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Japan's Holy War and Sacred Campaign

By the REV. MALCOLM C. FREHN

Orthodox Presbyterian Missionary to Japan

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Frehn, in the first portion of this article, has voiced in typical Japanese style and language the present-day thoughts of a patriotic son of Nippon in order more forcefully to convey the intensity of the Japanese conviction that the flag of the Rising Sun is destined by the gods to fly over every corner of the globe. The Japanese psychology is uniquely illustrated in this unusual style of treatment.)

WAGA kuni wa Kami no kuni de ari. Our country is the country of the gods'. This statement is eternally true of our country, Japan, and cannot be said of any other nation on earth. We, great Japan, have existed before the dawn of history and our nation is the oldest in the world.

"When Izanagi and his wife, Izanami, produced the great eight-island country of Japan, these deities used the best of material, while the inferior gods of foreign nations made those nations of sea foam and mud. Japan's superiority over other nations is clearly manifested by her recognized might in world affairs.

"Where is the foreign nation that can boast a deity like our great Sun Goddess, Amaterasu Omikami? Her shrine in Ise is the Mecca of the entire Japanese people, standing guard over the empire and protecting the grand imperial family.

"The first human emperor, Jimmu, worshiped

Amaterasu Omikami and attributed to her divine power his success in conquering the evil spirits of Japan. In the twenty-six hundred years since the founding of our empire by Emperor Jimmu, we have never failed to worship the Sun Goddess, and today our veneration and worship of her is more earnest than ever before. Her almighty power guards our empire from foreign invasion, and when other nations are forgotten, great Japan will exist for ages eternal.

Hakko Ichiu

"The meaning of Hakko Ichiu is 'the eight corners of the universe under one roof'. When Emperor Jimmu ascended the throne of Japan in 2600 B.C. he uttered the words 'Hakko Ichiu'. Under the divine guidance of the Sun Goddess, he conceived the vision of the entire world dwelling in peace under the parental care of the emperor of Japan. For over twenty-six hundred years the vision of Emperor Jimmu has been nourished by our great nation, and now we begin to see that the gods of Japan are bringing this vision to fruition.

"The nations are beginning to see that only in Japan is there a stable government, peace, and plenty. Where is the nation that can boast a line of sovereigns as old as the Japanese nation? Revolution and political changes have taken place times without number in foreign countries. But Japan never changes her rulers. Her imperial family continues from ages eternal.

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EDITORIAL

Thanksgiving and Repentance

IN TIME of war it is more than ordinarily difficult to be thankful. The suggestion has been made that the time-honored American tradition of an annual day of thanksgiving had better be shelved for the duration. And yet it would not be at all difficult to draw up a long list of blessings for which we, the people of these United States, may well praise God on the twenty-sixth day of November in this year of our Lord 1942.

To name but a few of our blessings: we still have an abundance of food; our cities have not been bombed; to the present time—God alone knows what the future will bring—our losses in men have been small indeed when compared with the losses suffered by several other nations; in spite of wartime restrictions we still enjoy a large measure of liberty; and, whatever one's politics may be, it can hardly be denied that the recent election gave striking evidence that the processes of democracy are still functioning among us. In a word, we are highly favored above the peoples of many other lands.

There is a less obvious but even more abundant cause for gratitude to which we do well to give heed. It was pointedly expressed by Jeremiah in his Lamentations (3:22): "It is of Jehovah's mercies that we are not consumed".

That these words of the weeping prophet of Judah state a far more abundant cause for gratitude than the blessings enumerated above is not difficult to see. When we compare our present state with the sorry plight of almost all European countries, the difference is great indeed. But when we compare our present state with what we have deserved, the difference is incomparably greater. Not only are we deserving of all the misery which is rampant

on the European continent today; we have deserved nothing short of utter and complete destruction. How unbelievably merciful to us is God!

