THE CHICAGO RESETTLERS' COMMITTEE AND CHICAGO JAPANESE AMERICAN RESETTLEMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

JORDAN KOJIMA. The Chicago Resettlers' Committee and Chicago Japanese American Resettlement. (Under the direction of DR. AARON SHAPIRO)

As Japanese Americans left the World War II internment camps, many people migrated to the Midwest, and a large Japanese American community gathered in Chicago. During the early postwar years, the Chicago Resetters' Committee assisted and helped resettle Japanese Americans into Chicago. The committee sought to reflect the new community with a representational leadership, and through its welfare services, it demonstrated its commitment to the community. The Chicago Resettlers' Committee's records provides a unique insight into the trials and challenges of Japanese American Resettlement.

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INTRODUCTION: A NEW COMMUNITY AND A NEW ORGANIZATION

In 1940, there were less than a thousand Japanese Americans living in the Chicagoland area. However, by 1950, there were over twenty thousand Japanese Americans in Chicago. Within the short decade, the Chicago Japanese American community settled into the area, but the settlement was not easy. Ethnic organizations were set up to assist with the Japanese American Resettlement. One central organization to Resettlement was the Chicago Resettlers' Committee (CRC). This committee came from humble origins, but the organization came to assist and affect a great number of the resettling Japanese Americans. The CRC was established resettle the interned Japanese Americans into Chicago. The organization wanted to be open to all Japanese American groups, so the CRC provided a full and broad representation of the Japanese American community. The organization's administrative documents and records offers clear insight into the daily struggles of the organization and the community. Oral histories could provide better understanding of individual's experiences, but oral histories lack the ability to provide a consistent account. The organization's records offer a consistent viewpoint of events, as well as a steady supply of references to other involved people and organizations. Throughout the historiography, the World War II Internment of Japanese Americans is treated and viewed as a formal event because of its importance. Likewise, the Redress movement[1] of the 1970's and 1980's is treated with similar importance. However, the immediate, postwar years are overshadowed by these two larger events.

[1] "Redress movement," Densho Encyclopedia, accessed November 25, 2017, http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Redress_movement/#Social_Movements_and_Redress_Campaigns The Redress movement pushed for a formal apology and compensation for Internment. The Redress movement culminated in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. Any survivors of Internment received a formal government apology and a small financial compensation.

Resettlement deserves the same treatment as the other events. As the first steps in recovery from Internment's trauma, and it also established the future ground for the Redress battles against discrimination. Many historians view the postwar Japanese American community within an Assimilationist narrative, but the reality of the postwar Chicago Japanese American experience creates a more nuanced history.[2] From its inception, the CRC fought many battles against discrimination, as well as assisted numerous Japanese Americans. Assimilation and identity discussions were part of its struggles, but the organization viewed its community as its first loyalty. The CRC viewed itself as an organization to serve the welfare of its community, and its story demonstrates the difficulty realities of the postwar period. Resettlement was a complex process. In 1954, the organization changed its name[3] because it decided that Resettlement was over. It believed its name should reflect the change in times. However, the new organization, the Japanese American Service Committee (JASC), hoped to continue the CRC's welfare mission. The first eight years of the CRC witnessed many changes and struggles, and perhaps the greatest change and challenge was the Resettlement and growth of the Japanese American community.

The origins of Resettlement and the historical narrative begins in the preceding decade of World War II. The historiographical discussion surrounding the prewar and Internment experience focused on the difficulties of the World War II period and also

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[2] In Japanese American historiography, Assimilation is usually taken as a cultural and social move to be more "white", but the CRC defined their assimilation through superficial qualities, i.e. financially or educationally. Henceforth, Assimilation as an academic term will be capitalized. Any mention of CRC's assimilation will be lowercase.

[3] "Our History," Japanese American Service Committee. Accessed October, 2017. http://www.jasc-chicago.org/about-jasc/a-special-place/.
The CRC became the Japanese American Service Committee (JASC).

highlighted identity questions about the Japanese American community. However, the historiography overlooked post-World War II Resettlement life, and often neglected the importance of geographic Resettlement areas outside of the West Coast.

Within the historiography, Japanese American historians also focus on these Japanese American ethnic organizations because of their prominence and influential role in the community. From the community's beginnings, the Japanese American ethnic organizations were the prime movers of social and political events and discussions. Most pre-World War II communities created ethnic organizations to rally behind. Before World War II, the Issei or first-generation immigrants utilized Japanese Associations to gather and organize social, political, and financial resources. Yuji Ichioka documented the enormous influence and importance the Japanese Associations within the Japanese American communities. The Japanese Associations helped the community to work and thrive in the United States. However, the Issei especially struggled because of their immigration status. They were unable to become naturalized citizens, and as a result, they had to find unorthodox ways to resolve social, economic, and legal issues. The ethnic organization provided a way for the Issei to work around some of these problems. The solutions resolved the issues, but were often a roundabout way to address the issues.

One example of a workaround solution was the Japanese Associations' response to the 1913 California Alien Land Law Act. This law stipulated that any aliens or companies owned by aliens could not purchase or own land, instead aliens could only lease the land for a period of time. In addition to these restrictions, resident aliens were unable to bequeath or sell their land to another immigrant alien. Since a large percentage

of Issei were farmers, the Japanese Associations sought to mitigate the potential fallout. Before the legislation was activated, Japanese Associations encouraged and promoted Japanese to utilize the law's loopholes.[4] One of the major loopholes was that the regulations did not address landholding companies and their stocks. In the few months before the legislation became active, roughly 65 of 141 Japanese landholding companies were formed. Even in the face of the California Alien Land Law Act, the Japanese Associations and Issei discovered and exploited ways to maintain their settlement ambitions. Ichioka pointed to social and economic organizations, like the Japanese Associations as linchpins for understanding the pre-World War II, Japanese American experience.[5]

However, the Issei's children came of age in the years before World War II or during the War. The Nisei or second-generation Japanese organized their own ethnic organizations around their desires and problems. The most prominent ethnic organization was the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). Before World War II, the JACL was pro-Japan and pro-American.[6] These organizations were a hotbed of identity discussions about the Nisei who grew up in a split world. World War II forced the Nisei to choose between their heritage and homes. This identity struggle and the increased role of the JACL continued during this era.

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[4] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: The World of the First Generation of Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York: Free Press), 6-9.
[5] Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*, (New York: Oxford University Press). Azuma examined much of the pre-World War II identity conflict of the Nisei generation. His studies demonstrate that organizations, like the JACL were forced to struggle through these similar identity struggles.
[6] Azuma, 139.

One of the best documented time periods of Japanese American history is the Internment and its struggles. The historical study of the Japanese American Internment experience forms around two discussions of the internment camp experience. Roger Daniels was one of the first historians to examine on the suffering and daily experiences of Internment. In *Prisoners Without Trial*, he covered the general experience and scope of the roundup and Interment. Within this first category of discussion, historians researched the different types of Internment experiences. These historians examined Issei couples[7], Nisei students[8], Latin American Japanese Americans[9], and the other large variety of Internment experience. These different studies described and catalogued the different thoughts and opinions of the population, and the studies highlighted the variety of Japanese American experience.

World War II was a watershed moment for the Japanese American community, and Internment separated the historic enclave communities. During the war, the Rowher and Jerome camps were set up in Arkansas. These two camps were the only two camps east of the Mississippi. Perhaps, they foreshadowed the postwar population shift, as almost a quarter of the Japanese American population moved away from the West Coast.[10] However, the historiography does not mirror this population shift. Resettlement studies typically treated the release of Japanese Americans as a return to the West Coast.

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[7] Louis Fiset and Daniel Rogers, *Imprisoned Apart: The World War II Correspondence of an Issei Couple* (University of Washington Press, 1997).
[8] Karen Riley, *Schools Behind Barbed Wire: The Untold Story of Wartime Internment and the Children of Arrested Alien* (Rowman& Littlefield Publishers, 2001).
[9] Seiichi Higashide, *Adios to Tears: The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in the U.S. Concentration Camps* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000).
[10] John Howard, *Concentration Camps on the Home Front: Japanese Americans in the House of Jim Crow*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

Another weakness of the Resettlement studies is their lack of topical variation. The post-World War II years are often studied in the limelight of civil rights and ethnic identity, and some of the nuances of the physical events and history are missed.[11]

During World War II, ethnic identity became a large part of the community's and historiography's discussion. The Nisei were forced to wrestle and choose which culture and who they wished to be. The identity questions begged whether or not Japanese Americans were American or Japanese or both. Historians, like David Yoo[12] and Eiichiro Azuma[13], examined the conflicting nature of the Nisei's struggle for identity and place before and during World War II. Organizations like the JACL became staunchly pro-American, and the JACL even served as a representative to the U.S. government.[14] On top of this difficult identity struggle, the Nisei became leaders of the community. The Nisei's stepped into adulthood as the Issei's hold on the community dwindled. During and after Internment, the Issei's lack of English fluency and the destruction of Issei organizations meant that the Nisei and their organizations assumed influence within the community. While the JACL assumed a pro-American stance for World War II, the identity questions and debates continued after the War. In fact, the JACL's actions created more tension around this identity question. During the war, the JACL formed an 'anti-Axis' committee which reported on potentially subversive activities. In some cases,

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[11] Ellen Wu, *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 33-34.
[12] David Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei: Race, Generation, and Culture among Japanese Americans of California, 1924-1949* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1999).
[13] Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[14] Paul Spickard, *Japanese Americans: The Formation and Transformation of an Ethnic Group* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press), 110-111.

