japanese American church postwar. Commission members and Japanese American ministers debated the postwar future of traditional Japanese American churches; tension existed between those who believed the assimilation of Nisei into primarily white congregations would pave the way for racial reconciliation and those who felt that Nisei needed ethnically bounded and safe congregations with others who had shared their wartime experience.⁷³⁰ Seattle-based Methodist missionary John Cobb insisted

⁷²⁷ Charles Reifsnider to Gordon K. Chapman, 17 September 1942, Box 1, Folder 14, Chapman Papers

⁷²⁸ “Non-Christian Religious Activities,” Documentation section, Reports Office, 3 March 1943, Box 113, Folder 10, RG 2010, Japanese American Research Project Collection of Material about Japanese in the United States, Charles E. Young Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles.

⁷²⁹ Esther Briesemeister, Tule Lake Relocation Center, 31 October 1942, Box 724, Folder 1, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁷³⁰ For example, Galen Fisher to Mark A. Dawber, 17 April 1944, Box 54, Folder 3, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers; and Kojiro Onoura to Gordon Chapman, 4 January 1945, Box 54, Folder 3, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

that the Nisei must “have churches of their own. If these are not provided, many will go into Buddhist groups or be lost to religious influences entirely.”⁷³¹

The Commission members did not always see Buddhists as competition. The Commission intended originally to create an interfaith organization, but Commission leadership found the Roman Catholics uninterested and the Buddhists, “while interested, function[ed] in such a different way” that they were unable to provide representation.⁷³² As executive secretary of the Commission, Chapman interacted frequently with WRA authorities. Besides translating Japanese texts for the WRA, Chapman claimed to represent the Buddhist point of view to the WRA several times. He actually found several Christian groups, the Free Methodists and the Holiness Church, more difficult to cooperate with.⁷³³

Both the WRA and the Protestant Commission believed vibrant churches promoted stability, and cooperative efforts among churches stimulated harmony. Both agencies encouraged the religious leadership in the incarceration camps to create interfaith councils. By spring 1943, each of the camps had formed interfaith councils with Protestant, Buddhist, and Catholic representatives.⁷³⁴ These councils occasionally planned programs together,

⁷³¹ John Cobb to Gordon K. Chapman, 2 November 1945, Folder 4, Chapman Papers. The interviews of relocated Nisei by Charles Kikuchi suggest the ambivalence many young adults felt toward both Christianity and Buddhism. Chicago Life Histories #11-14, Box 46, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers. The WRA noted that Nisei took the initiative to establish non-sectarian Buddhist churches in the camps, even as authorities contended that Nisei showed a growing preference for Christianity (partially to avoid the suspicion with which white America viewed Buddhism). WRA Community Analysis Section, Community Analysis Report No. 9, “Buddhism in the United States,” 15 May 1944, Box 28, Folder 7, RG 122, Manzanar Papers.

⁷³² Report of Meeting of Commission on Aliens and Prisoners of War and Inter-Council Committee on Japanese Christian Work, 14 September 1942, Box 719, Folder 23, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁷³³ Ibid.

⁷³⁴ This development, what might be called the “Protestants, Catholics, Buddhists” interfaith approach, contrasts to the religious trinity sociologist Will Herberg made famous in 1955 with his work *Protestants, Catholics, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955). There were no Jewish Nikkei in the camps, of course, but an interfaith council including a non-Judeo-Christian faith was fairly unprecedented for the time and ran counter to the myth of the United States as a “Judeo-Christian nation” that emerged in the postwar years. For the Nikkei, such collaboration would have been less strange than for WRA personnel, perhaps, because many families and all Nikkei communities lived with religious hybridity in their own homes as many individuals professed Christianity while still maintaining Buddhist worship and

shared in worship together, and co-led funeral services for fallen soldiers.⁷³⁵ The interfaith councils also needed to approve of missionaries who wished to serve Protestant congregations in the camps. Henry Bovenkerk found work with Manzanar's federated church in part because he made a favorable impression on the WRA, church members, Roman Catholics, and Buddhists. During his tenure at Manzanar, Bovenkerk worked to strengthen interfaith cooperation.⁷³⁶

The Buddhist priest Reverend Nagatomi exemplified interfaith cooperation when he offered a prayer at a service commemorating the first anniversary of the Manzanar Christian Church. His prayer emphasized the complementariness of Christianity's emphasis on love, and Buddhism's focus on mercy, intoning, "In this great Circle of Love and Mercy we strive to live our daily living harmoniously. Thus, let us stand together regardless of the religion and cooperate peacefully."⁷³⁷ At Tule Lake, one Nisei remarked that both groups were active in the center. Buddhists outnumbered Christians, but they appeared to cooperate. He cheered that "at least the outlook of the Buddhist leaders seem[s] to point to a cooperative spirit with the Christian, in order to perfect a good community."⁷³⁸ In reality the interaction of religious leadership remained sporadic; interfaith councils existed primarily to avoid competition

practices, and other families had both Buddhists and Christians among the different generations living in one household. The missionaries had become accustomed to practicing Christianity in the context of other faiths, and being in conversation and cooperation with non-Christians. See Chapter One for a discussion of how Christianity gained status as one of the three faiths recognized by the Japanese State.

⁷³⁵ "WRA Semi Annual Report, Jan 1 to June 30, 1943," n.d., Box 7, Folder 11, RG 130, Gillett Papers; Kojiro Onoura, "Community Christian Church Monthly Report," 28 February 1943, Box 1, Folder 51, Chapman Papers.

