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Allen C. Blaisdell

FOREIGN STUDENTS AND THE BERKELEY INTERNATIONAL HOUSE,
1928-1961

An Interview Conducted by

Joann Dietz Ariff

Berkeley

1967

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ALLEN C. BLAISDELL

photo by
Bob Lynds

PREFACE

Under a grant from the University of California Alumni Foundation, the Regional Oral History Office has been conducting a series of interviews with persons who have made a significant contribution to the development of the University of California at Berkeley. A list of University History interviews follows, including an earlier group which had been conducted in cooperation with the Centennial History Project, directed by Professor Walton E. Bean. The Alumni Foundation grant made it possible to continue this University-centered series, of which this manuscript is a part.

The University History interviews have benefited greatly from the expert advice and assistance of Richard E. Erickson, Executive Manager of the Alumni Association; Arthur M. Arlett, Intercollegiate Athletic Coordinator for Alumni and Public Relations; and Verne A. Stadtman, Centennial Editor.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons prominent in recent California history. The Office is under the administrative supervision of the Director of the Bancroft Library.

Willa Baum
Head, Regional Oral
History Office

15 July 1968
Regional Oral History Office
Room 486 The Bancroft Library
University of California
Berkeley, California

Interviews in the University History Series which have been completed by the Regional Oral History Office. These are listed in order of completion.

OLD SERIES

Shields, Peter J.	<u>Reminiscences.</u> 1954
Woods, Baldwin M.	<u>University of California Extension.</u> 1957
Stevens, Frank C.	<u>Forty Years in the Office of the President, University of California, 1905-1945.</u> 1959
Birge, Raymond Thayer	<u>Raymond Thayer Birge, Physicist.</u> 1960
Chaney, Ralph Works	<u>Ralph Works Chaney, Ph.D., Paleobotanist, Conservationist.</u> 1960
Porter, Robert Langley	<u>Robert Langley Porter, Physician, Teacher, and Guardian of the Public Health.</u> 1960
Treadway, Walter	<u>Correspondence and Papers on Langley Porter Clinic.</u> (Bound into Langley Porter interview.)
Waring, Henry C.	<u>Henry C. Waring on University Extension.</u> 1960
Neuhaus, Eugen	<u>Reminiscences: Bay Area Art and the University of California Art Department.</u> 1961
Sproul, Ida Wittschen	<u>Duty, Devotion, and Delight in the President's House, University of California.</u> 1961
Hutchison, Claude B.	<u>The College of Agriculture, University of California, 1922-1952.</u> 1962
Merritt, Ralph P.	<u>After Me Cometh a Builder, the Recollections of Ralph Palmer Merritt.</u> 1962
Mitchell, Lucy Sprague	<u>Pioneering in Education.</u> 1962
Neylan, John Francis	<u>Politics, Law, and the University of California.</u> 1962
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Lessing, Ferdinand D.	<u>Early Years.</u> 1963
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Pepper, Stephen C.	<u>Art and Philosophy at the University of California, 1919 to 1962.</u> 1963

Wurster, William Wilson College of Environmental Design, University of California, Campus Planning, and Architectural Practice. 1964

Lenzen, Victor F. Physics and Philosophy. 1965

Meyer, Karl F. Medical Research and Public Health. In Process.

NEW SERIES

Interviews fully or partially funded by the University of California Alumni Foundation.

Cross, Ira Brown Portrait of an Economics Professor. 1967

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Hamilton, Brutus Student Athletics and the Voluntary Discipline. 1967

Wessels, Glenn A. Education of an Artist. 1967

Blaisdell, Allen C. Foreign Students and the Berkeley International House, 1928-1961. 1968

Evans, Clinton W. California Athlete, Coach, Administrator, Ambassador. 1968

Ebright, Carroll "Ky" California Varsity and Olympics Crew Coach. 1968

Hays, William Charles Order, Taste, and Grace in Architecture. 1968

Lehman, Benjamin H. Recollections and Reminiscences of Life in the Bay Area from 1920 Onward. 1968

Underhill, Robert M. University of California Lands, Finances, and Investments. 1968

Corley, James V. Serving the University in Sacramento. In process.

Dennes, William R. Philosophy and the University Since 1915. In process.

Donnelly, Ruth In process.

Johnston, Marguerite Kulp In process.

Towle, Katherine In process

Witter, Jean In process.

INTRODUCTION

The traditions of idealism and intellectual training run deep in the background of Allen C. Blaisdell. It was his grandfather who said, "I desire to be so trained by the experiences of this life as to be fitted for any service in any world," a goal which became a guide for the grandson, who went on to be the first director of the Berkeley International House, the first Foreign Student Advisor of the University, and its first Foreign Student Officer.

Allen was born July 9, 1897, in Olivet, Wisconsin, while his father, James A. Blaisdell, was pastor of the college church there. When the boy was seven years old, his father became Professor of Biblical Literature at Beloit College in Wisconsin, and when he was fourteen he suddenly found himself in Southern California at Pomona College, as the son of the new president.

It was at Pomona College that he graduated, a Phi Beta Kappa, in 1919, with his "chief interest in sciences." After a year in Japan teaching English, he accepted the family tradition and returned to school at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, then to Union Theological Seminary in New York. With his bride, a Barnard College girl, Josephine

Bell, he became the assistant minister at the "blue-blooded Presbyterian church" in Utica, New York, where a strike controversy, in which he took the side of the strikers, caused him to move on to a more liberal assignment--a little Congregational church in South Hadley Falls, Massachusetts, where most of the congregation were laborers. But his theological-social liberalism soon moved his interest completely outside the pulpit. Four years later he accepted the post as Assistant to the Director of International House in New York, a training position for the directorship of other international houses that John D. Rockefeller was planning to build.

1928

Shortly afterward, in ~~1930~~, University of California President, Dr. W. W. Campbell, asked Mr. Blaisdell to start the International House at Berkeley, where he served as director until his retirement in 1961. In his capacity as Foreign Student Advisor he helped students with visa problems, finances, and nagging details of regulations laid down by the University administration and the U.S. State Department. As Director, he put main emphasis on creating an atmosphere in which graduate students of all nationalities could be comfortable, study, and make lasting friendships. In all this, his wife Josephine also had many corollary duties to perform, and it

was her death, in the midst of a drastic administrative reorganization by the President's office that added the decisive note in his decision to retire. Soon afterward he married Christine Sears, a psychotherapist and old family friend, who had also just been widowed.

Seven interviews were recorded with Mr. Blaisdell during September and October of 1966. They took place in his comfortable living room, which is warmed by his grandparents' old grandfather clock in one corner and, on a wall, a Chiuro Obata watercolor of the Japanese World War Two relocation center in Nevada. Through the windows one sees the brilliance of well-tended iris and rhododendron, with the bay and San Francisco in the distance.

As one might expect, he was well-prepared for the interviews, and talked easily with long, flowing sentences. Usually wearing slacks and a sport shirt fastened with a bolo tie, he launched into each interview with enthusiasm and expressed the hope that similar interviews could record the histories of the New York and Chicago international houses.

When he checked over the transcript, he paid scrupulous attention to details but made no substantive changes in the original recorded conversations. To further document the information in the interview, he generously deposited his

papers and photographs covering the period up to his retirement in the Archives of the University of California.

Joann Dietz Ariff
Interviewer

15 September 1967
Regional Oral History Office
Room 486 The Bancroft Library
University of California
Berkeley, California

Allen C. Blaisdell

Chronology

1897	July 9	Born Olivet, Michigan
1897-1902		Olivet, Michigan
1903-1910		Beloit, Wisconsin Strong School. 1-7 grades
1910	Summer	Moved to Claremont, California
1911	June	Graduated Claremont Grammar School, 8th grade
1911-1914		Claremont High School
1914		Summer school, University of California, Berkeley
1914-1915		Clerk and delivery boy, grocery store, Claremont
1915-1918		Pomona College
1918	June-December	Military service, Presidio, San Francisco, and Camp Taylor, Kentucky. Second Lieutenant, Field Artillery
1919	February-June	Pomona College. Graduated B.A. June, 1919
1919-1920	August-July	Teacher of English, Fukuoka Commercial School, Fukuoka, Japan. Traveled in Korea, Manchuria, China
1920	August-January	Pacific School of Religion
1921-1923	February-June	Union Theological Seminary, New York City
1923	May 17	Married Josephine Bell
1923-1924	June-August	Assistant Minister, First Presbyterian Church, Utica, New York

1924-1927		Minister, Congregational Church, South Hadley Falls, Massachusetts
1927-1928	September-July	Assistant Director, International House, New York City
1928-1962		Director, International House, University of California, Berkeley
1938		M.A., University of California, Berkeley
1940-1961		Foreign Student Advisor with later title of Foreign Service Officer, University of California, Berkeley
1942		Six months leave to serve with Relocation Authority in interests of Japanese American students in relocation projects
1948		Co-founder, National Association of Foreign Student Advisors (name changed later to National Association of Foreign Student Affairs). President, 1950-1952
1948-1949	August-January	Six months leave. Mr. and Mrs. Blaisdell visit Arab countries to evaluate educational experience of foreign students in U.S. En route Europe, Turkey, etc.
1956	Spring	Leave to travel with Mrs. Blaisdell in Asian countries for same purpose as trip in 1949. Financed by Rockefeller Foundation. Japan, Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, India, Ceylon, Singapore, Indonesia, Australia
1958	Fall	Puerto Rico for International Institute conference on Latin American students, continuing to Venezuela as guest of Creole Oil Company

1959	June	Death of Josephine Bell Blaisdell
1959	July-August	Trip to Germany--financed by German government with group of Foreign Student Advisors
1960	January June 30	Married Dr. Christine Seward Sears
1961	August 31	Retired as Foreign Service Officer, University of California. On one year leave as Director of International House to retirement date of August 31, 1962
1962		Board of directors, Alameda County Planned Parenthood. Board of directors, Blaisdell Institute on World Cultures and Religions, Claremont, California

Berkeley Rotary Club--several years in the early thirties

Commonwealth Club, San Francisco--1930 to about 1958

Faculty Club, University of California, Berkeley

San Francisco World Affairs Council--from beginning to about 1960

Advisory Committee on Foreign Students, State Department--several years in early 1950's

Advisory Committee, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.--several years in early 1950's

Advisory Committee on Foreign Students and Scholars, Institute of International Education, New York City--later became National Association Foreign Student Advisors--honorary membership after retirement

Sierra Club
Civil Liberties Union
California Tomorrow

San Francisco Committee on Foreign Relations--local chapter, Committee on Foreign Relations, New York City

Save the Bay Association

Golden Bear--honor organization, students, University of California

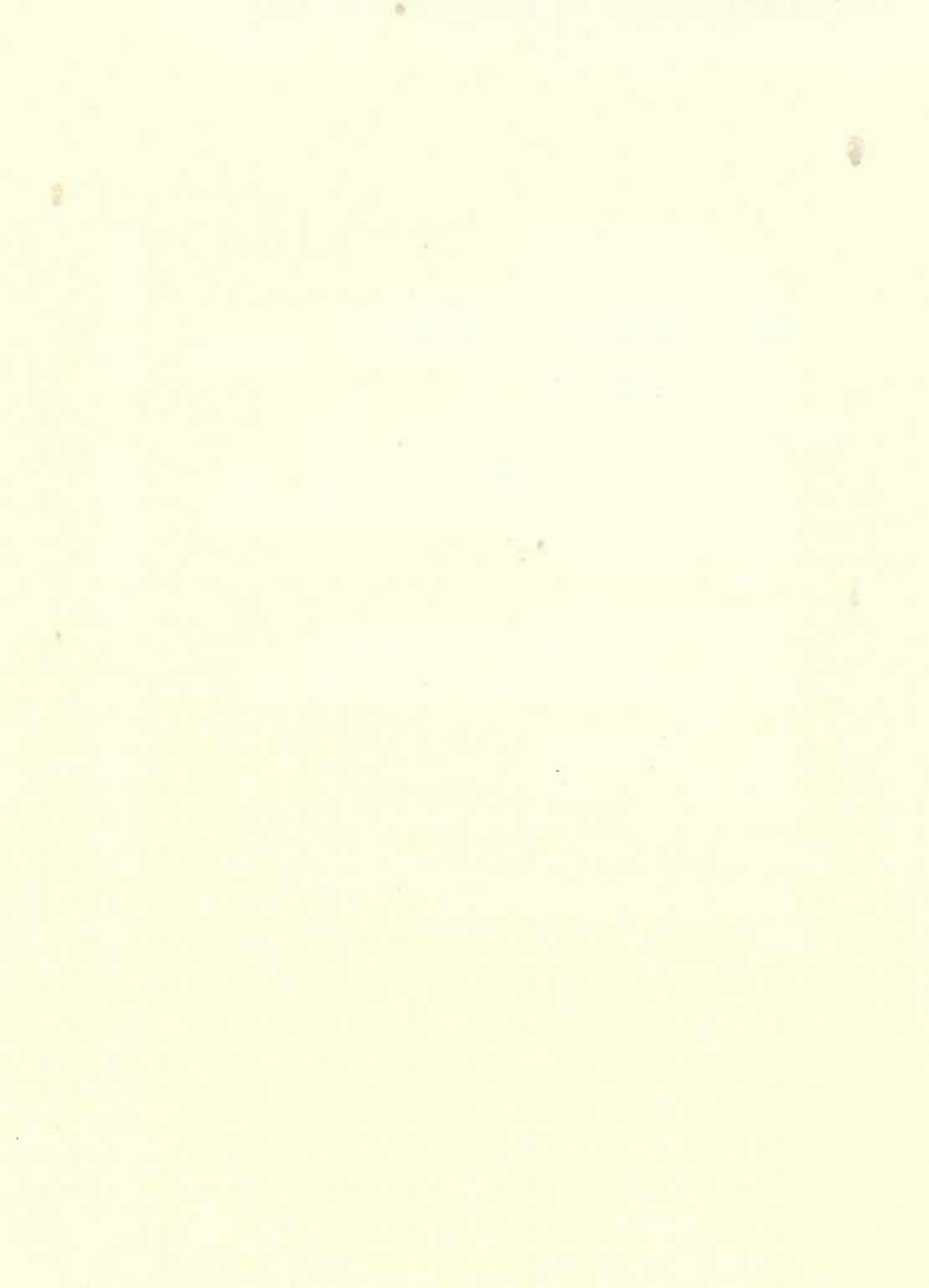
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ANCESTORS, PARENTS, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

Ancestors

Ariff: Mr. Blaisdell, where were your ancestors from?

Blaisdell: My ancestors were from England. The name Blaisdell--the suffix "dell" would seem to indicate that they were of the Danish, Norseman, King Kanute background, because the suffixes of that kind are thought to have been of Danish origin. Ralph Blaisdell--however spelled, for the name is spelled in many ways, particularly in the United States now--apparently was a farmer and came to America, landing at Pemaquid Point, Maine, in a shipwreck of the ship Angel Gabriel on August 15th, 1635.

Ariff: Was that ship filled with pilgrims who were attempting to get to this country?

Blaisdell: We are not entirely sure as to the purpose of this ship. As you know there were companies which were promoting the bringing of people over to start colonies within the province of those companies. It would appear that the ship Angel Gabriel was one of these company ships which was supposed to

Blaisdell: have landed further south and got diverted by the big storm and, therefore, was shipwrecked. If you will remember in your own days the terrible storms along the coast of New England, you can imagine what that storm was like. I visited Pemaquid Point in later years and could never understand how anybody could have survived that rocky point. But, anyway, as far as we know that was where he landed. I presume he was a farmer. Information about him is available in the Blaisdell papers of the Blaisdell Family National Association^{*} but of not very great importance to us in this matter.

My grandfather, James Joshua Blaisdell, was born in 1827 in Caanan, New Hampshire. He went to Dartmouth College, and following Dartmouth College he studied law in his father's office, which would seem to indicate that his father was a lawyer. He went, however, to Andover Theological Seminary and was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1853. He was minister of the Presbyterian Church there.

*Located in the Genealogical Library of Latter Day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.



Ariff: What about your grandmother?

Blaisdell: My grandmother was Susan Allen Blaisdell, born in Lebanon, New Hampshire, in 1829. Her grandfather, and I assume later, her father, had a large sheep ranch there. This clock behind me was bought in Lebanon, New Hampshire, from a clockmaker, Jedediah Baldwin, in 1795 and has come down to me through the Allen family. As you see, my name is Allen after my grandmother's maiden name. That picture over there is the picture of her grandfather, Diarka Allen.

Ariff: By the way, is this spelled with an "e-n" or an "a-n"?

Blaisdell: A-l-l-e-n--the English, not the Scotch. The Scotch is A-l-a-n. Nobody seems to know how to spell it. I've grown not to be sensitive about it. The name "Blaisdell" is spelled Blasdale, Blaisdel, Blasdell, etc. Why this is, we do not know. We don't like to assume that our ancestors were illiterate, but it is possible that they spelled euphonicly, and some spelled one way and some spelled another. We don't know where the division of spelling came in, but all Blaisdells of one spelling or another in the United States are descendants of this one ancestor; we're all related--except one small line.

Blaisdell: Rather interesting as far as the University of California is concerned is that Dr. Blasdale, of the chemistry department in early days, was probably not related to us, but came from a family that emigrated much later--but are small in number. I knew Dr. Blasdale when I came to Berkeley. His daughter was later a librarian at Mills College.

Ariff: Tell me a bit more about your grandparents.