Issei were arrested and taken to Justice Department camps. They also encouraged Japanese Americans to support America and the war effort through purchasing war bonds, supporting the Red Cross, and fighting as soldiers for the United States.[15] Organizations, like the JACL took concrete sides with the identity debates. But, instead of quelling or unifying the community, the controversies and questions remained and continued after the men came home from war.

After the Internment, Japanese Americans had to figure out what to do and where to go. Many Japanese Americans returned to the West Coast, but unfortunately, racial tensions were high. Race riots against Japanese Americans broke out in many cities. As the community walked out of the traumatic Internment experience and into the racially charged society, the community continued to ask questions about identity. As the community started to rebuild, it began to wrestle with identity questions. Within the historiographical identity discussion, two trends of post-World War II identity discussion emerged.

The largest postwar, historiographical category was the identity discussion, but within that discussion, two types of studies were popularized. The first category of historians preferred to examine the postwar achievements of the Japanese American community. Two of the main voices for the first approach were Bill Hosokawa and Mike Masaoka. In his most famous book, *Nisei: The Quiet Americans*, and other studies, Hosokawa studied and emphasized the achievements of the Japanese Americans.[16]

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[15] Jere Takahashi, *Nisei Sansei: Asian American History and Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 126.

[16] Bill Hosokawa, *Nisei: The Quiet Americans*, Rev. ed. (University of California Press, 2002).

Hosokawa was a main JACL leader for many years, and his contemporary, Mike Masaoka, was also a prominent JACL leader. Masaoka wrote E*ast to America: A History of the Japanese in the United States*, and it contained a similar argument and theme.[17] However, Masaoka's book was meant to survey all of Japanese American history, but his work still contained a hagiographic view of the JACL and the postwar Japanese American community. These discussions highlighted important accomplishments of the Japanese American community, but their discussions avoided discussing the less pleasant and controversial topics, like the JACL's silencing and lack of support for "un-American Japanese Americans".[18] While these types of literature are important, they failed to account for the reality of suffering and struggles of the Japanese American community. Hosokawa and Masaoka de-emphasized the suffering through their emphasis of the Japanese American positives.

The second large category focused on diversifying the story of the Japanese American postwar experience. The diversification of opinions centered around the controversial identity topics. Jere Takahashi critiques early postwar Japanese American political discussions, especially inside the JACL. Takahashi noted that a good portion of Japanese Americans did not wish to rock the boat about the Internment and the community's other misfortunes.[19] As a result, the community and JACL explicitly and implicitly silenced voices of protest within the Japanese American community. Within the initial postwar years, the JACL did not focus its efforts on a large-scale reparations

[17] Robert Wilson and Mike Masaoka, Ea*st to America: A History of the Japanese in the United States* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1980).
[18] Takahashi, 129.
[19] Ibid, 145.

effort. This stance was part of a greater debate and controversy about the JACL's hypocrisy and failure to be representational of the community.[20] However, Takahashi's main goal was to identify the shift and turn of opinion within the community towards Redress and other important civil rights' initiatives. Additionally, Lon Kurashige focused on documenting Japanese American cultural events as metaphors and expression of the Japanese American communal identity.[21] After World War II, Kurashige noted that Japanese American social and cultural events often added or highlighted the Nisei soldiers. Some historians view the Nisei soldiers in a conflicted light because of their Americanized exterior after the war ended.[22] Furthermore, Kurashige emphasized that the largest Los Angeles celebration, Nisei Week, was a large metaphor or reflection of Japanese American community identity. The Nisei Week reflected a particular image of Japanese Americans, and this image excluded and marginalized parts of the community. Within the historiography, there are authors who admit the complexity of the historical identity discussions. Stephanie Hinnershitz, observed the complex and difficult identity struggles among Japanese American Nisei students, as well as their fight against discrimination. The students banded within Japanese Christian organizations or larger Christian organizations to resist the wartime Internment.[23] While most historiography argued from different sides of the Assimilation debate, Hinnershitz contended that the organizational actions and Japanese American identity was a more complicated issue,

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[20] One early piece of legislature that the JACL sponsored was the Japanese American Claims Act of 1948. However, the efficacy of the Act was questionable, and its effect was small and nominal for the Japanese American community.

[21] Lon Kurashige, "Problem of Biculturalism: Japanese American Identity and Festival before World War II," *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 4 (Mar. 2000), 1640-1643.

[22] Lon Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic Identity and Festival, 1934-1990* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2002).

[23] Stephanie Hinnershitz, *Race, Religion, and Civil Rights: Asian Students on the West Coast, 1900-1968* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press), 69-70

than simple Assimilation. Japanese Americans defined and viewed their identity as more flexible, than only assimilated and unassimilated qualities.

An important vehicle for the Assimilation argument was the role of ethnic organizations. Japanese American organizations played a central role in the postwar identity discussions, and the JACL remained an important participant. Takahashi and Kurashige observed and documented the JACL's continued failure to be representation to its constituents. Both authors were critical of the organization's stubbornness about the issue.[24] Because of its failures, the JACL was caught in a hypocritical position. In a national sense, JACL lobbied for legislation to help the community, but, the JACL also stifled local discussion of these topics. Its victories were stained with some of its questionable past decisions. The historiography is critical of the JACL's manufactured postwar image, but their criticism also overshadowed contributions of other Japanese American organizations, like the CRC. Because of the ubiquity of the JACL, the historiography's criticism of Japanese American organizations is often reflected on this Resettlement time period.

Ellen Wu is one of the few historians to focus and concentrate on a geographical area outside of the West Coast, as well as study the specific Resettlement time period. In her studies, Wu documented the creation and influence of the Chicago Resettlers' Committee during and after World War II. More specifically, she searched for origins of the model minority myths, and she believed the CRC was an example of early Assimilationist ideas. In her book, *The Color of Success*, Wu argued that Chicago

[24] Takahashi, 129.

Japanese Americans started to capitulate to the idea of racial Assimilation. She also viewed the CRC as one of the vehicles for the Assimilation. In her argument, the CRC capitulated to the white, middle class standard, and she interpreted many of the CRC's actions as part of this Assimilation ideology.[25] In a similar vein, historian Charlotte Brooks argued that the Japanese Americans were racially ambiguous in Chicago. Japanese Americans were neither treated as poorly as blacks, nor treated as equals to whites.[26] However, both historians viewed Japanese Americans rhetoric and choices as a capitulation because their definition of Assimilation was broad. They viewed assumed Japanese Americans' actions were almost purely driven from an Assimilation ideology. The Japanese American resettlement patterns and habits were a surrender to the Caucasian community and values.

Within this discussion, the arguments are defined through the use and definition of Assimilation. Wu and Brooks defined their position more strictly, and they interpreted Japanese Americans actions as more ideologically equitable. However, the CRC vocally advocated for assimilation, but its assimilation appeared to be to a different standard and definition. Wu interpreted the CRC's effort to discourage sub-groups of the community, like the zoot suiters or *Yogore*[27] as Assimilation to the Caucasian standard of living. However, the CRC admitted the majority of the community viewed the zoot suiters or Yogores' actions as detrimental behavior. The similar opinions of the Caucasian

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[25] Wu, 33-34.
[26] Charlotte Brooks, "In the Twilight Zone Between Black and White: Japanese American Resettlement and Community in Chicago, 1942-1945," *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 4 (Mar. 2000), 1668-16869.
[27] Wu, 18-19.
Yogores were young men who did not wish to follow the societal norms. They enjoyed drinking, carousing, and gambling.

population and CRC do not necessarily equate to Assimilation. The CRC did view itself as assimilationist, but with different definitions. They defined assimilation as the "gradually transfer the [Nisei's] sense of security in the Japanese American groups to groups in larger society."[28] Wu's Assimilation argument is a firm definition, and she imposes the definition onto a time period with different ideas about assimilation. The CRC's definition of assimilation did not necessarily include a capitulation to Caucasian standards.

The Chicago Japanese American community and CRC's daily reality was complicated and ambiguous. One example was Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi and her efforts.[29] She was a main driving force in founding the CRC. Part of her original action was directed towards staying on good terms with the Chicago community and the FBI. At the same time, she stood firm with the FBI because she wanted the Issei and other groups to belong to the organization. The FBI especially did not want Issei to be organized because they feared Issei would create a new ethnic enclave.[30] Nishi assured the government, and as a result, a compromise was formed: the CRC. Because of her definition of Assimilation, Wu viewed the CRC's early efforts as the capitulation to Caucasian standards because Nishi founded the CRC under the FBI's watch. Her definition overlooked some of the nuances of the difficult reality of Resettlement. Her

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[28] Japanese American Service Committee, Legacy Center Archives, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Progress Report, Series 3, Folder 2.1, Coll 2006.018, 1947-1948.
[29] Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi was an extremely involved member of the Chicago Japanese American community. She would serve on the Chicago Japanese Council, conduct her own study about the Nisei's Resettlement experience and mental trauma, attend almost every single, early board meeting, as well as help with various studies, committees, and activities. Her role as a secretary is an understatement, and there should be a more intensive study into her extensive work and help with Chicago Japanese American Resettlement.
[30] Wu, 33-34.

analysis required basic assumptions that Nishi's goals and motivations involved becoming Caucasian. Her observation about potential origins of the model minority myth were well researched and grounded, but her generalized definition of Assimilation interprets the CRC's actions without all of the context and motivations of the group.

