

Jehovah's Witnesses and the Empire of the sun: a clash of faith and religion during World War II.

Journal of Church and State - January 1, 2002

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Word count: 13647.

[citation details](#)

Following World War II, the atrocities carded out by Nazi Germany received a great deal of attention from the academic community, politicians, and the popular media. Even fifty years after the end of the war, civil lawsuits seeking restitution for stolen bank assets and seized bank deposits, as well as reparations for victims forced into slave labor, continue to be initiated against German financial and manufacturing institutions. Only in recent years, however, has similar attention also turned to the civilian experiences of those living in the Asian theater of the war. There were an estimated 13,966 civilians (1) confined in prison camps or subjected to forced labor by the Japanese military. Japan also stood accused of committing other crimes against humanity, including forced prostitution, mass rape, slaughter of civilians, cannibalism, biological warfare, and biochemical experimentation on live prisoners and civilians. Although the terms of the peace treaty, signed on 8 September 1951 in San Francisco, were intended to settle all claims arising out of the war, recent California legislation (2) calls upon Japan to pay reparations to the "United States military and civilian prisoners of war, ... the survivors of the 'Rape of Nanking,' [Nanjing] ... and the women who were forced into sexual slavery and known by the Japanese military as 'comfort women.'" This legislation extends the statute of limitations for lawsuits against Japan and Japanese interests arising out of crimes committed during World War II lawsuits to 2010.

Among those Japanese civilians taken prisoner were a significant number of Jehovah's Witnesses, whose religious beliefs and practices were out of harmony with the Japanese culture of the day. Now, the experience of Jehovah's Witnesses living under Nazi rule is well documented and widely publicized. (3) In her book, *The Nazi State and the New Religions*, Christine King concluded, "one out of every two German Witnesses was imprisoned, one in four lost their lives." (4) Similarly, the harassment of Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States has also been chronicled. A booklet, *Persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses*, summed up the experience of the American Witnesses: "Not since the persecution of the Mormons years ago has any religious minority been so bitterly and generally attacked as the members of Jehovah's Witnesses ... Documents filed with the Department of Justice by attorneys for Jehovah's Witnesses and the American Civil Liberties Union showed over 335 instances of mob violence in forty-four states during 1940, involving 1,488 men, women, and children." (5) In Canada, the treatment of the Witnesses was no different. Parents whose children refused to salute the Canadian flag were arrested and imprisoned while their children were seized and placed in foster care. (6) Historians and scholars have repeatedly and thoroughly investigated these wartime experiences. (7) Little is known, however, of the experience of Jehovah's Witnesses under Japanese domination during these war years.

During World War II, Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan, like their fellow religionists in North America and Europe, faced a desperate battle for survival. The Witnesses' understanding of Jesus' admonition that his followers were to be "no part of the world" (8) led them to conclude that bowing to the emperor, saluting "Heil Hitler," or saluting the national flag, were all gestures that constituted impermissible acts of disloyalty to their King and Leader, Christ Jesus. The primary conflict between the Witnesses and the Imperial Japanese government focused on the Witnesses' refusal to bow to Emperor Hirohito's image. The government's displeasure was clearly demonstrated with the mass arrest of 130 Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan and the Japanese protectorates of Korea and Taiwan in June 1939. (9)

Any official documentation about this period is difficult to locate and authenticate for a variety of reasons. First, the Witnesses themselves who survived the terrible ordeal, like their European

counterparts, viewed whatever they had suffered as simply the outworking of a Satanic attack against the congregation rather than a personal affront. So, when the war ended and they were able to congregate freely and resume their public ministry, the Witnesses did not look back in anger or with a desire for retribution or revenge. They viewed their personal stories as part of a larger issue of faith and as evidence of the ability of their God Jehovah to save and deliver. (10) Second, the chief corporate agency of Jehovah's Witnesses, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania (Watch Tower Society), (11) did not preserve these individual records and the experiences of the individuals who suffered. The Watch Tower Society's work was to assist and support the preaching of the good news. After World War II, the Watch Tower Society and individual Witnesses returned to the work of preaching and disciple making with zeal and determination. Third, there is little government data available to validate the experience of the individuals outside of the Watch Tower Society's meager archives. The late journalist and historian Arnold C. Brackman offered an explanation in his book *The Other Nuremberg*. He provided a detailed account of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), which was conducted in Tokyo from November 1945 to November 1948:

The Japanese militarists took advantage of the hiatus [the time between the surrender of Japan on August 16 and the technical surrender on September 2] to destroy evidence of war criminality by the warehouse. At War Ministry offices on Ichigaya Hill, bonfires glowed day and night as tons of records were burned. Similar fires crackled in other government buildings, at army and navy installations throughout the Japanese Empire, and at the headquarters of the Kempeitai and other units of the secret police. Among the documents destroyed were the transcripts, of all imperial conferences, all the records of the Supreme Council for the direction of the war, all the deliberations of the Cabinet and Privy Council, all files on prisoners of war, all orders and plans relating to the attack on the Philippines and Southeast Asia, and all the documents relating to the Manchurian, and Chinese campaigns (*italics in original*). (12)

Much of the evidence that was not destroyed remains classified by the United States government. (13)

Documentation of the Witnesses' experience in Asia comes largely from Watch Tower publications. That literature is invaluable in identifying individuals and events, but is limited a historical source, since its primary purpose was to provide spiritual encouragement to continue the preaching work rather than to provide documentation of a challenging missionary period. Nevertheless, the Watch Tower statistics are dependable. Information about the religious ministry of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide is preserved in a variety of ways. The Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, published annually by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., is the most accessible source of this information. Each Yearbook contains annual statistics as well as a brief narrative about the activities in selected countries. A sociological study by Rodney Stark & Laurence Iannaccone observed that, "The Witnesses are extremely statistically-minded." As to the reliability of the Witnesses' statistics, Stark and Iannaccone answered affirmatively:

There are three excellent and independent reasons to trust them. First, as will be seen, they often report "bad news"--declines as well as increases in membership. A second reason is that even very critical ex-members, who accuse Witness leaders of many sins, accept and publish these statistics. Finally, the statistics stand up very solidly when compared with the Canadian Census and the American National Survey of Religious Identification. (14)

With these statistics as the basis for investigation, survivors, along with their children, who recalled both their own experiences and the stories of their relatives, become the most accessible source of information about these experiences.

In 1879, the Watch Tower Society's first president, Charles Taze Russell, began publishing a Bible-based journal, *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* (Watch Tower). The Watch Tower contained a regular feature section entitled "International Scripture Studies Lessons" designed to assist those attending the Bible classes "to lead others into the fullness of the gospel." (15) Those groups, as well as interested individuals, kept in close contact with the Watch Tower Society by written correspondence. Portions of those letters were regularly published in the Watch Tower magazine for the benefit of the general readership. Much of what can be learned about the early

missionary work of Jehovah's Witnesses in Asia is revealed in those published letters.

DESCRIPTION OF THE WITNESS COMMUNITY IN JAPAN--1890-1915

As early as 1892, the Bible Students, (16) as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known, were deeply involved in spreading the Gospel message outside of the United States in a work they referred to as the "Home and Foreign Mission" work. (17) Correspondence with the Asian field indicates that the early missionary work of the Bible Students did not start among the Asians, but among foreign missionaries serving in Asia. The October 1887 edition of the Watch Tower published a letter to Mrs. Charles T. Russell, wife of the Watch Tower Society's first president, from an individual with the initials "C.B.D." She described herself as a missionary in Chefoo (Yantai), China, and thanked Mrs. Russell for sending copies of the Millennial Dawn and the Watch Tower. (18) Subsequent correspondence revealed that Miss C. B. Downing was a Presbyterian missionary. (19) She assured Mrs. Russell: "I am giving away and lending copies of the Millennial Dawn and my papers, and any time you can send me extra copies of the Watch Tower I can use them to advantage. I expect to see a good many missionaries from other parts of the country during the summer, as this is a health resort, and I shall scatter my Towers, and lend Millennial Dawns." (20) One of the recipients of Downing's letters was a Baptist missionary, Horace A. Randle, who also served in Chefoo, China.

