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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT

TOPAZ, UTAH

VESPER SERVICE FOR SOLDIERS FROM TOPAZ

by

RUSSELL A. BANKSON

PROJECT REPORTS DIVISION
Historical Section

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VESPER SERVICE FOR SOLDIERS FROM TOPAZ

The new civic auditorium in Topaz was dedicated for center-wide use on the evening of December 22. This offered the first opportunity for participation in center-wide events by large groups of residents.

In anticipation of completion of the auditorium, Charles F. Ernst, Project Director, discussed at Cabinet meetings and Planning Board meetings prior to the dedication, ways and means in which the auditorium could be of most general use.

One of the proposals that he made was that all of the center be made aware of the large number of soldiers whose families reside in Topaz. This led to the adoption of a motion that a vesper service be held on the afternoon of Christmas day, Saturday, December 25, 1943. The proposal was passed on to the Inter-Faith Council, which was delighted to assume sponsorship for such a service and did take over the planning of the event.

The program was prepared by the Inter-Faith Council to include musical numbers, prayers and talks in both English and Japanese as a memorial to the soldiers of Topaz wherever they might be.

In cooperation with the Inter-Faith Council the Project Reports Division prepared special invitations in both English and Japanese, which were delivered to every parent, brother, sister and wife of a soldier to attend the service at 2 o'clock on Christmas day. A copy of this invitation is attached as

Exhibit A.

In addition to this invitation a general invitation was prepared and distributed to the entire population of the center to join in the memorial service. A copy of this invitation is attached as Exhibit B.

As the hour for the service approached, relatives of servicemen and other residents of the center began to stream into the auditorium and by the time that the memorial service started, approximately 600 persons had taken their seats. Of special interest was the fact that most of these were among the older Isseis, including the parents and grandparents of soldiers.

Reverend I. Kyogoku of the Buddhist church served as general chairman for the service, being assisted by ministers of the Christian faith. A copy of the program is attached as Exhibit C.

The service opened with one minute of silence while the audience stood. Then Janett May Miyata, a 13 year old student of the seventh grade, standing alone on the platform, sang "The Star Spangled Banner". This was followed by an opening prayer by the Reverend M. Nishimura, a Protestant minister. In his prayer he asked God to bless the servicemen in their dangerous task, risking their lives for this country. He asked divine protection upon the soldiers and sailors and comfort and encouragement for their folks at home.

Reverend Kyogoku gave a message in Japanese, a copy of

which, translated into English, is attached as Exhibit D.

Janett May Miyata next sang "Say A Prayer for the Boys Over There", after which the Reverend J. Tsukamoto, an American-born minister of the Protestant church, spoke in English. His remarks are attached as Exhibit E.

The service closed with a prayer by the Reverend Kawamori of the Protestant church, in which he thanked God for this service and prayed that peace might come to the world speedily.

Among the guests who attended the vesper service were many members of the appointive staff, whose sons are also in the Armed Forces.

All who attended the service felt that it was conducted with dignity and felt happy that they had thus been able to honor their loved ones who are offering their lives for this country on the far-flung battlefronts.

It is the hope of the Administration that out of this service will come the impetus for the formation of a Parents' Association which may include the parents, brothers, sisters and wives of servicemen, not only among the residents but the appointive staff as well.

There was a time not many months since when the relatives of servicemen in the center were reluctant to advertise that a member of their family was in the Armed Forces. There were elements which were without doubt bent upon making it disagreeable for such families. This attitude seems to have vanished to a large degree since the segregation movement and there is a constantly growing attitude on the part of the families of

servicemen to talk about their sons in the Army and even to display service flags.

It is felt that the very fact that hundreds of Iasei openly attended the vesper service honoring their sons were evidence of this new feeling within the center and that opposition to Army service has been eliminated to a large degree. Several persons are now very active in the movement to organize a service group which can operate an USO unit in the center where visiting soldiers can be entertained and where information can be available about the soldiers and about their families.