Blaisdell: Yes. They were married--Miss Susan Allen and James Joshua Blaisdell--about 1853, and went to his first parish, which was a Presbyterian church in Cincinnati, Ohio. He remained there until 1859. I do not know much about his experience there. In 1859 he went--as a professor--to Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin, which is some fifty miles from Madison. It was frontier life and I expect, like many Puritans and New Englanders, and also Blaisdells, they were dominated by a pioneer spirit, and that he wanted to, and did, have a large part to play in the development of the state, which was then very frontier in character. He was interested in the conservation of natural resources. Along with others, he bought some land, along the Rock River across from the college, which was forested. It was later given to the city of Beloit and it became a park.



Blaisdell: My grandfather was interested in missionary work. Strangely enough, in his books I found later that he mentions having visited Italy, and his reaction to looking over the city from the tower of a cathedral in Milan. Father seems to know little of how he went. I don't know how he travelled, it must have been very primitive going.* So he was interested in the world. He was also interested in education, in developing schools; but he was very conservative religiously and stood without compromise against the intrusion of liberal religious influences in Wisconsin. There was a trial once. I've forgotten the details, but it had to do with the trial of a man in regard to some liberal movement in the churches. Why it went to trial, I don't know. But Grandfather wrote extensively against this man because of his liberal tendencies. On the other hand, he was a man of very warm, human sympathies. He was interested in starting reform schools for delinquent boys. I later met a man who was a student of his, an older man in my day, who said that, while conservative

*Also it is a mystery as to how he afforded it on the very modest salary of a small college.

Blaisdell: religiously, Grandfather was the man that always came to the defense of the students who became drunk. There was a great deal of liquor in the frontier town--many saloons. One of the great problems of the college was drinking and Grandfather always came to the defense of the students in trouble.

Ariff: How many children did your grandfather have?

Blaisdell: He had three children--three boys. One, Abner Blaisdell, was a cripple and died in his junior year in college. Not much is known about him. The second son was Philip, who was mentally retarded and lived in our home for some years; but later because of a tendency toward violence, he had to be institutionalized. He was a great burden to my father, who loved him very dearly because they grew up together as boys--one of the great tests for Father was to see him institutionalized. Father was the third.

Parents--James Arnold Blaisdell and
Florence Carrier Blaisdell

Ariff: Your father was the youngest?

Blaisdell: Yes. My father's home, however, was more than a home for themselves. Relatives in difficulty would send their children there. One of Father's warmest relationships was with Henry Swain, who later was state chancellor of schools in Montana. He grew up as a boy in my grandmother's home and his sister, whom we called Aunt Myra, was also in the home. It was a haven for those in trouble, and many others enjoyed the home in many ways. It was not confined to just the three boys.

Well, Father went to Beloit College and was a great orator. I have copies of the orations he gave in state competitions. You must remember that public speaking, debating, and oratory were much more prominent in the colleges in those days than athletics. To win a state contest was a great honor, and winning orators were received back with great acclamation. There is a rostrum still on the campus of Beloit College which was used--just a rock on which the orator stood and received the acclaim of the students.

Blaisdell: My father stood there several times. He was a very timid boy and student who wanted to participate in the simple athletics of the time, he wanted to play baseball. But his father would never let him become athletically involved, and I doubt whether he would have made a good athlete; he was not strong.

Ariff: It is interesting that you said that he was timid, and yet, he was such a speaker.

Blaisdell: Yes, this will come out later. He had to steel himself, in later life, to meet the obligations of public life as a college president and as a minister. But it was his inner spirit of friendliness that broke through this timidity, and also his interest in great purposes steeled him externally.

He must have graduated from Beloit in 1888 or '9; then he went to Hartford Theological Seminary. This break, as he has testified in his memorabilia that I have, was one of the turning points of his life. He had been under the domination of a rather severe, religiously conservative but kindly, father. But when he left Beloit, it was the beginning of the development of his own thinking, which was more liberal than his father's. While they differed in later years rather sharply on religious matters, there

Blaisdell: was a very warm affection between them. He went to Hartford Seminary, which was a conservative seminary, largely to please his father. He would have preferred to have gone to Yale and would have transferred there during his seminary course, except that he was such a good student that he was awarded scholarships at Hartford and he could not afford to make the change; and I presume, his father could not help him.

Ariff: Did he go through the seminary--through all the years?

Blaisdell: Yes. He graduated from the Hartford Seminary along about 1892 or '3.

Ariff: When did he meet your mother?

Blaisdell: My mother was a farm girl. The family lived on the farm on the outskirts of the little city of Beloit. I visited the farm in earlier years while it was still a farm, but have not been able to find it since, as it is probably covered by urban development. There were four Carrier sisters, all beautiful girls, lovely people. One became quite an artist, although she never was able to carry it forward because she became a teacher--first, as a missionary in Puerto Rico, and later on under the United States government program of education. Once, in later years, when I was in

Blaisdell: Puerto Rico, I found her record there as a teacher. She had great influence on us. She would return in the summer, and bring us Spanish candy. In later years, she taught my brother Spanish, and he became a professor of Spanish at Los Angeles City College.

Ariff: Which brother?

Blaisdell: This was brother Brooks, who was my oldest brother. In fact, I think she was the only member of the family who brought into the family any real interest in cultural things like art, and appreciation of the beautiful, though my mother also--all the Carrier sisters--had some of it.

Ariff: What position did your mother have in the family? Was she the oldest, the youngest?

Blaisdell: I think she was the third, because their mother died in her birth and the fourth daughter was a half-sister by my step-grandmother, whom I knew in later years.

My mother went to Beloit High School. It is hard to believe there was a high school in Beloit in those days, but there must have been, because I was told that was where my father and mother met. She was a beautiful girl. She used to tell me about walking five miles to school every day, in the winter over snowdrifts as high as the fences, and five miles home

Blaisdell: in the evening. I presume that they were very much in love from almost their first meeting and informally engaged for five years while my father was going to seminary and she going to Mt. Holyoke College. I presume that she was the only one of the Carrier sisters who went to college. I know her father could not help her, so I assume that my father and his parents helped her financially. I suppose that the Blaisdell family was a little disturbed about Mother Blaisdell because her family was not of the intellectual community of the college at Beloit. They were on the outskirts, they were the farming community.

Ariff: Your mother's family?

Blaisdell: Yes. And my father's family apparently felt that she should have the education that was necessary to become a part of the Blaisdell tradition. [Chuckles] I just assume this, and I think I am right, because Father spoke several times about this matter. Well, anyway, she went to Mt. Holyoke College. My grandmother, Susan Allen, was a student at Mt. Holyoke Seminary under Mary Lyon in the 1840's.

Ariff: Susan Allen?

Blaisdell: Yes, Miss Susan Allen. (My daughter is Susan Allen Blaisdell, born in the one-hundredth year of my grandmother, Mrs. Susan Allen-Blaisdell.)

Ariff: How many children do you have?

Blaisdell: I have two children: a daughter who is married to an attorney, William Carroll, in San Francisco--he is in the Extension Division of the University as well as having an office in San Francisco. My son, Morton Carrier Blaisdell, is a major in the Air Force, the Strategic Air Command, and is in Alaska. He has had several assignments in Alaska. He was in the second World War as a fighter pilot and then came back and graduated from Davis, and was going into Agricultural Extension work, but was called back during the Korean War. After that, he had spent so much time--and he loved the Air Force and flying anyway--so he decided to become a "regular".

Ariff: To make it a career.

Blaisdell: Yes.

Ariff: What happened after your parents met and after their early education in college and seminary, they were married...

Blaisdell: Well, at the end of Father's seminary course, he was offered a fellowship of fifteen hundred dollars, which was quite a sum in those days and the highest award the seminary could grant any of its graduating students, to study in Germany. However, to take advantage of it, he would have had to sign the Hartford Creed, which was a very conservative creed. He was advised to

Blaisdell: give his own interpretation to it, but he felt that this was somewhat dishonest, and he could not really subscribe to the creed because of his growing liberalism. Also, he and my mother had been engaged for some time and they thought they should start their married life, and two of them could not have gone to Germany together under the funds available. So he turned it down--but largely due to his reaction to conservatism in the seminary. And so they were married, about 1893, it must have been, because my brother was born in '94--the first child.

Ariff: Where did they live after they were first married?

Blaisdell: They went immediately to his first parish at Waukesha, Wisconsin. My mother was injured just a while before their marriage and was an invalid at the time, and the injury made her something of an invalid throughout her life. She spent much time away from home because of this. On the other hand, she must have lived a rather strenuous life to have brought up three impetuous boys, and a girl later, and to be the wife of a minister in a controversial period.

I should say a word here about the religious atmosphere of those days: it was a turbulent time. The German scholars in the historical study of the

Blaisdell: Bible had begun the movement of thinking that the Bible was not divinely inspired, but was a human document. The churches were split wide open on this question and it perplexed my father through his fourteen years as a minister. The churches were always divided between those who continued to believe in the divine inspiration of the Bible and those who saw in it an historical, human document. My father, in later years, when I started in the seminary, handed me a little book by Washington Gladden, a prominent minister in those early days, called Who Wrote The Bible?* Well, this book reflects the tremendous controversy. There were trials of heresy in the churches on this issue, and other issues of liberalism were very disturbing. I presume that this movement was as disturbing, if not more so, than the present movement of "God is Dead", which is disturbing religious thinking in our day. Bishop Pike and others are getting caught up in this movement. I got caught up in it much earlier. Anyway, Father went to Waukesha, it was the college town, Milwaukee-Downer College, which was a girl's college, but the

*Washington Gladden, Who Wrote The Bible?, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Riverside Press, 1891).

Blaisdell: church he was in was not the college church. Father felt left out of educational matters, with which he was primarily, I think, concerned, though he was caught up in the ethical and social movement of the church in early days. On his way to seminary, he had visited Harpers Ferry and had become much interested in the Negroes of the South. In Beloit, in the early days, his father's home was one of the 'Underground' hiding places for the Negro slaves escaping from the South.

Ariff: What year was that?

Blaisdell: It must have been in the fifties--late fifties and early sixties. My father was a chaplain of the 40th Wisconsin Regiment during the Civil War. I get diverted--my mind goes to childhood experiences that are rather interesting.

We boys, one time, found two muskets, that my grandfather had in the Civil War, in the attic. Remember the attics of the old New England style homes? Well, our attic was jammed with things. We would go up there on rainy days. One day we found these two muskets; on the Fourth of July, one time, we took them down and we put in dynamite caps, that made a little "pop", as we shot them off. It was

Blaisdell: great fun! One did not make enough noise, so we put in two, and then my brother put in four and shot the gun, pointing it across the street. "Bang," the thing went off--it had been loaded since Civil War days--the shot hit the house of the president of the college across the street and barely missed some passing people, and of course, it knocked my brother head over heels backward! Well, that is one of the childhood memories I have of those earlier days.

Now, in the church there in Waukesha my father was impatient, as I was in later years, being insistent upon the social conscience of the church and also, he was interested in developing the physical plant. But again, the church was divided, and he became restless. He never believed in asking or looking for opportunities. He always believed in "the call"--that continued with him for years. He never sought opportunities, they sought him.

He finally accepted the call to the little Congregational college church of Olivet, Michigan. This was one of the colleges that was established by the Congregationalists, who were the pioneers in education as civilization moved west. It was one of the

Blaisdell: stream of colleges, Oberlin, Grinnell, and Carleton, and later Pomona. But Olivet never developed. The town was in sort of a backwash and remained mostly agricultural, and it did not prosper. My two brothers were born in Waukesha.

Early Childhood in Olivet, Michigan

We had a horse by the name of Ned in Olivet. My father said that he and my mother went for a long ride one day, and came back realizing that I was to be born. My father made a rather complimentary statement that I think he lived to doubt in later years, that I was their pride and joy. Anyway, I was born in Olivet. The house had no inside running water; there were outside toilets; there was a wood and coal stove on which my mother cooked.

It might be interesting for me to add a few memories of Olivet. It may illustrate something of the vast changes that have transpired in my lifetime. Probably no generation in history has passed through such a radical transition. I remember running downtown to see the first automobile to pass through the village-- think of all that has been involved in the change from

Blaisdell: the horse and buggy era to the era of the automobile!

I don't remember a telephone in our home, though later in Beloit there was one of those old machines you cranked to get contact. There were no telephone numbers but you asked central to connect you, using names. There were two telephone companies in the same town and there was no interchange between them, and there was no possible connection outside of your town--no long distance calls.

In Olivet there were no bathrooms--toilets were all out of doors. We took only weekly baths. The men of the town went to the barber shops for their baths--again only once a week! We children took ours in large tin tubs near the stove in the kitchen, with water heated on the stove. As the youngest child, at that time, I took my bath last in the same water my brothers had bathed in. Our first bathroom was in Beloit--and primitive at that.

The only evening light was from kerosene lamps. The Saturday morning chore was to clean and fill the lamps. Later in Beloit we changed to gas light, then much later to a single electric light for each room.

We did not have automobile accidents. Our chief excitement in this respect was runaway horses. I was

Blaisdell: in one of those. The horse was frightened by something and we ended up with the horse in the barn and the buggy smashed against the door.

The little college in Olivet had reluctantly, as in colleges in general, established science courses in its curriculum. The little chemistry laboratory was just across the street from our home. I can still smell it today. As children we would accompany the professor of biology on snake hunts. This professor was once reported to have been eaten by cannibals but actually lived to become an eminent professor at Harvard. On returning later from one of his tropical visits he visited us and horrified my mother by bringing with him several baskets of live and huge boa constrictors and let them out to exercise in our yard.

My first love was a little blonde, curly haired daughter of the coal dealer of the town. "Our home" was under the front stoop of our house. It was all innocent and fortunately no need for birth control devices of which there were none at the time. My father told me much later that it was almost impossible to secure these until after the presidential regime of "Teddy" Roosevelt--and illegal until much later. He once much later smuggled in an unexpurgated copy of

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Blaisdell: Marie Stopes' book, Married Love, from England. It was illegal to have it in the U.S. I took it to seminary with me in 1921 in New York and the copy became much worn as it passed from student to student. I think it was read more avidly than the Bible! It is not strange therefore that since retirement I have been on the board of directors of Planned Parenthood-- world population control agency of Alameda County! To do then what we do now would have and did lead to prison terms!

There was no distribution of milk. You owned cows. Our family owned a half a cow with a professor and he and Father alternated in the milking. Our duty as boys was to bring the milk home. Pasteurization was not known and I don't remember my mother even boiling it.

Mother took great part in the life of the church, taught Sunday School classes; and I think the criticism of the more conservative element was greatly softened by her, because of her loveliness, and also because of my father's outreach in terms of human sympathy, and interest in everybody regardless of how he differed with them in point of view. He developed the capacity to listen to others, and not to press his own points of view. This became a very great help to him in later

Blaisdell: years as an administrator. To be able to listen is a great quality! Most people like to talk about their own ideas. (I am afraid I am like that.) Father listened, and people thought that he probably agreed with them more than he did, because he listened and did not controvert them.

In Olivet he bought an apple orchard and became interested in the land. Later, at Pomona College, he was always urging the college to buy land and more land. There also he bought an orchard of his own, developed a lemon and orange grove out of the desert above Claremont. He was a great believer in land and its importance.

I don't remember my father's preaching. I don't remember his sermons. We always went to church, of course. The only episode I remember was that once our dog, Fritz, followed us to church and down the aisle. Before we could capture him, he went up and lay down beside Father on the pulpit. He stayed there sleeping all through the service. That is the only memory I have, but this interest of Father's in the liberal movements must have had an influence on me.

Ariff: Yes. To divert a bit, what was the influence of religion on your home life?

Blaisdell: Did I tell about my grandfather's conservatism? I guess I did.

Ariff: Yes.

Blaisdell: And my grandmother, I judge, followed him, not so much because of her own natural inclination to develop religious thought as following her husband; she lived with us until she died (except in Olivet). After Olivet, we moved to Beloit, Wisconsin, and lived in Grandmother's home.

Family Life in Beloit, Wisconsin

Blaisdell: Father was offered a professorship in Olivet College, and several times to Beloit, but later accepted an offer which seemed to be more to his liking; it was the professorship of Biblical Literature and College Librarian. President Eaton of Beloit College was quite a family friend and was constantly trying to bring Father back to the college. However Father did not want to follow the family pattern and he resisted for a time. But later this developed, and I think he felt, too, that he would be in constant controversy in the church--that he would have a

Blaisdell: greater chance of influencing liberal thinking on religion if he went to a religious college and could interpret the Bible through the course on Biblical literature. Later conversations with his students that I have had revealed that he had great influence as a teacher opening up the horizons of religious and ethical and social thinking. When we went to Beloit was the beginning of the period that my grandmother lived with us or rather we lived with her in the old family home, and so as not to disturb her many of the religious traditions that might not have been carried on if she had not been present were carried on in our home.

My father was very fond of his mother. In fact, in later years, I came to feel he had what might be called a "mother complex"--frequently she was pushed forward more than my mother. I think this must have been very perplexing to my mother. I remember later episodes in Claremont where my grandmother, in her declining years, would open all the mail and this would bother my mother a great deal. There were other things of this kind. As a result, in Beloit where we went in about 1903, many of the religious traditions were continued.

Ariff: Where, in your family life?

Blaisdell: In the home. We always had prayers following breakfast, in the living room. We all kneeled in front of our chairs for these prayers. I remember a friend of mine, who is still living, who used to go by to join us to go to school and would whistle for us. My father would say, "Invite Harlan in," and he would have to kneel and have prayers with us. On Sundays, not only did we attend church in the mornings but also in the evenings and the rest of the day had to be given to unusual occupations such as reading good literature. We were not confined to religious literature, but we were supposed to find a good book and read out under the great elm trees, which my grandfather had planted in a yard fenced in by a New England fence which we could not go beyond on Sunday.

Ariff: What did you read?