⁷³⁶ Gordon K. Chapman to Henry Bovenkerk, 24 February 1943, Box 18, Folder 8, RG 93, UPCUSA BFM Papers.

⁷³⁷ Rev. Nagatomi, "Prayer on the First Anniversary of the Christian Church in Manzanar Center," 13 June 1943, Box 28, Folder 7, RG 122, Manzanar Papers.

⁷³⁸ George Sakoda to Eleanor Breed, 3 August 1942, BANC 86/36c, Files Related to the Evacuation of Japanese and Japanese Americans: Berkeley, California, 1942-1975, Bancroft Library Special Collections, University of California, Berkeley.

between the different groups for limited meeting space in WRA buildings.⁷³⁹ Missionaries and pastors worried that the appeal of Buddhism to Nisei, combined with the failure of Protestant churches to effectively reach these young people would negatively affect the future of Japanese American Protestantism.

At times the Protestant Commission's and missionary desire to practice justice regardless of faith tradition conflicted with their expressions of Christian brotherhood to other Protestants. Not all Nikkei pastors trusted the Buddhists, considering them "opportunistic" and insincere.⁷⁴⁰ Some of the more conservative Japanese American pastors resisted what they believed were efforts to dilute the effectiveness of the Christian message in ploys to build bridges among Buddhists and Christians.⁷⁴¹ When Margaret D'Ille, a former YWCA secretary in Japan and then Director of Community Welfare at Manzanar, suggested that the "Y" drop "Christian" from its name at conflicted camps like Manzanar and Tule Lake in order to be more inclusive of Roman Catholic and Buddhist young women, a Methodist minister and an Episcopalian priest wrote scathing letters about the YWCA's activities to the Protestant Commission seeking its intervention. As far as the Reverends Shigeo Tanabe and Father Daisuke Kitagawa were concerned, the "Y" was making incursions into the church's realm, stealing away their young people, and injuring the "reputation of all Christian organizations" by functioning as a "Christian organization in disguise just to attract non-Christian people." They acknowledged the useful work of the YWCA, but preferred for Buddhists to participate in the Association only as much as they

⁷³⁹ Suzuki recalls no "real effort to study each other's religion or beliefs." Suzuki, *Ministry in the Assembly and Relocation Camps of World War II*, 329.

⁷⁴⁰ Esther Briesemeister, Report on Tule Lake Relocation Center, 25 October 1942, Box 723, Folder 17, RG 6, YWCA Papers.

⁷⁴¹ Harry Matsuda (Pseudonym), Buddhist leader at Manzanar, served as a youth counselor with the YWCA for a while because it "did not stress the Christian relationship at first since it was wholly made up of all the leaders in camp, including the Buddhists." Chicago Life Histories #11-14, Box 46, RG 1259, Kikuchi Papers.

were comfortable with an explicitly Christian program.⁷⁴² Gordon Chapman dealt with the controversy by pleading with the YWCA secretaries to “confer with Japanese Church Councils before undertaking work in a given Center.” Either burying or projecting his concerns with any perceived threat to Christian work, Chapman focused on appeasing the pastors’ fear that their ministry would fall prey to the desires of concerned white Protestants to be more inclusive.⁷⁴³

Chapman emphasized the value of the Commission’s ministry to people of all faiths as he deplored the military lockdown of incarcerated deemed disloyal at Tule Lake Relocation Center. Noting that the population transferring in to Tule Lake was largely Buddhist, he insisted that “the need for counseling . . . will be greater than ever. There is a very strong feeling in some quarters that missionaries . . . would be able to work much more effectively than would be the case with Japanese pastors” who became polarizing figures at Tule Lake.⁷⁴⁴ DeForest served as an interpreter at the Tule Lake Center during deportation hearings of individuals who had “renounced” their citizenship. Many of these individuals were Buddhist, and DeForest noted approvingly the efforts of Buddhists during the war to sever their relationships with the Buddhist sect in Japan She offered praise for a “fine

⁷⁴² Father Dai to Gordon Chapman, 2 November 1942, Folder 44, Chapman Papers; Shigeo Tanabe to Gordon Chapman, 10 November 1942, folder 44, Chapman Papers.

⁷⁴³ Gordon K. Chapman to Essie Maguire and Galen Fisher, 27 November 1942, Folder 44, Chapman Papers; and Esther Briesemeister, Report on Tule Lake Relocation Center, 25 October 1942, Box 723, Folder 13, RG 6, YWCA Papers. On Margaret D’Ille see Shizue Seigel, *In Good Conscience: Supporting Japanese Americans during the Internment* (San Mateo, CA: AACP, 2006), 110-116. The missionaries employed as social workers in the camps had to navigate the tensions between Christians and Buddhists in order to fully serve the diverse population in the camps. Miya Kikuchi, the sister of Charles Kikuchi and an active member of the YWCA, wrote to the director of the Owens Valley Reception Center (which would become the Manzanar Relocation Camp) in April 1942, as the new incarcerated were arriving, begging for a social worker capable of helping the Buddhists because of the antagonisms she noted between the Buddhists and Christians. Mrs. Miya Kikuchi to Mr. Kidwell, Owens Valley Reception Center, 14 April 1942, Box 7, Folder 6, RG 122, Manzanar Papers.

⁷⁴⁴ Gordon K. Chapman to Marcia Kerr, Board of Foreign Missions (Presbyterian Church in the USA), 24 August 1943, Folder 11, Chapman Papers.