We have spurned the law of God. God's holy name is used in vain by women as well as men, by army officers as well as privates. Profanity gushes forth from the lips of the drunkard in the gutter and a candidate for the presidency of the United States on the public platform. God's holy day is desecrated as never before in our history. When our President assured us at the close of the prohibition era that the old-fashioned saloon would not return, he was right, for the modern tap-room, frequented by both sexes, is in many instances twofold more a child of hell. The sacred marriage relationship is violated unblushingly in the supposedly best families of the land. Vice abounds in the vicinity of soldiers' camps and navy yards, and those in authority wink at it. And all the time we keep prating, "God bless America". Woe unto us hypocrites!

Be not deceived. God is not mocked. What a nation sows it shall reap. The people that sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. In indignation the righteous God has lifted up His chastening rod and brought it down upon us. He who decreed in the beginning that the wages of sin would be death has begun to mete out that penalty to us. War, awful war, came to us. The call to arms was sounded. Homes were broken up. Ships were sunk. Men disappeared until the day when the sea shall give up its dead. The flower of our youth has begun to fall by the sword, machine gun and shrapnel. What is our response? Do we like Ephraim of old bemoan ourselves: "Thou has chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God"? Are we sighing: "Surely, after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded"? Alas, instead the words of the prophet apply to us: "Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they

have refused to return". Worse even than that, instead of humbling ourselves we lift up our hearts in pride and our voices in boasting that our wealth, our industry, our manpower and our strategy will get us victory. We defy heaven and so deserve to be cast down unto hell.

Ah, says someone, but after all we are a Christian nation. Would to God that were true! Right here we come face to face with our most heinous national sin. The founders of this nation were indeed in large part Christians. The foundations which they laid were by and large Christian. The heritage which they left us their children was in goodly measure Christian. But we have spurned that heritage and destroyed those foundations. The Bible, the corner-stone of Christianity, we have rejected. The God of the Bible we have scorned. The Christ of the Bible we have robbed of His deity, and His atoning blood we have trodden under foot. Christianity has been stoned in our streets, and churches that call themselves by the name of Christ have not merely stood by in silence, but have gladly taken care of the clothes of those who cast the stones, yea, have themselves eagerly taken part in the stoning. The dechristianization of the American people has been in process for a long time. In recent decades it has progressed apace. Today it is dangerously near to completion. The epithet *pagan* describes us more accurately than does the adjective *Christian*. To be sure, we like to retain the Christian name, but nominal Christianity is hypocrisy. Certainly, we still hold to many Christian forms, but formal Christianity is a sham. And most assuredly, we would cling tooth and nail to such products of Christianity as civil and religious freedom at home and law and order in international relationships. We would give our very lives for these. But do we not realize that the nation which spurns Christianity itself cannot long enjoy its benefits? We desire the fruits of Christ's labors, but the Christ Himself we once more crucify.

What mercy that we are not consumed! What inestimable mercy that we are not destroyed! The long-suffering of God to usward far surpasses comprehension.

May God forbid that on Thanks-

giving day of this year we, the people of America, should strut to our places of worship to thank God, after the manner of the Pharisee, that we are better and stronger than other peoples and to vaunt our national virtues and boundless resources.

On the contrary, may we repair to our places of worship with bowed heads and in the spirit of the pub-

lican who dared not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast and cried: "God, be merciful to me a sinner!"

Then we shall be in the proper mood to give thanks. For the deeper our sense of sin and guilt and worthiness of ruin, the more profound will be our gratitude to God for His mercies.

—R. B. K.

Today in the Religious World

By THOMAS R. BIRCH

A Congressional Bow to Religion

WE ARE encouraged by the fact that, a few days before the national election, Congressman William E. Hess of the Second Ohio District came out strongly in favor of religion. Specifically, he favored injecting it into the declarations of the leaders of the nation in this time of crisis. "Total absence of any religious note in the patriotic utterances of our national leaders" was lamented by Congressman Hess, who added that "in all our past wars, religion has been a source of strength and courage to the nation, but in this one, so far, we seem to be depending upon a materialistic concept of life. I think this is a mistake, because this fight is going to be hard, and in hard battles men find they need something more than materialistic considerations and juke-box music to inspire them". We wish that many more of our national leaders sympathized with Congressman Hess. We recognize the fact that his statement seems motivated by something less than true Christian zeal and lays its emphasis strongly upon the practical advantages to morale that could be obtained by the judicious use of religion, but nevertheless we are cheered by even this crumb of consideration.