Without question the vesper service was a step in the right direction in making it the right thing to do to openly recognize our boys who are in the Armed Forces.

Evidence of this is the fact that the block managers have volunteered full cooperation in obtaining detailed information about names, rank and station of each serviceman from this center, as well as information about the servicemen's families.

At their request a form was prepared by the Reports Division explaining the purpose of the listing, to have a way of exchanging news and information about families and servicemen. This was prepared in both English and Japanese and was taken to each apartment in the center by the block managers, who personally assisted in filling out the blanks.

A copy of this blank is attached as Exhibit F.

December 24, 1943

INVITATION TO VESPER SERVICE FOR SOLDIERS

Many of our sons, brothers and husbands, who are proudly wearing the uniforms of the Armed Forces, are now serving their country in many places. At this season of the year, it is more than fitting that we should join together in a service, doing honor to them as a part of the national plan to say a prayer for our boys over there.

You and all members of your family who have a soldier in the service are invited to join in a Vesper Service, which will be conducted in the new community auditorium on the afternoon of Christmas day, Saturday, December 25. Will you join with us and with your friends and neighbors at that time.

INTERFAITH COUNCIL

軍人諸君に對する 晩禱禮拜 御案内

私共の息子、兄弟、夫の多くは堂々と軍服を着用して今は諸處にて彼等の祖國の爲に御奉公致して居ります。

此年、此の季節に國策の一部として彼等に敬意を表し、離れて居る我が青年達の爲御一緒に禮拜し禱する事は當然の至りと存じます

軍人を出しておいでになる貴下及び貴家の皆様が晩禱禮拜に御出席下さいますやう 御案内

申し上げます 場所は新築公會堂にて時日

は十二月二十五日土曜日クリスマス當日午後二時でございます 御友人、御近所の方々お誘ひになり

御参加下さいませんか

千九百四十三年十二月廿三日

宗教團體聯盟

December 23, 1943

INVITATION TO VESPER SERVICE

A Vesper Service in honor of young men from Topaz, who are now in the Armed Forces of the United States, will be held in the new civic auditorium building on the afternoon of Christmas, Saturday, December 25, at 2 o'clock.

Whether you have a member of your family in the Armed Forces or not, you are invited to attend this service and join with your friends and neighbors whose sons, brothers, or husbands are in uniforms, and with them, say a prayer for our boys over there.

The service will be presided over by Rev. I. Kyogoku and will include the following numbers: opening prayer by Rev. K. Imai, a vocal solo, short sermon by Rev. Kashima in Japanese, and short sermon by Rev. Tsukamoto in English, another vocal solo, and a closing prayer by Rev. E. Kawamorita.

The doors will be opened at 1:50 p.m.

INTERFAITH COUNCIL

晩禱禮拜御案内

現在合衆國軍籍に在るト。パス出身の青年諸君を祝して 晩禱禮拜が新築市公會堂にマナ
二月廿五日土曜日 クリスマス當日午後二時より行はれま
す

貴下の御家族中に軍人があると否とに拘らず 息子、兄弟、夫を軍人として持つ貴下の御友人、御近隣の方々と共に 我が軍人諸君の爲に捧禱する
ため此の集ひに御出席あらんことをおすゝめ申上げます

京極開教使 司会左の順序で行はれます

開會祈禱 今井牧師
獨唱

小説教 日語 鹿島開教使
英語 塚本牧師

獨唱
開會祈禱 川守田牧師

午後二時五十分開場致します

千九百四十三年十二月廿三日

宗教團體聯盟

SPECIAL VESPER SERVICE FOR SOLDIERS
PROGRAM

Chairman Rev. I. Kyogoku

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Prelude | |
| 2. Silence of One Minute | |
| 3. National Anthem | Janett May Miyata |
| 4. Opening Prayer | Rev. M. Nishizura |
| 5. Message in Japanese | Rev. I. Kyogoku |
| 6. Solo | Janett May Miyata |
| 7. Message in English | Rev. J. Tsukamoto |
| 8. Closing Prayer | Rev. E. Kawamori |

The Message

Sermon by: Rev. I. Kyogoku

Friends;

We are gathered here before the Absolute One of each faith to express our sincerest appreciation and thankfulness to those who devote themselves in the defense of freedom and the fight for democracy, and those who dedicate their beloved sons, fathers, and brothers to this sacred war. The soldiers whom you offered to their country are fulfilling their duty at this very moment of this service. They are shields to protect their country and lances to defeat the enemy. You, the parents and relatives must be proud and satisfied with your beloved ones.

