

1147

COMMITTEE RECORDS

PORTLAND, OREGON CHAPTER ORG. MTG MINUTES,
MEMBERSHIP LIST

MAY, 1943

G-A

171

*Reply 4/19/43
Enclosed copy to 4/19/43
to Bartholomew*

The Diocese of Oregon
541 MORGAN BUILDING
PORTLAND, OREGON

April 17, 1943

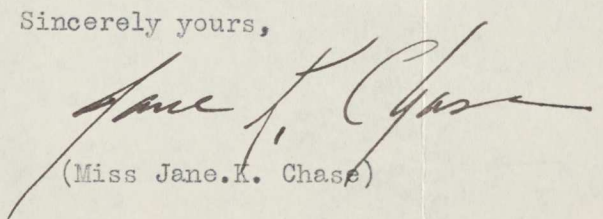
Mrs. Ruth W. Kingman, Executive Secretary
Committee on American Principles and Fair Play
2207 Union St.,
Berkeley, Calif.

My dear Mrs. Kingman:

Mr. McGiffert, in replying to a note of mine, asks what our Committee here is doing that is important. Which brings up the fact that we don't seem to have a Committee, and it certainly seems as if Portland should be doing something about it. I called Miss Mildred Bartholomew of the Y.W.C.A., who has been a leader in all our efforts to help the Japanese-Americans, and she tells me she wrote a letter about this some time ago but has heard nothing further.

Mr. McGiffert mentioned the possibility of your coming to Oregon to consult with our Committee, which is, of course, a grand idea if and when we have a Committee.

Sincerely yours,


(Miss Jane K. Chase)

Portland, Ore. - May 7, 1943

A meeting was held at the Y.W.C.A. from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. to consider the work of the Committee on American Principles and Fair Play and the possibility of forming a branch of this committee in Portland.

There were eighteen people present, a representative group. A list of those attending is attached.

Mr. Don Fessler, executive secretary of the Northwest Institute of International Relations, presided. In opening the meeting Mr. Fessler stated that most of us realized that our democracy as such was something we must fight for at home as well as abroad; that the Committee on American Principles and Fair Play was one of the organizations which had this as its aim, being organized to cope with the local problem of our attitude toward a racial minority on the West Coast. He then introduced Mrs. Ruth Kingman, Executive Secretary of the Committee.

Mrs. Kingman outlined the history and organization of the Committee. Several months before the war President Sproule of the University of California and a number of others, feeling that the tensions on the Pacific Coast were becoming terrific, formed a group known as the Committee on Fair Play. This was composed of forty or fifty members, a majority of whom were business and professional people. They felt that there were dangerous tendencies in public thinking, particularly in the failure to discriminate between what was happening in the Orient and what was going on at home among our American Japanese, and the Committee's aim was to combat this by furthering real understanding and knowledge of this minority group.

Four or five months ago these same people got together again, this time with an enlarged group and a more varied personnel, and formed the Committee on American Principles and Fair Play. The Committee refuses to look back and pass judgement on the controversial matter of the evacuation. However, they feel that since the Government has now adopted a definite policy in regard to the American Japanese, based on recognized American principles, and since they are continuously embarrassed in their efforts to carry out this policy by pressures from the West Coast, that the time has now come for us to speak out in support of this government-determined policy. While it may seem strange to urge that we support our own government, we all know that there are groups on the west coast who because of established and long-held racial attitudes are making it difficult to follow the path the Government has set.

The Committee feels that this whole question is of great importance because we are getting on very dangerous ground when we treat any group simply as a group because of associations with its origin. It is not smart and it is certainly not American. The Committee is interested primarily in the problems of the Nisei, but it is certainly not typical of America to judge any second or third generation citizens by what is done in the land of their ancestry.