Writing from Chefoo in 1898, Randle thanked the Watch Tower Society for sending two boxes of the Millennial Dawn and a large supply of tracts. He explained that he had been reading the Watch Tower Society's literature for two years and that he had been studying regularly along with his wife and children. About his background, Randle explained: "I have been a Baptist missionary in China since 1876." (21) Though Randle eventually resigned from the Baptist Foreign Mission Board and left the Baptist church in May 1898, he continued to share the Watch Tower Society's Bible literature with other missionaries. About his future plans, Randle explained: "My desire now is to reach all missionaries and other Christians (foreign specially) in China, Japan, Corea and Siam, and this can only be done by correspondence and advertisement, both of which methods I hope to use, to spread `abroad in these Eastern lands some knowledge of the present truth." (22) In the spring of 1900, Randle visited Watch Tower President Charles T. Russell at Allegheny, Pennsylvania. There he received some training in preparation for preaching in his native Britain. He shared the following experience regarding his work in Asia:

I was able to hold about a dozen meetings among missionaries in several stations, but my principal effort to reach the missionaries of the [F]ar East had to be done by correspondence, for they are scattered over thousands of miles of country, in some 500 different stations. For this purpose I had a circular letter printed In all we dispatched the following:--1847 to missionaries in China; 385 to missionaries in Japan; 72 to missionaries in Corea; 20 to missionaries in Siam, etc., making a total of 2324. The number of tracts sent out was about 5,000. (23)

In 1906, the Watch Tower Society sent William T. Ellis to several Asian countries to assess the possibility of a missionary effort in those countries. (24) When he returned to the states and published his report, the tone was not optimistic. Ellis concluded that there was no reasonable hope of a mass conversion in Asia, and that there was no reason to believe that a significant number of Asians would accept the teachings of the Bible. But he was not entirely negative and recommended that the Watch Tower Society devote some resources into the Asian field. He concluded that there should be some missionary work "with a view to do a harvest work among them--to seek for some of the Elect church amongst theme--`not many." (25)

The 15 July 1906 edition of the Watch Tower contained a letter signed "A. G.,--Japan." (26) A.G. explained that he had been a member of the West Japan Presbyterian Mission for nearly twenty-five years, but that he had recently read Millennial Dawn, and as a result of that reading, felt moved to resign from the Presbyterian Mission. In his letter to the Watch Tower Society, A.G. proposed that he stay in Japan and continue his missionary work using the publication Millennial Dawn instead of the teaching materials and doctrines of the Presbyterian Mission. He also suggested that a Japanese Christian whom he knew, "a man of literary taste and experience in translating," should translate The Divine Plan of the Ages, one of the volumes of the Millennial Dawn series, into the Japanese language. (27) The proposed fee for the translation was fifty dollars. There was no response printed

in the Watch Tower and no indication as to whether his proposal to have The Divine Plan of the Ages translated into the Japanese language was ever accepted.

In 1907, the Watch Tower again referred to plans for beginning missionary work in Japan, but these plans did not materialize. (28) It seemed that the effort had "miscarried" because of some problem on the part of the appointed missionary. (29) There is no indication whether this unspecified problem was connected with what "A.G." mentioned in the previous year or with some other missionary. Later in the same year, however, the Watch Tower reported that there was a foreign missionary effort underway that had succeeded in entering China. The report also noted that the Japanese could read the Chinese language. (30)

Russell was keenly interested in spreading the good news of the Kingdom in Asia. At their 1-10 September 1911, annual convention, the International Bible Students Association appointed a committee to tour the world and supply an unvarnished report of the true condition of religious affairs in Asia. (31) Together they visited Hawaii, Japan, China, Philippines, and India. The tour began in St. Louis, Missouri, on Tuesday, 5 December 1911. (32) On Saturday, 30 December 1911, Russell and the committee arrived in Yokohama, Japan, for the start of their 700-mile trip through Japan. In Tokyo, where Russell gave two public addresses, he noted that the Protestant missionaries he had met were considerably discouraged. Russell reported the trend of religious sentiment as being "toward infidelity, doubt, and atheism." (33)

Russell was encouraged by the trip to Asia, and he thought that his sermons were well received by the Japanese audience as well as by the Protestant missionaries who attended. (34) After Tokyo, the committee traveled to Kobe and Nagasaki before they left Japan on 4 January bound for Shanghai, China. In Japan, they visited nine Protestant religious services and gave brief addresses at two services. Russell acknowledged the work of the Methodist missionaries, but observed that most Japanese who attended churches did so for social gain rather than for worship. (35) After leaving Japan, members of the committee followed an aggressive travel schedule. (36) They did not travel to Korea, but arrangements were made to translate and print The Divine Plan of the Ages in Korean. The International Bible Students Association, with Robert R. Hollister as representative, published this Korean version on 18 March 1914. (37) The committee concluded that their missionary work had to take a different approach than that of their predecessors. They had observed that the Protestant and Catholic missions had focused on providing secular education rather than on spreading the Gospel message. The committee praised their efforts, but concluded that common education was best left in the hands of the government. (38)

Before the tour was completed, arrangements were made for Hollister, a New York journalist, to be the representative of the International Bible Students Association (I.B.S.A.) in Asia. Special tracts with Bible messages were prepared in ten languages and circulated throughout India, China, Japan, and Korea. (39) A Department of the Far East was established to spearhead the preaching work in Asia. Subsequently, William J. Hollister and his wife, together with Fannie L. Mackenzie (40) a woman of Scottish descent, spent most of 1915 traveling through India, China, Japan, and Korea. The Hollisters remained for about one year, while Mackenzie was able to stay longer. Robert Hollister, who was in Asia from 1912 to 1914, (41) mentioned in his convention report prepared for the I.B.S.A. that Mackenzie was "still carrying on the good work." The 1915 I.B.S.A. Fifteenth Souvenir Report, which contained Robert Hollister's report, also carded a picture of a Japanese man named Kodama with the caption "first Japanese helper." (42) Two other Japanese Witnesses, Hirose and Goto, were also associated with Hollister and Mackenzie, and they published a journal in Japanese called Banmin-No-Tomo ("The Friend of All People" or "Everybody's Friend"). Hirose first came in contact with the Bible Students while living in New York City. He returned to Japan with the purpose of spreading the message to his countrymen. Goto was a medical doctor and professed to be a Christian for thirty years before he started to read the Watch Tower around 1912. (43)

As generations of Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries had learned during their efforts to convert Japanese followers, the missionary effort was not an easy one. The differences in language and culture posed significant obstacles to making new converts. However, the Witnesses did have limited success. Some of these early converts would prove to be as faithful and loyal as fellow workers of the missionaries sent by the Watch Tower Society. In some cases, they and their

immediate descendants continue as active Witnesses today.

World War I brought severe problems for the Witnesses in America, Europe, and Canada. (44) Little attention could be given to new fields while they were fighting for survival at the headquarters. After the war ended, the preaching work gradually resumed, and attention could be given to foreign fields. On 6 September 1926, Junzo Akashi was sent as a missionary to Japan, Korea, and China. Akashi, who also served as translator, translated "Watch Tower" as Todai (lighthouse) sha (company or association), since he considered the Watch Tower as a means of shining the light of understanding. (45)

Upon arrival in Kobe, Akashi found an unorganized group of Bible Students, and he immediately opened the branch office there. Akashi arrived with copies of The Harp of God, a single-volume publication translated into the Japanese language designed to offer a discussion on the basic truths of the Bible. Kesamatsu Akamatsu soon joined him in the work and would become a board member of the Todaisha. (46) Shortly after his arrival, Akashi started work on translation and publication of Deliverance, a one-volume publication.