Blaisdell: I don't remember. This is curious. I must have read some of the childhood classics but, frankly, I can't understand certain things in the family life. There were not the cultural influences that you would have expected. We weren't introduced to art. My mother read to us; but I don't remember any emphasis on the literary classics. In many ways, I felt I had been

Blaisdell: denied the introduction to things that I now see I am totally uneducated in--art, literature, music, the theater.

Ariff: In speaking about the home life, what about card playing and dancing?

Blaisdell: Oh, those things were definitely out.

Ariff: Perhaps there was some relationship, those were frowned upon.

Blaisdell: Well, yes, they were. My father, of course, even with his liberal thinking, did not want to, and I don't think he was inclined to, disturb others by evidence of this sort of thing that disturbed the communities. As a minister and later as a professor in the college, he conformed and believed in conformity, to a certain extent, until later years.

I can intrude here one experience at Pomona College, later, way up in 1914-15. There was no dancing at the college, and nobody could smoke in public. One professor was seen smoking a cigar at Laguna Beach in the early days, and he was nearly fired from the college, when this became known. One time, I took the college car, which was the only car our family had, and I don't know whether I had permission or not, but anyway, I was going to Pomona with a young

Blaisdell: lady, and I unfortunately parked the car in front of the dance hall at Pomona. The city of Pomona was five miles away from the college. The car was seen there by one of the college professors and he reported to Father that the college car was parked in front of the dance hall at Pomona city. Well, I hadn't gone to the dance hall but I had quite a time extricating myself from, first, the use of the college car, and second, so carelessly parking it in front of the dance hall! [Chuckles] Well, this goes forward, and we should go back.

Ariff: Yes, I am curious about your family. What your position was in the family? Were you the third child?

Blaisdell: I was the third boy, and I think I was supposed to be a girl. Probably the name would have been Ellen instead of Allen.

Ariff: How many were there of you all together?

Blaisdell: There were four. We finally had a sister born, seven years younger than I was. They apparently tried again to see if they could get a girl and would quit if they got another boy. But this time they got a girl. One of the interesting things was that all of us children were born in the home and not in the hospital. Father, in later years, used to say that there was a great deal

Blaisdell: lost by children being born in hospitals rather than in homes. I don't know why. Anyway, my sister came along. On the day of her birth, there was of course commotion in the house and my dear brother had been told to take me out. So he took me downtown, and on the way he introduced me as best he could to the information on birds and bees, and then told me that I had a sister. That was my first introduction to sex, the birth of my sister. I don't think my brother knew too much, but anyway, I accepted it as divinely inspired. [Chuckles]

Ariff: What were you interested in when you were a child?
Do you remember?

Blaisdell: My childhood was not a happy childhood, as I look back on it, somewhat because of the restrictions that I could not join with my friends and do the things they did. We never could have a gun, a BB gun, as my friends had. We were denied many other things that others could do. Then, too, Beloit was beginning to be an industrial city. The fathers of the college did not have the foresight to secure the land down to Rock River. There was a bluff--a little plateau above the river--and the college was on this bluff. As a result, Pleasant Street, of Beloit, which bordered the river

Blaisdell: just below the college, became the Italian community, whose members were employees in the Fairbanks Morse Engineering Company that developed considerably in later years. It was part of the movement to bring cheap labor from abroad for the growing industries of that period. The Italian community was in the same school district as we were, so we all went to school together. On the way home, the Italians and the college community kids would meet, and always have a fight. They had no common interests. I think that this was the introduction to my thinking on race. It was pounded into me. I suppose that this was somewhat the beginning of my awareness of racial prejudice. My somewhat more liberal attitude toward race in later years was somewhat influenced by my being beaten up by an Italian boy whom I called a "Dago".

Ariff: Why did you call him a "Dago"?

Blaisdell: Oh, when we weren't with them, we called them "Dagos". There were the "Wops" or "Dagos", and I forget what we called the Swedish element. There was quite a group of Swedes and Norwegians. As a matter of fact, we had a maid in our home who was a Norwegian or Swede, I think. These young Scandinavian girls came over to be

Blaisdell: married and find their life in this country. There was quite a colony of the Swedes and Norwegians. The Italians were the factory workers.

As I have indicated, my childhood I do not remember with very great pleasure except in relationship to my mother. I can remember on winter afternoons, when it was beginning to get dark when we came in from the snow and from school, she would read to us and peel apples. We would have apples and reading with Mother, in the gloom of the early winter evenings. Those were happy times.

The winter sports did not interest me to any extent. The college had what were called Indian mounds. They were burial places of the Indians. They were excavated later and some artifacts found. They were all over the college campus and seemed like mountains to me as a boy. We used to slide down, using barrel staves as skis. The Observatory Hill, going down toward the river, was quite a hill. Then there was Devil's Slide, which only the most proficient would dare to go down. I don't think I ever skied down that. Skating to school on the sidewalks and then the gathering of nuts in the fall were happy activities. We would go out into the farm country--nobody cared.

Blaisdell: We threw sticks into the trees and got great big loads of nuts, butternuts, and walnuts, and hickory nuts. We'd store them for drying in our attic. Those must have been happy days.

I remember, we had a horse as we did in Olivet, and we took rides on it. Sometimes the family rented a surrey, and would drive out to the old farm and to "Big Hill" for picnics. I was always the youngest, so I sat below the seat behind the dashboard, and I could see the hoofs of the horses and the imprints they made in the dirt road and the wheels going around. If in the spring, we would find violets, bloodroots, windflowers and other wild flowers. Those were happy times. But I was not a strong boy, and I don't think I was too happy. I don't remember being a happy boy. I don't know why--partly me and partly the environment, I think.

BOYHOOD IN CALIFORNIA

High School Days in Claremont, California

Ariff: How old were you when the family moved to Claremont?

Blaisdell: I lived approximately seven years in Beloit. I must have been thirteen or fourteen when we went to Claremont because I was in the eighth grade.

Ariff: Why did your family move to Claremont?

Blaisdell: Pomona was a struggling Congregational college about to close its doors because of financial difficulties. And Mr. George Marston, who was president of the board of trustees--the great citizen of San Diego, of the Marston Store--was a great man. Pomona College was looking for a president. There was a man who had given to Beloit College and had also given to Pomona College--a man by the name of Pierson. Mr. Marston went to Mr. Pierson, who had followed the destiny of these two little colleges and had been generous to them, and asked him if he had any suggestions. Mr. Pierson said, "Well, you ought to look up James Blaisdell at Beloit." Mr. Marston came and talked with Father. He was a man who could challenge anybody to exciting futures, and he excited Father. Father

Blaisdell: went to Dr. Pierson and asked his advice, and Pierson said, "Stay at Beloit, you'll be the next president."

Ariff: At Beloit?

Blaisdell: Yes. But there were two things: first, there was the challenge of the Blaisdell pioneer spirit coming through the family from Puritan days. Also, Father had a family of four children, and his salary at Beloit College including, I think, his carrying on the ministry of the Second Congregational Church of Beloit, amounted to maybe \$1800. He felt he couldn't be fair to his family and not take the opportunity of a salary of \$5000 as president of Pomona. So he accepted, and we moved to Claremont in 1910. I was in the eighth grade. I finished the eighth grade and I went to Claremont High School.

Ariff: How was Claremont as compared to Beloit? Were you happier in Claremont?

Blaisdell: I think so. There was a freer atmosphere. Much of the tradition and conservatism of the home life had passed out. Liberalism began to dominate.

Ariff: Was your grandmother still living?

Blaisdell: She was still living, and moved with us to Claremont, but she adjusted more to us than we to her.

We didn't have prayers--all we had were blessings at

Blaisdell: mealtime, but we did not have after-breakfast prayers. I suppose on college matters Father had to get busy right away. A good deal of those traditional conservative things began to disappear. California, as it is today, is more open, more friendly, less reactionary. I have had professors at Cal and at other California colleges say the same thing. One of my closest friends, who came to be a professor at Mills College, Oakland, was previously at a conservative Middle Western college, and he just breathed a sigh of relief when he came to California. He could not believe that there was such a freedom and openness of thinking as there was here compared to the Middle West. That was true even in those early days. You were more concerned about the development of civilization than you were in the traditions and the past; you were living in the future; in the Middle West you were conserving something which had already been built. This led to this open, pioneer atmosphere which, I think, still prevails in California to a certain extent.

Ariff: What was one of your father's first ventures when he came out here?

Blaisdell: Well, the first thing he had to do was to raise \$100,000 to get the college out of debt. Nobody thought

Blaisdell: it could be done. The college was about to close its doors because of debt. He went into a campaign of \$100,000, which was "something" in those days, and it was successful. He was a great speaker and he challenged people. He challenged the students. He was an inspirational man. He did not push religion down their throats in any sense whatsoever. Out of his background he had a great grasp of literature, of the Bible, and particularly of Tennyson. He could speak and he could inspire people to participate in great enterprises. This was his genius as president of Pomona.

Ariff: He was very successful at this first...venture?

Blaisdell: Oh, yes. Only a few years later under his leadership the college entered into a campaign for one million dollars. And one million--well, that was something! And they were successful in that! He went throughout the length and breadth of the state, preaching in churches, anywhere where he thought there was money. The timidity of his earlier days gave way to the challenge of the enterprise. He would do things in the interest of the enterprise which he could never have done as an individual, he was so timid. He used to tell me that he was always uncomfortable in the

Blaisdell: presence of wealthy people. In spite of this he challenged them to the concept of "the stewardship of wealth". He dwelt on this as a peculiarly American characteristic. It was rather curious. His social thinking was way ahead of his acting as a college administrator. But he adjusted his statements so that they did not unduly disturb the community; but his ideas were there in the background and they pushed the enterprise forward constantly.

Ariff: Do you remember anything more about your father's problems at Pomona, other than fund raising?

Blaisdell: Oh yes. I was one of them, as were my brothers! You see, we never had a home. In Beloit we lived in my grandmother's home; in Claremont in the president's house belonging to the college. We never owned our own home. Whereas we had horses and a carriage in Beloit, the college provided an automobile for Father's professional duties. A car then was quite something, of course. I remember the first one was a Cadillac, a very big, cumbersome thing. So we never could use things without a consciousness that we were not using our own, but something that belonged to the college. This always bothered us, and it bothered Father, too. As boys we had to have transportation at times for

Blaisdell: dates, and it was difficult to persuade Father that we should use the college car. So it was sneaked out at times. I remember that the town slopes down from the mountains. I became adept at turning the engine of the car off way up the street, and coasting down, turning the corners, going up a little incline, and backing into the garage without the engine! [Chuckles] But the college always came first in our family life.

Ariff: Did you feel rather smothered by this? Did you feel that your activities were circumscribed?

Blaisdell: Anything we did represented the president's thinking. This was a problem for us. I think more for me probably than for my brothers. I don't know why. In later years when I was in college, what I said tended to be interpreted as what the president wanted.

Ariff: I was wondering about that. How would you describe yourself as contrasted to your brothers? Would you say, for instance, that your older brothers were more aggressive or outgoing, or was it the opposite?

Blaisdell: My oldest brother remained throughout his life under the domination of my father. My father was a dominating person, kindly but dominating. He would say to me when I came to him with a problem that had to

Blaisdell: be decided, "Buddy, you decide that for yourself."
But I knew--excuse me--damned well what he wanted me to decide! You see, my brother Brooks, an older boy, had a very perplexing life, that I won't go into too much. He was always under the domination of my father until his death in later years. Well, I should go back and say that my second brother, Paul, and I went through Pomona College, and I always thought that was a great mistake. We should never have attended the college where my father was president. My oldest brother couldn't take it.

Ariff: Brooks.

Blaisdell: Yes. He was sent to the University of Wisconsin where he graduated in agriculture; but he came back to Claremont. After college, my second brother went to medical school in Chicago. He pulled aside into his own life. He was never dominated by Father and was probably resentful of him in many ways.

Ariff: I found a book in the library written by a man by the name of Summer about Pomona.

Blaisdell: Which was that, George Summer, or C. B.? Do you know? Charles Bunt Summer was one of the early founders of the college and was still living when we went to Claremont. George was his son. George was professor of economics and then treasurer of the college for many years, and then became treasurer of the joint enterprise for some time before he died.

Blaisdell: A very interesting thing, just to give you a train of thought into the future, I recently ran across an article on the development of the idea of breaking down the big universities into small units like Santa Cruz or San Diego or Irvine. It points out the fact that this whole movement from bigness to maintain smallness started with my father. I remember once talking to Dean McHenry, chancellor of the Santa Cruz campus. Clark Kerr and Dean McHenry and many University people were International House boys. I knew them as students. I recently met Dean McHenry on the campus, and I said, "Dean, what you are doing is following out my father's concept of small colleges." He said, "Yes, I have always said that Santa Cruz should have been called the Blaisdell Campus of the University of California." Dean's sister married a professor at Pomona. Dean was often out there while he was a professor at UCLA. He caught the concept there, and he instituted that at Santa Cruz.

Ariff: I wondered if you wanted to say anything more about high school.

Blaisdell: As I have said, we went to Claremont about 1910, and I was in the eighth grade. After the eighth grade, I went to Claremont High School, which was a very small

Blaisdell: high school at the time, and I was there for three years. By the end of three years I had completed enough units so that, with summer school at the University of California in the summer of 1914, I was able to get the credits necessary for entrance to college. Parenthetically-- the course I took at that summer session was German. By a law passed during the war, all instruction in German was discontinued in public institutions, and all professors in that department of the university were dropped! How different in the second World War when it was the policy to teach all the languages of our enemies. I therefore took the next year out and worked in a grocery store driving the delivery wagon and got to know the inside of family life in Claremont in no uncertain ways! I went to the back doors and saw their kitchens, and got to know the women of the community.

College Days and the Army

Blaisdell: Following that year, I entered Pomona in 1915-- Pomona College, of course. As I look back on my

Blaisdell: college course, I feel that I did not get a very good education other than at the beginning. It was a disturbed period.

Ariff: Why was it disturbed?

Blaisdell: It was disturbed because of the war. My mother and I were at Lake Tahoe following my summer at UC, and while we were there war was declared. Then, as I returned to college, a good many of the students went off to the Ambulance Corps before we were in the war itself. When war was declared, I believe ¹⁹¹⁷~~1916~~, many more enlisted or were drafted. At the end of my junior year, I went to an Army Training Camp at the Presidio in San Francisco. Following the course, I received my second lieutenant's commission in Field Artillery. However, we were transferred then to Camp Taylor, Kentucky, near Louisville. And as we had had no training in artillery, we were put into a unit for artillery training. This was about September ¹⁹¹⁸~~1916~~ or ~~17~~, I don't remember which. While we were in our training, of course, the armistice was declared in November, but I continued on through to the commission and was discharged on January 1. Of course, during my period there was the great influenza epidemic. I would wake up in the morning and find the bed next to me

Blaisdell: vacant, and the next morning the bed on the other side was vacant.

Ariff: Where was this?

Blaisdell: This was at Camp Taylor, Kentucky. That was a very serious time over all of the United States. But I survived all right, and then returned to Claremont and took up my college course for the second semester. We were given credit for our military training so that I graduated with my class in June, 1919. This again added to the fact that my education was rather sparse. My chief interests in college were in sciences, chemistry and so forth, though I was much interested in philosophy. We had a visiting professor from Harvard who was very stimulating--George Herbert Palmer.

Ariff: Your career was interrupted, but I understand you made Phi Beta Kappa in spite of this.

Blaisdell: Yes. There were some who assumed that I made Phi Beta Kappa because my father was president of the college, and not because of my intellectual acumen.
[Chuckles]

James A Blaisdell--President of Pomona College

Ariff: You have spoken about how difficult it was to be the son of the president of the school. Since you were in that position, do you remember any of your father's problems in connection with school-- problems other than fund raising?

Blaisdell: It was a time of shift and change in American small-college education. They started as religious institutions with a background of Congregationalism. There was no dancing, no smoking; a good many things were frowned upon. There was daily chapel until around 1918, or '19. After I left, chapel was discontinued. There were college gatherings once a week, non-religious in character. It was this shift of religious thinking again, and Father was in the forefront of that. The colleges gradually became secularized and far more liberal in terms of religious thinking, and in terms of social customs. The type of religious change that went on can be illustrated by this (and I think my father was in the lead in this): he did not like to have outside religious organizations with any control of religious discussion and thinking at the college. He opposed the YMCA program which was very extensive

Blaisdell: in colleges at that time. Instead, he set up a Department of Religion in the college. The first man, I think, who was in charge of that department was Dr. Brooks, who was previously minister at the First Congregational Church at Berkeley. With this course, Father felt that the college would set its own atmosphere in meeting the religious issues.

Ariff: What direction did this course take? Was it a course in comparative religion?

Blaisdell: I don't know, as it came just after I left, and I did not participate in that. There was a move against the evangelism of the YM and YWCA at that time. The YWCA was far more liberal than the YMCA. Father wanted the college itself to set the atmosphere of its religious thinking. While there were visiting speakers coming in, they were not encouraged to come in for evangelical purposes and were invited by the college itself. There was only one church in Claremont, the Congregational Church, at that time. The relationship between the college and the church was therefore rather close. This, again, was part of the religious life of the college. The students sang in the choir of the church. I believe there was required attendance at church on Sunday; this was discontinued very shortly.

Blaisdell: Later, the college set up its own services. The community was growing, and other denominational churches were established in the town, so one community church did not prevail as in earlier days.

Ariff: What was Pomona strongest in, in what subject matter?

Blaisdell: Well, it was very strong in its science. There was an outstanding professor there in chemistry, Professor Lyman. Through those years, the graduates of Pomona in the sciences who came to the University of California did remarkably well. However, Father was deeply concerned to keep the humanities strong in the curriculum. My father used to say that it was very easy to raise money for an endowment for a science department but it was far more difficult to raise money for humanities. He therefore stressed the humanities as essential to liberal education. I might add here too something that is of interest in terms of later development at Berkeley.