These historical tendencies are ultimately the most significant arguments within Japanese American history. The suffering from Internment and the postwar, Japanese American identity question cast a shadow upon all of the Japanese American studies revealed much about the Japanese American experience, but there are negative consequences to the heavily focused topics. The historiography's emphasis on one issue creates or implies a singular solution. In this case, the solution was Redress. Most studies, including with Roger Daniels, Jere Takahashi, and even Bill Hosokawa, interpreted Japanese American history's movements as a straight path towards Redress. It is true that many of these discussions lead to Redress, but Redress became the ultimate inevitability for the Japanese American community. The reality of the difficult journey to Redress is missed because of historians' assumption about Redress' future success. In a way, historiography treated Redress anachronistically. This critique is not meant to detract from previous historians' work, but shift the conversation. The result of these discussions was that Resettlement became an afterthought for Redress. In other cases, if Resettlement is discussed, most of the historical discussion center around racial identity and the expression of it. During the Resettlement discussion, Japanese American organizations are heavily critiqued because of their controversial decisions and lack of representative. However, the CRC's historical context and circumstances reveal a different reality, then the pro-Assimilationist and pro-Caucasian Japanese American narrative.

The CRC's founding and context bears similarities to the West Coast communities. It struggled with issues, like racial discrimination, a lack of material goods, and most importantly, questions about identity. However, the organization's historical context created a more nuanced story and harsh reality of Japanese American Resettlement. First and foremost, the CRC needed leadership, but they did not want to lack representation. The organization founded itself as a representative for the entire community, and it strove to reflect that goal. During World War II and the postwar years, the JACL was heavily criticized because of its conscious choice to discuss and highlight only the American identity of the community. In contrast, the CRC tasked itself with resettling its community, as well as creating a thriving environment for its growing constituency. It tried to care for the daily needs of its constituency, and it developed services to help with housing and employment. The CRC's care also extended to the identity questions of the community. The JACL may not have encouraged as much discussion about the topic, but the CRC encouraged identity discussions to help its community cope and wrestle with these lingering questions. Throughout all of its actions, the organization refuted the notion of capitulation to white or Caucasian ideals. The organization did its best to forward Japanese American civil rights in Chicago. In the first eight years, the CRC strove to resettle the community into Chicago. In 1954, the CRC found itself questioning this resettlement identity, and it renamed itself to reflect the identity change. The Chicago Resettlers' Committee became the Japanese American Service Committee (JASC).[31] The committee was confident Resettlement was over, but

[31] "Our History," Japanese American Service Committee. Accessed October, 2017. http://www.jasc-chicago.org/about-jasc/a-special-place/.

they were still determined to provide the same welfare services to its community. However, the short decade of the CRC highlighted important facets about Resettlement, and the experience resettling of Japanese Americans.

Overall, study of the CRC's organizational struggles brings attention to the Resettlement time period. The lack of Japanese American histories from the Midwest or other United States' regions misses the new, complex reality of the Japanese American Resettlement and postwar life. The intense focus on Internment, Redress, and racial identity created a myopic focus where local and important actions and events were passed over. And, while Internment, Redress, and racial identity are all important, even to this study, this study hopes to contextualize those events and ideas within the Chicago Japanese American daily life. In addition, historians' negative treatment of the World War II Japanese American organizations and activities also creates a strong bias against the efficacy of Japanese American ethnic organizations. Ultimately, the failure of the historiography to consider these parts of the Japanese American community neglects the Japanese Americans' different experiences. The story of Chicago Japanese American Resettlement is one small piece of the missed history. With the baggage and struggle of Internment, the foreignness of a new home, and an exploding population, the CRC assisted its constituency with these issues.

Before the CRC tackled community issues, the organization had to decide who and what it was going to be. The CRC's first large discussion focused on the group's identity and leadership. Unlike previous ethnic organizations, the CRC chose to become representational of its constituents. Yet, after soul searching for its organizational

identity, the CRC confronted many of the daily issues of the newly founded Chicago Japanese American community. Its choice to become a representational community reflected its desire to assist its community. However, the CRC's actions spoke louder than its words. The different organizational initiatives demonstrate that the CRC was far from pushing a Caucasian valued agenda. Instead, the organization helped its community financially, psychologically, and legally.

CHAPTER 1: THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CHICAGO RESETTLERS' COMMITTEE

The origins of the CRC are rooted in Imperial Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. Shortly after the United States' declaration of war, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. The executive order voiced concerns about the potential loyalty of Japanese Americans, and it granted the War Department authority to relocate and detain West Coast Japanese Americans. The relocation process began a month later in March, 1942. Over 120,000 West Coast Japanese Americans were moved to various assembly centers along the West Coast. From the assembly centers, the Japanese Americans were transported into the internment camps.

During their incarceration, the War Relocation Authority (WRA), a subdivision of the War Department, operated and managed the relocation or internment camp system. Within the internment system, there were different types of camps. The assembly centers were meant to be temporary staging areas for the internment camps, but because of lack of space, some of the assembly centers were converted to internment camps.[32] In addition, the U.S. Justice Department operated several internment camps or Justice camps outside of the WRA's authority. These Justice camps held Japanese Americans deemed more dangerous.[33] The criterion of these camps was often based on the outward expression of their Japanese heritage, i.e. Japanese language teachers, etc.

During Internment, the WRA used loyalty tests to ascertain the trustworthiness of Japanese Americans. In protest of the government's actions, a small number of Japanese

[32] Manzanar Relocation Center served as both an assembly center and a relocation center
[33] Many of the Justice camps were located in the northern Plain States, like Montana and Idaho.

renounced their American citizenship, some became draft dodgers, and others became vocal advocates against the incarceration. However, if the Japanese American answered with the 'loyal' answers, then the government approved them for release. In addition to the loyalty tests, there were other release conditions for Japanese Americans. By late 1943, the WRA started to release Japanese Americans back into American society. The government did not allow Japanese Americans to return to the War Departments' West Coast exclusionary zone, and they had to report to government resettlement posts throughout the other parts of the country. As the resettlement process continued into 1944, the Midwestern city of Chicago became a large center for Japanese American resettlement.[34] Here, the economic integration was much easier, and work was more abundant. The lack of historical racism towards Asian ethnicities allowed the Japanese Americans to obtain jobs easier.[35] Word eventually spread back to the internment camps, and "the Midwest became a favored area. Before World War II, Chicago's Japanese American population numbered in the hundreds, but after World War II, the Chicago Japanese American's community numbered roughly 20,000 people.[36]

Early into the Resettlement process, the WRA noticed that many Japanese Americans were not resettling into Chicago well. Most prominently, younger, single, and male Japanese Americans, called zoot suiters or Yogores, enjoyed the night life, rather than setting roots. These zoot suiters were labeled because of their different type of suit, their hairstyle, and overall demeanor.[37] However, there were other practical concerns for

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[34] Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* (Washington, D.C. 1982), 205.
[35] Brooks, 1686.
[36] Nishi, 6.
[37] Wu, 26-28.

resettling Japanese Americans. Jobs and housing proved to be difficult for many of the newly arrived Japanese Americans. While some churches, YMCAs, and recreational centers permitted Japanese Americans lodging, these solutions were temporary. Even though the government offered some assistance, it was diminutive and brief. The government was hesitant to allow Japanese Americans to organize their own group because it did not want a Chicago Japanese American ethnic conclave.[38] The WRA offered office space to host board meetings, but no financial support. The CRC's first meetings demonstrated its lack of financial capital and need to find financial help. However, by the end of 1945, the CRC moved out of the WRA, and they established their offices elsewhere.[39] The WRA's initial support was small, and in the end, the CRC became a Japanese American run organization. Eventually, the government relented and allowed Japanese Americans to lead and organize their ethnic group. The CRC was discouraged from building another enclave, like pre-War West Coast cities. The government's discouragement and the lack of geographic unity prevented a formal ethnic enclave from forming in Chicago. The government wanted the Japanese Americans to become part of the Chicago community. While unable to create an enclave, but the CRC grew into a unifying and organizing force within the growing community.

The first goal of the CRC was to select the leadership and layout its goals. Because of the time sensitive nature of its tasks, the CRC built its leadership over time. Early on, they formed and established the main organizational goals and purposes. First, CRC defined it constituency as "persons of Japanese ancestry and other interested

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[38] Wu, 26-28.
[39] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, November 13, 1945.

persons."[40] The organization hoped the leadership would reflect the diversity of the population.

The CRC sought to pursue its practical goals with forming intra and inter-communal relationships with different organizations and people. The largest and most important relationship or partnership was the intra-communal efforts. These relations became a reflection of the CRC's intent to be a representational organization. The CRC saw its role as a representative of all Japanese Americans, so the CRC sought to have as many Japanese Americans represented in its leadership.

One of the looming issues for the Japanese American community was generational representation. World War II accelerated the Nisei's leadership responsibility takeover, but this did not mean the takeover was smooth.[41] The Nisei's organizations, like the JACL became the dominant organizational voices. The CRC also encountered a similar issue of many Nisei voices. However, the CRC benefited from the JACL's World War II failures. During World War II, the JACL experienced what can happen when an organization is not reflective of the community's interests.

Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi, the CRC's first secretary, recounted a pivotal Internment riot of Japanese Americans. In the Manzanar Internment Camps, hundreds of discontented Japanese Americans rioted against the prison-like conditions and lack of representation from the camp selected, Japanese American representatives. The mob

[40] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, November 13, 1945.
[41] Spickard, 98-100.

hunted down JACL and Japanese Americans in the government's service. On that day, the Japanese American community saw "what could happen to spokespersons who did not have sanction of those whom they tried to represent… the violent and hostile attacks against the JACL's early wartime leadership in the camp."[42] The CRC learned from these critical experiences. The violence and riots influenced the organization's decision to include Issei within the leadership.

However, the CRC did not develop its identity only through reactions to wartime experiences. It was very proactive with the Issei's needs within the community. As a self-declared welfare organization, the body saw care for its constituents, especially the struggling Issei, as a top priority. In the early meetings, the board discussed the Issei as a vulnerable or at-risk group of the community because the Issei struggled with the harsh reality of postwar life. First and foremost, they lost much of their material resources, like money and housing. In addition, the Issei lacked the social skills necessary to work outside the Japanese American community. Many Issei could not speak English fluently, and they were still classified as enemy aliens.[43] The CRC viewed the Issei as important members of the community, and its policies and actions reflected the this evaluation. However, the organization went beyond valuing the Issei, and they invited the Issei into the organization's leadership.

The government authorized the Nisei to create a resettlement agency for Japanese Americans, but at first, they did not like the Issei's participation within the leadership of

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[42] Nishi, 6.
[43] Ibid.

the organization. However, the government's reluctance did not deter the CRC's Nisei leaders, and within its first few meetings of 1945, the CRC voted to include Issei into the leadership. The first president of the CRC, Harry Mayeda, a Nisei, stated "Issei participation in the formation of the Chicago Resettlers Committee was essential."[44] As the meeting continued, they put the motion to a vote and discussion. Mr. Masuda, a Nisei, was nominated for president, but he declined and hoped to elect an Issei. However, Mr. Matsunaga was Mr. Matsuda's patron, and he was also an Issei. In a brief statement, "Mr. Matsunaga expressed the belief that for the public relations and for the sake of the majority of resettlers who are Nisei, a Nisei should be president."[45] Interestingly, the Issei's wished the Nisei generation to lead the Committee, even while the Nisei pushed for the Issei's inclusion. Regardless of the sincerity of these overtures, the fact remained that the CRC leadership was now composed of Issei and Nisei.

In the end, both generations would be satisfied and represented on the Committee. The Issei held the positions of the vice-president, treasurer, and two auditors. The Nisei held the president and secretary positions of the CRC.[46] The Nisei became the public face and voice, and the Issei managed the finances of the organization. The JACL, struggled with leadership representation, but the CRC learned from its sister organization's mistakes. However, the organization's efforts to include different perspectives went beyond generational groups. The CRC also took measured steps to include other Japanese American religious groups and faiths.

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[44] Nishi, 6.
[45] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, November 13, 1945.
[46] Nishi, 6.

The Chicago Resettlement Committee endeavored to represent different parts of the Japanese American religious constituency, as well as partner with different external religious organizations. In an early meeting, the CRC board members noted the lack of Buddhist, Japanese American representatives. In November, 1945, a board member motioned that the Executive Board needed to "represent all religious groups and also sections of Japanese American residence in the city."[47] After the resolution passed, the Board decided to reach out to Mr. Kono of the Midwest Buddhist Church about the opening. Mr. Kono accepted the invitation, and he was not simply a token committee member. He participated in various subcommittees throughout the committee's years. As early as 1946, he served on a social welfare committee with a handful of other board members. This trend of religious inclusion continued in the following years. In 1949, board members drew attention to a lack of representation from the Zenshu Buddhist group, and the board agreed to extend Mr. Okuhara an invitation for the board. Mr. Okuhara's name appears within the next few meetings, so there is tangible evidence of the increased community connections. Eventually, these different relationships would help the CRC offer a diverse range of opportunities for its constituency. The CRC wished to provide an environment for all Japanese Americans, and its dedication to the generational divide and the different religious faiths are all examples of its commitment to that reality.

Throughout its founding years, CRC also did its best to represent or consider the interests of other subdivisions of the Japanese American community. The records failed

[47] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, November 13, 1945.

to detail a full list of every social group, but the CRC considered these smaller groups' needs worth addressing. In 1949, the CRC's analysis committee noted that "returnees from Japan after the war are finding themselves not able to fit into either the Nisei, Kibei[48], or Issei group." The CRC did not provide a specific definition for these returnees, but the returnees could be Japanese Americans who renounced their American citizenship and went to Japan or Japanese Americans stuck in Japan during World War II. In addition, another sub-group needed assistance: Hawaiian Japanese Americans. The Hawaiian Japanese Americans struggled because "there is a social problem of coming from different islands."[49] A large effort was made to connect with Japanese war brides from World War II. In 1953, the War-Brides Organization reached out to the CRC for help, and they helped the CRC with some of its events. The depth of the partnership was not revealed discussed in detail within the meetings, but the discussion of the War-Brides Organization's needs appeared in several monthly meetings.[50] The CRC's discussion and debate over these smaller divisions of the community demonstrated its care and commitment to Japanese Americans. This broad appeal and effort to create a strong community also helped the CRC organize partnerships with other Chicago Japanese American organizations.

The CRC also expanded its constituency through building working relationships with other Japanese American organizations. Generally, the CRC's political agenda was not its main financial focus or organizational goal. However, this did not mean that the

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[48] The Kibei were Japanese Americans who were educated in Japan, but returned and lived in the US.
[49] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.3, June 7, 1949.
[50] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.8, May 11,1953.

CRC refrained from any political activism or political partnerships. The CRC's political partnerships were mostly with other Japanese American organizations. One of the most famous organizations was the JACL, but the CRC also helped found other important Japanese American organizations.

The CRC, JACL, and a handful of other Japanese American organizations formed the Chicago Japanese American Council (CJAC)[51]. This council served as a discussion table for all the major organizations, as well as a place to find common ground on issues. The creation of the CJAC was proposed in June, 1946, and it was originally gathered as a Veterans' Testimonial Banquet. However, the attendees decided to make a more permanent entity. The attendees put requests into their respective organizations to help form the CJAC.[52] The CRC's board met in July, 1946 to discuss the CJAC proposal. The board discussed and amended different articles to the proposed CJAC constitution, but the board gave a unanimous vote to accept the CJAC's proposed constitution. After those proceedings, the board sent a formal application to the CJAC and nominated Mr. Kawasaki and Mrs. Nishi as its CJAC representatives. Later on, the Chicago Japanese Council and CRC worked together on issues, like city-wide discrimination or recreational activities. On a recreational and social level, the CJAC coordinated different organizations to lead a festival or event. In some cases, the CRC, JACL, or CJAC would take the leadership role within the activity or meeting. In a Chicago community civic

[51] In different documents the Chicago Japanese American Council is also referred to as the Chicago Japanese Council. In published documents, the full title is used, but within meeting minutes, the terminology differs from JAC, Japanese American Council, Chicago Japanese Council, Chicago Japanese American Council, etc.

[52] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.2, June 17, 1946.

organizational event, the CRC and CJAC debated about who should host the table. From the notes, it seemed like the CRC hoped the CJAC would take initiative, but the CRC took the lead after the CJAC asked its sister organization to organize the table and activities.[53] This partnership and others like it were invaluable because they helped the Chicago Japanese American community to coordinate and communicate with each other about important issues.

One prominent example of this cooperation was the National Conference on Japanese Americans. The conference was being held in New York on November 8, 1945. The conference was sponsored by the Committee on Resettlement of Japanese Americans of the Home Missions Council of North America. The conference took place at the Parkside Hotel in New York City. The CRC's presence and support were requested for the conference, as well as other Japanese American organizations. And, according to the meeting minutes, the conference's purpose had two main pieces: a discussion of "indemnifications in the loss of property in the evacuation and a recognition of the continuing increasing needs of resettlers."[54] The meeting minutes are vague whether the CRC sent a representative, but the records did contain a telegram sent with the CRC's support and endorsements:

> CHICAGO RESETTLERS' COMMITTEE ENDORSES REPARATION EFFORTS FOR LOSSES SUSTAINED IN EVACUATION. URGES

[53] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.2, 1947.
[54] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, November 13, 1945.

> REALIZATION OF CONTINUING INCREASING NEEDS WITH THE CENTERS CLOSING AND POSTWAR HOUSING JOB COMPETITION.[55]

These early efforts and activism for reparations would lead to a limited financial compensation for Japanese Americans. The Japanese American Claims Act of 1948 would allow Japanese Americans to file claims about economic losses. The second part of the telegram points out a dire housing circumstances for Japanese Americans. However, the CRC's political activism was still an important function for it to serve its constituency. The CRC eventually became involved with reparation efforts, but by and large, the CRC desired to focus on the immediate and daily needs of the Japanese Americans.