In 1926, the Watch Tower magazine was first translated into the Japanese language. (47) Although Akashi established a branch in Kobe, he quickly reevaluated the situation and moved the branch to Kyobashi, Tokyo. Still unsatisfied, he finally relocated the branch to Ogikubo, on the outskirts of Tokyo. Here the printing plant and office facilities were finally established. In 1927, Akashi's three sons joined him in Japan, but his wife remained in the United States and continued to associate with a local congregation. (48)

In 1927, the Japan office was directed to oversee the preaching work in Japan as well as in its protectorates, Korea and Taiwan. In the same year, Akashi organized a second Bible study group in Kobe, and started a new group study in Osaka. By the end of 1927, there were fifty-two Witnesses in Japan described as "earnest," and several large public meetings had been held in Tokyo, "great city [of] 2,300,000." After only a year in Japan, Akashi reported that the people of Japan are "all tired" of literature from Protestant and Catholic missionaries, and that the Bible Students were having difficulty selling their literature. (49)

The 1928 branch report to headquarters continued with an optimistic attitude, reporting twenty-two newly baptized Witnesses and the formation of two new study groups. But the situation was not as bright as the report indicated. Religious apathy was not the only reason why the distribution of Bible literature was a challenge for the new Bible Students. The report explained, that after many natural disasters, many Japanese people had been impoverished and found themselves in sore financial straits. (50)

The year 1929 was a difficult year for the organization. There were some unspecified disputes among the Bible Students. As a result, a number of "brethren in the field" split off from the I.B.S.A. The number of Witnesses who remained associated with the I.B.S.A. dropped dramatically from seventy-five in 1928 to thirty-seven in 1929. Internal differences would continue to challenge the organization, and there were growing problems and conflicts with those outside the congregation. In a growing spirit of patriotism and militarism, anything printed that was seen as challenging the government was not well received. In 1925, the Japanese government had enacted the "Maintenance of Public Order Act." The "Peace Preservation" law targeted the Communist Party. (51) The law forbade the forming of a company or society that would try to change the nature of the nation or oppose the private property system. Later, its application would be extended to suppress the educated class, religious organizations, and eventually the public at large. In 1928, the maximum penalty of the law intensified, as capital punishment or life in prison were added. At the same time, special police units were established to handle violators.

The 1 February 1929 issue of The Golden Age magazine brought the I.S.B.A. into conflict with the law. Akashi, the branch overseer was arrested and charged with violation of the Periodicals Act and fined one hundred yen (\$50). (52) The I.S.B.A. appealed to a higher court, but received no response. Despite these hardships and setbacks, the Japan branch was able to send two Japanese full-time missionaries to work in Shanghai, China; other Japanese missionaries went to Taiwan to preach. (53)

Despite the internal difficulties and the legal problems, the I.S.B.A. was beginning to enjoy some success in Japan. Jizo Ishii and his wife Matsue were two of the first Bible students to be baptized in Japan. (54) In 1928, while operating a tailor shop in Joto-Ku, Osaka, young Ishii obtained a copy of the book *The Harp of God*. After reading it, he was very quickly convinced that he had found the real truth of the Bible. He and his wife were baptized on 23 March 1929, and in September they were appointed as colporteurs (full-time preachers).

In their preaching, they used the publications *The Harp of God*, *Deliverance*, *Creation*, the *Watch Tower* and the *Golden Age*, as well as five booklets available in the Japanese language. Since the number of preachers was limited, the Ishiis preached in a large section of Japan that covered over three-quarters of the country, including major cities such as Osaka, Okayama, Tokushima, Kyoto, Nagoya, Yokohama, Tokyo, Sendai, and Sapporo. (55)

This large assignment did not last long, because in 1931, the Ishiis were appointed to work at the Tokyo branch office. At the small office and dormitory, the Ishii family took care of tailoring, mending, and pressing clothes for the other colporteurs. At times, those who worked at the branch had the custom of going out in teams of four to preach in nearby communities. They traveled by bicycle over the mountainous Hakone Pass and would travel as far as Numazu. During this time, one of Jizo Ishii's early memories was the announcement made at the 1931 I.S.B.A. district convention in Columbus, Ohio, announcing the organization's new name, "Jehovah's Witnesses." A Witness at the Tokyo branch built a shortwave radio so that they could listen to the convention while Junzo Akashi translated and explained the Bible talks. They heard Judge Rutherford, the *Watch Tower's* second president, call for the adoption of the new name "Jehovah's Witnesses," followed by a thunderous applause of acceptance by all who were present. This announcement was well received by the Witnesses in Tokyo, but many still referred to the organization as *Todaisha*. (56)

One of the families contacted by Matsue Ishii during her early colporteur work also had a long and faithful record in ministry. (57) This was the Miura family, who lived in a small town about twenty-five miles north of Sendai. When Katsuo Miura married in the spring of 1931, he was twenty-four years old, and his bride, Hagino, was seventeen years old. From Matsue Ishii, Katsuo Miura obtained *The Harp of God*, *Deliverance*, and other publications. Katsuo readily recognized that these materials contained the truth of the Bible. He paid a visit to the *Todaisha* headquarters in Tokyo, and, in turn, Junzo Akashi visited the Miuras in Ishinomori. It was there, in October 1931, that Akashi "baptized" the Miuras by sprinkling water on them in their private bathtub. Like many others, the Miuras were later rebaptized when they came to understand that full water immersion is a Scriptural requirement. In November, Katsuo and Hagino Miura became colporteurs. (58)

With great enthusiasm for what they had learned, the Miuras sold all their belongings by public auction, and went down to the *Todaisha* headquarters in Tokyo. They rented a room nearby in Suginami-Ku. The next day they started in door-to-door work, without anyone to train them in the preaching work. But they were anxious to distribute the message of the Kingdom as contained in the *Watch Tower* and *The Golden Age*, and what they lacked in skill was more than made up for in enthusiasm. Since there were no congregation meetings to attend, they simply preached to whomever they could find and worked on their own. They went from door-to-door everyday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., except on rainy days, when they stayed home and engaged in Bible study. (59)

In this way, the Miuras worked together in the preaching work and covered large sections of Tokyo before they moved to Kobe in 1933. Still very zealous for the preaching work, Hagino Miura, now pregnant, continued working as a colporteur, despite her physical limitations. The next year, while still in Kobe, Hagino gave birth to a son, Tsutomu. The Miuras remained in Kobe until the spring of 1935. Then they moved to Western Honshu where they continued their colporteur work in Kure, Yamaguchi, and Tokuyama cities. They finally settled in Hiroshima, where they shared a rented house with two other families.

Others zealously engaged in the mission work. In one instance, Saburo Ochiai and a young Taiwanese friend, left with a Mrs. Idei the books *Creation*, *The Harp of God*, *Government*, *Prophecy*, *Light*, and *Reconciliation*. These books were to become her teachers and companions in the years following. Recognizing her obligation to preach, she later ordered some 150 booklets from the

Todaisha and began distributing them in the early 1930s. Her work did not go unnoticed by the authorities, as she herself recounts:

The arrest of the Japan branch servant was announced in the newspaper after I had been preaching for a few months. The repercussions were felt immediately, because in making return visits on people who had obtained literature I was told that detectives had come and confiscated what I had placed with them. Then four detectives came to search our house. They took all our books and magazines. I was questioned by one of them at the local police box. He admitted, however, that I was not doing anything bad and released me. (60)

Idei's arrest signaled the beginning of the open conflict between the Witnesses and the Japanese government under Emperor Hirohito.

CLASHES OF CULTURE AND RELIGION -- JAPAN

Even before the "Manchurian Incident" of 18 September 1931, (61) aggressive militarism was on the ascendancy in Japan. Hitler became chancellor of Germany on 30 January 1933, (62) the same year of the first arrests among Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan. While the main members of the Todaisha were arrested on 16 May 1933, Akashi was arrested on 22 May 1933, and examined by the public procurators on suspicion of having violated the 1925 Peace Preservation Law, which was originally intended to suppress the Communist Party. (63) In 1935, with the arrest of Satomi Hakamada, the Japanese Communist Party's Central Committee was disbanded. The Peace Preservation Law, however, remained in force and was used to target social democrats, liberals, and anyone who conducted "anti-government" activities, including religious organizations such as Ohmoto-kyo, Tenri Honmichi, and Todaisha. The jailed Witnesses were soon released because of a lack of evidence, but prohibitions were placed on the distribution of their literature.