The minister at the Congregational Church at Claremont in those days was a Dr. Henry Kingman, who was married to an English woman he had met when he was a missionary in China. The Kingman children were approximately my age. Harry Kingman, the oldest son, was a graduate of Pomona and later became the executive

Blaisdell: secretary of the University Young Men's Christian Association at Berkeley. He was later very influential in liberalizing the whole social attitude of the YMCA, and was of large influence at the University. Our friendship continued through the years. We were very close in the many perplexities which arose at peripheral institutions at the University in later years.

Ariff: Here in Berkeley?

Blaisdell: Yes.

Ariff: Whom else did you meet there as a young man? Do you remember?

Blaisdell: I had better not go into that [chuckles], because I met a lot of girls! The man who became the president of the Armstrong Linoleum Company was one of my friends. And Mr. Rex Ragan was my friend from the eighth grade through college, and later became a professor of business administration and tax consultant at the University of Southern California.

Ariff: I have come across the term "Claremont Colleges" in my reading and I wondered which colleges were included.

Claremont Colleges Concept

Blaisdell: That development came after I left, but was initiated by my father. He saw Pomona College becoming too big and while he visualized the future growth of California, he valued the intimacy of the small college. He used to say that no college should be bigger than that all its students could eat in one dining room. He felt the intimacy of student and student, and faculty and student in the small college was exceedingly important. He did not want Pomona to become the Stanford of Southern California, which it was tending to become. The enrollment at Pomona at that time was limited to eight hundred. He felt that was the maximum size for a small college. This has grown to be now, I think, to eleven-twelve hundred. To offset this, he visualized the setting up of small ~~indigenous~~ ^{independent} colleges around common, central facilities. He spent a year in England or in Europe, and a good deal of time in England, and came back to initiate this program. It was originally called the "Oxford Plan". Father later insisted that, while it took on some of the characteristics of the English university, it was distinctly American in that it was a

Blaisdell: visualization of a group of colleges more or less unrelated, as under the federal system of states, namely, that the individual college should be entirely ^{independent} ~~indigenous~~ and self-governing, but that there should be a cooperative unity through which they could accomplish common things that the small colleges could not afford by themselves. With the advancement of science, etc., at the large universities, if the small college was to continue, it had to build up its facilities which were too expensive for the small college, such as science laboratories, common auditoria, a common library for them all. This was the beginning of the "Claremont Colleges". It has changed its name somewhat, and changed its character, and later developments are not entirely in line with Father's original conception. He once said to me that he once believed that men could cooperate, but that he had learned that they could not.

Ariff: When did this disillusionment set in?

Blaisdell: It set in with the opposition largely at Pomona College against the joint system. The faculty at Pomona College felt that their departments needed reinforcing, their salaries needed to be readjusted, and that it was more important to build the single

Blaisdell: college strongly than to divert the energies and the support to other institutions. Pomona never quite accepted the common system. They accepted donations for a science laboratory which should have really been a laboratory controlled by the central organization, the Claremont Colleges, for all the colleges. However, the adjustment had been made and I don't think the central idea can ever be destroyed. It is being copied very widely.

In a late issue of the Business Week magazine there is an article on the development of this concept at other large universities such as the University of California. Santa Cruz campus has followed the pattern, and so has San Diego campus. Other universities in the South and in the East are breaking down in smaller units. The College of the Pacific has gone to a similar plan. These all vary from the central idea, but Business Week indicates that it was my father's original concept that was the beginning of this whole thing.

Ariff: What about the high schools? I have read about communities building up educational complexes where they have all of the educational facilities in one location. Does that idea have any relationship to this?

Blaisdell: No! No relationship. However, Claremont had become an educational complex in these ways. Around this central plan of colleges have developed other institutions affiliated, although not essentially organizationally part of the plan. For instance, the botanical gardens, up on Indian Hill, which is just a short walk from the colleges, has become incorporated as part of the plan where research is done in botany, and plant pathology, and this sort of thing. Then the Methodist Seminary, which was associated with the University of Southern California, moved to Claremont School of Theology which, while not officially related to the complex of colleges, is still a co-operating agency in the development of the educational facilities. And the high school is just across the street. It is just the fact that the colleges attracted other educational institutions. In another year or so, there will be a girl's Catholic college at Claremont; it is moving out from the Los Angeles center. Again, it will not be an official part of the college complex in responsibility, but by the very nature of the development these institutions are gathering about it. Just outside of Claremont, there is a boy's secondary school, and there is a girl's collegiate institute, I think

Blaisdell: they call it. The Claremont Colleges plan is growing to be a magnet of co-operating but ^{independent} ~~indigenous~~ institutions.

Ariff: It just happens.

Blaisdell: Yes. Other schools gather around this educational environment.

Experiences in Japan

Ariff: What did you do after you graduated from Pomona?

Blaisdell: When I left college I went to Japan to teach school. There was a man by the name of Galen Fisher who later lived in Berkeley. His brother was later a member of the board of directors of the International House for some years--the Fisher family was a very fine influential family in the area. Galen Fisher was one of the founders of the YMCA in Japan, and he started a "Peace Corps" which was not known as a Peace Corps then. He would come to the United States, pick out a limited number, five to ten young fellows just graduating from college, and he would take them to Japan. There he would farm them out to Japanese government schools, to teach English.

Ariff: Was this under the auspices of the YMCA?

Blaisdell: Yes. But once we got there we were not under the YMCA. We became employees of the Japanese Prefectural Government. I was one of these who was chosen and went to Japan in 1919, just following my graduation.

Ariff: What age group did you teach?

Blaisdell: I went down to Fukuoka and taught in the Fukuoka Commercial School which was a sort of commercial high school. It was entirely a boys' school. I suppose the students must have been of high school age, and a little beyond, in their last year.

Ariff: How did you live when you were in Japan?

Blaisdell: This is a very interesting period in my life. I went under a two-year agreement. The first year I lived with a Lutheran missionary family in Fukuoka. I was then somewhat religiously inclined--I think somewhat superficially, but at least I had the inclination. But living with this conservative Lutheran missionary family, I began to react. I remember one episode. We always had prayer meetings on Wednesday nights. I did not need to go but I did because I was living in their home, the gathering place of the missionaries. They were all Southern Lutherans. Following the prayer meeting, I made the remark, "I don't understand it,

Blaisdell: you folks will come thousands of miles to associate with Japanese on an intimate basis, and they are yellow-skinned. But not one of you will go back to Georgia or North Carolina and sit down to the same table with a Negro." Before the evening was out I had all the missionary ladies in tears because I challenged their sincerity. Most of my work was in the government school, and it was very interesting. I was the only foreign teacher in the school. They were very kind to me and very tolerant of me.

Ariff: Did you learn any Japanese while you were there?

Blaisdell: Very little. I was not ever a linguist. My father was not a linguist either. He always said that he had a poor memory--and language is memory. I picked up enough to get along so I could travel.

Ariff: You were speaking about getting to know the Japanese people. Did you make any Japanese friends while you were there?

Blaisdell: Oh yes--not that lasted beyond the years at all, but the school boys would come to my home outside of school hours. In fact, it became so burdensome in the end that I had to call a halt to it. I remember going out on the playground one time and the stuffy, stern, old military officer who was in charge of the military

Blaisdell: training, which was very dominant at school, was giving the manual of arms. I had been in the first World War, that is, I had been a lieutenant. I had not gotten to Germany. But I was a second lieutenant in Field Artillery and I had gone through the preliminary training. So I stepped up to him and when I first went he looked at me with great skepticism and sternness and would have nothing to do with me. But I picked up a gun and I showed them the American manual of arms. He was pleased as punch over that, and after that he was very friendly with me.

Or the professor of agriculture would come in. He would bring in a box of fireflies that he had caught on his farm. In the evening I would take the box of fireflies up to my room, and I would open the window and see them fly out over the landscape. Indeed, they tried to marry me off to a Japanese girl! They made several approaches on this. I still have the picture of the girl they tried to have me marry. I don't know why I didn't, because I learned to love the beauty of the Asian women. In later years I always said that my second wife would be an Asian because they knew their place! But it never happened that way.

Blaisdell: It was a fascinating year. The Japanese believe in vacations and holidays. And during those periods I would get on the train (I had, I think, fifty per cent off on third-class travel because I was an employee of the government), and I would travel. I would get on the train in the morning and I would get off at night at some place, look up the missionary and stay overnight with him, and then move on the next day. I did quite a bit of that.

One time, I took a friend, who was also one of these "Peace Corps" men, teaching in Nagasaki, over to Seoul, Korea, for an operation at the ~~Severin's~~ ^{Severance} Hospital. I left him there and went on up to Manchuria and on into Peking. I travelled third class, sleeping on the luggage racks of the third-class Chinese trains. How I ever survived, I don't know. I had many experiences there that were very determining in my attitude towards things in Asia--the dominance of the Japanese, the cruelty in Korea, the overpowering lordship they had on the Manchurian Railroad on which I had to travel, being pushed around.

In Peking, China, I bumped into what was known as "Princeton Court," which is another pre-Peace Corps movement. Princeton University sent some of their

Blaisdell: graduates over to co-operate with the YMCA in Peking, China. There I bunked in with a group of them in a Chinese house they were running. The manager of the house was a man by the name of Laurence Sears whom later I met at Union Seminary at New York. We became lifelong friends. I used to visit him. He became a professor in later years at Ohio Wesleyan and then came out to Mills College. Very shortly after that he died; then my wife died. Laurence Sears' widow and I decided to carry on through life together, and she is now my present wife, Dr. Sears. That goes forward, but you can see how things tie together and lead on to the future.

Ariff: What do missionaries accomplish abroad, how do you feel about missionaries going to, say, the Orient?

Blaisdell: Many of them were the salt of the earth, kindly people. However, I began to feel that in terms of evangelism, they were far from constructive. They broke against the traditional manner of life of the people. Where they got one individual interested and converted, they created a family split that was unfortunate. Then too, I saw them teaching the superstitions of our religion as being true against the superstitions of their own religions. It bothered me

Blaisdell: very deeply--not so much when I lived with them as later on when I looked back on it. Here again, the Congregational missionaries were a different kind. They were liberal people. Whereas there were evangelists among them, their main concern was in the founding of educational institutions and hospitals. In those institutions I feel they made important contributions. Where the emphasis was to convert the young people in the schools I disagree with them. At the end of my first year, I was approached two ways: one, by the English speaking newspaper of Japan (The Japan Advertiser), printed in Tokyo, to become a reporter for them. I have often wondered why I did not take it. I did not know enough; I was too immature--religiously concerned. Then I was approached by the Congregational Missionary Society in Japan to continue with them. (And also, as with the first, I felt I should return to the U.S. to undertake my graduate studies).

At the end of the school year, the seniors of all the schools were taken on foreign trips. Some of the schools sent their students as far as the West Coast of the United States, but my students were to be sent to China. And I, with a Japanese teacher,

Blaisdell: was put in charge of this group. We travelled steerage from the port in Japan, Moji, to Shanghai. I remember that trip with great interest. I travelled through China to Nanking and that whole area of China with this group. We stayed in native inns, of course, and I think I got, either there or somewhere along the line, amoebic dysentery. Nobody knew what it was in those days. I was very sick. In fact I went to the station at Fukuoka to catch my train for Tokyo, and fainted. I remember waking up and seeing my colleagues at the school, all in their Prince Albert suits, who had come down to see me off, gathered about me, and the doctor in his Prince Albert. It was quite an episode for him to be called to the station to treat a foreigner. A missionary whom I always loved for what he was and what he did for me, took me to his home and for a month I was in bed. Then I went from there on up to the north of Japan and realized that I had to go home. Every time that I started to do something, or make a decision, I would faint. As long as I did not have to make a decision I was all right. So I crawled on to a freighter at Yokohama. On the freighter was the same man that I had taken to ^{Severance}~~Severin's~~ Hospital on my

Blaisdell: way up through Korea. He was going home! He played the mandolin and I played the cornet, neither of us professionally. As I lay in my bunk and he lay in his, we would have duets with the mandolin and the cornet. On the boat he slipped roller skating and he broke his ankle. So we were both confined to our berths.

Ariff: What did you feel was the most significant aspect of your Japanese trip--what impressed you most?

Blaisdell: I suppose that I would have to say that the most significant aspect of it is my present wife. I met her first husband in China as I travelled during that year, and that led to a close family relationship through the years. So when my wife died and her husband died, the natural thing for us to do was to pool our interests and friendship for the latter years. That's by the side, of course. Though not too much so, because I think it points to the fact that the most important thing is the personal relationships that grew out of it, the friendships that have continued through the years. Even though I disagreed violently with the conservative theology of the Lutheran people with whom I lived in Fu Kuoka, they were delightful people, and I am still in

Blaisdell: correspondence with a man nearly ninety years old now who was the missionary with whom I lived, and who has visited in my home several times. This was very important to me. The relationships with the Japanese have not continued because it was impossible over the years. I don't know what became of the students.

I suppose, also, that it was an experience that alerted me to the world at large. It brought me out of the confines of my own cultural and intellectual life in the Western world, and has influenced me right down through the years. It was the opening of the door into the future. I suppose that if I had not gone to Japan in those days I would have never become the director of International House. It led right into that. I threw off the religious things that concerned me then; it opened the doors of human relations on a world-wide basis. I remember my father once saying to me as I started out on a later European trip, "You leave a citizen of the United States, you will return a citizen of the world." And I think that refers, also, to this early experience in Japan. It has led to my return trips to the Asian world, and has made me very appreciative of the Asians and aware of

Blaisdell: the problems they are facing and concerned with the political events, the foreign policy, of the United States government, in regard to the Far East, and also particularly to my interest in the whole movement in Japan centering around our occupation. It led from one international experience to another, and set the pattern of my world consciousness and my professional life.

Pacific School of Religion

Ariff: What made you decide to go to the Pacific School of Religion?

Blaisdell: Now you are asking a very hard question. I am not certain that anybody could answer why he does certain things. I suppose my interest in religion was due to the restlessness of adolescence. One never begins to think for himself very early--indeed, I matured very late in life in terms of thinking things out for myself, and the religious pressures at that time were rather strong. I suppose it was something of following the family pattern. My grandfather and father had been ministers and I think that maybe this had its influence.

Blaisdell: Then, of course, my trip to Japan influenced me. I was deeply impressed with the kind of people I met there who were in the missionary movement. They were great statesmen, particularly those of the Congregational Church. They established schools and hospitals. Then I lived with the more conservative Lutherans in Fukuoka and I was impressed by their kindness. On the other hand, in later years, I began to be more critical of the evangelical movement of the missions--I guess I was even then.

I suppose one of the things that interested me in going into the ministry was, that as in the past, the leadership of small colleges came out of the ministry. I saw that, as I moved on, I would probably do very much as my grandfather and father did, move out of the ministry into education.

Ariff: In other words, you realized that you were doing this?

Blaisdell: Oh, yes. I was ethically dominated, I suppose. This I got from my father. He was in the forefront of thinking on social matters. As administrator of a college, he could not always publicly express his liberal social points of view. In these matters he was well ahead of his time. But he had to raise money! He had to keep the college in line with the general

Blaisdell: thinking of the community. But privately, however, he was interested in such things as the civil liberties movement, and in other liberal movements that were going on at the time following the first World War, and I suppose I was influenced by that. Indeed, I think I was more ethically inclined than I was religiously inclined. I found myself restless in the seminaries. I first went to the Pacific School of Religion, on my return from Japan. That was largely due to the fact that I had caught amoebic dysentery, and there was a very good medical center at the University of California in San Francisco dealing with Asian diseases. I was under treatment there and stayed here primarily for that. These diseases were not known then. The University of California Hospital was in the forefront in the study of Asian and Oriental diseases. They did not know that I had amoebic dysentery, it never was diagnosed, but later the continuing symptoms seemed to point to it. It plagued me on through life considerably, because it affects the nerve centers, and this bothered me considerably, well on into my mature life. But I seemingly outgrew it later.

Ariff: The cold climate kills the amoebae. They can't live

Ariff: here.

Blaisdell: I don't know. At Pacific School of Religion I was not impressed with the student body, particularly. It was not an inspiring relationship. While there were one or two outstanding professors at the Pacific School of Religion at that time, like Dr. Badé in Old Testament studies, and a visiting scholar from the seminary across the bay on New Testament, they were about the only two that had any real influence on me. Badé, particularly, interested me in the study of the Bible as a human document. But at the end of my first semester, I decided that I had better not go back, and I went on to Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

EASTERN SEABOARD--SEMINARY EXPERIENCES AND FIRST PARISH

Union Theological Seminary

Blaisdell: There it began to be clear to me that I did not belong. However, it was a stimulating experience because it was following the World War that many social institutions such as the Civil Liberties Union and the Fellowship of Reconciliation developed. I became a participating member in these movements. Union Seminary had a very stimulating professor, Harry F. Ward, who was in the forefront of social thinking. I'll speak of his influence later.

Ariff: What was the Fellowship of Reconciliation?

Blaisdell: Several pacifist organizations against war and force-- very much like the movement of the Negroes in the South led by (Martin Luther) King, which is an influence of the pacifism of Ghandi. In those days, I was pretty much of a pacifist and was a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. I later changed in my thinking to some degree, though I've been largely influenced by that through the years. There were some fine professors there. The president of the seminary was a man named Arthur Cushman McGiffert, who was a great scholar. He

Blaisdell: opened the door to me that religion was something that one could participate in or not, and not be condemned if he did not. He opened the whole door of the history of Christianity and of the church.

Ariff: Which church?