Quisling Bans Luther

Premier Vidkun Quisling, Norwegian puppet ruler for the Nazis, has forbidden Norwegian congregations to sing the traditional Luther hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God", because it contains the words, "And were the world with devils filled, all watching to devour us". Quisling, you see, is beginning to be chased by the little men; he is beginning to see ghosts behind doors, and to hear the

things that go bump in the night. He has been told by the leprechauns that Norwegian church-goers are interpreting the lines as referring to the Nazis. We expect soon to hear that he is governing Norway from under the parlor rug.

Meanwhile Bishop Eivind Berggrav, imprisoned primate of Norway, has started work on a translation of the New Testament into modern Norwegian. Although he is under strict surveillance at his country home near Oslo, which is surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by fourteen Quisling policemen, Berggrav is complacently setting about the gigantic task of a new translation. Dramatically, he has begun with the prison epistles of Paul.

More Typewriter Strategists

Nine hundred and eleven Protestant clergymen have signed a petition calling for the opening of a "new Western front" through the "Fascist spokes" of Spain and Vichy France. The petition was sponsored by Kenneth Leslie, editor of *The Protestant*. "If the United Nations are to win this war", said the petition, "it must be carried into the German hub of the Axis through these Fascist spokes and carried today when Germany is locked in battle with the Soviets. This attack—opening a Western front—has been requested of us by our sorely pressed and decimated Russian ally. If we hesitate and disaster overtakes us, we must blame only ourselves".

Among those who signed the petition were Bishop James Cannon, Jr., Richmond, Va.; Bishop U. V. W. Darlington, Methodist Bishop of West Virginia, Huntington, W. Va.; Dr. Frederick May Eliot, President of the American Unitarian Association; Dr.

Frank P. Graham, President of the University of North Carolina; Dr. John A. Mackay, President of Princeton Theological Seminary; and Dr. William F. Sunday, President of the Brooklyn Federation of Churches, Brooklyn, N. Y.

In our opinion, this petition represents a self-conceited meddling for which there can be no valid excuse in wartime. Given two military experts, one a Christian and the other not, the nation would do well to heed the voice of the Christian. But given nine hundred and eleven men, most of whom have not even a bowing acquaintance with the Christianity of the Bible and none of whom could qualify in any slightest respect as military experts, and the United Nations would do well to ignore or suppress their ill-conceived petition. When President Roosevelt, one fireside ago, slapped down the "typewriter strategists", we felt that he was being smug, ill-advised, and unnecessarily harsh. But if he was answering this kind of heckling, we sympathize with him.

Sky Pilots in the Groove

"Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" is the title of a song supposedly born at Pearl Harbor by a versatile chaplain who replaced a gunner shot by the Japanese. The song has sky-rocketed to popularity and can now be heard on our crystal set at any hour of the day or night. We think that the resourceful chaplain may have been both reverent and sincere when he first uttered the words. Certainly, they are strongly reminiscent of the historic "Trust in God and keep your powder dry". But in their present rendition by the nation's swing bands, they are undeniably offensive to any Christian soul. As a national violation of the third commandment, this song has no equal. In a day when America should be humbled and repentant before the chastening hand of the God she has forgotten, she profanes His name. While her towers totter and her bulwarks buckle, her icky soul puts on a zoot suit, grabs a licorice stick, and goes out of this world like any juke-box hepcat. As in Joseph Auslander's indictment of the modern poet,

"The fifes of the Lord are polluted
With melodies tickled and tooted
Out of the stops that once fluted
Tall silver songs for King Saul."