According to the 1947 Yearbook, a simultaneous arrest of all of Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan, Korea, and Formosa (Taiwan) was carried out in 1939 by the Japanese government. (64) Volume I of Study of Resistance in War Time, edited by the Institute for Study of Cultural Science, Doshisha University, Kyoto, reported that:

On June 21, 1939, in one swoop, 130 others of the Todaisha were arrested--ninety-one (including Junzo Akashi) in Tokyo and eighteen other prefectures in Japan, thirty in Korea and nine in Taiwan. The Todaisha headquarters in Tokyo were surrounded by more than one hundred armed police, and a thorough search was made. Here, twenty adults and six children were arrested. Akashi, his wife, and second and third sons were put in the lockup at Ogikubo police station. (65)

At that time, any books, booklets, and periodicals from the branch were also confiscated. The 1947 Yearbook contained Akashi's own recollections of the morning's activities:

One morning at 4:45 the brethren in the Branch office of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society were awakened by a knocking at the door. The office building was surrounded by more than a hundred armed police. Every corner of the building was searched carefully for arms, such as revolvers and swords, but they found none of these. However, they did take away more than twelve truckloads of books, pamphlets, periodicals and printing material. This was held by the Japanese police as "evidence" against the Lord's servants.

Twenty brethren and six children were immediately thrown into jail. Some were ill, and they were not given much better treatment. But a week later those who were sick were released. The condition of the jail into which the brethren were thrown was filthy, a hogpen as it were. Later it was learned that all of the Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan, Korea and Formosa were arrested at the same time. Communications between the brethren were cut off, and nothing was known of what became of anyone until years later. (66)

A summary report prepared by the Japanese Ministry of Home Affairs in 1947, reprinted in the 1973 Yearbook, reported on the same turbulent days:

In May 1933, Akashi and several of his associates ... were arrested on lese majesty charges in Chiba

Prefecture and the Todaisha was dissolved. It was reorganized and many members ... (some 200 in all, including 50 residents of Tokyo) were dispatched throughout Japan, Manchuria, Korea, Taiwan, etc., making speeches and distributing literature[translated] by Akashi.... Finally, and this was the crux of the case as far as the Japanese courts were concerned, because otherwise they would have had no interest in the doctrines of this or any other religious body, "the Todaisha was assisting in the establishment of Jehovah's organization and system." Since this assertion was considered as a plan to overthrow the Japanese state structure (Kokutai), the members of the Todaisha were arrested on June 21, 1939, and some were found guilty. (67)

The Akashi's eldest son, Masato Akashi, was one of two Witnesses who refused military induction on 1 January 1939, six months before the entire congregation in Japan was arrested. [Toshiji Sasaki, in his book *The Faith and Resistance of the Todaisha*, provides a detailed history of the Akashi brothers, as does Masami Inagaki in *Japanese Who Rejected Military Service: Wartime Resistance of the Todaisha*.

According to Inagaki, in January 1939, Masato, then twenty years old, was initially called to join the artillery unit of the Setagaya Tokyo regiment. (68) Masato knew what he was facing. He had been raised as a Witness, and while in school he had faced some opposition from school authorities when he and his two younger brothers refused to salute the national flag, sing the national anthem, or participate in national patriotic celebrations. Inagaki pointed out that Masato's parents had not forced him to take this controversial position, but that this position was a stand that he personally felt was correct. When Masato was issued his military uniform and gun, he realized that induction into the armed forces would be a violation of the only principles he had ever known, which included the teaching, "you must not kill your neighbor." Masato reasoned that a gun is for killing and that training to use a gun was tantamount to training to commit murder. Since murder was clearly and repeatedly forbidden in the Bible, he reasoned that he could not even consider possessing a firearm. Resolved to uphold his position on the matter, Masato approached his company commander and explained: "As a Christian I would like to obey the Bible words which state, 'Thou shall not kill.' Therefore I am returning my gun." (69)

Inagaki reported, "If there was any shock to be felt, it was on the part of the officer who heard his words. Incapable of muttering a response, the soldier's face turned pale and he left Masato standing there while he went to report this to his superior officer. The superior officer also could not bring himself to reprimand Masato. He quietly exhaled the words, "So, now we have people who say such things in Japan too, do we?" The superior officer might have been familiar with "conscientious objectors" in the United States, such as the Quakers and Jehovah's Witnesses. Or, he might have been familiar with the accounts of young Witnesses in Germany who faced beheading rather than participating in military service. Masato was assigned to the guardhouse, and he was taken off all training. (70)

The only physical abuse or beating Masato received for taking his stand was when a Catholic officer entered the guardhouse. Perhaps the officer feared what the other officers would think of him as a professed Christian now that one of their recruits had refused to fight on the basis of his Bible-based beliefs. This officer, perhaps in an attempt to impress his superior officers who were also present, lunged at him with a chair in his hand, only to be pulled back by the on-looking officers. After that brush with violence, Masato had a relatively safe life in prison. His superiors, not wanting to tarnish their regiment's record, tried to persuade him to rethink his position, but to no avail.

When it became apparent that Masato was simply not going to take up arms, he was transferred from the army barracks to a prison cell. At one point, one of the inquiring officers took out his gun and pointed it at Masato and said: "Are you saying that you don't mind being killed?" Masato was a bit startled by the suddenness of this behavior but calmly said: "Even if you kill me, I won't kill you." This made the gun-wielding officer appear awkward in front of the other officers. He put away his weapon, saying that, "[I]f all Japanese soldiers were like you, we would be stronger." When asked whether he thought the Emperor was a god, Masato answered: "[H]e is a human." To the question of whether he denied the Emperor, he apparently responded by saying that he acknowledged him as Japan's highest authority. (71)

Inagaki quoted from a report that was compiled by the interrogating officer, which stated that Masato refused to worship the Emperor because he only viewed him as a human and as a creature created by God. Masato felt that the Emperor ruled in a system that was controlled by Satan, and he refused to participate in military training because he didn't want to be trained how to kill. (72) The report Christian Activity During Wartime, Volume 1 (1936-1940), prepared by the "Special Secret Service Police (Tokko)," confirmed the details of Masato's experience and added that, on 19 January, while in interrogation, Masato explained: "I will not worship any creature above Jehovah nor will I bow toward the Emperor's palace or his photograph as these are idolatry." (73) On the following day he was found guilty of refusing military training and "making disrespectful remarks," for which he was arrested by the military police, and charged with lese majesty and violating military law. Masato was then sentenced to three years in prison by court-martial. These investigations, the police report added, "caused not only investigations about the military ... but also brought the Todaisha under investigation ... which investigations were completed by the end of May ... On 21 June, ninety-one Witnesses, including Akashi were arrested." (74)

Kazuo Muramoto had a very different experience with military authorities. (75) Kazuo's experience was prolonged and far worse. Encouraged by Masato's actions, Kazuo escaped from his regiment and headed to the Todaisha building. Upon arriving, Kazuo proudly told Junzo that he had escaped. Junzo nodded in acknowledgment, but then said something that surprised Kazuo. Junzo asked: "But, think about it," Junzo said, "Even if you stay here, they will soon find out about your escape and they will come looking here. It's only a matter of time before they find you. Why don't you go back." Kazuo was stunned. It took all he had to escape. To go back was asking the impossible. "I would need courage," he said, to which Junzo replied: "That's right. That is true courage." Kazuo took the train and returned to his military engineering school. Much to his surprise, the officers expressed their relief, indicating how maintaining a good school record meant everything. Kazuo's voluntary return assured a clean record for the school. He resolved that he would not use weapons or participate in combat.

Kazuo's opportunity to explain his neutral position came quickly when he was ordered to do maintenance work on the guns. He handed the weapon back to his superior officer and said: "I would like to return my gun." He was refusing combat service for the first time. Kazuo thought this was the end of him. The superior officer, in a state of shock, just stared at him. Kazuo reiterated his decision not to participate in any activity connected with military training or combat. When it was announced to the class of soldiers that Kazuo was to report to the guardhouse because he refused to serve in the military, a sudden hush fell upon the crowd. Like Kazuo, his associates also understood that this decision would bring dire consequences.