Blaisdell: The Christian Church, through the Middle Ages. Then there was Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick who gave a course on the development of Christian ideas throughout the Bible and later history. This was a very stimulating course, the development of Christian thought. These all had an influence on me, though McGiffert, I think, was the outstanding man. I used to go to his seminars in the late afternoons of the winter when it was dusk. He had the eyeglasses that you pinched in the middle and could take off. He'd look at his notes and take off his glasses and let his mind wander. Fascinating! I think he is one of the great teachers, one of the few great teachers that I ever had. His son later was at the Pacific School of Religion and later president of Chicago Theological Seminary.

Ariff: What did you do when you were a student in New York?
What did you do in your leisure time?

Blaisdell: I did not have leisure time. Here again, my father

Blaisdell: was involved in purchasing land and developing his lemon orchard. He was always concerned with the fact that he had no security. As administrator of the college, he had no security; the faculty did, but the administration did not. He was always aware that controversy in education would put the administrator in the forefront and that he might not have a job, and he was therefore determined to build up his own resources to be financially independent. And then too, he had a strange philosophy--well, it was not strange, it was rather interesting. His social vision was that all young people should start equal and that they should be in the competitive field early in life and that they should not be helped too much, but that everybody should have an equal chance. Therefore I received very little assistance, and I earned my own way to a very large degree. My mother would sneak a little money to me every once in a while on the side, but other than that, very little help.

Ariff: What did you do?

Blaisdell: I was given a position as student assistant at Dr. Fosdick's church, the Presbyterian church that he was minister of at the same time that he was professor at Union Theological Seminary. I assisted in the

Blaisdell: young people's work of the church, and that took my weekends. I worked down there for a year or two. That was the time when he was under fire for his liberal religious ideas, and finally resigned from the Presbyterian Church. Then the Rockefellers built the great church, the Riverside Church, for Dr. Fosdick. I was in the midst of that controversy, which is all a tremendously important development of my own thinking because I was in the maelstrom of religious changes that were going on at that time.

Then I cashiered at the little restaurant across Broadway from Union Seminary. They had no dining room at the seminary and this little restaurant was used by the students of the seminary and Columbia University. Its name was "The Flying Fame", but we called it "The Crying Shame". I cashiered there and got my meals in exchange. All this, with my hangover of amoebic dysentery, left me in pretty bad shape at the end of my seminary course.

Ariff: Very weak, I can imagine.

Blaisdell: But another thing about Union Seminary. Remember, in those days, Dr. McGiffert had encouraged the educational participation of the students of the seminary at Columbia University. Many students received their

Blaisdell: Ph.D.'s at the same time they were taking their religious training at the seminary. This was later discouraged to some degree because most of the men of my period moved into education rather than the church, and Dr. Henry Sloan Coffin, who became president later, took the stand that the seminary was for the development of ministers and not of educators. I have always been opposed, since my seminary experience, to seminaries. It seems to me that seminaries isolate the developing students who would later take positions in the life of organized religion. It isolates them into a group of similar-thinking people. I always felt that they should go to the universities and receive their Ph.D. degrees and then take such simple courses in conjunction with it as might be necessary. This I think was President McGiffert's idea, to some degree. Later, I began to see that the seminary students were not as intellectually alert as the students of the universities and colleges were in their graduate work, and that seminary work isolated them from the influences of real scholarship. There were some very fine people there--some of my life-long friendships have come out of that.

Ariff: Some years ago I noticed that the students at Union Theological Seminary were involved in field work in Harlem.

Blaisdell: Yes, that came somewhat later; though it began in my time, it developed even more later. My field work was at the Presbyterian church, though there were classmates of mine who were doing their field work in settlement houses of that day. This, again, opened up our whole thinking on religion. Then there were those who were taking their Ph.D.'s. It was a more stimulating group at Union by far than at Pacific School of Religion.

Harry Edmonds--Beginnings of the International House

Ariff: Was the New York International House in existence when you went to Union?

Blaisdell: Not when I went; it was just beginning. There was a movement that was the background of the development of the International House which was going on. Mr. Harry Edmonds was the YMCA Metropolitan Secretary at Columbia University. He, in the earlier days, along about 1910, '11, '12, along in those days, became

Blaisdell: interested in foreign students at Columbia University. He developed the Cosmopolitan Club, which was then rather a new idea which grew rather rapidly in the universities and colleges. It was an organization of American and foreign students, and was conducted under the aegis of the YMCA at that time. One time Harry Edmonds invited Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to speak to one of the meetings of this group. It met in Earl Hall at Columbia University. Harry had begun to have a vision of the International House movement. Mr. Rockefeller came up and spoke to the Cosmopolitan Club, and he caught the fever. Mr. Edmonds was very statesmanlike in conducting his relationship with the Rockefeller family. He cultivated it. Later Mr. Rockefeller became so much interested that he gave several million dollars to the building of the first International House, which is on Riverside Drive--close to Columbia University but not on the university campus.

Here is a rather interesting development that later affected the work here at Berkeley. The YMCA wanted the International House to be built under the aegis of the YMCA but Harry Edmonds and Raymond Fosdick, who was then with the Rockefeller Foundation, felt

Blaisdell: that it should be entirely secular because they did not want the students of various religious backgrounds to be under the domination of a Christian group. They felt that people of all religious backgrounds should be on an equal standing--that if the House were under the aegis of a Christian organization, it would somewhat complicate the relationship and some might tend to feel that it was an evangelical movement. So, after a great struggle and controversy in those days--and the YMCA struggled very hard to keep it--it was decided by Mr. Rockefeller that it should be secular. Therefore, it was non-religious and also was not related to Columbia University officially. It became entirely indigenous as far as the university was concerned, largely because it was a center to serve all the universities and colleges, of which there were many in New York City. It has maintained its indigenous status, as compared to Berkeley and Chicago, where they became part of the university campus. But this is the background. The International House movement's beginnings were there when I was at the seminary. While I was not associated with it, some of my fellow students at Union were.

Then there was a movement taking the seminary and

Blaisdell: college students who were interested, on tours of the social movements throughout New York to acquaint them with the slums and this sort of thing. The social thinking was very strong at Union Seminary and Columbia in those days, very strong--to introduce the students to the real character of the civilization of which they were a part, and particularly of New York City. We became aware of the slums and of the social issues at that time. There was Professor Harry Ward, far advanced in his social thinking, who was instrumental in establishing the Civil Liberties Union. He was professor of social ethics. This opened all the windows of my mind, and I began to mature there. I began to draw aside from the definitely religious character of my thinking.

After my course at Union Seminary, I married Josephine Bell, whom I met at my work at Dr. Fosdick's church. She was from the South. We had great fun and rather trying times in our early relationship because she was from the South, but she grew out of those southern attitudes very quickly even though it meant some stress in her family relationships. As we grew in our affection and love, it was perfectly apparent that my home would have to be open to all

Blaisdell: races, and she could see that very clearly. And once a southern girl, I learned, has broken with the past, she becomes far more open to social matters than some of the northern girls who never had to change. They go out full force. One of my later assistants at the International House was also a southern girl, and she was just outstanding in her attitude toward racial matters. Because they had come out of the maelstrom and had seen their mistake, they moved farther forward than a lot of the girls that never had to face that. Well, this was my wife, Josephine Bell.

Ariff: Was she a student?

Blaisdell: Yes, at Barnard College. We dated the Barnard girls just across the street from Union Seminary. We were married right after my course, but I wasn't well.

First Parish: Presbyterian Church, Utica, New York

Blaisdell: During the summers I had been invited up to take charge of the summer religious education program of the Presbyterian Church at Utica, New York. The minister was a Dr. Philip Bird who had been an

Blaisdell: assistant minister in his younger days at the Claremont, California, church. He invited me up for the summers, and I took charge of the summer Sunday Schools, what do you call them?

Ariff: Bible Schools?

Blaisdell: Yes. I, however, gave it a little different term and turn in its emphasis because of my social thinking. But he was impressed and I was interested, and when I graduated, he invited me to become the assistant minister at the blue-blooded Presbyterian church in Utica, New York. There everybody was very kind to Josephine and me, but I felt restless. This was an industrial community, and the church represented the upper crust--the managers and the owners of the spinning mills and the garment factories. There came a crisis in the community because of a strike in the mills and among the garment workers, and I took the side of the strikers and, of course, alienated a good many of the industrial leaders, though I had quite a following of younger people of the church. Some of my life-long friends came out of that, but at the end of the year I felt so uncomfortable, I just looked around for other opportunities.

South Hadley Falls, Massachusetts

Blaisdell: A little Congregational church in South Hadley Falls, Massachusetts invited me there. It was a very small little church, composed largely of the workers of the silk mills of Holyoke. In other words, I shifted gears from the managerial class to a church that was made up of the laboring class, largely, and I found myself very much more comfortable there, though my religious thinking began to be such that I could almost see in the future that I might not have a place in the organized religion at all.

You will remember, I mentioned Harry F. Ward at Union Seminary. He certainly opened the doors of our thinking. But I think he did something of a disservice in this respect, and it was not entirely his fault by any means. We went out with Harry Ward's ideas, his social ideas, which were far advanced at the time. The young ministers out of that group became rather dogmatic in terms of their social thinking because they had had "the hands laid on them." They, therefore, were speaking the word of God. They must have been an obnoxious bunch of fellows in the church! I think I must have been obnoxious, because I was endowed with the sense that I was speaking the word of

Blaisdell: God about social issues, when actually, I had no more the word of God than anybody else! But this dominated my experience in the church. I became a rather controversial figure. People were very patient with me, indeed, in the church. I remember, I dwelt so much on social issues that one dear old deacon one time stopped me after church and said, "Mr. Blaisdell, won't you sometimes preach a sermon on Jesus Christ and Him crucified?" You see, I was not dealing with religious ideas. I became impressed that every time I used the word 'God' there were as many concepts of the word 'God' being thought of in the audience as there were individuals. Unless I began to define the terms, I was misleading them.

Ariff: You left a Presbyterian church and went to a Congregational church. Can you describe the difference, or the relationship, between the Presbyterian ideas and the Congregational? Is there any difference?

Blaisdell: The Presbyterian churches tended to be more the churches of the "establishment" which is a later term, of course. The Congregational churches were the more liberal churches; there was no overhead organization; they were independent churches. And I was just going back to my birthright as a

Blaisdell: Congregationalist, where I seemed to belong. Then too, this little church challenged me because of its character of being more of a working class church. You see, the New Englanders had been moving out of the agricultural areas, and the Catholic French Canadians coming in and filling the vacuum in the agricultural life. The New England Protestant stock began to go into the industrial developments within the urban centers, the industrial cities of New England. In my time, this little church where I was for about four years, the mills were having a difficult time. They were moving south because of cheap labor (though some remained) and it left the New England working class unemployed. Most of my people were employed only two and three days a week, and this caused great difficulty.

Ariff: This was just before the depression?

Blaisdell: Just before the depression. I was just three miles from Mt. Holyoke College with which I became associated through my friendship with professors because of my educational interests. Lifelong friends were made there.

President Woolley of Mt. Holyoke College was very gracious to me because of my grandmother's and mother's

Blaisdell: earlier relationship to the college. I remember my present wife was at Mt. Holyoke College as a student while I was there, and I preached at Mt. Holyoke College. She doesn't remember what I had said-- neither do I. President Woolley was always saying you should be sermon tasters, so she invited visiting ministers in to preach Sunday sermons at Mt. Holyoke College.

Later, the girls' choir of the college came down for concerts at the church. The church was in very bad shape. I got some of the industrial owners in Holyoke to give us small amounts of money to reconstruct the church and to buy a beautiful organ. When I first went there the church had a hand-pumped wheezy old organ. I got the wife of a professor at Mt. Holyoke, who was a musician, to come down and be our choir director. We would devote the afternoon services entirely to lovely music, and the services became very popular in the community. That was in later days toward the end of my stay.

I became involved in all the controversial social thinking at the time. I remember one instance-- the Ku Klux Klan was very strong in the New England area--anti-Catholic. I had learned that members of my

Blaisdell: congregation were in the Klan. In fact, one day one of my friends came to me and said that the next Sunday the Klan was going to be in full force at the next seminary service. And sure enough, that morning the the front pews were lined with the Ku Klux Klan.

Ariff: How did you know?

Blaisdell: Well, I knew in advance from my friend who was a member of the Klan who came to tell me; so I prepared a particular sermon--anti-Ku Klux Klan. And I bawled them out furiously at that morning's service of the church. Curiously enough, when I left--and this is something that I cannot understand--I received two letters that I prize, one was from the Catholic priest of the little community, and one was from the Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan, saying how sorry they were that I was going. Whereas they knew I was critical of them socially, the religious things they were trying to stand for I had done--the ethical, social things they were interested in. Then also, it was the time of the trial of the Sacco-Vanzetti case. I preached on that and caused considerable turmoil.

Twelve miles from South Hadley Falls, there was Smith College in Northhampton. Calvin Coolidge came from Northhampton, and he was running for the

Blaisdell: presidency of the U.S. against LaFollette of Wisconsin. I made the mistake one day to talk about politics to the woman who was clerk of the church. I said that I was going to vote for LaFollette. There were a few of the leaders of the community, a bit more wealthy than the rank and file of my church, who were very disturbed over my politics. Whereas I did not let that enter into the church, they got me down one time, four or five around a table and tried to put the screws on me to vote for Calvin Coolidge. This sort of thing occurred. On the other hand, this never affected their support of the church. It was very curious, one of my closest friends was one of the wealthy people of the community, about the only really wealthy person. His son later became a member of one of the large brokerage firms of New York. When I went back some years later to visit the community, his wife was still living. She was over ninety years of age. I called on her and we had a very lovely time together. Her husband used to take me to Amherst to the football games. (By the way, it was very interesting at that time, the football coach at Amherst College later became an assistant coach here at Berkeley and professor of political science. His son later became president

Blaisdell: of Mt. Holyoke. When I came to Berkeley, I took political science courses under him. He was Professor Gettell of political theory. He was one of the very stimulating professors in those earlier days.)

As time went on, I began to have great difficulty in developing a sermon because I could see that my thinking was changing. I began to get restless. So, about the end of the fourth year, I took a trip to New York just to look things over. I had very little money. My salary was \$2900 per year. I took the philosophy that I would never charge or receive a fee for marriages or funerals. I have never accepted a fee for performing those services as part of my professional prerogative. I was to be the minister of the community, and I was to be at the service of the community because of the nature of the group that could not afford these things. But I would never marry anyone that just came along. I would marry people within the community but not external to the community.

I happened to see Harry Edmonds at the International House, and we had a little chat about things-- about my developing thinking and so forth. I had no

Blaisdell: idea it would lead to anything. I went back to South Hadley Falls, and within a day or two I received a telegram from Harry Edmonds asking Josephine and me to come down to New York to confer with them about possibly joining the staff at the International House in New York.

New York International House

Ariff: When was the New York International House established?

Blaisdell: I think the building was finished in 1924.

Ariff: I see, about the same time...

Blaisdell: Yes--about the same time that I became minister at South Hadley Falls Church. So we went down.

The idea was that Mr. Rockefeller and Mr. Edmonds were interested in spreading the International House movement. They had seen the success of it there in New York and so they developed a program, largely under the influence of Raymond Fosdick, I think, too. They had begun to develop plans for International Houses at the University of California at Berkeley, at Chicago, at Pennsylvania, and also at Boston. Then, later, it was to move abroad. They brought in

Blaisdell: a group of young men, three or four of us, to be on the staff of the New York House in a training program as directors of these later houses that were to be built. I was the only one who survived that period of training. The others were drawn off for one reason or another. Also the depression came, and the Rockefellers had to retrench financially. They gave up the idea of the development, other than what they had already committed to Berkeley and to Chicago. The University of Pennsylvania and Boston were dropped. There was some delay even in the development of Berkeley and Chicago. The men who had come in with me were beginning to drop off, but I stayed on.

Acting Director of New York International House

Mr. Edmonds went abroad for a year with his wife and I became acting director of the New York International House while they were gone. I was just a young fellow. How the students ever tolerated me, I don't know. Some of those early day students I still know very intimately in New York. We laugh together about many things that we did together, and the mistakes I made, and so forth. They supported me

Blaisdell: very loyally--this group--and I enjoyed that year very much. I had gone to New York International House with the idea that I would just go and look back at the church. As I looked back, I saw that I was finished as far as the church was concerned--that I was growingly secular in my thinking, almost completely--that organized religion was not of concern to me any further. There was still with me the influence of those days, largely in terms of my social thinking. The International House gave me the perfectly beautiful outlook for this in terms of the social amelioration of the conflicts within the world, and appealed to my ideals ~~as~~ as nothing else had done in a long time. I was fascinated with it! It was a stimulating experience. While I was there I also was allowed to sit in with Mr. Rockefeller on the negotiations with the Sorbonne in Paris for the development of an International House at the Cité Universitaire, which was the student housing center there. That was very interesting to see. And Mr. Rockefeller gave them considerable funds for the building Maison Internationale at the Cité Universitaire in Paris.

In the fall of 1928 (I was at the New York

Blaisdell: International House during the university year of 1927/28) the plan had gone so far forward that discussions were entered into with the University of California. President Campbell was then president. It was felt wise to have someone go out and start the student movement at the University in anticipation of the building which was just starting. Dr. Campbell interviewed me at New York and seemed to be satisfied that I would fit the role.

Ariff: He came all the way out to New York?

Blaisdell: He was there on other business, and he interviewed me there and made the appointment, or authorized the appointment. Mr. Edmonds and Mr. Fosdick felt that since I had the background and experience in New York, I should go out to Berkeley.

BERKELEY INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

Beginnings of the Berkeley House

Blaisdell: Everything was not completely settled when I came out. Mr. Rockefeller, through Mr. Fosdick, was insistent that first, the International House should follow the pattern of the New York House and be entirely indigenous and apart from the administration of the University. He felt that it would relieve the University of the controversial elements that would be involved in the International House movement and give the house a freedom of movement that might not be possible under University ownership. I came out with the understanding that this was to happen. But it turned out that, because of tax problems, we had to be covered by the tax freedom of the University.