Another reason for our deep concern lies in what our non-white allies are thinking about our treatment of this minority group. The Government knows what Japan is thinking and saying about this and is definitely concerned with what the people of China, India and South America are thinking. We are eager that we live up to the thing we say we are fighting for. We know that there are many people up and down the coast who feel that "a Jap's a Jap", but our government agencies such as the War Department, the Department of Justice and the WRA do not feel that this is a reasonable attitude.

Mrs. Kingman spoke of conditions in the Relocation Centers, basing her statements on a personal knowledge of the Topaz Center, which rates second highest in maintenance of morale, the Minidoka Center standing first. She called our attention to the fact that disloyalty and low morale are most in evidence where the pressure and discrimination against these people has been most severe. There has been no discrimination in Hawaii and there has been no disloyalty there. This is shown very plainly in the response to the recruiting for the Army.

She proceeded to tell very vividly of her experience working in the Topaz Center. She brought out the fact that seven out of ten of the people in these concentration camps are American Citizens and that half of these are under twenty years of age. There is a higher percentage of college graduates among these Nisei than among any similar group, and they have potential leadership ability which we can ill afford to lose. People often raise the question as to the degree of Americanization among them. The answer should be that they are not Americanized, they are Americans. Organizations that have worked with them know that to be true, but the press has not been willing to publicize it.

We are not blind to the fact that there are elements among the American-Japanese which should be segregated. What we are trying to do is to mobilize that public opinion which feels that the whole business of handling this on a racial basis represents something very dangerous in American thinking. We need an intelligent approach based on information which can be accepted as true. It is absolutely necessary that the Pacific Coast be educated if the Government authorities are to be allowed to follow the unifying program which they consider necessary to the war effort.

College students have taken this matter up enthusiastically. They know the Nisei and know what it is all about. But public opinion generally on the coast bases its thinking on what certain pressure groups have been saying for the last twenty years.

Following Mrs. Kingman's talk there was some discussion as to the organization of a committee in Portland. It was brought out that the methods of organizing varied in different communities, but that it was usually a poor idea to have it started and controlled by an existing organization. It was considered better to have a representative backing of interested individuals. This can be accomplished if a few leaders determine that the Government's program should be given support and that that part of public opinion which has not been vocal up to now shall be heard. The point is to get the right leaders. If we do not organize a group it is possible for individuals to become members of the central Committee, but it would be much better to have a local group which could meet local problems.

It has been suggested that since the policy of the U.S. Government was referred to in the above speech, it might be well to insert in this account some statement as to just what that policy is; for instance a quotation from the President's letter to Secretary of War Stimson.

Those present at the Portland meeting. May 7, 1943

Mr. Clifford Perry
Assistant School Supp.

Mr. George Joseph
Atty. for Meier & Frank Co.

Mrs. Frank Cole
Past Pres. of the Portland YWCA
Related to the American Friends
Service Committee.

Mr. Don Fessler
Executive Sec'y NW Institution
of International Relations.

Miss Jane Chase
Episcopal Diocesan office of Ore.

Mr. E. B. MacNaughton
President of the 1st Natl. Bank

Dr. I. George Nace
Executive Sec'y Portland
Council of Churches

Mr. Clarence Oliver
History & Current Problems Teacher
Jefferson High School.

Mrs. Clarence Oliver.

Mr. David Robinson
Rumor and Propaganda Analysis
Oregon Defense Council

Mrs. Clare Johnson
Wife of Executive Sec'y, Central YMCA

Mr. John Phillips
Vice-principal, Lincoln High School

Miss Golda Wickham
Dean of Girls, Lincoln High School

Mr. Richard Nokes
Reporter, Oregonian

Miss Dora Rice
Executive Secretary, Williams Ave. Dept
Colored, Portland YWCA

Mr. Robert H. Strong, of Strong and
Associates, Property Management

Mr. M. A. Earl
Secretary of Oregon State Industrial
Council of CIO.