The next day, a couple of military police handcuffed him and took him by train to a military prison. En route, Kazuo noticed a Todaisha preacher and her child riding in the same train. He recalled feeling proud, though the woman never noticed him. There was nothing to be ashamed of anymore. He felt the load on his conscience ease. The military police interrogated him and beat Kazuo. Only then was he given blankets and food. The military police would repeatedly ask him whether he had talked about his stand to anyone else. Apparently, they were afraid of others getting the same idea. Kazuo reassured them that he had no intentions of starting a protest movement, but that he was acting alone according to his Bible-trained conscience. Kazuo was next transferred to an army prison and was kept in a single cell. He was later officially sentenced to two years in prison by court martial.

Masato Akashi and Kazuo Muramoto were sentenced on the same day, and were sent to solitary confinement. Government records indicated that Chuji Miura was also tried and imprisoned for similar reasons, but Todaisha members interviewed years later could not recall a member by that name. Government records do not shed any light on his identity or background either. With three conscientious objectors coming out of the Todaisha, however, the government saw no reason to allow the Todaisha to exist another day.

Junzo and his wife, Shizue Akashi, were ordered to report to "the Special Secret Service Police" after their son, Masato, refused military service. Both parents were asked how they viewed their son's position. They answered, "Given his faith, he did the right thing." This dialogue, no doubt, further

fueled the government's desire to suppress the Todaisha. Todaisha publications continued their criticism of the world's evil system and war. Toshiji Sasaki refers to the Watch Tower Society's book, *Riches*, and suggests that the Japanese government was offended by the suggestion that God's Kingdom was the superior solution to mankind's problems. (76)

One week after the imprisonment of the three Todaisha members who refused military service, the police arrested twenty-six resident members in the Todaisha building, including Junzo and Shizue, Sasaki reported. Six trucks were used to conduct a sweeping arrest of all Todaisha members in the city. Their printing equipment and all office equipment were also confiscated. One female member was arrested while still asleep early in the morning, Sasaki related. The government's tight control over the media, and their desperation in suppressing anti-war propaganda, were highlighted by the fact that more than one hundred people were arrested, and none of the newspapers reported the incident.

In August 1939, Junzo Akashi was transferred to the Ogu police station. For seven months, the Special Police of the Religious Department investigated him. They used physical violence to extract "confessions" from him. He was tortured day and night, and was put into a cell with poisonous insects, mosquitoes, lice, and bugs. He was kicked and thrown repeatedly to the floor, and his face was so badly beaten that he was unrecognizable. His whole body was covered with wounds. Finally, according to the Doshisha University report, Junzo gave up and put his seal to anything the police asked of him. After increasingly violent cross-examinations, the police completed their report on Junzo Akashi on 1 April 1940.

On 27 April 1940, Akashi and fifty-two others were formally charged with violating the Peace Preservation Law. Akashi himself was also charged with sedition against the government and disrespect for the emperor. In July 1940, the pro-Axis government under Prince Konoye was given power over the army. On 27 August of the same year, the Todaisha was banned as an illegal organization that incited public disorder. The trial of Junzo Akashi and the fifty-two others continued through 1941 and 1942, during which time one of the defendants died of illness. Finally, all but one who responded to the military call-up were convicted and sentenced. Junzo Akashi received a prison sentence of twelve years, and the others were given from two to five years. (77)

Police investigations were accompanied by all kinds of violence and torture. Less severe treatment came in the form of cursing and beating, but often sadistic handling resulted in crippling and maiming. Due to long periods of incarceration in unsanitary cells, many prisoners became ill or incapacitated. Some died in prison. Families were scattered or disappeared, and many fell into pitiable circumstances.

According to Inagaki, one member of the Todaisha was first confined in the Tokyo Yoyogi Military Prison in June 1939, and later released on 16 December 1940. (78) Rearrested in Kumamoto on 1 December 1941, this Todaisha member, Akashi, was held in a small, dark cell for two months with his arms tied up behind his back. He was repeatedly beaten. In August 1941, two military policemen beat and kicked him for an hour-and-a-half before his father's eyes, and left him half dead. This treatment was because of his refusal to bow in the direction of the emperor's palace. While in the same prison, in December 1944, Akashi was stripped of his clothes, his arms were tied behind his back, and he was laid out on a wet concrete floor. Buckets of water were poured over his face and nose until he was unconscious. He was then left for several hours until he revived. The same process was repeated again and again. When finally released from Fukuoka Prison in October 1945, Akashi was more dead than alive.

Despite persecution of this kind, "many of the Todaisha continued to keep their faith, awaiting their release that came in 1945." (79) According to Inagaki, the Todaisha members were subjected to unspeakably cruel and depraved conditions and treatments. Junzo Akashi's own writings testify to the intense brutality to which he was subjected, day in and day out. Akamatsu, another Todaisha member, recalls a young boy in the same prison cell who was arrested under the suspicion of being a communist sympathizer. One night he was taken out of the cell and beaten while naked. By the time he was dragged back to the cell he could hardly walk or breathe. He had been arrested for possession of a textbook on social studies. Behind the veil of the Peace Preservation Law, many

such brutal acts took place. Akashi's account, for this reason, constitutes critical material that sheds light on wartime Japan. Amidst the horror, there were few officials and citizens who dared to come to the assistance of the arrested members of Todaisha. Certain prison guards knew that the Akashis were not criminals and felt sorry for their prolonged imprisonment. However, they apparently did not know the reason for their imprisonment.

The Peace Preservation Law stated that it was directed toward any organization that was established with the intent to change the nation's fundamental characteristics. The Japanese authorities twisted and contorted Todaisha's teachings so that it appeared as though this religious organization violated the Peace Preservation Law. According to Inagaki, Akashi did not consider the Todaisha to be an organization or a company. When the three Todaisha members refused military service, prosecutor Nishigatani was in the middle of conducting an internal inquiry regarding Todaisha's activities and philosophy. Once he confirmed that the three objectors reflected the beliefs of all Todaisha members, he saw no reason to allow Todaisha to continue in existence. (80)

To the prosecutor, the Witnesses' belief in Armageddon as God's final war between the nations and God's Kingdom meant that the Todaisha was not only interested in changing the nation's fundamental structure, but also in denying the deity of the emperor and in overthrowing the emperor's dynastic rule. He reasoned that since, according to the Todaisha, Jehovah will wipe out all of Satan's agents and his system of Armageddon, the emperor, as a part of this system, must accept the Todaisha's teachings and live as a subject, not as a ruler, in God's Kingdom if he wished to survive the destruction. Only a nationwide conversion to the teachings of the Todaisha could save Japan. However, since such a conversion was highly unlikely, the prosecutor reasoned that the Todaisha's teachings taught the mass destruction of the Japanese government and its people. Having considered the information at hand, the prosecutor concluded that the Todaisha's preaching work confused, shook, and undermined the Japanese government by seeking converts to God's Kingdom. Therefore, the Todaisha seemed bent on changing the nation's fundamental structure. In an attempt to paint the Todaisha as a dangerous company or organization, the prosecutor's report further suggested that this "war" of truth was, in fact, a literal, physical war, and that real weapons would be used. (81)

The conflict lay with the prosecutor's perception that the Todaisha's intent was to undermine the nation's fundamental structure and to challenge the emperor's sovereignty. In 1942, Junzo Akashi was sentenced to twelve years in prison on charges of sedition and disrespect. Both the preliminary hearing and the public trial maintained the same line of reasoning. First, that the Todaisha is a "kessha" or company (an organization); second, that the Todaisha's teachings undermine Japan's fundamental national characteristic; and third, that Junzo rejects the emperor's authority.

Shizue, Junzo Akashi's wife, was by no means a weak person, but the confinement and unsanitary conditions during the four years in prison reduced her to such a poor physical state that she could not walk unless nurses held her on both sides. The unspeakable treatment towards women by the "Special Secret Service Police" is further illustrated by what two left-wingers (not Todaisha members) experienced after their arrest and interrogation by the Tokko in the Kanto region. These women were told to strip naked in front of two Tokko officers and forced to stand on their hands. In the end, their body hair was burned by candle fire. All of this was done "in the name of the Emperor."