Early Board of Directors

Blaisdell: Therefore the money for the land and building was given to the University of California with the understanding that the house would be administered by a separate corporation whose board of directors were interrelated with the administration of the University. So, the president of the University, at the beginning, was president of the board and so continued until the end of Dr. Sproul's administration. We had community people also on the board, leading people in San Francisco.

Ariff: Do you remember any of them?

Blaisdell: Oh, yes--Mr. O. K. Cushing, an attorney in San Francisco, Mr. Mortimer Fleischhacker, the banker in San Francisco, Mr. Ralph Fisher, the banker from Oakland, a Mrs. Gibson from Los Angeles.

The early concept was that the International House, like the University at Berkeley, would be the leader of a state movement, not just related with the local campus. So we included people from Southern California on the board to give it a state-wide character. This later was more or less passed over.

Blaisdell: On the board following Mrs. Gibson was Mrs. Imra ~~Bu~~walda, whose husband was professor at Cal Tech and had earlier been a professor at the University of California. Mrs. ~~Bu~~walda was a woman of considerable experience in police work on her own. She had been a woman policeman in Berkeley, I think, in those days and was a very energetic young miss. We did not see eye to eye on many things, but at the same time, as we went on, we formed a very warm friendship till I retired.

Ariff: Tell me a bit about the site of the house and how it was chosen.

Blaisdell: Mr. Edmonds chose the site. He was a great statesman to have gotten as many million dollars out of the Rockefellers as he did, and to have carried on his negotiations with Berkeley in those critical early days. Mr. Edmonds had a concept of the International House being very conspicuous and influential in the community. So he came out, and took an airplane, and rode around over the campus, and spotted where he felt the front door of the University was to be. The University wanted very much to have International House go over to where the Pacific School of Religion is now; but Harry felt that was the back door of the

Blaisdell: University, and he wanted this at the front door of the University. He viewed the plot near the stadium. Dr. Sproul, Comptroller of the University then, had his residence there, Vice-President Hart had his residence there, and several other conspicuous members of the community had homes in this site. But Mr. Edmonds indicated that should be the site, and they accepted it. The property was purchased, but it caused some confusion in the early days, because it meant the movement of a residential area into the University complex. It was really the first movement outside of the then boundary of the University, and the beginning of the taking over of private property for University uses. Really, it was one of the first land acquisitions that had hit the community in any way, and this caused the University some difficulty. One of the more restless groups of students of the University indicated that Professor Hart was taking advantage financially of the deal, which I think is not true. But there was quite a bit of controversy at the time it came out in the open.

I might say here that the one with whom Harry, and later I, dealt almost completely, was Dr. Sproul. He had engineered the early negotiations and while

Blaisdell: acceptable to Dr. Campbell, Dr. Sproul was more familiar with all the details. Dr. Campbell was president of the board, but Dr. Sproul was in the forefront of things as far as the International House was concerned. He carried on the negotiations with the Rockefellers. He was the one to whom I always turned, except when Dr. Campbell asked, in certain instances, to have me work directly with him. I always went to Dr. Sproul to work out the difficulties and discuss them. I must say that I owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Sproul for his support of me in all the controversies that developed through the years. He backed me up completely, whereas he knew that I did not think the same as he did in certain political and social issues. He never once intruded unduly on the administration of International House. He always said, "Allen, you go ahead and run International House, if I don't like it, I'll tell you so. But don't start to ask me all the questions there; you'll run the show, and if I disagree, I'll tell you so." That was his philosophy right to the very end of our relationship. Whereas I was critical of his administration during the oath controversy, not once did I find myself alienated from Dr. Sproul as a

Blaisdell: person and as a leader in International House matters.

Ariff: What about the architectural style of the house?

Blaisdell: The architect was a Mr. George W. Kelham of San Francisco. He was then, I think, the University Architect. You see, Bowles Hall, not Boalt Hall, was the first residence hall constructed by the University. Mr. Kelham was the architect of that building which just preceded the development of the building of International House. He was, therefore, the architect of International House and later the architect of the Life Science Building of the University. All of our work, architecturally, was with him. Before I came to California he came east and talked with Mr. Fosdick, and the Rockefellers. He took as his pattern the Spanish background of California in order to give it an international turn. The building developed as a Moorish-Spanish building. It was somewhat criticized by other architects, but on the whole, I think, he did a very good job. We had to adjust it later in some respects, but it was a very beautiful building. I came out in the fall of 1928 and worked with the architect. I was very young; I don't know why they tolerated me. I presume

Blaisdell: it was my enthusiasm that caught on but there were difficult days.

President Campbell

Blaisdell: Just a few days after I had gotten here, President Campbell called me into conference and said, "I have just discovered that you are an ordained minister." He said, "Had I known that, I would not have approved your appointment at the University." He said, "Don't ever let anybody know that you are an ordained minister." My reply to him was, "Dr. Campbell, I realize how you feel, but give me a chance, and if, after a year or so, you find that my ministerial background has caused you embarrassment, you are free to tell me so." He was very generous and accepted that. "But at the same time," he said, "I cannot approve your salary of five thousand dollars!" (which had been agreed upon in New York). I said, "That was an agreement with you in New York, and I have gone to considerable expense in moving out here, and I must insist that the salary remain at five thousand."

Ariff: Did he feel that that was too high?

Blaisdell: Yes. He was comparing me to the YMCA and things of this kind. Mr. Harry Edmonds had, in the early negotiations, insisted that the director of International House should have a salary and a status equal to a dean of the University, because he felt that it should be on a par in negotiations with the University administration in this respect. I went to Dr. Sproul and I told him of this and he said, "Don't worry, this will come out all right." And after three or four months the salary was approved. But that was the early introduction of my life as director of International House.

Another time, shortly thereafter, I had written the first prospectus of International House to be given to the students of the community. It was to be a very attractive leaflet, and I had taken great care in writing it. The first board meeting had been held before I arrived and was appointed secretary of the board of directors of International House. Dr. Sproul had taken the minutes of that first meeting. When I came, I became secretary of the board. I took Dr. Sproul's minutes and combined them with those of the second meeting of the board, which I wrote. After

Blaisdell: I had issued these I was called by President Campbell, again early in the morning, to come and talk with him. He had the minutes before him--blue-pencilled all over. And he said, "Mr. Blaisdell, if you have no more capacity to write the English language, you have no place at the University of California." I said nothing and took the minutes and went to Dr. Sproul. The blue pencilling had been all on Dr. Sproul's minutes that he had written on the first board meeting, and not on mine of the second meeting!

We had great fun over that through the years-- that Dr. Campbell had not blue-pencilled mine but had blue-pencilled the one that Dr. Sproul had written. Dr. Campbell was a great stickler on the English language, not because of its correctness, necessarily, but because of his preference for certain ways of speaking and writing the language. This bothered him through his administration. There was an episode told in those days that an alumnus had written to the President about some matter; and Dr. Campbell had blue-pencilled the letter and sent it back to the alumnus saying, "When you can write the English language I will give concern to the problem that you have raised."

Ariff: I imagine that he would have had considerable conflict

Ariff: with some of the professors in the sciences, since they don't...

Blaisdell: Well, more with the humanities because he was a scientist.

Ariff: Oh, he was!

Blaisdell: He was an astronomer. You see, David Barrows, before his administration, had been associated with a group of faculty that had been agitating for more faculty participation in administration. There had been a breakdown between the faculty and the Board of Regents. Dr. Barrows was embarrassed in his administration because he was associated with this group.

Ariff: This was before Campbell?

Blaisdell: Yes. Then Dr. Barrows resigned and returned to the Political Science department. Dr. Campbell was brought in to clean up this relationship of faculty to Regents. He was definitely a tyrant in many respects, and was considered so. He was brought in for that purpose, very largely, to get the faculty in its place in relationship to the Board of Regents. Everything was to go through the President of the Board and faculty should not have constant relationships with members of the trustees on matters of business as far as the University was concerned. Dr. Campbell was

Blaisdell: brought in for that purpose. What he was doing with me was following that pattern. This will show up later.

Ariff: Why did he feel and say that if he had known that you were an ordained minister that he would not have permitted you to...

Blaisdell: He was a scientist, and whereas he was a member, I think, of the Episcopal church, he did not want religion moving in the University per se. I never questioned him on his religious thinking at all, but I assumed that that was his philosophy. You see, according to the legislature in those days, ministers were not supposed to come into the campus. That was a controversial issue.

Ariff: The separation of church and state.

Blaisdell: Yes. The religious institutions were to be peripheral to the campus entirely and not to intrude within the University, and this was very closely adhered to. Not only religion, but political activity was restricted--no political speaker could come onto the campus in those days. This, in later days, caused quite a controversy. Dr. Sproul inherited that administrative commitment of the University, and I presume that that was Dr. Campbell's feeling about this. He was right

Blaisdell: in a sense! He was fearful that it might violate this concept of intrusion of a religious controversy on the campus, and he did not know me, of course, in my developing thinking.

Dr. Campbell called me down on the minutes first, and that passed over. First, I was to have developed the brochure I previously mentioned. After I had written it, I took it to the secretary of the President and said, "Now who is professor in English, in whom does the President have the greatest confidence?" And he gave me the name, I have forgotten the name now, but he was a very distinguished professor in the English department. So, before I took it to Dr. Campbell for his approval, I took it to this professor of English, and I asked him if he would go over it very carefully and correct any English in the thing that he saw was wrong. He made a few suggestions and said, "Otherwise, I think it is perfectly all right." So I took it to Dr. Campbell then, not telling him what I had done, of course. Within a few days, I received a call from the

and he again said, "I must again admonish you on your English." He said, "If this is the kind of English you are going to use, you don't have a place

Blaisdell: at the University of California." I looked at it. The very things he had blue-pencilled again were not my suggestions but were the suggestions the professor of English had made.

Ariff: What did you do?

Blaisdell: I took it to Sproul and I said, "Here is the story." And he laughed and laughed. And he said, "Don't worry, we are all used to this."

Ariff: When you study for the ministry, is there a course or emphasis in English or public speaking; are you taught a certain manner of speaking?

Blaisdell: Oh, yes--not necessarily a manner--one developed his own manner; but we had a course under Dr. Fosdick where we prepared sermons and delivered them and he criticized the whole thing. Oh, yes, there was a tremendous emphasis on public speaking. Also, while I was there, after I had started and had been there a year, they increased the seminary course to four years because they set up a series of examinations, one of which was to be an examination on English literature. If you couldn't pass that examination, you were required to take the fourth year almost entirely devoted to English literature.

Ariff: How many years were required previously?

Blaisdell: Three. I could not pass the examination on English literature because, as I have said, I was never really educated. Because of my college course, I never knew English literature, I never knew art or any music, I have never been introduced to astronomy. Strange, that my college course had never really given me a grasp of any of these fields. I saw that I had to take a fourth year. I was being married and had accepted the position at the Presbyterian church in Utica, so I quit after three years and was ordained in New York in one of the Presbyterian churches there. I never got my degree from Union Seminary. It was not necessary, although I had completed all of the three year curriculum which was required when I started. I couldn't take this fourth year, I could not afford it. Quite a few of my class did the same thing. But you can see, the emphasis was increasingly on ability to speak and a familiarity with English literature. Dr. Fosdick was largely responsible for this because he was a great scholar of literature. When he first became a minister over in New Jersey, he rented a room in New York. Every day he would go over and read, and read, and read. His sermons, in later years, were masterpieces

Blaisdell: of English literature because of the familiarity he had developed with English literature. This was the weak point of our training, and they were trying to correct it in this respect. That takes us backward, however.

I think I should divert here a little. I think maybe I have given the wrong impression of Dr. Campbell in some respects. I feel that he never really caught the concept of the place of International House in the University community which had been held by Mr. Rockefeller, and Mr. Edmonds, and Mr. Fosdick. For instance, he never would call me the "director" of International House. He always called me "Mr. Secretary". He was therefore thinking of International House in the same terms as the other peripheral religious organizations like the YMCA and the YWCA. I don't think he ever quite caught the concept of the place of leadership in the University that had been held by those who made it possible. There were later conflicts that I will go into later. In the end, toward the latter part of his administration, and after he had retired, I can't say that we were close friends, but he was very kind to me in many things, and supported my

Blaisdell: administration rather dramatically in ways that I will tell you later.

Ariff: Why do you think this was? Do you think he saw the effect of International House?

Blaisdell: Let me put it this way, he said to me one day, "Mr. Blaisdell, this is a great idea. But remember, that the test will be as to its financial administration."

Ariff: When he says this, he means the International House concept?

Blaisdell: Yes. This is important and led to many things later. The concept of the Rockefellers was that they did not want to place in the community or on the University campus something that would be a financial liability and that would require University and community support. The building was built with the idea that it would be entirely self-sustaining from income from residents and eating facilities. This was basic to the concept and it was very prominent in the negotiations--but it caused difficulties in later years. Dr. Campbell was merely stressing this, you see, by saying that I would be judged as an administrator by the success with which we operated, and, despite all the stresses and strains and the depression at the time when we came in, International House always remained solvent.

Ariff: Very good!

Blaisdell: And I think Dr. Campbell appreciated this particularly. We had many conversations and negotiations, though very often I dealt through Dr. Hart, who was vice-president of the University and chairman of the English department (chuckles), and Dr. Baldwin Woods, who was at the engineering department and became very sympathetic to the development of International House. He was much interested in it. I think, as I developed the confidence of this group surrounding Dr. Campbell, that he began to gain confidence in me.

Ariff: What did you do when you first came out to head the Berkeley International House?

Blaisdell: I came out in the fall of 1928. The first semester I did very little but study the situation. In the negotiations for the International House, the University, through the president's office, had sent to the Rockefellers statistics in regard to the foreign students, as justification for and need for the house here. The first thing I did was to take the statistics and begin to study them. They had been largely supplied by the YMCA because there was a man there who had started a program for foreign students under the

Blaisdell: auspices of the YMCA. The statistics, I began to see, were entirely erroneous. They had not only included the American-born Chinese and Japanese, they included the Negroes! And they included those who were American citizens, though of foreign ancestry.

Ariff: They might have been erroneous, but they were probably instrumental in bringing the house to this area.

Blaisdell: Oh, yes! I began to see, when I boiled it down, that the foreign student group was exceedingly small-- I have forgotten the number--two or three hundred who could actually be called foreign students. Then I had to make a decision. I could see that we were going to have great difficulty to justify International House on the basis of the statistics. I either had to say, I can't go on with it because it is going to lead to great difficulties and misunderstandings, or decide to play the game and wait for the future, and build for the future--because I could see that there was going to come a large influx of foreign students in the future. This decision was very important as far as I was concerned. I went to President Campbell and talked to him about it. He was very distressed about the statistics. He felt that the University had misrepresented the situation to the Rockefellers. I

Blaisdell: said, "Dr. Campbell, I don't take it that way, but I think both of us have got to decide this question that I am faced with." He backed me up completely and said, "We will build for the future." That was the beginning, I think, of his confidence in me; he could see what we were facing.

Previous to my coming, the University had also agreed, through Dr. Sproul, that they would use their influence to have the YMCA and the YWCA move into the background of the foreign student movement and turn the direction toward International House. However, when I arrived I found that very little had been done in this respect. It brought me into unfortunate relationships with the YMCA and the YWCA, and other religious groups around the campus, because of the insistence on it being a secular institution. The original struggle in this matter, you will remember, occurred when the International House in New York was first built.

Let me go back for a moment to the decision in regard to the growth of International House in the light of the small number of foreign students. This problem was to appear rather constantly throughout the early years until following the war. The board

Blaisdell: of directors, not fully understanding the situation, was constantly critical of the fact there was not a good proportion of foreign students as compared to American students at International House. There were many factors leading to this small number.

In my early association with foreign students I called at the residences of many of them to determine the conditions under which they were living. It was going to cost the foreign student more to live at International House than at the rather run-down boarding houses which then existed. I could see that we were not going to get foreign students in large numbers, or any large proportions of then existing small numbers of foreign students. I saw that they would have to be subsidized in some way, which I will explain later. However, the proportion of foreign to American students was never satisfactory to me. I understood the situation, but members of the board did not. This was a constant problem. I always had in mind Dr. Campbell's admonition that the house must be financially successful. Therefore, in spite of the overbalance of American students, it was necessary to fill the house to keep it on a financially even keel, so that the proportion of foreign students

Blaisdell: to American students was always small until later years. I realized this was going to happen. The decision I made of building for the future rather than being disturbed about conditions of the present, as I have said, had its difficulties, because the board and others did not understand the situation.

I have spoken earlier about Harry Kingman. He and Mrs. Kingman, and Mrs. Blaisdell and I, have been friends since the early days. Harry, though he was somewhat older, and I, had known each other, and in later years had built up our friendship. He came to the YMCA, at the same time that I came to International House--before the building was built. He was very cooperative in all matters, and we worked out our difficulties in regard to foreign students. He, reestablishing his own program there, minimized the work with foreign students, though I insisted that, in terms of religious matters, of course the YMCA, and the YWCA, and the churches should have their rights as far as we were concerned. I think I was probably a little oversensitive about this matter, and pressed a little too hard, because it gradually worked its way out, and International House became the center of foreign student work and interest to a

Blaisdell: very large degree.

Ariff: I am curious about the religious matters. Did you put signs up in the house? What was the relationship between the house and the nearby religious organizations?

Blaisdell: We had our bulletin boards, of course, and we always carried the announcements of the churches, and the YMCA and the YWCA. There was never any difficulty on that.