Buddhist priest” for whom she translated, whose letter of thanks she considered one of her “treasured documents.”⁷⁴⁵ Whether or not these missionaries recognized Buddhist incarcerated as friends or brethren in the same way they claimed Christian incarcerated, they granted them the basic right to compassion as fellow human beings.

The experience of Protestant Commission members working with incarcerated Japanese American Protestants and Buddhists tested their conviction that a common faith or a common humanity transcended national and racial boundaries. Believing themselves defenders of equality and justice, Commission member efforts betrayed the contingent nature of anti-racism. As they spent time developing relationships with Japanese Americans, these former missionaries discovered that convictions demanded to be backed up by cultural proficiency. Their own affinity for all things Japanese ignored the real needs of an ethnic group which identified primarily as American and found it necessary to link its national identity with its faith profession in order to survive. What Commission members shared with many of the Japanese American ministers was confusion about how to promote the welfare of Buddhist Japanese Americans without watering down their own faith convictions: Could a Christian kinship encompass those who did not believe in Christ? As Commission members struggled with these issues, they and their Japanese American counterparts foreshadowed the challenges facing America after the war to integrate an excluded population, regardless of “blood and skin color.”

Conclusion

In mid-1943, the Executive Committee of the Protestant Commission, which included the stalwart missionaries Gordon Chapman, Galen M. Fisher, Frank Herron Smith,

⁷⁴⁵ Charlotte DeForest Closing Out Manzanar, n.d., DeForest Papers.

and Charles Reifsnider, penned a message to Nikkei pastors. Intended as a note of hope and solidarity, the message also betrayed the limitations of these missionaries to fully understand the Nikkei experience. The Commission emphasized its admiration and sympathy for the courage with which Japanese Americans faced their numerous wartime trials, and called the Nikkei pastors its “spiritual teachers” in enduring hardship. While claiming no “special wisdom” to itself, the Executive Committee expressed its hope that the “numerous and powerful agencies” like itself that quietly fought against the vociferous voices of racial prejudice for “racial justice and brotherhood” would lead to true change in the government and country, and it stated that the Nikkei pastors would agree that their suffering was light when compared to that of Christians in Europe and “parts” of Asia.⁷⁴⁶ The Commission offered a conditional spiritual superiority to the incarcerated by claiming that their experience of forced removal from their homes and involuntary imprisonment at the hands of their own government paled in comparison to the trials under Axis powers. This habit of offering solidarity on the one hand and undermining their words with the other exemplified the efforts of missionaries who worked through the Protestant Commission on behalf of Japanese Americans throughout the war.

Years of experience in Japan, as demonstrated in Chapter One, and for some, months of internment in Japanese camps, heightened missionary appreciation for Japanese culture and true affection for individuals of Japanese descent. Smoothly translating those experiences and affinities to a Japanese American population with a sizable group of second generation youth and young adults with little connection to Japan proved challenging. Their relationship to Buddhists in the camps remained conflicted as they struggled to balance the

⁷⁴⁶ Executive Committee, the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, to Japanese Ministers in the United States, 9 June 1943, Box 4, Folder 3, RG 130, Gillett Papers.

desire to evangelize a captive population with the need to respect the shared humanity and degradation of all Japanese Americans regardless of religious persuasion. When Japanese Americans voiced concerns about paternalistic or inappropriate behavior among the missionaries, individuals tried to adjust their behaviors. Younger and more theologically progressive missionaries like Henry Bovenkerk often had an easier time than did older or more theologically conservative missionaries. In spite of their imperfections and failures, missionaries manifested their belief that Christian kinship created a common humanity and a mandate for equal civil rights in ways that showed them pushing against pervasive racism in American culture.

Afterword

*“Oh God, I pray that someday every race
May stand on equal plane
And prejudice will find no dwelling place
In a peace that all may gain.”
--My Plea, by Mary Matsuzawa⁷⁴⁷*

On December 19, 1944, with the war turned in the Allied forces' favor, the Supreme Court ruled that the government no longer had any justification for detaining loyal Japanese Americans. Anticipating this decision, the army rescinded their exclusion orders on the West Coast a day earlier.⁷⁴⁸ These two decisions freed Nikkei from their long confinement in incarceration camps and opened up their former homes on the West Coast for their return. Reflecting on these developments, furloughed Congregational missionary Clarence Gillett, who spent the war years supporting Nikkei resettlement efforts, reflected that “no better Christmas gift could have been given to the thousands still in the camps, than this proof that America is truly democratic at heart. A long hard way still lies ahead but a questionable government action has now been rescinded.”⁷⁴⁹ While the primary concern of furloughed Japan missionaries during the early war years was to demonstrate through material gifts and spiritual presence the bonds of Christian fellowship and love to a displaced population, as the war drew to a close, they focused their attention on questions of social justice. The true manifestations of Christmas, of the advent of Christ in the world and in the hearts of the

⁷⁴⁷ Mary Matsuzawa, “My Plea,” in *Cactus Blossoms, 1945: Poems by students of Butte High School, Gila Relocation Center*, Box 153, Folder 7, DeForest Papers.

⁷⁴⁸ On *Ex Parte Endo*, see Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest*, 164-167, 173-174, 181; Daniels, *Concentration Camp U.S.A.*, 140-143; Girdner and Loftis, 373-382; Donald Teruo Hata and Nadine Ishitani Hata, *Japanese Americans and World War II*, Fourth Edition (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2011), 37-38; and *Ex Parte Mitsuye Endo*, 323 U.S. 283 (1944) case transcript, <http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/cgi-bin/getcase.pl?court=us&vol=323&invol=283>.