And on this occasion I express my deepest sympathy to the parents who live here as enemy aliens and as the parents of soldiers. Your condition is very hard, but you must know that your sons realize faithfully the lessons given by you. You always taught them to be loyal to their country and to discharge filial duties to their parents. Your sons are perfectly faithful to the moral code you taught them. They are loyal citizens and dutiful sons.

I ask you to recollect an anecdote of Ansei Yamazaki, a famous Confucian of Tokugawa Age. He had great many disciples over six thousands. One day he put a question to the disciples.

"If a great army, Confucious as its commander in chief and Mencious as the second commander, invade this country, what shall you do?"

And when no disciple could answer, he said,

"If they invade I should endeavour to capture two commanders alive and protect my country. This is the only way to be faithful to the teaching of the Saints, Confucious and Mencius."

The deeds of your sons are the realization of the words of Ansaï Yamasaki, their learned and loyal ancestor. They are American. According to your own moral precepts, they should protect their country against enemy. You must clearly understand your condition and be satisfied of your beloved sons.

You must be aware that Your own Karma (the effect of actions in past lives which appears according to the law of cause and effect) brought you to this hard condition. Do not complain. Do not lament. Be peaceful under the light of wisdom that your faith gives you.

In closing this short message, I want to express my heartiest desire for the early recovery of peace, especially on this day of the birth of the great teacher.

EXHIBIT E

Vesper Services
Christmas Day - 2 P.M.
December 25, 1943

Sermon by: Rev. Kenjiro Tsukamoto

I speak to you this afternoon in a strange capacity, a capacity known only in Topaz. I speak to you in a service in which are participating Buddhists, Catholics, Seventh Day Adventists and Protestants. We disagree in many things. We disagree as to whom we worship, as to how we worship, as to what day we wought to observe as most holy, and in several other respects. But we do agree in some customs and we agree to cooperate for the good of our community, and that common ground upon which we do agree embraces the welfare and the happiness of a great multitude of people.

So I am happy today in joining the other members of the Inter-faith Ministerial Association and extending to you all, to the servicemen visiting Topaz, during the holidays, our best wishes and welcome home to your families.

It is needless for me to recite your exploits and extol your soldierly virtues. The whole nation owes to you heavily for its safety and honor. The whole nation cannot share with you your dangers, your privations, your sufferings and your heart-aches, but a large proportion of your dear ones sweat blood daily in their silent prayers for your safety. The happiness of the great masses of the people of America is wrapped up in your safety and health.

It is true that many of us do not realize, do not appreciate the gravity of the war as you know it. This nation is only half awake to its great demands of sacrifice and more sacrifice. Many people grumble and gripe about the rations, about the prices, about the wages, about housing, about the censorship, about the administration, about everything under the sun. But this is possible in great measure because of the shelter of safety you have given to the people of this nation, protecting them from the storms of war. Relax your efforts ever so little, let a few bombs fall on our cities, and you will see an electrical change in our whole attitude towards war. You will no longer see relaxed faces and rich sense of humor. You will see tense faces and tendencies to overwork and fatigue. Will this be a good exchange for that healthy good American habit of being carefree and of expressing trivial gripes. There is not very many country left in the world where it is safe to express ourselves the way we do.