One of the problems I had to face was in co-operation with the more conservative religious groups which thought of the foreign students as a wonderful target of evangelism! I had to indicate that, as far as International House was concerned, we could only cooperate with those who did not seek to proselytize. This continued with the more conservative groups, and we had to be rather adamant in our insistence that the churches should not do this. As one missionary wrote to his constituents in Berkeley, "This is one of the finest missionary opportunities that you have." And the church took this rather seriously. There were instances from time to time where we had to be rather insistent that this should not take place. Another element in this, that appeared early and continued

Blaisdell: for some time, was our relationship primarily with clubs, women's clubs and other organizations, which wanted to have the foreign students as sort of program fillers--not necessarily to serve the foreign student or be concerned about his needs, but rather to press their own interests in a sort of exotic presentation of the foreign students. They wanted them to wear their national costumes and do their folk dancing. We set up a program finally of insisting on payment of the foreign student for their speaking, and indicating that the needs of foreign students were such that we thought it was only fair that they should be paid. The problems were the initial problems which we worked out and, I think, set the pattern of International House.

Nationality Housing Groups

Blaisdell: Another problem at the beginning, that was after the house was completed, was the fact that realtors and others who owned apartment houses took the attitude that International House was to relieve them of the problem of racial housing. I protested, in one case, to a realtor in regard to prejudicial matters and

Blaisdell: his refusal to rent to national minorities and nationality groups. His reply to me was, "Well, International House was built so that we would not have to be faced with this matter." And I said, "On the contrary, International House was established to set the pattern for everyone to follow." This question of housing of foreign students exterior to International House was one of our serious problems, and it brought me into controversy within the community on this matter instance after instance, where I had to protest against discrimination in housing for foreign students, particularly those of colored origin.

Ariff: I would imagine that was especially so in the early years or in the isolation period.

Blaisdell: Then there was not a large group at the University at that time that was concerned with interracial and international matters. There was a very fine limited group which cooperated thoroughly. But on the other hand, there were those student groups that did not. The fraternities, at first, protested very seriously about International House being on the Piedmont Avenue complex. They weren't going to walk up the street with the 'niggers and the chinks', and so forth. There was

Blaisdell: one protest from a fraternity very close to International House. This later gave way, but I think International House was one of the initial moves within the University for official attitudes. I remember one controversy I was in was with the barber shop at the ASUC center. They would not cut the hair of Negroes. We had to protest that, and it was solved satisfactorily; but there was no large movement of the student interest in matters of this kind that backed us up very much. It was a slow growth. I talk about problems, and it seems to me that I am overly problem-minded as I deal with those early days. There were many evidences of constructive accomplishment, but they were sort of in the back of my mind as an administrator. My problem was to keep the University, and the community, and the students moving together with the board of directors and so forth--not to let them pull apart. This was difficult. You had the students on the one side in International House who were constructively minded and overly demanding in getting accomplishments of racial accord; on the other hand, you had the community and the various institutions of the community pushing you from the other side. International House, in those early days, was

Blaisdell: very conspicuous. It was the largest and most prominent building of the University, outside of the Campanile. Its dome stuck up as a symbol of what we stood for.

Ariff: I was chatting with Mrs. Sanford, and she mentioned that they had a problem with someone putting a chair on the top of the dome!

Blaisdell: Oh, that was in much later years. Yes, there were always the playboys and the playgirls--mostly boys. That did not bother me too much. Those things were just a natural outgrowth of youth--the stunts and things of that kind. I had participated in them in my college days, too, so that did not bother me too much.

During the first two years without the House (it was not yet completed) there were things that I had to do. One was to become familiar with the housing of foreign students, particularly the Asiatics, including the Japanese, the Chinese, and the Indians, who tended to be completely isolated. There was the Japanese Students Clubhouse, largely built for American-born Japanese, but which absorbed some of these. There were not many in the early days, but I was concerned that the American-born Japanese should

Blaisdell: be brought into relationship with us. The Chinese had their own student clubhouse. Whereas there was a rather sharp split between the American-born Chinese and the Chinese from China, at the same time they tended to merge together in these housing enterprises. The same thing is true with the Indians; (Asian) they had their residence. I don't think it was a formal club at all. There was the Filipino Student Club House in those days. These separate housing groups were absorbing many of those foreign students--to draw them out into an interrelated community was one of the most difficult things.

I was particularly interested in these groups to see what I could do. For instance, if an American-born Japanese pulled aside from the Japanese Student Club House and came to International House, (and there were those who did) they were isolated from the Japanese community. The Japanese community rather took it out on them because of the fact that they had broken away from the group. The Chinese did the same. There was a sort of a group feeling, and if one violated the group feeling, he lost status in the group. This was one of the problems we faced. I became a member of the board of the Filipino Student

Blaisdell: Club House in an effort to work with them and their problems, and I worked closely with the Japanese, too.

Gradually, over the years, particularly after the war, this thing broke down to some degree, particularly with the foreign students. In the World War, the very fact that the American-born Japanese were isolated made it very difficult for us to identify them and their loyalty to the United States.

That was the first thing I did--to become familiar with the foreign students and their conditions, their housing situation. One of the purposes of International House was to draw the foreign students out of the semi-ghetto situation which had developed racially in Berkeley, and to draw them into an international community; so I was interested to know their housing conditions. Mrs. Blaisdell and I--our home was the center of the program, very largely; we drew foreign students to us for consultations about problems, and had evenings around the fireplace with them.

Ariff: Did you live here then?

Blaisdell: No, we lived over on the south side at that time, up on Panoramic Way, and a great deal of our work then

Blaisdell: was around the home. I might add here that Mrs. Blaisdell was a very vital part in the whole movement, whereas she took no official position in the life of the house. She was always there in the background doing the things that were important to the work. Later, because of her really helpful spirit in the thing for many years, at the time of her death the Home Room became the Josephine Bell Blaisdell Room, by action of the board of directors, in her honor, and her picture and a plaque is there still. That came along about ~~1958~~ or 1959.

One of the responsibilities that took a great deal of time in the early days was speaking. It was for two purposes: (1) Interpret International House to the general public. It must be remembered that there was considerable racial prejudice in California in those days, particularly anti-Asiatic. International House was not only conspicuous in Berkeley and the Bay Area, but was considered controversial throughout the state because of its inter-racial and international emphasis. (2) Visits and addresses at educational institutions throughout the state was for the first reason; but also to encourage students, particularly graduate students to anticipate residence at

Blaisdell: International House when transferring to the Berkeley campus. The demand for speaking continued until I retired, but with diminishing necessity, and invitations accepted with more discrimination.

Speaking was always hard for me--I prepared carefully and always lived the occasion over and over with thoughts as to what I should and could have said and what I should not have said. It took time for travel and preparation and a good deal of nervous energy which of necessity had to be reduced in later years.

In the appendix is merely a selected list of the many^{addresses}, just to give an idea of this part of my work in the earlier years.

It will be seen that the luncheon clubs bulk rather large--this led later, particularly with Rotary, to their co-operation with us in several ways: One, contributions to assist individual students; two, in the development of Mrs. Carlson's program of entertainment of foreign students in homes, and community interpretation throughout the state; three, the local Rotary Clubs were very influential in the development of the Rotary International Foundation--an over two million dollar fund

Blaisdell: for fellowships for foreign students throughout the U.S. and American students studying abroad. Leaders of the local clubs conferred with us frequently on this matter in the days of its origin.

The Sunday Supper Tradition

Blaisdell: The second thing we did here in Berkeley was to establish the Sunday Supper, when everybody got together. This tradition was one of the most prominent parts of the New York house from its earliest days, even as a non-house group, and later the house group. In the early days in New York, before they had the house, the students got together, made sandwiches, and did all the work necessary. Then, when they had their lovely auditorium, the Sunday Supper continued, in which there was always an effort made to have interesting speakers and discussions with the entire group. Once a week, the entire group got together--and we insisted upon decent dress so that we could see ourselves at our best. So when we arrived here in Berkeley, without the house, we had Sunday Suppers at the Student Union, and began to organize

Blaisdell: the group for eventually moving to International House. This was very important, as we moved into the house in 1930. Many previous students I have met through the years have talked about those early Sunday Suppers at Stephens Union, which was then the social center.

Ariff: I imagine they developed quite an esprit de corps.

Blaisdell: Yes, they did. We had discussion groups, and so forth, in our home coming out of that. That is the story of the pre-house.

Staff Organization

Blaisdell: I was working, too, with the architect and the builders, and also laying plans for the staff organization. I was assigned an office in the third story of the library before the house was built. Almost immediately, I employed a business manager who could begin to lay, with me, the foundations of the financial operations of the house. Mr. Charles Lutz was the first business manager, and I valued him very highly. He died during the first year of the operation of the house, unfortunately; but he was very vital in

Blaisdell: those early days in organizing staff. It was no small job to get this thing underway--the largest student housing enterprise in the Bay Area--and to put it on a financially even keel. You had to employ telephone operators, food specialists, and janitors, etc. I had to organize staff responsible for programs. It was no easy job to get this thing underway, but was fascinating in many ways to organize it, and find personnel, and so forth. That took a great deal of my time: in the first two years, to lay those plans, and then, in the last year, to get people committed for employment as the house opened in the fall of 1930.

Ariff: Who was the first program director?

Blaisdell: One of the first people on the program staff was Florence Walne. She was the daughter of a missionary in Japan, and knew Japanese fluently, and later she became a professor of Japanese in the Far Eastern language department at the University. In later years she married the man who was the head of the University Press. In those early days she was not married, and was working with me. She was very vital to the program, a very lovely person. She also was very important to the growth of the house and its

Blaisdell: program.

Our program was comparatively simple in the early days. We did not have a large staff; we could not afford a large staff. We started very modestly in programs. We moved into the house in 1930--and remember, this was the depression year. International House was the second residential facility for students at the University; Bowles Hall had just preceded it, as I remember it. It was no small task to fill the house, and we had to. The Rockefellers had given \$1,700,000; later they raised it a little. I think the building, and grounds, and furnishings cost about \$1,750,000 originally. Then they had given a small amount, some \$25,000 to \$50,000 to cover the costs of the first two years, and the initial program beginning. We started on an even keel, and had a small fund on the side to play with in terms of developing programs and interests, public relations, and to build a staff. We had no money to start with except this additional fund that the Rockefellers made possible to get the House underway. Again, the Sunday Supper was the center of the program, and we worked out from there into discussion groups and language tables and so forth.

Ariff: When did Miss Carneiro join you?

Blaisdell: Miss Carneiro came sometime in the mid-thirties, and started the festival and folk dancing part of the program, and was very successful in that our festivals were beautiful events. She was insistent on authenticity, and costuming had to be just right; there was nothing sloppy about it at all. So much of the foreign student work at other colleges and universities was very sloppy, and did not represent the best cultural background of the students, the cultures from which they came. We wanted to represent the best in the foreign students' backgrounds.

Ariff: What other concerns did you have at that time?

Blaisdell: In those early days, the administration absorbed a great deal of my attention, though I got to know the students rather well in those early days when the group was smaller and at the beginning. Later, as the group grew in size, it became impossible for me to know the students. They knew me, most of them, but I could not call them by name, though I remembered many of them. I particularly got to know the foreign students, and especially those in the group who were in difficulty financially, or in other matters that needed to be worked out. In later years, I did not

Blaisdell: get to know the rank and file too well. This disappointed me, to some degree, to be so absorbed in administration.

Problems of labor unions came up rather early in the life of the house. We had started, I think, on a far too low wage and salary base, simply because we did not have the funds to do otherwise. Gradually we were faced with the necessity of increasing the standards and having to negotiate with unions. These were difficult days in that respect. I was not much of a negotiator, but had to handle the negotiations with the labor unions in the early days.

Relationship of International House with the University

University Housing

Blaisdell: Let me speak here about the problem of the official relationship of International House with the University. You see, the building and grounds belonged to the University--were given to the University of California. The desire of the Rockefellers, as I have indicated earlier, was to have the house entirely independent

Blaisdell: apart from the University; but this did not seem possible. Then they wanted to have a ninety-nine-year lease from the Board of Regents to give us that independence. But we found that the ninety-nine-year lease was valuable and would be taxed; therefore we had to find a non-valuable mechanism of relationship with the University--which ended up as a fifteen-day revokable license from the Regents of the University.

Ariff: Fifteen-day!:

Blaisdell: In fifteen days they could reclaim the property from the International House Corporation. This never bothered us, except at the time of the war. There they were not insistent; but we released the house at the time of the war to the University for the use of the Navy training group. That was the only time that any question was ever raised in regard to the independent nature of International House.

Ariff: That was World War II?

Blaisdell: Of course. International House was in a sort of ambivalent situation: we did not belong to the University as an operating corporation, and yet we did belong to the University. The problem that Mr. Fosdick and the Rockefellers had visualized did

Blaisdell: develop--namely, that the freedom of International House to meet situations became complicated because we could never do anything that would be embarrassing to the University and its administration. Dr. Sproul and I, as he became president, used to joke about this. When I wanted something in a way the University could help us, I would insist that we belonged to the University; but when I did not want something the University wanted me to do, I could say that we did not belong to the University! I had to straddle the fence with both ears to the ground, which was an embarrassing situation at times. This continued right straight through the early history of International House--this ambivalent situation. The Business Office of the University was a more conservative group. There were very fine men in there, but at the same time, they were always eager to get their hands on International House--because in a certain sense International House sometimes embarrassed them, the University, politically at Sacramento, and they wanted to control International House.

Ariff: The house embarrassed the University politically?

Blaisdell: Yes, because of things that we stood for that were not entirely acceptable at that time. Dr. Sproul was

Blaisdell: very helpful in keeping the official hands of the University off of International House, but the University made a constant effort to get in.

Relationship to University Housing

Ariff: What about the Dean of Women? I remember you mentioned some housing problems.

Blaisdell: Dean Stebbins was there, at the time when I came. In the early days, you see, we were almost the first coeducational housing enterprise in the United States. Certainly, it was the first in this general area in which men and women would live together. The rules of the University were that any recognized housing unit at the University could not house men and women, so that International House was never on the approved housing list of the University in those days. The Dean of Women's office co-operated in many ways, but they were basically opposed to this principle. This, again, caused difficulties with the housing office of the University. We had to struggle, to get them to promote the interests of the housing of International House. In those early days we did not appear on any

Blaisdell: official housing leaflet of the University. Students would arrive in Berkeley, not knowing of the facilities of International House, and just happen to drop in. Our posters could not even be on the bulletin boards of the housing office! Dr. Sproul, in his tactful way, sought to help in this matter, but the problem was never really resolved in a thoroughly co-operative way until much later in the life of International House. A result of this, and our intent ultimately, was to make International House almost completely graduate student in nature. In those early days, to fill the house, I had to have "bodies" to keep on a financially even keel, so we gradually compromised on seniors and juniors. But the girls not only had to have the permission of the Dean of Women's office to live at International House, but they had to have written permission from their parents! This tended to put a cloud on International House, in a sense. The families got to feel that the University was not thoroughly happy about this situation. We worked these things out gradually. There were some lovely people--Alice Hoyt and others--at the Dean of Women's office who worked very closely with us and were sympathetic to the situation. But it was a problem at the beginning,

Blaisdell: largely because undergraduate women could live only in an approved boarding house, or rooming house, or residence hall, where men and women did not live under the same roof.

Well, look at it now--the residence facilities at the University--they eat together, men and women, in common dining rooms. We set the pattern of the breakdown of the situation. Actually, we had almost no difficulties arising out of the situation. Oh, there were the playboys who would find ways to get around locked doors and so forth, but they were very few. The building itself was so beautiful that it established the character of relationships. This was one of my insurances, and Mrs. Blaisdell's insistence--that the house should always be beautiful. The housekeeper was encouraged to put flowers around and keep the atmosphere pleasant. My feeling was that students would always live up to the atmosphere in the midst of which they lived, and I think this was largely true.

Another situation which arose was the question of women smoking in International House in the Great Hall. This was not supposed to be done according to the Dean of Women's office and the regulations of the University.

Blaisdell: But we set our course happily and never caused any trouble. The girls smoked, but I was always amazed at how small a minority of the students really smoked ever. It was a very small minority of which I was one, unfortunately.

Intermarriage

Blaisdell: I suppose one of the things that worried people most about International House was the problem of intermarriage between American and foreign students, and of the marriage of Caucasians with other racial groups-- this question regarding International House was always raised. I spoke a good deal. I went to Rotary Clubs and other organizations which invited me to speak about the foreign students and International House. Never once in those early days in the question period after a speech did it fail that I had to answer the question of intermarriage. I remember one instance up in Sonoma at a Rotary club at an evening meeting. The club met in a dining room next to a bar; and, of course, they had gathered earlier at the bar and were nice and mellow. I spoke about International House

Blaisdell: and the foreign students. Afterwards one man arose and asked about the problem of intermarriage, and I, naively, without a great deal of background information but some reading, had indicated that probably it strengthens the health and culture of groups to intermarry; as groups became isolated they tend to become weakened in character. He happened to be a raiser of horses for racing purposes, and he argued with me about this from his experience with horses! You bred for purity and purity of line. I found that very hard to answer! But this was a problem constantly, and it was a concern of mine.