Shizue's treatment, along with these other accounts, shows that the brutality and the torture were outlets of sadistic desires on the part of such officers. At age 58, Shizue died in prison from unspecified causes related to a diminished physical condition, and a lack of medical treatment during the final days of war. Junzo was only notified about her death after she had passed away, and was never given the opportunity to be by her side or to see her during her final moments. The 23 January 1947, issue of the newspaper, Asahi Shinbun, ran an article on the judgment paper of a woman, Shizue Akashi, who "predicted Japan's defeat" and died in prison. The prison administrator's comments indicate that Shizue received no medical treatment during her imprisonment.

Other Todaisha members suffered similar consequences. Some were maimed from torture while others fell victim to serious illness from the unsanitary conditions in prison. Yoshie Sumida, a Todaisha member, was twenty-two years old when the Shibuya police arrested her. She narrowly

escaped death after developing tuberculosis in prison. A female member, Tomi Tanabe, was arrested simply for receiving a letter from a Todaisha member. She was sent to the same prison as Shizue Akashi, and (tied there in 1944. Yoshisuke Murata, a stationmaster in Akita prefecture, was arrested, imprisoned, and tortured. Although he survived his prison term of six years, he died one month after his release. Gyoku Ohren, a Korean, became a Todaisha member after reading The Golden Age, and became a zealous preacher in Korea. He was arrested in Tokyo along with the Akashis. After years of torture, he went insane and suffered a horrible death.

The government seized the building that served as both Todaisha's headquarters and the Akashis' home. All the confiscated publications found there were either thrown in the river or burned. Government records claim that a notice was sent to Akashi while in prison regarding the liquidation of the property of the Todaisha, and that he and his sons were present when the liquidation occurred. However, Akashi was not notified or consulted about the liquidation of the property. In fact, the government went ahead with the process and used former Todaisha members who had compromised on their positions. On 9 April 1942, the third public hearing was conducted against five Witnesses, Junzo Akashi, his wife Shizue Akashi, Yoshie Sumida, and two Koreans, Sai Yoh-gen and Ook Ung ryen. After both attorneys pleaded their case, the judge asked each defendant whether they had anything to add. Inagaki provided the summary of the exchange between the defendants and the Judge: (82)

SUMIDA: "No, I don't, accept that my reason for joining Todaisha wasn't because of the fear I had of Armageddon as the prosecutor put it. I believe because it is the truth."

SHIZUE (JUNZO'S WIFE): "Nothing in particular, except to say that every prophecy in the Bible has come to pass, so it is unthinkable that the remaining prophecies go unfulfilled. The truth is always right. I cannot abandon the truth and become the devil."

SANO: "I have nothing to say."

TAMAI: "I have nothing to say."

JUNZO: "What I would like to say at this point is that I don't feel I have done anything that violates the law. The Bible is a public document. Any Bible based publication published by us has been censored by the authorities. Everything I've done so far has all been legal. It is, therefore, unthinkable to me that I should suddenly find fault with my methods and decide to break the law. Furthermore, the truth I have spoken to date is God's words. There are absolutely no mistakes. There only remains 4 who are following in my footsteps. Counting myself, we are five. This is a fight of 100 million against 5. The near future will prove whether the 100 million wins, or whether God's words spoken by the five wins. I believe in that. As long as this peace of mind remains with us, I have nothing further to say."

Three years later Japan lost the war, proving true what the five Todaisha members said in court.

Only five of the Witnesses, including Junzo Akashi, in Tokyo remained firm. Witnesses in other areas also stood firm in their position. However, Inagaki indicates that the majority of the fifty-two who were arrested either gave up their faith or turned away from the faith after prolonged imprisonment and numerous interrogations. (83) The author comments that more women living in rural areas refused to participate in the war effort for refusal to contribute gifts to the military, and to transport military equipment. One such female Todaisha member who lived in Niigata prefecture was featured in "the status of social movements during the 17th year of Showa (1946)," an Interior Ministries internal bulletin. The article talked about her unwavering determination to never leave the faith.

Junzo Akashi, who was sentenced to twelve years in prison, was sent to Kyugo prison in Sendai prefecture. There he suffered from the extreme cold (Sendai is in northern Japan), in a prison with no heating facilities. He was issued red clothing, which indicated that he was a political offender and arrested on the charge of harboring dangerous ideas. For sleep, he was issued two thin pieces of rags, grossly inadequate for the severe cold temperature. Whenever a guard found him wrapping a face towel around his neck for warmth, he was slapped in his face repeatedly. The prison was one the most animalistic and horrible places a human could experience. Medical treatment was virtually nonexistent. Many prisoners went insane or committed suicide. Every day, five to six prisoners died

as a result of exhaustion, starvation, or violence. Much to Junzo's surprise, he met Sai, the Korean youth who never abandoned the Todaisha Faith. He introduced Junzo to communist prisoners, who had already been there four to five years before Junzo's arrival. They informed Junzo about the prison and the outside world.

Junzo eventually received an English Bible. He learned about Japan's surrender in August 1945 while still in prison. The prisoners remained incarcerated until October of that year, but their treatment greatly improved and the beatings stopped. Upon release, Junzo went to Kazuo's brother's home. There he was reunited with Kazuo after seven years. The 1948 Yearbook reported and reprinted Junzo Akashi's letter of resignation, dated 25 August 1947, in which he expressed disbelief in the Watch Tower's teachings. (84)

These five Tokyo Witnesses were not the only Witnesses in Japan to suffer arrest and imprisonment for refusing to bow to the emperor. The 1998 Yearbook and 1973 Yearbook reported the experience of Katsuo and Hagino Miura. The Miura family lived in the small town of Ishinomori, about twenty-five miles north of Sendai.

The Miuras were arrested by the police on 21 June 1939. (85) They were put in prison in Hiroshima, and their young son was sent back to his grandmother in Ishinomori. After eight months, Hagino Miura was released so that she could return to the north to care for her son. Katsuo Miura was detained and beaten for more than two years before he was brought to trial. During one session, the judge asked: "Miura, what do you think of His Majesty, the Emperor?" Katsuo answered, "His Majesty, the Emperor, is also a descendant of Adam and is a mortal, imperfect human." That statement so astonished the court stenographer that he failed to record it. Katsuo received a sentence of five years in prison, and the judge told him that unless he gave up his faith, he would be in prison for the rest of his life. Food in prison became scarce, and during the winter months he had many cold, sleepless nights because of lack of clothing. Although cut off from all spiritual association, he had access to the Bible in the prison library, and by repeatedly reading it, he maintained his spiritual strength. His first and second trials were in camera, and his appeal to the higher court was rejected. Since the courtroom now provided his best opportunity for giving a witness, he did his best to testify concerning God's Kingdom.

The investigating officer was very angry with him, regarding him as unpatriotic. Miura endured hair pulling and other mistreatment. After three years in prison, he was found guilty of violating the Peace Preservation Law. However, the Bible continued to give him strength and comfort. Finally, Katsuo Miura was forced to march along with other prisoners to the Iwakuni prison when the prison cells in Hiroshima were destroyed. He explains his experience in an interview for Watch Tower:

It was the morning of August 6, 1945 seven years after I was arrested.... All of a sudden, a weird light flashed and sparkled on the ceiling of my cell. It was like lightning or magnesia flashlight. Then I heard such a terribly loud roar as if all the mountains had collapsed at one time. Instantly the cell was shrouded with a thick darkness. I shoved my head under my nearby mattress, to escape what appeared to be a dark gas. After seven or eight minutes had passed I pushed my head out from under the mattress and ... looked through the back window. I was thunderstruck! The jail workshops and the wooden buildings had all been crashed flat.... On the morning of the third day after the explosion, forty-five of us prisoners were tied together with ropes, and we were led in our prison garb two miles to the railway station for transfer to another city. It was then that I saw the terrible plight of the community. The whole city was a ruined field as far as the eye could see.... Everybody looked depressed and without hope. Two months after the atom bomb I was finally released from jail. (86)

Miura then rejoined his wife, Hagino, and son, Tsutomu, in the north of Japan in Ishinomori. In the 8 October 1994, issue of Awake! magazine, Tsutomu Miura added more detail to the dramatic events.