To you will fall the double share of the world's burdens. You are now fighting for the victory of our cause. You are prepared to expend yourselves to the uttermost for your nation's victory. You are prepared to give every ounce of your energy and attention so that your country will not be dishonored. But to you will soon pass another task, the work of world reconstruction. This new work in which the nations which have been remodeled for war shall have to be remodelled for peace, in which the bomb leveled cities of our enemies must be rebuilt again, in which the hungry millions of the devastated farmlands of Europe must be fed and

clothed, in which the crimes and diseases of broken cities must be policed and hospitalized by our soldiers and doctors, in which the reparation and debts of staggering proportion must be raised probably by our supervision and help in which hundreds of millions of people will have to make another difficult readjustment in their economic and social lives. It will be more difficult than your task of today. You will have to have the patience of a doctor doing delicate surgery, where today you only hack and shoot.

There is another task which some of you will face in the world of tomorrow. Some of you are of Caucasian blood. It is easy for you to realize that this country is your home. But some of you are of Japanese blood. Circumstances have been harder upon you. Prejudices and misunderstandings have made it hard to realize that you are fighting for your home. But the offsprings of your blood and the children of your friends who have elected to make this country their home will thank you for the future which you are securing for them. You are the pioneers of a new order testing the axioms of this country, testing the faith of Abraham Lincoln, testing the faith of every true American to whom this nation's sacred duty towards God is just as precious as this nation's glory, power and privileges. You are the pioneers of a new order testing the moral fiber of our Constitution in order to see whether God intends to preserve this nation sound in her principles and true to her trust. Your faith and trust I pray will be vindicated in the years soon to come.

There are many other things which I would like to say to you,

but I do not wish to be tedious. Your country thanks you, we of Topaz thank you sincerely for your efforts to protect our homes of today and tomorrow. We thank you for your supreme dedication of your life and health for the task of today. We thank you for your confidence and trust to make tomorrow better than today. I wish you Merry Christmas and extend our sincere welcome to you all.

EXHIBIT F

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH

Dear Friends:

A great many matters of interest to veterans of the War and their families are occurring at this time. Congress is discussing measures which will help the soldiers after they are discharged. There are frequently messages to be delivered to soldiers or to members of a soldier's family.

So that the families may be able to receive all of the information of interest about their soldiers, and so that the soldiers themselves may be supplied with this information and news about their families as rapidly as possible, the Block Managers wish to make certain that no name has been over-looked.

As a part of the regular block census, they wish you to supply the information that is needed on this form and turn it in to your Block Manager. He will see to it that you get the reports of any new legislation or changes of policies which are adopted. In that way, you will be able to know just what benefits are available for members of a soldier family and for the soldier himself, now and in the future.

親愛なる諸君

歸還兵士及其の家族に關係のある事柄が現今実に多く發生してあります。

議會は除隊後の兵士達を援助する政策を討議中であり其處には兵士又は兵士の家族讀員に通達するべき言が屢々あります。

其の家族が彼等の兵士に關係のあるあらゆる情報を受取ることが出来る爲に、又兵士達も出来る限り迅速に彼等の家族に関する消息、報知を與へられ得る爲にブロックマネージャー諸君は、記憶落ちの姓名がないやうに確實に致し度いのであります。

一定のブロック別調査の一部としてブロックマネージャーは貴下に下の書式、式の各項にそれぞれ御記入の上、所屬ブロックのマネージャーまで返付して頂き度いのです。又は政策の変更は如何なることでも貴下が報告を得らるゝやう注意する筈であります。斯くて貴下は兵士の家族と兵士自身、現在又は將來に如何なる恩典に預り得るかを知ることが出来るのであります。

SERVICEMAN'S NAME
軍人の姓名

MILITARY RANK
軍籍階級

STATIONED
在勤地

1-
(一)

2-
(二)

3-
(三)

4-
(四)

SUBMITTED BY:
提出者姓名

ADDRESS
提出者住所

(name)

RELATIONSHIP TO SERVICEMAN:
軍人との關係

Parents
親(父又は母)

☐

Brother
兄弟

☐

Sister
姉妹

☐

Wife
妻

☐

NUMBER IN FAMILY REMAINING IN TOPAZ
トバズに在住する家族の人数