⁷⁴⁹ Clarence Gillett, *Santa Maria Courier*, newsletter to friends and supporters, 30 December 1944, Folder 9, Chapman Papers.

American people, were to be found in the fruits of acceptance and integration for Japanese Americans wherever they settled after camp.⁷⁵⁰

The many lessons on the nature of Christian internationalism channeled the efforts of missionaries connected with the Protestant Commission in the months and years following the retraction of evacuation orders. Men and women like Galen Fisher, Gordon Chapman, Elizabeth Evans, Howard Hannaford, and Henry Bovenkerk moved their attention from the camps toward the integration of Japanese Americans fully into American life even as many of them prepared to return to their life's work in Japan. Both in their continued work in the United States and in their resumed functions in Japan, these missionaries reflected a worldview that had shifted during the war. Their embrace of the theology of Christian internationalism continued, strengthened by the shared suffering with their Japanese colleagues in Japan in the early years of the war and their personal experience of the extreme conditions of endless dust and heat, loss and determination found in the Japanese American incarceration camps. Perhaps the missionaries could not have survived the upheavals of the war years, any more than their co-religionists in the camps, without a solid belief in the bonds of Christian love bearing them above their hardships. At the same time, their belief in this fellowship shifted strongly, for most of them, to a conviction that Christ-based kinship required relationships of equality and mutuality, repentance and humility. Their expanded interpretation of Christian internationalism placed these missionary women and men in the vanguard of the volatile postwar period of what some scholars have termed the "long civil rights movement."⁷⁵¹

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁵¹ Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March 2005): 1233-1263; Steven F. Lawson, "Long Origins of the Short Civil

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Commission leadership fought with Federal Council of Churches and Home Missions Council heads in New York City to extend the work of the Commission from the closing camps to the needs of Nikkei resettling on the West Coast in 1945 and 1946. Individuals like Evans followed their new friends and neighbors out of the camps and found work with resettlement committees or hostels in Midwestern cities while waiting for their foreign missions boards to send them back to their true home in Japan. As Nikkei began returning to the West Coast, the missionaries shared the sentiment of the president of the Disciples of Christ missions' board that "there are some wrongs that cannot be atoned for and some losses that cannot be made good. . . . We are brethren in Christ Jesus and we rejoice in the ties of Christian love that bind our hearts together in increasing fellowship."⁷⁵² It became the goal of the women and men discussed in this dissertation to help the nation redress the many economic, spiritual, and psychological losses sustained by incarcerated Japanese Americans.

As the military removed exclusions to settlement on the West Coast, Commission members saw the importance of their work increase. They redefined their functions in 1945 to "provide facilities for mutual consultation and coordination" for white and Japanese American denominational field representatives; to secure a "wise" distribution of missionaries and Japanese American clergy at hostels and congregations across the country;

Rights Movement, 1954-1968," in *Freedom Rights: New Perspective on the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. by Danielle L. McGuire and John Dittmer (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2011), 9-38; Gilmore, *Defying Dixie*; Lee Sartain, *Invisible Activists: Women of the Louisiana NAACP and the Struggle for Civil Rights, 1915-1945* (Baton Rouge: The State University of Louisiana Press, 2007); Carol Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Kevin M. Kruse and Stephen Tuck, eds., *Fog of War: The Second World War and the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁷⁵² President Robert M. Hopkins, United Christian Missionary Society (Disciples of Christ) News Bulletin, January 1945, Folder 18, Chapman Papers.

to “promote integration” of Nikkei in American churches and communities by helping churches learn how to welcome Japanese Americans into their fellowship and worship life and how to encourage Japanese Americans to join their communities instead of creating segregated Nikkei congregations; to promote Christian nurture; to cooperate in resettlement; and to act as a clearing house for ecumenical projects.⁷⁵³ These goals continued their earlier efforts to increase ecumenical cooperation in efforts for and with Japanese Americans and expanded their concern for the full integration of Nikkei in to the national and Protestant communities.

Already located in the Pacific Coast, these missionaries could easily keep abreast of developments in communities there and advise Nikkei who wished to return to their former homes of the safety of the neighborhoods. They could also undertake substantial campaigns in cities and towns to which they expected Nikkei to return in order to educate residents on the loyalty and virtue of Japanese Americans.⁷⁵⁴ Frank Herron Smith, slowed down by a series of heart attacks, launched a letter writing campaign to government officials, FBI investigators, and radio stations, decrying acts of violence against returning Japanese Americans and their property, while Chapman appeared before the California state legislature where he called Japanese Americans the “scapegoats” of the war, comparing them to German Americans in World War One.⁷⁵⁵ In 1944, Episcopalian Bishop Charles

⁷⁵³ Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Services, July 31-August 1, 1945, Box 8, Folder 18, RG 26, PHS.

⁷⁵⁴ Charles Reifsnider to Gordon Chapman, 20 December 1944, Folder 2 of 2, Chapman Papers; and Gordon Chapman to Charles Reifsnider, 14 February 1945.