At 8:15 a.m. on August 6, 1945, an atom bomb exploded over Hiroshima, Japan, devastating the city and wiping out tens of thousands of its population. My father had refused to worship the Emperor and support Japan's militarism, so he was at that time an inmate in the Hiroshima prison.

Prisoners who survived were crying for help. There was fear and panic--a scene of dire confusion and terror.

As a boy I thrilled to listen to Father tell about, as he put it, "being atom-bombed out of prison.

Matsue Ishii, who shared the Bible message with the Miura family, had a similar wartime experience. In the 1 May 1988 edition of *The Watchtower*, she describes her wartime experience:

For nearly a year, I had been held in solitary confinement in a tiny, filthy, flea-infested prison cell in Sendai, Japan. For that whole time, I wasn't allowed to take a shower or a bath. My flesh was ulcerated, eaten by bedbugs. I was so racked by rheumatism that I could neither sit nor stand. Reduced to skin and bones and weighing less than 70 pounds [30 KG], I was near death.

CONCLUSION

For seven years there were no reports or communications from the Witnesses in Japan. Finally, in 1946, the silence was broken with a report indicating that the Witnesses were alive and that there were sixty Witnesses active in the preaching work. No doubt some of these Witnesses were recent converts, but it is impossible to determine exactly how many had survived the bitter persecution. The experiences of the Witnesses in Japan were completely unreported outside of Japan until the publication of the 1947 Yearbook.

In the fall of 1999, the Japanese Diet passed laws (87) reestablishing the Hinomaru (88) as the national emblem and the Kimigayo (89) as the national anthem. Fearing a resurgence of nationalism as a response to a badly shaken economy, and the public disgrace of political and corporate leaders, politicians and members of academia, including Japanese and non-Japanese historians, raised their voices in alarm, anxious that same nationalistic spirit so destructive in World War II might reemerge in Japan. Today, the work of Jehovah's Witnesses is firmly and legally established in Japan. According to the 2001 Yearbook, (90) there are some 220,538 Witnesses in Japan. However, a substantial membership is not always sufficient to protect a minority religion from the emotion-stirring forces of nationalism and patriotism. A consideration of the experiences of the Witnesses in Japan, Germany, and many other nations during wartime reveals the hardship that governments can cause in the name of patriotism and national unity. There is also another lesson to be observed from these experiences. Jehovah's Witnesses, although neutral to national politics, can become the litmus test for human rights protection, as religious liberty is one of the best indications of the general state of human freedom in a given society. For example, in Moscow, a city court recently sought to ban the activities of the Witnesses, but to no avail. This victory was not just for the Witnesses themselves, but also for other believers who have suffered or who might suffer from a collapse of the rule of law. There can be no doubt that the most vulnerable of Russia's religious minorities can feel more secure today than they would have if the Witnesses had lost. It is noteworthy that Jehovah's Witnesses are not outlawed in any country in the world that meets minimum standards of religious freedom and the rule of law. If the Witnesses' public work and ministry are interfered with, then the rights and protections of other groups, nationalities, and interests are also at risk.

(1.) Chalmers Johnson, "Japan Should Pay for Individuals' Suffering," *Los Angeles Times*, 31 March 2000. <http://www.ww1slavelabor.com/news/Mar312000.html>.

(2.) See, e.g., Assembly Joint Resolution (AJR) 27, Resolution Chapter 90, filed with Secretary of State of the state of California on August 26, 1999. <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/>.

(3.) Simone Liebster, *Facing the Lion--Memoirs of a Young Girl in Nazi Europe* (New Orleans, La.: Grammaton Press, 2000). Recent accounts of Jehovah's Witnesses who survived Nazi oppression include the story of Simone Liebster, who as a young teenager was separated from her parents and detained in a juvenile home for refusing to make the "Heil Hitler" salute.

(4.) Christine King, *The Nazi State and the New Religions* (Lewiston, N.Y.: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1982), 158.

(5.) American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), "Persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses," Report, (June 1941): 3.

(6.) William Kaplan, *State and Salvation: The Jehovah's' Witnesses and Their Fight for Civil Rights* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 138.

(7.) David Hackett, *The Buchenwald Report* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995). Detailed account of individuals who were imprisoned at the Buchenwald concentration camp at Weimar including account of Jehovah's Witnesses. Milton Meltzer, *Never to Forget: The Jews of the Holocaust* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 28. Meltzer explained that the camps held three types of prisoners. The "politicals" were the Communist, Social Democrats, Jehovah's Witnesses, opposition clergy, people who talked against the regime, and purged Nazis. The second group were the "asocials," primarily habitual criminals and sex offenders. The last group were members of "inferior races," the Jews and the Gypsies.

(8.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1961), John 17:14: "I have given your word to them, but the world has hated them, because they are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world."

(9.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., *1973 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1973), 214-15. Volume I of *Study of Resistance in War Time*, edited by the Institute of Stud, of Cultural Science, Doshisha University, Kyoto, which was published in 1968, suggested that there were 130 Witnesses in Japan, thirty in Korea, and nine in Taiwan, for a total of 169 arrested.

(10.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, of New York, Inc., *Jehovah's Witnesses--Proclaimers of God's Kingdom* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1993), 291. See, e.g., the experience of Martin Poetzinger, a member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses from Germany, who was imprisoned and tortured in concentration camps during World War II. When he was questioned about those experiences, he would reply, "This one thing I do--seek first the Kingdom."

(11.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., *The Watchtower*, 15 October 1977, 632. Jehovah's Witnesses use a variety, of corporate legal structures to effect their preaching work. The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, originally incorporated in Pennsylvania in 1884, is the primary corporate agency for the publishing work. Other corporations such as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York and the International Bible Students Association have also been used.

(12.) Arnold C. Brackman, *The Other Nuremberg* (New York: William Morrow & Co., Inc., 1987), 40.

(13.) Congressional Bill S.1902 RS, 106th Congress, 2d. session. On 10 November 1999, Senator Diane Feinstein introduced a bill before Congress designed to require declassification and disclosure of persons and records of the Japanese Imperial Army.

(14.) Rodney Stark & Laurence R. Iannaccone, "Why the Jehovah's Witnesses Grow So Rapidly: A Theoretical Application," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 12, no. 2 (1997): 133.

(15.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., *Zion's Watch Tower* (1 January 1892), 1351.

(16.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., *Jehovah's Witnesses--Proclaimers of God's Kingdom* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1993): 151-52. The Witnesses often referred to themselves as Bible students, and starting in 1910, they used the name International Bible Students Association with reference to their meetings. In 1914, in order to avoid confusion with their recently formed legal corporation called International Bible Students Association, they adopted the name Associated Bible Students for their local groups. In 1931, the name "Jehovah's Witnesses" was adopted, based on the scripture at Isaiah 43:110: "You are my witnesses," is the utterance of Jehovah, "even my servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and have faith in me, and that you may understand that I am the same One. Before me

there is was no god formed, and after me there continued to be none."

(17.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Zion's Watch Tower (15 January 1892), 1361.

(18.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Zion's Watch Tower (October 1887), 979.

(19.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Jehovah's Witnesses--Proclaimers of God's Kingdom (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1993), 418-19.

(20.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Zion's Watch Tower (October 1887), 979.

(21.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Zion's Watch Tower (15 November 1898), 2391-92.

(22.) Ibid.

(23.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Zion's Watch Tower (15 May 1900), 2632-33.

(24.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Zion's Watch Tower (1 December 1907), 4096.

(25.) Ibid. Ellis's observations and recommendations were certainly realistic in view of the enormous resources in money and manpower that had already been poured into Asia, particularly Japan, by other Catholic and Protestant missionary organizations. See, e.g., the Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), 8: 306, wherein it states that proselytism had

minimal success. The first Catholic missionaries arrived with Francis Xaxier, who would later be canonized. They arrived at the port of Kagoshima in Kyushu, Japan on 15 August 1549. His early efforts found converts among the powerful princes. One notable prince, Nobunaga, converted, and it is estimated that among his followers there were some 200,000 converts using 250 churches by the time Nobunaga died in 1582.