The CRC did not see itself as an organization solely for Japanese Americans, but as a Chicago welfare organization. In the 1946 annual report, the CRC defined itself as an organization

> Of citizen and non-citizen Japanese Americans, Caucasians, and Negroes; Catholics, Protestants, Buddhist, and Jews; representatives of business, labor, education, the press, and other occupations who believe unless well-advised leadership is given to the problems of Japanese ancestry, further physical and psychological isolation would become the trend[56]

The CRC's internal actions demonstrate this dedication to the community. However, the organization cultivated relationships with outside community organizations and groups. These organizations provided valuable community connections for the CRC

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[55] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, November 6, 1945.
In quoted telegrams, the text was always in caps, so the quoted text is also in all caps.
[56]JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1946.

and the Japanese American community. The CRC's lack of material or financial resources also spurred the community to build relationships outside of the organization and community. The CRC sought these relationships because they believed that connecting with Chicago's larger community was essential to resettlement.

> We believe the Chicago Resettlers' Committee is the kind of organization that warrants the support of all people, inasmuch as the Chicago Community at large should be concerned with what happens to people uprooted from their homes and business on the West Coast, forced to confinement without charges, and who were resettled in strange urban communities.[57]

The CRC sought Chicago's religious community's support through its charity organizations, and a group of religious organizations and denominations joined the CRC's Advisory Council. While the Advisory Council did not play a substantial role in daily operations, the council offered advice and assistance on various events or issues. In some of its 1945 meetings, the Executive Board desired to network with a handful of Christian denominations, like the Congregationalist Union, Methodists, and Episcopalians[58] However, the CRC also partnered with other religious faiths. The Jewish community joined and helped the CRC. Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein joined the CRC's Advisory Council and attended a handful of meetings.[59] Rabbi Weinstein's name can be seen on the yearly Advisory Council's membership list for some years. So, the partnership was far from a one-time event. However, the largest and most consistent religious partner was the Catholic denomination.

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[57] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1946.
[58] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, September 25, 1945.
[59] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, January 11, 1946.

One of the prominent and founding members of the CRC was Catholic Brother Theophane Walsh. Brother Walsh was one of the few *Hakujin* or white people to help found and sit on its Board. Brother Walsh had a longstanding history with the Japanese American community. In the years before the World War II, Brother Walsh's mission was in Los Angeles. Specifically, he served in the Japanese mission near Boyle Heights with the Maryknoll Mission. However, during the Internment, he voluntarily went with the Japanese Americans into camp.[60] This dedication and relationship with the Japanese American community lead to Brother Walsh traveling with Japanese Americans to the Chicago area. In the Chicago area, he ran the Catholic Youth Organization's Nisei Center (CYO), and he helped with community projects.[61] Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi provided high praise, and stated, "Brother Theophane Walsh…was thought of as 'one of us'".[62] Brother Walsh's prominence is quite significant for the CRC. There were advisory members, like Rabbi Weinstein, who were given positions on the Advisory Council, but Brother Walsh sat on the Executive Board.

These religious affiliations and relationships helped the CRC access resources for its constituency. The CRC saw one of its main objectives to encourage and cultivate Japanese Americans to be productive members of society. However, one large problem existed for the organization: money. At its outset, the committee's first practical goal was financial sustainability and survival. In its first recorded meeting, they established a budget and outline of the expenditures. "An approximate budget of $6,000 for a year,

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[60] Nishi, 6.
[61] "Biographies: Brother Theophane Walsh," Maryknoll Mission Archives, accessed November 10, 2016, http://maryknollmissionarchives.org/?deceased-fathers-bro=brother-theophane-walsh-mm
[62] Nishi, 9.

including $250 a month for the director and $150 a month for an office secretary was suggested."[63] However, the government did not provide them financial support. Instead, the CRC needed to raise the funds to grow.

Brother Walsh and the other religious organizations filled these giant needs for the CRC. Brother Walsh donated space and time of the CYO's space to the Chicago Resettlers Committee. In the beginning of 1945, the CRC met out of the WRA's office. The CRC did not have a building or house to gather in. However, in late November, 1945, the meeting minute's office heading noted that they began meeting in the CYO Center. In December, 1945, Brother Theophane said, "that the CYO could be used as a temporary office by the CRC until a space could be found." His openness and partnership allowed the CRC to establish its first semi-permanent residence and office. However, Brother Walsh did not just open the CYO to the CRC's executive board meetings and official proceedings. The CYO also hosted plenty of Japanese American community events. During the first few years, he allowed the Issei English classes, tea, crafts, games, etc."[64] Much of the early efforts and successes of the CRC was owed to the generosity of the CYO, especially Brother Theophane.

While the CYO remained one of the largest recreational and administrative centers, in 1945, the CRC discussed the creation of smaller administrative districts to help cover the large geography. The suggested settlements were proposed by Mr. Hikida.

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[63] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, April 27, 1945.
[64] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, April 27, 1945.

His proposal suggested five areas: "Far north, along Wilson and Winthrop, 2-near north, Clark and Division area, 3- South, 39th to 44th along Ellis and Drexel, 4- Far south, 55th to 63rd East, and 5- West."[65] Because of the CRC's expansive geography, the CRC relied upon other community and organizational partnerships to organize resources for its membership. In order to represent the Chicago Japanese American community, the CRC became involved with several committees around Chicago. [66] These different relationships helped the CRC communicate with the community and advocate for its constituents about issues. The CRC sought to achieve its organizational goals through these different relationships. These relationships helped the CRC administratively, but these relationships also provided practical benefits. The practical benefits for the Chicago Japanese American community started almost immediately after the CRC made the partnerships. The speed of the CRC's efforts and the almost instantaneous implementation can be best understood through the daily, life struggle for the Chicago Japanese American community.

However, the CRC did not solely partner with the CYO and Brother Walsh. By 1946, other organizations were opening their doors for the CRC's community events. In January 1946, the Chicago Buddhist Church held one of the CRC's first Go tournaments, and almost one hundred people attended the event.[67] Other Christian denominations

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[65] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, November 5, 1945.
The meeting minutes do not clarify if those specific divisions occurred. However, future meeting minutes and annual reports suggest that administrative divisions were created for the CRC.
[66] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1946. In the 1946 Annual Report, the CRC lists many of these groups: "Executive Board of the Division on Education-Recreation Coordinating Committee on Welfare Services to Persons of Japanese Ancestry, Lower North Community Council, Department of Social Service, Church Federation of Greater Chicago, Chicago Japanese American Council, and Chicago Council Against Racial and Religious Discrimination."
[67] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1946.

opened their doors to CRC's events. The South Congregational Church opened its doors to for English (as a Second Language) classes.[68] Other Christian organizations opened their doors. The Olivet Institute[69], a Church of the Nazarene denomination, opened its doors for a Biwa[70] concert for the Japanese American community.[71] These Christian denominations and many others contributed to the CRC through opening their buildings, and in some cases, they made monetary contributions.

In the 1946 annual report, the CRC published its financial data for 1945 and 1946. The goal of $6,000 was not met, but the CRC managed to reach roughly two thirds of its goal. The most significant group of donations came from religious organizations. Religious contributions made up most of the operating budget of the CRC. The Chicago Congregational Union provided $700.00, the Congregational Committee on Christian Democracy provided another $700.00, and the Unitarian Home Service Committee provided $800.00. The 1946 overall budget grossed total of $4,115.25, and the membership fees only totaled $592. Donations from organizations and people comprised 85% of the CRC's operating budget. Religious organizations contributions came in slightly less than 56% of the total 1946 budget. The importance of these religious connections was both financial and practical, and these relationships were a key factor in the CRC's sustained growth.

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Currently, the Olivet Institute is called Olivet Nazarene University.
[70] The Biwa is a native Japanese instrument, and it is similar to the European lute.
[71] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1946.

As previously mentioned, the religious organizations and communities donated a vast majority of the early financial capital. However, another significant partnership involved Chicago's business and richer citizens. Within the 1946 donation list, the Dearborn Glass Company donated $70.00 and National City Lines gave $60.00. Marshall Field, a famous businessman, donated $100.00 to the CRC.[72] While this list of donors is not large, the list does represent the CRC's early efforts to connect its organization and constituency with local companies and influential citizens. The CRC did more than just solicit donations and favor. They also made a concerted effort to involve outside members within its organization.

In late 1945, the CRC established an Advisory Council to help connect the organization with different people, groups and organizations. The meeting minutes on November 13, 1945 also indicated a push to put an African American on the council, but that decision was put off until a later date. At the time of the motion, the CRC was still reaching out to other organizations, and the documents indicate that the CRC wished to prioritize other organizational matters before expanding its Advisory Council. There was no indication who or if someone was selected for the committee, but if past actions are a pattern, an African American may have sat on the Advisory Board at a later date.[73] The CRC did not just create an Advisory Council for superficial reasons or appearances, but they also took the step to invite any and all Advisory Board members to attend all meetings (activities). The CRC also noted that "they (Advisory Council) will be kept

[72] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1946.
[73] There are later entries that indicate the CRC built organizational ties with African American organizations, but these relationships are not detailed significantly within the documents.

informed of activities through occasional reports."[74] There was an additional note at the end of the meeting that the Advisory Council should be invited to the organization's events, as well as the executive board meetings. The implementation and creation of the Advisory Council demonstrates the commitment of CRC's goal of a fully representational organization, as well as its desire to effect change with maximal community resources.

The CRC's organizational network did not stop with only national, political efforts. The main focus of the CRC remained on Chicago's stage. On a local level, the CRC did forge a partnership with the JACL, but the CRC's efforts were focused with connecting its constituency with other local economic and recreational services. Within the economic and recreational spheres, the CRC believed that discrimination lay firmly within its sphere of influence and duty.