⁷⁵⁵ Frank Herron Smith to President Harry Truman, 4 May 1945, Box 1, Folder 1, Smith Family Papers on World War II, Robert E. Kennedy Library Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Smith Family Papers); Frank Herron Smith to Mr. J. N. Peiper, Federal Bureau of Investigations, 4 May 1945, Smith Family Papers; Frank Herron Smith to the C. I. O. Reporter, Station KYA, 5 May 1945, Smith Family Papers; and “Jap-Americans War’s ‘Scapegoats’ Plea,” *Oakland Tribune*, January 25, 1945.

Reifsnider argued for need to protect the Nisei as they moved out of the camps or their temporary homes in the Midwest and East Coast to restart their lives on the West Coast. Reifsnider noted the obvious, that Nisei were American citizens. As citizens, they were not candidates for “repatriation” to Japan, as some rabid exclusionists demanded or for permanent exclusion from parts of the country. Just as folksinger Woody Guthrie proclaimed in his popular 1940 song, “This Land is Your Land,” all of the United States “from California to the New York island” was their current and “future home.”⁷⁵⁶

Commission members concerned themselves with more than the Nikkei who voluntarily moved out of the camps and headed to the West Coast. When WRA director Dillon Myer announced in early 1945 plans to close all of the ten incarceration camps by the end of that year, whether or not the war had ended, Commission members reacted vociferously.⁷⁵⁷ The Commission pushed government to take its legal and moral responsibility for Japanese Americans and not practice “compulsory ousters” of the aged, infirm, destitute, and very young who primarily comprised the camp populations in 1945. Commission members recognized the extreme pressure on housing and employment on the West Coast as returning soldiers competed with war industry workers and Japanese American refugees.⁷⁵⁸ They requested that the WRA and federal and state governments take responsibility for these wards of the state with guaranteed housing and employment, increased relocation financial assistance, and care for aged and disabled people.

⁷⁵⁶ Charles Reifsnider to Gordon Chapman, 20 December 1944, Folder 2 of 2, Chapman Papers; Woody Guthrie “This Land is Your Land.”

⁷⁵⁷ Morton Grodzins’ interview with Dillon Myer, February 7, 1945, Reel 22, BANC MSS 67/14c, JERS; Minutes and Findings of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 11-12 January 1945, Box 3, Folder 6, Japanese American World War II Relocation Papers, San Francisco Theological Seminary; and Galen M. Fisher, “Justice for the Evacuees,” *The Christian Century* 62, no. 43 (October 2, 1945): 1198-1199.

⁷⁵⁸ Charlotte Brooks, *Alien Neighbors, Foreign Friends: Asian Americans, Housing, and the Transformation of Urban California* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 159-170.

Commission members connected these concerns for incarcerated with concerns for the validity of America's claims for moral global leadership. In 1943, Clarence Gillett had argued that the Japanese American exclusion and incarceration policy was "sowing the seeds for a Racial World War III." Like the Nazis, the United States was condemning another "race because of fear and hate." He suggested that the duty of Christians was to show the Nisei that citizenship, justice, liberty, were more than "pretty phrases, culled from an old history book." Even in 1943, Gillett took a global view by proclaiming that the country's actions affected the whole world.⁷⁵⁹ Commission members renewed this refrain in 1945 by arguing that "the United States cannot jeopardize its international moral leadership by ill-considered treatment of its own citizens and people dislocated by the war."⁷⁶⁰ Fisher further challenged white Americans to "put yourself in the shoes" of a Japanese American and named the "glaring inconsistency" between the "Four Freedoms" and American treatment of racial minorities during the war. Like African Americans who fought for civil rights at home during the war, these missionaries joined Japanese Americans challenging systematic racial discrimination by using moral terms.⁷⁶¹

Commission members modeled this belief in the need to end racial discrimination in numerous ways. Besides their public relations work, the Commission engaged in efforts at sharing power with Japanese Americans and at collaborating on interracial concerns with other groups. During the war, the Commission had worked with the Japanese American federated camp churches to organize conferences in Denver that brought the scattered clergy and laity delegates together with Commission leadership. At these conferences, both Nikkei

⁷⁵⁹ Clarence Gillett, "Are They Loyal?—Are We Wise?" 1943, Box 3, Folder 17, Clarence Gillett Papers.

⁷⁶⁰ Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Services, July 31-August 1, 1945, Box 8, Folder 18, RG 26, PHS.

⁷⁶¹ Fisher, "Justice for the Evacuees," 1199.

and missionary leaders discussed the future of Japanese American churches, plans for resettlement, and ways to combat the negative effects of camps and to improve race relations on the outside.⁷⁶² Once the military lifted the West Coast exclusion orders, the Commission expanded its group to include Japanese American denominational representatives along with the white men and women appointed by their denominations as representatives for Nikkei work at the beginning of the war.⁷⁶³ They also participated in the historic Conference on Interracial Cooperation in San Francisco in early 1945 at which government agencies and voluntary organizations turned their attention to creating a broader coalition fighting racial discrimination in government and private institutions.⁷⁶⁴ The increased ability of missionaries to connect discrimination against Japanese Americans with a larger systemic pattern of racial prejudice in the United States mirrored the radicalization of numerous Japanese Americans who committed themselves postwar to the cause of interracial cooperation for civil rights.⁷⁶⁵

⁷⁶² For example, Minutes of the Conference of Leaders of Japanese Christian Work in the United States, Under the Auspices of the Home Missions Council Committee on Administration of Japanese Work and the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 15-17 December 1943, Box 2, Folder 5, RG 37, Board of Christian Education, National Japanese American Student Relocation Committee General Correspondence, 1942-1945, Presbyterian Historical Society (hereafter the BCE NJASRC Papers); and Minutes of Japanese Christian Conference, Trinity Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, 4-6 July 1944, Box 3, Folder 6, Japanese American World War II Relocation Files, San Francisco Theological Seminary.