Miss Mildred Bartholomew
Department of Religion and Membership
Portland YWCA

Young Women's Christian Association

PORTLAND - OREGON

BROADWAY AT TAYLOR



May 29, 1943

Mrs. Ruth W. Kingman
Committee on American Principles
And Fair Play
2207 Union Street
Berkeley, California

Dear Mrs. Kingman:

I am very well thank you. I have just come back from an hour's conference with Mr. Morton Tompkins from the Grange. I am glad that we didn't get to him earlier. He is full of his state meeting and pretty sensitive to the responsibility that confronts him. He had already written to the California State Grange Master asking if they have any recommendations. Mr. Tompkins is of the opinion that the Granges on the coast should stand together. He also seemed convinced that they should do a far-sighted thing.

I left our mimeographed material plus the statements by Secretary Stimpson and President Roosevelt, and I put the screws on pretty hard about boys and girls exposed to American customs and American influences all their lives being capable of very deep impressions no matter what colour their skins are.

Mr. Tompkins feels that what happens at this meeting is particularly important because of the whole series of State Grange Meetings, the Oregon Grange comes first. I asked him if he would like to be on your mailing list and he said yes.

He has three boys in the service. I told him Dean Ramsey's story when he said, "I have a son, or had a son on the Houston. My family has been closely connected with the Marines for 40 years. I have an airdale pup. Do you know how airdales hate cats,--that is the way I hate Japs, but this thing is an injustice."

11357 E. Polman St

It happens that Dean Ramsey's father had been the Tompkins family attorney.

We still do not have a chairman. I am warming up to the place where I think I will ask Mr. MacNaughton. (By the way, you spell his name MacNaughton and write it as one word.)

This morning we had a great editorial. I enclose it for your pleasure. I phoned Bishop Baxter about it at one o'clock and asked him to write the OREGONIAN. He already had.

I also had a letter from Mr. Sprague this morning in which he enclosed the debate he is having with Mr. Pierce also Ex-Governor of Oregon. Sprague's stuff is pretty good reading I think.

After all this broke this morning I had to have a cup of coffee with Jane Chase. Do you know that she is leaving the Diocesan office? She thinks she has promised to stay here until June 30th and then she plans to go for a month's vacation with her mother in Wisconsin. You two would make a powerful pair if you could hire her for your office secretary.

Thanks for the new material you sent. I haven't had a chance at it today but I will shortly. I think it will be nice if you could write the OREGONIAN about this morning's editorial and I wish two or three other people would. *from down there.*

I am not fooling about Jane Chase either. She feels that she should do something as a long time business but she has something awfully important to give to this Japanese problem and it might be just the thing that will introduce her to something right down her alley when she is no longer needed. You would feel as if you had a rock to lean on.

Aren't you glad you came to Portland? I am terribly glad.

Cordially yours,

Mildred Bartholomew

Mildred Bartholomew
Public Affairs Secretary

ENCS.
MB:AR

*Sorry this didn't arrive in your
morning mail today - your check
me & I note you have a stamp.*

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. C. WILLEVER
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

1201

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter

NL = Night Letter

LC = Deferred Cable

NLT = Cable Night Letter

Ship Radiogram

WESTERN UNION

(26)

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

FY95 40=PORTLAND ORG 31 1055A

1945 JUL 31 AM 11 28

MRS RUTH W KINGMAN

DUPLICATE OF TELEPHONED TELEGRAM

PHONE ASHBERRY 6214 2234 TELEGRAPH AVE

IMPORTANT FOR PORTLAND TO HEAR DILLON, MYER CAN YOU SHIFT HIS SCHEDULE FOR CITY CLUB LUNCHEON PORTLAND FRIDAY AUGUST 6TH, FORWARD SUBJECT AND MATERIAL ON MYER TO CITY CLUB FOR BULLETIN PUBLICATION MONDAY AFTERNOON REPLY TODAY TO ME AT YW=

MILDRED BARTHOLOMEW.

6TH YW.

Telephone No.	Ash 6214
Telephoned to	Adm
Time Delivered	11:43 am
By	Ba
Adm. to deliver	mail