The difficult and practical struggle of Chicago Japanese American's lives contradicts a firmly defined concept of Assimilation. The CRC advocated for an assimilated community, but the organization's definition was much more complex. The group's words and actions mirrored a desire to assimilate, but maintain its Japanese American identity. The organization utilized its resources to provide outlets and assistance for the community. Through these activities and support, the CRC did more to acknowledge the differences of the community's identity and even encourage it. In many instances and ways, the CRC stood up for the Japanese Americans rights as American

[74] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, November 13, 1945.

citizens. The vision for the CRC's welfare actions was mainly focused on three main areas of the community's life: recreational activities, financial support, as well as legal or political representation.

CHAPTER 2: THE CHICAGO RESETTLERS' SUPPORT FOR JAPANESE AMERICANS

When the Japanese American population settled into the Chicago area, the community was faced with several overarching issues. First and foremost, Japanese Americans lacked a community or a support network. The CRC endeavored to create a community for the Japanese Americans through recreational activities. The recreational activities would bond and help Japanese Americans become an organized community. However, the CRC's efforts did not stop with simple recreation. It also strove to help Japanese Americans financially. Through its referral service, the CRC helped connect Japanese Americans to housing opportunities, as well as all types of employment. The CRC also chose to represent community interests to the Chicago community. In legal or political cases, the CRC helped represent or advocate for the community. The CRC demonstrated that it was willing to stand up for its community, not simply cave to an external threat to be more American. The bad reputation of the JACL's wartime and postwar activities did not mean that all Japanese American organizations followed the same Assimilationist narrative.

In its first year, the CRC organized an Education and Recreation Committee to handle the different services. One of the most significant welfare efforts was the CRC's social and recreational events. They hoped that the recreational atmosphere would provide better places and events to socialize. The CRC acknowledged that one of the few places a Nisei felt accepted was within Nisei gatherings.[75] The CRC endeavored to serve

[75] JASCL LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Progress Report, Series 3, Folder 2.1, Coll 2006.018, 1947.

both Issei and Nisei, so the organization did its best to cater to both generations. In the few records that exist, the CRC had approximately ten thousand yearly attendees to activities and events from 1947 to 1950.[76] The total population of Japanese Americans was around twenty thousand people, and the reports indicate that possibly around a half of the community attended some of the CRC's recreational activities.

The larger turnouts started in 1946. By popular request, a golf tournament was arranged for the Japanese American community. The tournament supported two groups, one for the "younger" and one for the "older" Japanese Americans, and it was a "city-wide" tournament.[77] The CRC wanted to cater to Issei and Nisei, and its support of Japanese traditions as recreation was significant. One of the bigger events was a couple of large Go tournaments. The first tournament was held at the Chicago Buddhist Church, with about a hundred people in attendance. A second tournament was held at the CYO Nisei Center, and a crowd of "approximately one hundred and fifty persons participated in the two-Sunday event." Within a roughly year and a half work, the CRC had organized city-wide events, as well as events that had over a hundred participants. One of the much-celebrated events was the CRC's Hobby Show in October, 1946.[78] As the CRC became more financially solvent and better connected with organizations, it started to hold summer camps and retreats for boys and girls.[79] The CRC published a list of networked recreational organizations. These organizations were not necessarily the byproduct of

[76] These figures do not explain if or who was attending twice or multiple events.
[77] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1948.
[78] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.2, 1946.
[79] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Recreation-Education Program, Series 3, Folder 2.3, Coll 2006.018, 1948-1949.

CRC initiatives, but many were simply affiliated through a common goal and mission. The CRC saw itself as a hub for the community to connect with, and the list was exhaustive. On a list of two separate appendices, the CRC listed local churches[80], religious organizations[81], civic groups[82], special interest groups,[83] social clubs[84], and athletic teams[85]. If the CRC was only concerned with becoming American or avoiding being Japanese, then the organization would not have supported all these types of activities. However, the CRC endorsed a few different types of Japanese traditional events. The CRC wanted to provide all types of recreational activities for its constituency.

The CRC's recreational efforts were partially to help Japanese Americans to assimilate into Chicago. However, the CRC's recreational assimilation was superficial. The organization hoped to foster a better connection between the community and the greater Chicago community through these recreational activities. These activities did not necessitate the organization's intention to make its community more Caucasian.[86] The organization did not define its assimilation as a surrender to the greater Chicago culture and values. For the recreational tasks, the CRC created a two-person team to address the

[80] The list included Japanese American and other types of churches, i.e. Presbyterian Japanese Christian Church and St. James Church of Christ.
[81] This list was mostly youth gatherings for the aforementioned churches.
[82] This list included an assortment of organizations from the JACL to Businessmen's Group to the Mutual Aid Society.
[83] This group consisted of mostly cultural organizations, like the Shin Yu Kai, Senyru Kai, Gaka Guild, Chicago Nisei Athletic Association, and others.
[84] The social clubs appeared to be local groups of neighborhood kids. The list includes names, like Debonaire Girls, Charmette Girls, Blackhawk Boys, Silhouette Girls, Club Marquis Boys, and others.
[85] This list appears to be a list of teams from different neighborhoods or regions, but the list only provided names of the teams, like Dale Cleaners, West Coast, Gremlins, Collegians, etc.
[86] JASCL LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Progress Report, Series 3, Folder 2.1, Coll 2006.018, 1947.

Issei and Nisei's specific needs. The Nisei's recreational coordinator role fell to Abo Hagiwara, who served on staff of the "Boys' section of the Cleveland Y.M.C.A." To the Issei generation, Mr. Jack Yasutake took over as the Issei recreational coordinator. According to the report, their job descriptions were to "have organized groups, meetings, and other social activities in the nearly every area of the resettler residence."[87] For these efforts, the two coordinators also recruited volunteers to help organize the recreational activities. The CRC's partnering or hiring of these two recreational coordinators signified a departure from its initial centralized authority. These two men would be given the authority to coordinate all of CRC social activities.

However, in the coordinator's job descriptions, there was one large difference involving goals. The CRC stated that the Issei activities were to encourage solidarity because of their age and background. However, with the Nisei, the CRC hoped to use recreation as a tool to help them acclimate to Chicago. Herein lies one difference with the definitions between Assimilation and assimilation. A singular aspect of the organization or even a part of an organization did not represent all of the ideals of the CRC. While it is true that the CRC quoted assimilation as part of its process, assimilation did not necessarily include holding a white, middle class standard as the primary part of community's identity. In a similar way, the CRC's referral service could have advocated for Japanese Americans to live only certain places or search for certain types of jobs or more prohibitive with its resources. However, the CRC's referral services sent people to different places for housing or employment. The referral service was ultimately

[87] JASCL LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Progress Report, Series 3, Folder 2.1, Coll 2006.018, 1947.

pragmatic, and if the CRC intended to promote a white, middle class ideal, then its referral services could have been one of the strongest areas to emphasize these ideals.

The CRC's referral service targeted several major needs. The first referral service was housing. From the first meetings in 1945 to 1950, the executive board thoroughly discussed and addressed the subject of housing and housing discrimination. The CRC also assisted the community with employment opportunities. The CRC helped resettlers connect to job opportunities. The most ambiguous of the welfare assistance was the CRC's counseling services. The records were not clear about the extent and services, but the CRC provided a number of counseling services for Japanese Americans. These three different types of welfare efforts were no small feat. The CRC records reflect that an average of two hundred Japanese Americans per month walked through its doors for welfare assistance.[88] The CRC potentially served almost a tenth of the Japanese American community a year through its welfare assistance.

In 1946, the committee on housing sent "circulars to all hotel and apartment-house managers among Japanese Americans requesting them to report vacancies, which will be kept on central file."[89] Depending on the year, the CRC's records indicated better or worse times of housing availability, but it did not record what types of adjustments, if any, the organization could implement to help Japanese Americans. According to the report, many of the types of residences were not optimal because most Japanese

[88] The records are not always consistent. Some reports are missing months of data, others do not specify what type of referrals, or a few reports only record the general numbers.
[89] JASCL LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Series 1, Folder 1.1, Coll 2006.018, February 12, 1946.

Americans lived in some type of small apartment or boarding houses. As far as the number of housing referrals per year, the average of the referrals per year was about two hundred per year.[90] The referral process worked through the business and organizational connections with the CRC. The CRC recorded that Japanese Americans spread throughout the city because of the lack of housing, and in 1947, the CRC recorded that approximately ten thousand resettlers resided on the South side, approximately five thousand on the Near North side, and another five thousand on the North and West sides.[91]

The CRC's employment referral was its highest demanded referral service, and it numbered around one hundred per month. These employment referrals steadily remained in high demand for many of the early years. The CRC created an Employment Committee that connected the community with recruiters and personnel department representatives to better refer the community to jobs.[92] Later, some annual reports publicized some of the employment success. The CRC provided job referrals for professional and manual labor, but manual labor was more common. Both white and blue-collar jobs were set together as successes.[93] In the 1947 annual report, the CRC mentioned that one younger Japanese American became an executive of a promising

[90] 1946 had 159 housing referrals. 1947 had 114 housing referrals, and 1948 had 394 housing referrals. A possible reason for this number being much lower than the employment numbers is that a household contains multiple persons. However, the reports do not indicate family sizes or counts within its statistics.
[91] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1947.
[92] Ibid.
[93] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1948.

business firm, as well a few Nisei women who "found themselves positions with institutions or business firms."[94]

The CRC's documents indicated that these job or housing referrals were to other social welfare organizations or other connected groups and people. The CRC viewed itself as a hub where Japanese Americans could come to for job referrals and housing referrals, and the housing and employment referral service was the backbone of the CRC's referral efforts. However, these two services demonstrated the CRC's commitment to different social classes and groups within the community. The CRC provided both professional and manual labor jobs, and its housing service was equally spread out. While the CRC hoped for more financial solvency, the organization did not necessarily attempt to only define success through its mirroring of white, middle class standards. Counseling was the third major category of service, but it was much larger and ambiguous category. Counseling covered a broad range of topics and needs of the community. The counseling efforts were well-documented, but the category was poorly defined because of its expansive nature. Counseling documents included family classes, Internment trauma surveys, as well as legal assistance and political representation. All of these services are considered types of counseling. However, the category failed to give a good idea of an exact definition of counseling. Regardless of the definition, counseling was meant to treat and help Japanese Americans with recovery from Internment.