⁷⁶³ Joint Conference on future of Japanese church work, resettlement, and return, auspices of Japanese Church Standing Committee and The Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 24-26 April 1945, Box 2, Folder 5, BCE NJASRC; and Minutes and Findings of the Meeting of the Protestant Church Commission for Japanese Service, 11-12 January 1945, Box 2, Folder 5, BCE NJASRC.

⁷⁶⁴ Highlights of the Conference on Interracial Cooperation, 10-11 January 1945, Box 3, Folder 6, Japanese American World War II Relocation Papers, San Francisco Theological Seminary; and Charlotte Brooks, *Alien Neighbors, Foreign Friends*, 171,

⁷⁶⁵ For example, see Allison Varzally, *Making a Non-White America: Californians Coloring Outside Ethnic Lines, 1925-1955*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 124-157; Greg Robinson, ed., *Pacific Citizens: Larry and Guyo Tajiri and Japanese American Journalism in the World War II Era* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2012); Greg Robinson, *After Camp: Portraits in Midcentury Japanese American Life and Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); and Matthew Briones, *Jim and Jap Crow: A Cultural History of 1940s Interracial America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

Their concern for inaugurating an era in which the Protestant emphasis on the dignity, worth, and equality of all humans before God and the democratic ideals of liberty and equality were enacted included the churches as well as the State and the public square. Commission members continued to encourage their denominational congregations to open their doors for Japanese Americans. In contrast to the contemporaneous view that the onus of integration lay upon the racial Other, who had to prove that he or she was “truly American” and capable of fitting in, the missionaries agreed with the assessment of incarcerated Henry Tani that “integration is a two-way process with our denominational churches drawing close to Japanese ones and vice versa.”⁷⁶⁶ These women and men urged their churches to welcome the Nikkei into their fellowship and make every effort to make them feel welcome. In April 1945, the Commission adopted a resolution that linked efforts at integration to “Christian unity and Social Solidarity. . . [and] the unity of the household of faith which transcends all distinctions of race and color. Socially, it will weave that seamless robe of solidarity into which are blended the strands of cultural diversity.”⁷⁶⁷

Commission members’ concern for racial equality grew from their theological grounding and found its form in their experiences in Japan and among Japanese Americans during the war. They might have echoed the thoughts of Episcopalian priest Daisuke Kitagawa who spent most of the war in the Tule Lake incarceration camp and then created an interracial community center in Minneapolis while working with Nikkei soldiers based there. Kitagawa argued in 1949 that there was no such thing as “high indifference” or “color-blindness” in race relations. A Christian could not pretend that race did not matter.

⁷⁶⁶ Gordon K. Chapman to John Cobb, 18 January 1946, Folder 4, Chapman Papers.

⁷⁶⁷ Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, Resolution Adopted April 26, 1945, by Joint Meeting, at Los Angeles, 26 April 1945, Box 54, Folder 3, RG 1259, Clarence Gillett Papers, Charles E. Young Special Collection, UCLA.

Instead, the Christian must “share the responsibility of this problem with the rest of society, for it is nothing less than a corporate sin of American civilization.” Kitagawa suggested Christians might do this by forging friendships across racial lines. He provided examples of friendship between white Americans and Japanese Americans during the war which led to ostracism and attacks against individuals who ignored color bars. These individuals practiced loving relationships across racial-ethnic boundaries “not because they were primarily crusaders for racial equality but because to them the Christian fellowship was so real.”⁷⁶⁸ Kitagawa captured the foundational impetus that drove missionaries to work during and after the war for racial justice at home.

Humility, Reconciliation, and Partnership in Japan

Upon their return to the United States in 1943 after a year as prisoners in Japan, missionaries aboard the *Gripsholm* argued that world peace required a “vivid consciousness of a world community.”⁷⁶⁹ Their experience as aliens in Japan changed their understanding of nationalism; in Japan the previous years, they said, there had been no sense from the Japanese Christians of an “us” and “foreigners”; instead, Americans and Japanese alike were just “*people*, trying to follow Christ, caught in a tragedy beyond our control.”⁷⁷⁰ This emerging realization that the Japanese Christians and American missionaries were simply people all engaged in survival shifted missionary commitments upon their return to Japan after the war. No longer could they see themselves as somehow superior or more spiritually mature than their colleagues in Japan. The war years erased any remaining sense of

⁷⁶⁸ Daisuke Kitagawa, “A Churchman’s View of Race Relations,” *The Living Church* (May 15, 1949), 15-18, Box 6, Folder 6, RG 315, Kitagawa Papers.

⁷⁶⁹ Henry Van Dusen, “Address on the Home Church and World Church,” December 6 & 7, 1943, Box 7, Folder 24, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

⁷⁷⁰ N.A., “Faith is an Anvil Which has Worn out Many Hammers,” *Foreign Affairs Bulletin of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, Special Number, December 1943, Box 7, Folder 23, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

Christian imperialism from the missionary vocabulary for most of the missionaries and imbued Christian internationalism with a new sense of partnership, impressing upon the returning missionaries their need to atone for their previous participation in colonial systems.