(26.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Zion's Watchtower (15 July 1906), 4028,

(27.) Ibid.

(28.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. Zion's Watch Tower (15 December 1907), 4105.

(29.) Ibid.

(30.) Ibid.

(31.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., The Watch Tower (15 April 1912), 5007-10. The committee consisted of Watch Tower corporate officers and members, including the president, Charles T. Russell, the secretary, F. W. Robinson, E. W. V. Kuehn, Adj. General William. P. Hall, J. T. D. Pyles, R. B. Maxwell, and Dr. Leslie W. Jones.

(32.) Ibid.

(33.) Ibid.

(34.) Ibid.

(35.) Ibid.

(36.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., The Watch Tower (1 December 1911): 4932. According to the itinerary, the committee visited Shanghai, China, Hong Kong, Manila, Philippines, Singapore, Penang, Prince of Wales Island, Colombo, Ceylon, Madras, India, Calcutta, India, Bombay, India, Aden, Arabia, Cairo, Egypt, Alexandria, Egypt, Piraeus, Greece, Athens, Corinth, Patras, Brindisi, Rome, Italy, Paris, France, and finally ending in London, England.

(37.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1988 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. 1988), 138-39.

(38.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, of New York, Inc., The Watch Tower (15 April 1912), 501.4-15.

(39.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Jehovah's Witnesses--Proclaimers of God's Kingdom (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 1993), 421-23.

(40.) See Certified Copy of death certificate #HC 675960 from county of Hastings, England 1962. In 1949, F. Mackenzie was 91 years old, thus making her date of birth 1858.

(41.) International Bible Students Association, Fourteenth Souvenir Report (2 July 1914), 140.

(42.) International Bible Students Association, Fifteenth Souvenir Report (1915), 119.

(43.) Ibid.

(44.) For further discussion see: Shawn Francis Peters, Judging Jehovah's Witnesses--Religious Persecution and the Dawn of the Rights Revolution (Lawrence, Kans., University Press of Kansas 2000); Merlin Owen Newton, Armed With the Constitution--Jehovah's Witnesses in Alabama and the U.S. Supreme Court, 1939-1946 (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: The University of Alabama Press, 1995).

(45.) Masami Inagaki, Japanese Who Rejected Military Service (Iwanami Shinsho, 1972), 1920.

(46.) Ibid.

(47.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1928 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1928), 104-05.

(48.) Inagaki, Japanese Who Rejected Military Service, 23-25.

(49.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1928 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, 104-05.

(50.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1929 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1929), 130-31.

(51.) 1925 Peace Preservation Law. <http://www.fcc.sophia.ac.jp/Faculty/Devine/documents>.

Article 1

Anyone who organizes a group for the purpose of changing the national polity (kokutai) or of denying the private property system, or anyone who knowingly participates in said group shall be sentenced to Penal servitude or imprisonment not exceeding ten years. An offense not actually carried out shall also be subject to punishment.

Article 2

Anyone who consults with another person on matters relating to the implementation of these objectives described in Clause 1 of the preceding Article shall be sentenced to penal servitude or imprisonment not exceeding seven years.

Article 3

Anyone who instigates others for the purpose of implementing those objectives described in Clause 1, Art. 1 shall be sentenced to penal servitude or imprisonment not exceeding seven years.

Article 4

Anyone who instigates others to engage in rioting or assault or other crimes inflicting harm on life, person or property for the purpose of attaining the objectives of Clause 1, Article 1 shall be sentenced to penal servitude or imprisonment not exceeding ten years.

Article 5

Anyone who, for the purpose of committing those crimes described in Clause 1, Article 1 and in the preceding three articles, provides money and goods or other financial advantages for others, or making an offer or commitment for same, shall be sentenced to penal servitude or imprisonment not exceeding five years. Anyone who knowingly receives such considerations, or makes demand or commitment for same shall be punished in a similar manner.

Article 6

Anyone who has committed the crimes described in the three preceding articles and has surrendered himself voluntarily to authorities shall have his sentence reduced or be granted immunity from prosecution.

Article 7

This law shall be made applicable to anyone who commits crimes described in this law outside of the jurisdiction in which this law is in effect.

(52.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1930 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1930), 118-19.

(53.) Ibid.

(54.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1973 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1973), 217-18.

(55.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., The Watchtower, 1 May 1988, 21-24.

(56.) Ibid.

(57.) Ibid.

(58.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1973 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. 1973), 220-22.

(59.) Ibid.

(60.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1972 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1972), 215.

(61.) Barbara Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China* (New York: The MacMillian Co., 1970), 131. She describes the "Mukden" or "Manchurian Incident" stating: "On September 18, 1931, the Japanese Kwantung army, using the arranged pretext of a bomb explosion on the tracks of the South Manchurain Railway, seized Mukden in 'self-defense,' and spread out swiftly to the military occupation of Manchuria."

(62.) Gunter Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* (New York: McGraw-Hill 1964), 3.

(63.) Toshiji Sasaki, "The Faith and Resistance of Todaisha--A Summary," *Study of Resistance in War Time* vol. 1 (Doshisha University, Kyoto, Japan: Institute for Study of Cultural Science, 1968), 3.

(64.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1947 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1947), 178-81.

- (65.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1973 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1973), 215-16.
- (66.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1947 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1947), 179.
- (67.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1973 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, 214-15.
- (68.) Masami Inagaki, Japanese Who Rejected Military Service (Iwanami Shinsho, 1972), 78-86.
- (69.) Ibid.
- (70.) Ibid.
- (71.) Ibid.
- (72.) Ibid.
- (73.) Sugii Rokuro, Christian Activity During Wartime: Report from Police, Vol. 1--1936-1940, ed. Sugii Rokuro (Tokyo: Akiama, 1972), 206.
- (74.) Ibid.
- (75.) Inagaki, Japanese Who Rejected Military Service, 78-86.
- (76.) Toshiiji Sasaki, Study of Resistance in War Time, Vol. 1. Reference is made to the publication Riches (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1936), 92.
- (77.) Inagaki, Japanese Who Rejected Military Service, 78-86.
- (78.) Ibid.
- (79.) Sasaki, Study of Resistance in War Time, Vol. 1, 99.
- (80.) Ibid.
- (81.) Ibid.
- (82.) Ibid.
- (83.) Ibid.
- (84.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1948 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1948), 165.
- (85.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1973 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, 221.
- (86.) Ibid.
- (87.) The 'Hinomaru-Kimigayo' Bill was enacted on 9 August 1999, by The House of Councillors of the Japanese parliament with 166 votes in support and 71 against, [http:// www.jcp.or.jp/english](http://www.jcp.or.jp/english).
- (88.) National Flag of Japan--"Banners showing the sun were used by some of the noted clans in ancient Japan. A record of these flags appears in annals written about 600 years ago. When the ban against building large vessels was lifted--after the visit of Commodore Perry's squadron in 1853-54--the flag, in its present form, was suggested as a national ensign by Lord Nariakira Shimazu, head of the powerful Satsuma clan in southern Japan.... In 1872, the Hi-no-maru or sun flag was used in a national ceremony for the first time on the occasion of the opening by Emperor Meiji of the

first railway in Japan." <http://www.japanemb.org.lb/japanemb/anthemjap.htm>.

(89.) The National Anthem of Japan--The Kimigayo was officially adopted as Japan's National Anthem in 1888. The melody had been composed primarily for traditional Japanese instruments and it was found necessary to harmonize this piece according to the Western musical scale, <http://www.japanemb.org.lb/japanemb/anthemjap.htm>.

(90.) Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 2001 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 2001), 34.

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Citation Details

Title: Jehovah's Witnesses and the Empire of the sun: a clash of faith and religion during World War II.

Author: Carolyn R. Wah

Publication: *Journal of Church and State* (Refereed)

Date: January 1, 2002

Publisher: J.M. Dawson Studies in Church and State

Volume: 44 **Issue:** 1 **Page:** 45(28)