The JACL was often criticized because of its intransigence and inability to acknowledge the Japanese American traumatic experiences. In contrast with some of the

[94] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1947.

JACL's efforts, the CRC adopted a broad counseling program. The organization hoped the program would help the community transition out from the traumatic experiences of the camps. The counseling service included larger projects, but also efforts in a classroom setting. From the records, there were at least two general surveys about Japanese American's psychological health.

One of the first counseling efforts was the CRC's psychological survey of the Nisei in Chicago. The organization hoped the study would better equip it to handle the Nisei's problems. The CRC surveyed a large group of Nisei. Dr. Charlotte Babcock, physician and staff member of the Institute of Psychoanalysis, headed the survey and study in 1949 and 1950. About 15 Nisei social workers assisted with the project. One of the main Japanese American contributors was Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi. She worked and assisted the project to help the CRC, as well as complete her graduate schooling and work.[95] The researchers revealed and published their findings in 1950, and they came to several important conclusions.

One of the most important conclusions of the study was that the Nisei was conflicted about their identity and desired to "be like Caucasians." However, the Nisei's practical application wanted to "place individual satisfaction at the top over family obligation."[96] Herein, the Nisei struggled with their cultural identity. The desire for freedom clashed with their "signs of having the strength of Japanese culture." One of the relevant Japanese

[95] Wu, 38.
[96] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettles' Committee, Nisei Personality Correspondence and Reports, Series 3, Folder 2.6, Coll 2006.018, May 1949-May 1952.

cultural values was onryo[97] or "circumspection and restraint to avoid burdening, disturbing, or embarrassing others."[98] According to the report, "Nisei are caught in a terrific conflict over values held by parents." They wanted to be more independent, but they also cared about their family and culture. The Nisei's strong feelings of anxiety reflected their conflicted thoughts towards culture, racial identity, and their precarious place in America. However, the study concluded that the Nisei's mindset was "indispensable to an understanding of the adjustment of the Japanese in America."[99] The CRC did not ignore the struggle of racial and social identity with the Japanese American community, but the CRC tried to alleviate the anxiety and worry through the different discussion classes and programs.

By 1952, the CRC offered a various types of family counseling classes. These classes became one of the discussion forums of the organization. The various classes included topics, like "What About Discipline?"; "An Ounce of Prevention"; "Health and Your Child"; and "Our Sansei Children".[100] These different topics were both practical and important because the CRC hoped to have connect these practical discussions to larger conversations about identity and meaning.

These events also garnered community support. The support organizations included the JACL, Midwest Buddhist Church, Christ Congregational Church, Ellis Community

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[97] The primary source states *onryo*, but this is most likely a typo. *Onryo* means "vengeance," but *enryo* means "circumspection" or "restraint to avoid burdening others."
[98] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettles' Committee, Nisei Personality Correspondence and Reports, Series 3, Folder 2.6, Coll 2006.018, May 1949-May1952.
[99] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettles' Committee, Nisei Personality Correspondence and Reports, Series 3, Folder 2.6, Coll 2006.018, May 1949-May1952.
[100] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Child Guidance-Speeches, Series 3, Folder 2.6, Coll 2006.018, November-December 1952.

Center, and Nisei Womens Club, but they all sponsored the classes and discussion. Most of the classes centered around how to train and raise a child and family, but the class about Sansei children reflected the conflicted thoughts and feelings about their situation. For example, one class question asked its participants, "How Can We Secure Our Children From Prejudice?"[101]

A secretary or recorder wrote down a summary of this question and the other questions, and he or she included observations from the group and speaker. The discussion of the Japanese American community was honest about assimilation. The survey class confirmed that the Nisei generation were conflicted with their Japanese and American identity. The discussion openly acknowledged the Nisei's desire and aspirations to assimilate.

However, one of the most important aspects of the discussion revolved around the differences between the Nisei and Issei parenting beliefs. The class noted that Nisei wanted to raise their children differently. "Emphasis on catering to the Caucasian is changing. Many Nisei resented having their parents tell them to give up a toy to another child because he was white." [102] Because of their childhood experiences, the Nisei did not want to create an ingratiating attitude towards Caucasians within the Sansei because the Nisei had self-respect and a desire for equality. They wished to raise their children to deserve respect from other members of society. The Nisei did not want their children to bow to or ignore the same racial pressures, like they had to as children. While the Nisei

[101] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Child Guidance-Speeches, Series 3, Folder 2.6, Coll 2006.018, November-December 1952.
[102] Ibid.

wanted to be more American, they hoped their children would not think of themselves as inferior to Caucasians.

During its early years, the CRC also recorded the mental health of the Issei. At many points, the meeting minutes and annual reports always emphasized the lack of community and loneliness of the Issei. The CRC saw the Issei as one of the most vulnerable groups of its constituency, and many of its initiatives reflected the desire to enfranchise and help the Issei. One of the most important services to the Issei was legal translation work. In an annual report, the Issei struggled with much of the legal paperwork surrounding their lives because of the language barrier and their age. The report mentioned that the Issei struggled to apply for "unemployment compensation, old-age pensions and relief funds, evacuation claims, legal assistance, and health and welfare problems in general."[103] The CRC's translation work attempted to alleviate some of this problem, but the organization readily acknowledged the difficulty of the translation process. "Approximately half a day must be spent on each case in interpretation alone."[104] In 1948, the Japanese American Claims Act was one of the first pieces of national legislation the CRC assisted in carrying out.[105] The CRC allowed the JACL to take the lead role, but it supported the JACL through its assistance with administrative tasks. It became an access point for forms because there was a shortage of forms, as well as hosted a small gathering about the forms and filing process. The meeting was meant to be a general informational meeting,

[103] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1948.
[104] Ibid.
[105] The issue with the law was that it required proof of loss. Many Japanese Americans did not have intact financial records to reflect their losses.

not an in-depth guide because the CRC wanted the difficult legal duties to be left for attorneys or lawyers.[106]

However, the CRC took a proactive stance to the Issei's legal struggle. Some of the CRC's sponsored language classes were also treated as citizenship classes. In later, more developed classes, the CRC provided a diploma equivalent to the "first papers for citizenship." The CRC hoped that "If the diploma is good at any time for first papers… future aspirants for citizenship may take advantage."[107] Unfortunately, at the time, the Issei were not eligible for citizenship, so the English/citizenship classes were only a step towards the Issei's dream. After the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 passed, the Issei were eligible to become citizens. Almost immediately, the CRC altered its education curriculum to help the Issei become naturalized citizens.[108]

The CRC's sponsorship of the generational identity discussion, as well as the citizenship discussion demonstrated its commitment and willingness to support the community handle and discuss the difficult topics. The efficacy of its efforts was not tangible or quantitative, but the organizations large efforts demonstrate that Japanese American organizations cared for its communities. The Resettlement period is often overlooked for later years because of the connections between Internment and Redress,

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[106] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Annual Report, Annual Report, Coll 2006.018, Series 3, Folder 2.2, 1948.
[107] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.1, June 27, 1949.
[108] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.8, May 11,1953.

but the CRC demonstrated that large organized efforts to fight discrimination started early.

The CRC's effort to fight discrimination on a more localized level demonstrated a central difference between itself and the JACL, as well previous historical discussions. However, the CRC was not the first ethnic organization to fight against Japanese American discrimination. Many West Coast, student Christian associations with Japanese American participants fought against local discrimination in and around college campuses. These Christian associations were an early example of organizational fights against discrimination, but unlike the CRC, these Christian associations were more geographically limited to college campuses.[109] The CRC continued some of the Christian associations' dialogues and discussions, except with a much larger audience.

The CRC's desire to fight discrimination was tested in February of 1946. The Education Department's Board of Education refused to hire Tom Hayashi, even though there were teaching positions available. The Board of Education stated that "they were afraid of the consequences when the veterans returned." However, these statements did not placate the CRC. Instead, the CRC suggested that the CRC's director phone and send letters to the Board of Education. The CRC also noted that letters should or would be sent to civil liberties and race relations organizations. On March 26, 1946, the CRC discussed a meeting with Tom Wright of Chicago's Commission of Human Relations.[110] "Mr.

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[109] Hinnershitz, 70.