At a March 1943 meeting of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA's board of foreign missions on postwar missionary work, this shift was already evident. The majority of the participants, who included individuals involved in Japanese American work like Henry Bovenkerk, Ernest and Gordon Chapman, Alice Grube, Howard and Ruth Hannaford, and John Smith, stressed reconciliation, partnership, and cooperation. John Smith argued that missionaries invited by Japanese church must be "ecclesiastical diplomats schooled in the virtues of anonymity and humility." As far as he was concerned, both Americans and Japanese would have "blood on our hands"; both groups would have the need for repentance. He imagined fellow missionaries returning to Japan as "ambassadors of penitence in the fellow-ship of suffering" and as learners instead of teachers. Paul Rusch, who was denied work in the camps because of his "subversive" beliefs, envisioned himself as a "buffer" between the Japanese and the American occupation military. He reminded the gathering that the "demarcation between imperialism and religiously inspired missionary activities" is a "twilight zone," a comment that hearkened back to the robust days of Christian imperialism in mission work.⁷⁷¹

Most of the missionaries agreed with the assessments of Smith and Rusch. Howard Hannaford called for equality and mutuality in the relations between missionaries from the American churches and the Japanese church. He implored his colleagues to see the new

⁷⁷¹ Consultative Conference on East Asia Fields, Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 11-13 March 1943, Box 33, Folder 14, RG 81, COEMAR Papers.

United Church in Japan as a “twin sister, not a younger one.” He argued that even the “distinction between the sending [c]hurch and the receiving [c]hurch must be wiped out.” Calling for a new term instead of “missions,” one that was not loaded with the negative imperialist connotations of earlier periods, Hannaford presciently stated that “we are on the brink of a new era in foreign missions.” While not all of the missionaries at the conference were as eager as Hannaford to lose their identity as “missionaries,” Henry Bovenkerk agreed that their approach to postwar Japan should be one of “personal fellowship.” Missionaries, he believed, should return to Japan as “common seekers for the solution of the common problems” Only the more conservative Chapman brothers voiced opposition to these ideas. Gordon Chapman argued that the church in Japan was not mature; he used as an example the number of Japanese clergy who conformed to government expectations that they accommodate Shintoism.⁷⁷²

When the missionaries returned to Japan, many of them tried to live out the commitments they made while in the United States. The denominations remained joined in the United Church of Japan. Missionaries no longer expressly served their denominational foreign mission boards, although under the salary of those boards. Instead of working parallel to Japanese clergy and evangelists and initiating their own projects, missionaries served at the pleasure and invitation of the United Church. In effect, changes in the Japanese churches almost required a more collaborative and cooperative approach from the missionaries. Elizabeth Evans, who worked in a hostel in Minneapolis that eventually became an interracial hostel (and where she expressed a preference for the Nikkei residents

⁷⁷² Consultative Conference on East Asia Fields, Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 11-13 March 1943, Box 33, Folder 14, RG 81, COEMAR Papers. For the relation of Shinto and the Protestant church in Japan during the war, see Chapter One. In the Presbyterian and other denominations, the term missionary was eventually replaced with terms like “Fraternal co-worker.”

over the white residents), returned to her position at the Northern Star Girls' School at Sapporo, Hokkaido, in 1947. Evans reported being almost "killed with kindness" on her return. In the next five years, Evans helped rehabilitate the school and added a junior college to its offerings. In 1962, when the school celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary, it commemorated Evans's "moral and spiritual influence . . . [which] permeated those students, teachers, and friends around" her. To those who worked with Evans, she represented the best of the reconciling, humble missionary who wielded her Christian influence gently and implicitly as she modeled what it meant for her to follow Christ.⁷⁷³

Like Evans, after a brief stint in Syria, Hannaford returned to his previous work teaching in Tokyo in 1946; he also worked with the United Church of Japan on plans for the "postwar reconstruction of Christian work."⁷⁷⁴ As they cooperated in partnership with Japanese Christians, Hannaford and his wife Ruth remained busy in efforts to increase awareness among their American friends and supporters of the reality of life in Japan under the American Occupation forces.⁷⁷⁵ Ruth Hannaford expressed their relief when the Occupation ended in 1953 and recognized the ways that the Occupation had affected Japanese attitudes toward America. She told her friends that the missionary lacked any "special prestige because he [sic] is American and needs to exercise care not to appear to the

⁷⁷³ Memorial Minute, Miss Elizabeth Margaret Evans, 1886-1972, Box 45, Folder 5 (2 of 2), RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files; and Eiji Araima, president of the Board of Trustees, Hokusei Gakuin, In Exaltation of Miss Elizabeth Margaret Evans, 5 October 1962, Box 45, Folder 5 (2 of 2), RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

⁷⁷⁴ Press Release, The Rev. Howard D. Hannaford, n.d., Box 60, Folder 17, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

⁷⁷⁵ On the Occupation, see Robert Edward Ward, *The Allied Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952: An Annotated Bibliography of Western-Language Materials* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1974); and Yukiko Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (Columbia University Press, 1999).

Japanese people, both Christian and non-Christian, as uncritically” supporting American policies.⁷⁷⁶

Howard Hannaford went further than showing an awareness of the negative effects of an uncritical attitude toward the government, which suggests an increasing knowledge by these missionaries of the dangers incumbent in accepting the government’s wisdom in all policies.⁷⁷⁷ They had witnessed the folly of government decisions during the war, and had regretted their compliance, and close collaboration, with the government when it decided to disastrously and precipitately close the incarceration camps in 1945. Hannaford also critiqued fellow mission workers who did not embody the new spirit of missions. In 1953, as the representative of the Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board, Hannaford had an opportunity to exact revenge on Gordon Chapman, whose ways as executive secretary of the Protestant Commission he had found overbearing and controlling when he worked in the Japanese American incarceration camps. In a formal evaluation of Chapman, Hannaford recognized the other man’s skills in organizing programs and his proficiency in the Japanese language. But, Hannaford excoriated Chapman for “centering his work on himself rather than in the [c]hurch.” As far as Hannaford was concerned, Chapman’s unwillingness to cooperate with the Kyodan (United Church of Japan), to work as a member of a team, and to practice humility represented a serious problem for the relationship between Chapman and the Japanese church. Not only Hannaford but members of the Kyodan had complained of

⁷⁷⁶ Ruth Hannaford to Friends, 27 January 1953, Box 60, Folder 17, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files.

⁷⁷⁷ For more on the tensions between liberal Protestants and the American government’s foreign policies in the postwar era, see, William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy, 1945-1960: The Soul of Containment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); and Ruble, *Gospel of Freedom and Power*.

Chapman's attitude. Always one who needed to be in control, Chapman proved unable to change his habits in order to fully live out the spirit of Christian internationalism.⁷⁷⁸

Conclusion

The missionaries whose lives traversed between Japan and the United States in the first half of the twentieth century witnessed an immense change in their belief system. Once spurred by the evangelical imperative of the Student Volunteer Movement and the imperialist cheerleading of the United States and Japan, the missionaries moved after the First World War toward a more encompassing vision of Christianity that focused on social issues and fellowship over proselytization. Their experiences during World War II, as internees in Japan and then as dedicated workers on behalf of Japanese Americans, opened new vistas for Christian internationalism, founded in attitudes of repentance and cooperation, and committed to racial equality and justice as a goal for the attainment of Protestant and American values in the United States and the realization of just relations across the globe. Their story challenges current narratives that ignore wartime mission efforts and portray postwar missions as dominated by conservative evangelical groups, while also emphasizing the important role Protestant beliefs and contrasting Buddhist views played in every aspect of the Japanese American incarceration camps.

⁷⁷⁸ Foreign Missions and Overseas Interchurch Service, Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Personnel Evaluation Form for Gordon Kimball Chapman, 23 March 1953, Box 27, Folder 36, RG 360, Foreign Mission Personnel Files. Although Hannaford recommended withdrawing Chapman from the mission field, the Chapmans remained in Japan until he reached the mandatory retirement age in 1956.

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VITA

Beth Shalom Hessel was born on January 15, 1970, in Sacramento, California. She is the daughter of Pamela Anne and Martin Phillip Miller-Hessel. A 1988 graduate of Piner High School, Santa Rosa, California, she received a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a major in History from the University of California, Davis, in 1992.

After receiving her Master of Arts degree in US Women's History from Binghamton University, Binghamton, New York, in 1994, she worked at Lawson Software in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as coordinator of employee continuing education. In 1995, she enrolled in the Master of Divinity program at San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, California. She received her degree and was ordained as a minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church USA in 1999. For ten years, she served congregations in California, Kansas, Virginia, and Texas. She also taught at Randolph-Macon Woman's College.

In August 2009, she enrolled in graduate study at Texas Christian University. While working on her doctorate in History, she worked as a graduate assistant and a teaching assistant. She also worked in the Texas Christian University Writing Center during the 2013-2014 school year. She received the Benjamin W. Schmidt Memorial Dissertation Fellowship for the 2014-2015 school year. Since June, 2015, she has been the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia. She is a member of the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, the Western History Association, the Coalition for Western Women's History, and the Coordinating Council for Women in History.

Beth Hessel has two children and lives in Philadelphia.

ABSTRACT

“LET THE CONSCIENCE OF CHRISTIAN AMERICA SPEAK”: RELIGION AND EMPIRE IN THE INCARCERATION OF JAPANESE AMERICANS, 1941-1945

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This dissertation argues that during World War II, an ecumenical group of Protestant missionaries working through the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service sought to influence federal policy toward incarcerated Japanese Americans and to ameliorate the conditions faced by the 110,000 Japanese Americans in federal incarceration camps. Influenced by a commitment to Christian internationalism, the missionaries believed their vocational calling was to reform through Christian practice the racist and exclusive policies that shaped government and public attitudes toward Japanese Americans. The views of the missionaries had changed through their years of service in Japan. While most accepted versions of Christian imperialism in the first decades of the twentieth century, after World War I they moved increasingly toward a vision of Christian internationalism that created kinship among Christians across racial, linguistic, and political borders. This belief prodded them to create bridges between Americans and Japanese as the two nations edged toward war.

After Pearl Harbor, the missionaries tried to counter the increasing call to remove and incarcerate all citizen and resident Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. Failing in that effort, they became the official mediators among federal authorities, Pro-

testant denominations, and Japanese Americans in the camps. Their efforts to protect the religious freedom of Japanese Americans occasionally blurred the lines between church and state. While Commission members visited the camps regularly and carried on public relations campaigns across the country, other missionaries sought employment as religious workers or War Relocation Authority employees in the camps. As they built relationships with Japanese Americans and called for the protection of minority civil liberties, the missionaries also looked forward to returning to their posts in Japan after the war. The experience working with and on behalf of Japanese Americans during World War II pushed many of the missionaries to embrace postures of humility, repentance, and partnership with Japanese Christians on their return to Japan postwar.