[110] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.2, March 26, 1946.
The Mayor's Commission of Human Relations was created in 1943 to combat discrimination, and it was founded as a reaction to the Detroit race riots of 1943. The original intent was to mediate disputes and crises between black and white Americans. However, after World War II, the Commission also helped the

Wright…suggested that a formal protest be made, requesting that Mr. Hayashi be placed on permanent teacher-placement list…and that a history of the case and a copy of the protest be sent to the Civil Liberties Committee."[111] Unfortunately, the meeting minutes did not mention this case again, so the efficacy of the protest is unknown. Nonetheless, the CRC's fight against discrimination demonstrated its commitment to helping its community grow, not surrender to the larger culture.

The CRC's legal and political activism was a central pillar of the CRC's fight against discrimination. The CRC's working relationship with Tom Wright did not end after the meetings in 1946. He met with the CRC again when a new and much larger issue was brought to light. In 1949, the CRC became embroiled in a much larger discrimination case about Japanese American burial rights in the greater Chicago area.

The Chicago Japanese American community struggled with a difficult dilemma. "Before a body of a soldier can be disinterred from foreign soil and returned to this country for burial, the cemetery in which the burial is to occur must be named."[112] The historical records also noted that Japanese American families in Chicago had to name national cemeteries, like Rock Island to bury their sons. This difficult situation also applied to civilian Japanese Americans. No civilian Japanese Americans could be buried in Chicago's cemeteries, and this issue appeared several times since the Japanese

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Japanese Americans. Mr. Wright was one of the representatives of the Commission. The Commission is known today as the Chicago Commission of Human Relations (CCHR), and it, at least nominally, does similar duties to its historic ancestor.

[111] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Coll 2006.018, Series 1, Folder 1.2, February 12, 1946.

[112] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Chicago Cemeteries-Survey and Memoranda, Series 4, Folder 1.7, Coll 2006.018, 1947-1949.

American community settled into Chicago. In fact, some Japanese American families had to cremate their dead and keep the urns within their own homes.[113]

Through a public broadcast announcement, the CRC publicized the burial discrimination occurring in Chicago. On January 2, 1949, the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) issued a statement about Chicago's maltreatment of World War II, Japanese American veterans. In a scathing statement, ABC's Drew Pearson stated:

> ATTENTION EX-MAYOR KELLY OF CHICAGO—DURING THE WAR MR. MAYOR CHICAGO DID A GREAT JOB FOR SERVICE MEN...ANOTHER OUTFIT THAT DID A GREAT JOB FOR ITS COUNTRY WAS THE JAPANESE AMERICAN 442D REGIMENT…BUT NOW THE BODIES OF THE HEROIC 442D REGIMENT[114] ARE BEING SHIPPED HOME, AND THE ONCE BIG-HEARTED CITY OF CHICAGO TODAY REFUSED TO GIVE THESE MEN A FINAL RESTING PLACE. THESE MEN WERE GOOD ENOUGH TO DIE FOR THEIR COUNTRY. BUT BECAUSE OF CHICAGO'S AFTER DEATH RACE DISCRIMINATION LAW, THEY ARE NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO BE BURIED IN CHICAGO.[115]

On January 3, 1947, Chicago's Commission of Human Relations met with Japanese American civic organizations, Christian and Buddhist pastors, as well as Catholics and Jewish groups.[116] Civic organizations, like the CRC and JACL were present for the meeting. While the CRC was not necessarily the largest contributor to the meeting, its involvement demonstrated the CRC and Chicago Japanese Americans' desire to fight

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[113] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Chicago Cemeteries-Survey and Memoranda, Series 4, Folder 1.7, Coll 2006.018, 1947-1949.
[114] This was the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. The 100th Battalion/442nd was a Japanese American regiment, and it would be nicknamed the "Purple Heart Regiment" because of the number of casualties.
[115] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Chicago Cemeteries-Survey and Memoranda, Series 4, Folder 1.7, Coll 2006.018, 1947-1949.
[116] Encyclopedia of Chicago, "Mayor's Commission on Human Relations," accessed, October 25, 2017, http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1444.html.

against discrimination, not cave to any white, middle class ideals. The reason for the presence of multiple religious organizations was all of the religious organizations owned or had connections with cemeteries. A couple of news reporters from the *Chicago Daily News* and *Chicago Sun-Times* sat in on the meeting because they were reporting this new story. The first meeting helped introduce the participants and set the discussion stage.

During the first meeting with the Commission, the Commission acknowledged that it was informed of this discrimination in early 1948. A Mrs. Mukoyama[117] sent a letter to the Commission about the burial discrimination because the Chicago cemeteries forbid burials of citizens of Japanese ancestry[118], whether in the charters, by-laws, or regulations.[119] The Commission discussed the issue at the 1948 Chicago Conference of Civic Unity. From the Conference, Drew Pearson first heard and brought attention to the issue. Because of the broadcast, the Commission invited Japanese American organizations, as well as religious organizations to convene about this issue.

After this initial meeting, a second meeting gathered on January 7. At the second meeting, the most important attendee was Paul Klenk, the President of the Cemeteries Association of Greater Chicago. Klenk oversaw at least ten of the largest cemeteries in the greater Chicago area, and he confirmed to the group that the overwhelming majority of Chicago cemeteries under his jurisdiction had rules in places against other race burials.

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[117] Mrs. Mukoyama was also a member of the Chicago Japanese American Council.
[118] However, there was one major exception with Montrose Cemetery. However, the documents indicated that space was limited, so the cemetery could not remedy the entire problem.
[119] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Chicago Cemeteries-Survey and Memoranda, Series 4, Folder 1.7, Coll 2006.018, 1947-1949.

However, Klenk and other meeting participants did not come to the meeting without potential solutions. Klenk stated that he would recommend that every member of his association "join in a conference with the Commission on Human Relations to seek a solution to the problem. Such a conference also to include representatives of sectarian cemeteries, of the Church Federation of Greater Chicago and other civic groups." The Catholic representative stated that all Catholic cemeteries will bury Catholic dead, side by side without ethnic or racial discrimination.[120] The Commission invited cemetery organizations to convene about the issue in early February, 1949.

On Sunday, January 9, 1949, just after the second Commission meeting, Drew Pearson of ABC provided a radio update. Chicago Mayor Edward Kennelly phoned into ABC to defend himself and the city. He stated that he was not aware of the discriminatory burial policies, and Kennelly promised to do his best to change the policy. However, discussion and words were the beginning steps to address the issue, and the process continued on throughout the year.

From a later excerpt, the CRC revealed the community's steps to fight against the discrimination. The note was dated from January 31, 1949. The CRC and other participants viewed the plan as a two-step plan. First, the Japanese Council, JACL, and Mutual Aid would create a survey and study of the details about the cemetery issue. The second part of the resolution was waiting for the Illinois State Legislature's judgment. The CRC and other groups had sent documentation to the Illinois State legislature, and

[120] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Chicago Cemeteries-Survey and Memoranda, Series 4, Folder 1.7, Coll 2006.018, 1947-1949.

the legislature needed to allow cemeteries to permit multi-racial cemeteries."[121] The CRC's notes did not record the resolution, but future documents hinted at the success against burial discrimination. The organization's fight for Japanese American rights influenced events up to the state government.

The CRC wished to assimilate its community into Chicago, but it also resisted losing its unique identity. The CRC's recreational, housing, and employment policies were strategically assimilationist, but the organization viewed its goal as community financial solvency. Assimilationist historians believed the CRC's efforts capitulated to a white, middle class ideal, but the CRC fought for financial solvency and survival of its community. The organization advocated for assimilation, but its actions also acknowledged the unique identity of Japanese Americans. A closer examination of the CRC's agenda revealed the difficult reality of a new daily life of the Chicago Japanese American community. The CRC's efforts to create a community through recreation demonstrated its commitment to the preservation of Japanese American communities. The CRC's housing and employment referral goal was to create a community that could thrive in a new, place. The CRC's large investment into understanding the psychological trauma, loneliness, and other mental struggles of Japanese Americans pointed to its care for Japanese American community and its identity.

In Japanese American history, the Resettlement period is often neglected because of extended discussions about racial identity and civil rights. The Internment legacy is

[121] JASC LCA, Chicago Resettlers' Committee, Chicago Cemeteries-Survey and Memoranda, Series 4, Folder 1.7, Coll 2006.018, 1947-1949.

impossible to ignore, and even within this study, the Internment trauma and legacy affected the CRC's community building process. The trauma showed its influence through the recreational activities, educational classes, and board members' discussions. The trauma and identity struggle continued, but the CRC help the community with its burden. However, the CRC believed its Resettlement mission concluded and finished in 1954. The organization rebranded itself, but looked to continue the CRC's original legacy: serving the welfare of the community. The idea of Resettlement is a little explored idea, and even in a small glimpse of the CRC's role in Chicago, the complexity and richness of this time is there. The CRC played an instrumental role with community building in Chicago, and the organization's history reveals new possibilities and contexts for identity discussion. Unfortunately, the historiography often overlooks the Resettlement period as only a period of rebuilding, and prefers to discuss Resettlement in light of the identity questions or as a bridge to Redress.

The Chicago historical context and the CRC provides a new angle of discussion about Assimilationist ideas. The practical reality of the Chicago Japanese American community reflects the difficulty of equitably, conflating ideology with application. The organization's efforts to be representational of its community, rather than being prohibitive in its leadership selection demonstrate its commitment to its community. More importantly, the community building efforts demonstrate its commitment to maintaining a Japanese American identity. In the end, the CRC's beginning, short decade opens numerous possibilities and opportunities for the historiography to explore the Japanese American historical experience.

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