I remember very well the first instance of intermarriage--a very lovely Japanese girl. This is quite a story, but I think it illustrates the situation. A very lovely Japanese girl was brought over by an older Japanese man one time. He came to my office and talked with me and said he wanted her to live at International House. I did not know that there was anything in the background of this, and I approved it. She was a very beautiful person, as Asian women can be, you know. She lived in the house and then formed a friendship with the son of a Baptist minister up in Oregon. I was down in Fresno speaking one night and my wife

Blaisdell: called me and said, "You'd better come back immediately." This Japanese man had discovered her alliance with the young American student, and had found her in his apartment, and he was out gunning for the young man! It turned out that he had bought the girl from her Japanese family, and brought her over here to be educated in order that he could marry her later. Of course this was a very serious problem. I took the side of the young couple, even though I disapproved of some of the things they had done. They wanted to be married, and this brought me into association with this lovely, elderly minister who backed his son up, and spent a family fortune in solving this thing, I am sure. We got the girl, and I hid her in a Chinese housing unit in San Francisco so that the Japanese man could not find her. She had a brother in Paris, and we sneaked her out of the country. I remember taking her into my car onto the ferry and bringing her over here. We were going to put her on the train for New York at Richmond so that this man would not see us; but as I drove onto the ferry, this Japanese man drove up right next to me! I pushed her down in the back seat and covered her with a blanket and he did not catch on. I got her on the train, and she got to

Blaisdell: Paris. And then the boy went over to Paris after he finished his work, and married her. Later she jumped out of a fifth story window of a Paris hotel because she had been diagnosed with tuberculosis a second time and was despondent over that.

Some years later I was speaking at Pomona College and a young man came up, a professor at the college, in English, and said, "Do you remember me?" It was this man. He had come back from Paris.

Ariff: The young husband?

Blaisdell: Yes. He had come via Asia, visited the family, was adopted by the Japanese family in Japan himself. He had married again and was a professor at Pomona College. I have lost track of him since; but that was one of the first instances, and it caused quite a furor.

Ariff: I can imagine. I wonder if the man who had bought her could have been paid for her?

Blaisdell: No, no, that was not necessary to do. But for some months afterwards, or weeks, I had to go in the back door of International House because he was gunning for us! He had a gun, and the staff had to be very careful in their movements. We could get nothing on him. The police could not stop him because there was no overt act at that time. That was one of the first

Blaisdell: marriages, and rather dramatic. I have often thought that ought to be written up as a scenario for the movies. That could make a beautiful story.

Actually, intermarriage did not develop to any large degree in the early days. It became practically accepted by the community after the war when so many G.I.'s had married Japanese and brought their wives back. With the occupation forces in Japan, some G.I.'s came back with Korean wives and Chinese wives, so that in later years this question was just washed out almost completely. Not completely, but...to a large extent.

I remember when Mrs. Blaisdell was sitting with a group at luncheon at the Women's Faculty Club. They knew she was there, and she talked about International House. Then one of the women turned to Josephine and said, "Would you want your daughter to marry a Negro?" And the woman next to Josephine spoke up and said, "Mine did." That was one of the instances that did not come out of International House. That was a graduate student, I think, in one of the departments of the University, who married a Negro man. This question was prominent in International House, and was always spoken of; the House was always spoken of critically in the community, because they thought it

Blaisdell: would promote this sort of thing, which I presume it did, in a limited way.

In 1949 (and I'll come to this later) Josephine and I went abroad for a few months under the auspices of International House; then in 1956 we went to Asia under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation or at least funds provided by them, to see what had become of our foreign students, what they were doing, and how they had profited from their American education. One of the things I was interested in was talking to the girls who had married the foreign students to ask how they were getting along. In most instances, it was working out pretty well. It depended upon the character and the cultural background of the men, whether they played it square with the American girl according to her traditions, or whether they fell back into the traditions of their own cultures in which the woman had a rather minor place. On the whole, they moved into urban communities where the old traditions did not hold so much. These are the things with which we dealt in those early days, and in which we had set our precedents and our policies to hold the line against these criticisms.

Use of International House by Political Groups

Blaisdell: Another problem in those days, remember that Communism was not, in those days, as suspect as it became later. There was some feeling about it; but remember, in the Roosevelt administration we were recognizing Russia, and the Beards of England had gone over and had written extensively and optimistically about Russia, and Russia was an ally of ours in the war. There was no large movement of anti-Communism as such. The Communist students, and others, lived above ground. Harry Kingman was very successful at the YMCA in drawing them into conversations and discussions. They were known--we knew the individuals. Some of them were members of the Party; some we did not know whether they were or not--but they were the left-wing crowd. We tried to play the game with this group. We learned later, Harry Kingman and I, not to join in organizations

Blaisdell: that were part of the United Front; but we got to know the Communists. Harry Kingman, particularly was freer than I was, in many respects, in dealing with them.

We had an auditorium at International House. I often wished in those early days that we never had an auditorium. On the other hand, it was very valuable to the program life of the house; but it was a cost item that was embarrassing in the early days. It cost to keep the auditorium going, and to load this on to the room and board cost of the students was a problem. Then too, outside organizations wanted to use the auditorium.

The idea was that the auditorium would be rented and give us income, so I tried to establish a policy of fair-play with the Communists. I said that they should have their right to speak openly, and, with the approval of the board, this was done. The Communists were allowed to have their meetings there. I remember one occasion that turned the tide. They wanted to use the auditorium,

Blaisdell: and I said, "All right, you use the address 2299 Piedmont Avenue; but don't use the name of International House in any of your publicity." They agreed to this. Then at their meeting, they passed a resolution that they wanted forwarded to the Governor on some matter. The telegram they sent was, "Such and such an organization, meeting at the auditorium of International House, passed this resolution." When I called them on this, "Oh," they said, "we did not do that, another committee did that." I said, "Bunk, I know your methods, no longer do you use the auditorium of International House." But out of this--we were in the forefront of social thinking, you see--one of the phrases that was used by critical groups of International House was, 'The John D. Rockefeller Communist Palace'.

Blaisdell: This Communist controversy became rather acute at the University and with International House later in the thirties. This was the beginning of my association with the problem. For instance, the Communist group, or the left-wing group, and I was always hesitant to call anyone a Communist until I knew definitely, would have their meetings at the Great Hall of International House.

Ariff: Informally, or with your permission?

Blaisdell: No permission was necessary, they did not ask for permission. I went to the University attorney, and I said, "What can I do about this?" And he said, "Nothing." He said, "The University, and International House along with the University, are public facilities, and you cannot force anyone to leave, except in the case of an overt act." This was a problem.

Then one young fellow came to me one day. I did not know him, and he wanted to live at International House and did not have the funds, so I gave him a job in the soda fountain. Well, it turned out that he

Blaisdell: was a front for this group, and he was the beginning of the organizing of employees of International House in labor unions. This forced me into negotiations with the unions. But I was very insistent that this young man should not be in the negotiating group of the unions. He was gradually forced out of the picture, but he became known through that as one of the Communist agents in the group.

Ariff: When did you start employing students in the house?

Blaisdell: Oh, from the very beginning, and this had to be worked out with the unions too. We had to pay the students the same rate as we paid the full-time employees, and this was quite a burden. We could have operated International House with much less expense by using full-time employees rather than part-time students at the rate of full-time employees, but the students needed the assistance, and this was one way that we could get the foreign students to move in--by reducing their board costs. You see, they could live in apartments, and they lived in their club houses at minimal costs of food, and so forth. We had to find ways and means. In the early days, I built up a fund, out of such surpluses as we had, of room scholarships. These were awarded to foreign students, and sometimes this

Blaisdell: caused difficulties. I was open about it to the students. The American students became a little critical of the fact that they were supporting the foreign students, but that did not last very long. They could be argued out of that rather easily.

This Communist thing went on until I had to take a pretty strong stand, not only because of our affiliation with the University, but because they were intruding on the operation of the house. Finally, they attacked me: they handed out leaflets at Sather Gate, "Get Blaisdell!" It was not publicly known that it was a Communist group that was doing this, but it was. President Sproul said to me one time, "Well, they saved your skin. When they attacked you at Sather Gate, we knew you weren't a Communist; and of course, it had been whispered about that you were-- you were so liberal in your attitude toward the Communists." But he said, "Now you are clean!" So, the Communists really did me a service. Enough of that problem--but it was an issue, and it became an issue, as I will tell you later in the life of International House. It was a thing that constantly followed us in this way. We were dealing with the more liberal group, you see, of the University. The students who lived at International House had to be

Blaisdell: more liberal than others, or they would not live there. It was a self-selective group in that respect.

Residence Office

Blaisdell: That takes us to the problem of how we selected the students who lived at International House. We did not select them very much. In the early days, it had to be "first come, first served," because we had to fill the house to keep the institution on a financial even keel. We had to fill the house, we had to have bodies! We could not worry too much whether the American crowd overbalanced the foreign crowd. We set the general policy as we went on to move toward a fifty-fifty balance. In the American group there would be the racial minorities--we were always encouraging that--and then fifty per cent non-citizens.

Ariff: Didn't you try, when there were double rooms, to have one American student and one foreign student?

Blaisdell: That came somewhat later. In the early days, we did not have double rooms because the costs of operation

Blaisdell: were lower. As the costs of operation increased, because of labor costs and rising costs of everything, the four hundred and fifty rooms did not give us enough for self-support as was involved in the early understanding of International House operations.

Then, after the war, (and this takes us ahead a little, but it has bearing here) we doubled all the facilities of International House, because the controversy came up then about accommodating foreign students when the returning G.I.'s did not have a space to live. We set the policy then of doubling the rooms as far as the men were concerned, not necessarily the women. I don't think we ever had double rooms for women, as I remember it, though there may have been some.

We always put a G.I. with a foreign student as far as we could. This was a very healthy thing. It did something that we could not have done otherwise: it brought foreign students into relationship intimately with the American group--and some of the finest friendships have developed out of that, which lasted through the years. I ran across evidence of this years later. The Americans began to travel abroad and they would visit the homes of these foreign students. The foreign

Blaisdell: student would be taken home by the American student for the holidays. There developed a very intimate and fine relationship. Whereas it was crowding and inconvenient, we solved two things: one, we handled the problem of the returning G.I., and two, reduced the pressure on the University to reduce the number of foreign students. Dr. Deutsch, who was then Chancellor of the University, was very co-operative. I asked him to go east and speak to the newly organized Adviser to Foreign Students Organization. He spoke to the representatives of all the universities of the country and said, "This is not a matter of 'either' 'or', it is a matter of both." This came out of the International House effort to meet the situation in this way.

These were problems that we faced. What I am trying to show you here is a problem we faced in the early days of the house. I again say that I was probably problem-minded and apparently I still am, because I deal more with problems than with the constructive things that were accomplished.

Ariff: But I think this is what an administrator does. This is the way things are accomplished.

Other Aspects of Relationship with the University

Blaisdell: Now, another matter that came up, and this was constant throughout my administration: our relationship with the University. We began to do many things for the University students. It seemed to me that the University should have a quid pro quo for us, for the services we were rendering to their students. We were a University enterprise.

Cost of Utilities

Blaisdell: One of the first things that came up was the cost of utilities. We were tied into the university utilities; the steam, and the electricity, and the water all came from the University. Whereas the University could not make any direct appropriations, for International House was thought of in a way as a peripheral organization, Dr. Sproul was very cooperative in this as far as he was able to go. We got reduction in steam rates on the basis of a survey which Mr. Lutz and I worked out, by studying the cost of utilities in the community apart from the

Blaisdell: University, showing that the cost to us was more because we took university facilities than we would have had to pay had we received our utilities directly from the city or the utility corporations. It was perfectly clear that the rates were much higher, so the University adjusted, in the early days, those rates to us. It never really made up what I thought was the deficit that the University really owed to International House. This came up later.

But I was placed in a situation, in those early days, of working this relationship out, and it brought me into controversial relationships with certain offices of the University. I have **already** shown you about the Dean of Women's office, and the Housing office; and this brought me into conflict with the Business office of the University. They felt we were getting something that was not due us on this thing, and I had to argue and negotiate these things out. The House, through me, became a perplexity to the University on these matters, but it was necessary in order, again, to keep International House as a self-sustaining enterprise.

Co-operative Buying Program

Ariff: In what other way did the International House work with the University?

Blaisdell: Just following the war International House was instrumental, with the University, in setting up a co-operative buying program. The University didn't have sufficient residence halls at that time to have a program of its own apart from International House. Somewhat to our price disadvantage, we entered this program and made most of our purchases through the University program. This organization developed very extensively in later years, as the University dormitories and residence halls were increased, and they built up quite an organization, of which we were a part. In some ways we could have done better purchasing separately, for, again, business firms would use us as a back door to entrance to the University, and this was embarrassing. I think it cost us a little more to be a part of this, because there was a load, I think of some five per cent, placed on all our purchases to finance this central organization of purchase and management, in the early days. Whether this is going on today or not, I don't know. But

Blaisdell: certainly we were instrumental, and really made possible the early development of this central organization.

Ariff: I would imagine at this point, with the number of University dorms and living accomodations, that perhaps International House is now benefiting from this.

Blaisdell: That's hard to tell. I don't know whether I mentioned earlier that we also had our public utilities supplied through the University. And here again, we played the game with the University, though a study that we made showed that we could purchase our utilities directly through the city or the corporations themselves at an advantage, because there was a load on it of costs of University administration. This was used to negotiate with the University for reduced rates. I don't know whether I stated earlier that Dr. Sproul, whereas he could not make a direct appropriation to International House from state funds, did see to it that the cost of steam and so forth was reduced in order to offset some of the expenses that International House seemed to be carrying for the University itself. These were very complicated situations, and at times it caused some feeling,

Blaisdell: particularly on the part of those who were not particularly favorable to International House, who were in the business management of the University; though on the whole they were very kindly and thoughtful.

Employee Wages and Unions

Blaisdell: I was always seeking ways to keep the costs of administration as low as possible with fair wages and so forth--at the same time, trying to keep them low enough consistent with the students' ability to pay for residence at International House. The question came up about the employees of International House.

Here again, we took advantage of the relationship of International House to the University. There were two factors in this. One, that I didn't like International House to become the back door of negotiations with unions. They sought to use us at times in order to pry open the union relationships with the University employees. If they could get us into a situation that seemed to reflect on an adverse situation at the University, it was an opening of a back door for them

Blaisdell: to negotiate with the University. This became very perplexing, so we finally decided to take advantage of our relation to the University and have the employees of International House who were susceptible to union organization to be employed by the University, and we would pay the University for their services. This ultimately included practically all of the employees except with the staff, as I call it--those dealing with student relationships, like myself, the business manager, Mrs. Carlson, Mrs. Carneiro, and others. We were not included. We were paid directly by International House, except myself, where my salary was divided between the University and International House. This proved very satisfactory, and from the date we did this on, the negotiations with unions and determination of wages and benefits were conducted by the University, which relieved International House considerably of a burden of negotiation for which we were not trained, really, to carry on. In the early days I did carry them on, but I was handicapped in the fact that I was not trained, nor was anybody on the staff trained for this purpose. This also eliminated the possibility of unions using us as the back door to the University.

State Retirement Program

Blaisdell: Another factor concerning the employees of International House was that by becoming employees of the University, they could be included in the state retirement program. In the very early days of International House, the atmosphere of retirement programs was not very sympathetic or extensive, and approaches which I made to the board for establishment of retirement programs were turned down. I remember Mr. Fleishhacker once said, "We don't want to start retirement programs. We don't have it at the bank. We always take care of those that seem to justify being carried on." Well, of course, this was discriminatory, in a sense, and never satisfied me as to the necessity for a retirement program. This was very carefully studied in the late thirties and early forties.

It seemed that it was going to be very expensive for International House to set up its own retirement program. The initial cost, covering all employees, would have come to some \$200,000, and we were not prepared financially to initiate this. But when the employees of International House became employees of the University, it took the load of the retirement

Blaisdell: program, and a retirement program for those not included in the University setup was established. This was a very minimal program at the start and was never completely satisfactory or equitable. They did purchase for those of us who were in the early days--Miss Sanford and myself particularly--policies for past service. Then we established a mutual contributory program, which is the usual procedure, which covered a limited number.

On the other hand, this did not seem to be entirely satisfactory because the turnover of staff was rather rapid. In the early days I said to the staff, and even on through the later years, "Don't anticipate long-term service to International House. For you, it's a stepping stone of experience that you can use advantageously seeking other opportunities." Employment by International House in the staff program could lead to nothing very satisfactory in the long term. There could not be a continual raise of salaries, and as one got older he ought to look for other employment. I indicated that I thought a three to four year term was probably long enough. This gradually took care of itself because individuals could see that it was not advantageous to stay in other positions

Blaisdell: than, say, the director or the business manager. There were a few, however, who did stay on, like Miss Carneiro, Mrs. Carlson, and Miss Bade, who later joined the staff. The contributory program was started. Some of the staff didn't want it, and there was a good deal of jockeying regarding it.

A rather curious incident came up in this regard. One of the staff, a woman, refused to participate, and gave no reason. It was to her advantage to participate in it because we were ready for past service that hadn't been covered that would have given her a retirement program of satisfactory proportions, or fairly satisfactory proportions. I reported her refusal to the man we were negotiating with with the insurance company. And he said, "This is not unusual. I can tell you the reason why. Women have a tendency not to report their ages accurately, and this person knows that she has done this, and she, therefore, does not want this to come to the surface." So I called this woman, who was of Asian background, into the office. You know the ages of Asians are very hard to estimate. Sure enough, it came out that she had considerably understated her age, and she did not want this to come to the surface. We arranged it so that

Blaisdell: we set up a special fund for her, apart from the program. She never entered it. This came up later at retirement age.

One of her fears was that--we had informally established sixty-five as the retirement age, which became rather established as we started the retirement program. I warned her a year in advance that she was reaching the retirement age and that she should be prepared to accept it, and I talked with her several times during the year about this. She had hoped that under the employment record, with her previous age stated, that this would not come up. But as this was corrected, it did come up. Then the year came to an end and the board of directors voted to have her retire. She had lost face, in the Asian habit, and she revolted very strongly. Though she had six months to go, still she packed up all her things and left International House. She, however, was in the midst of developing a festival, and the students went down to her and persuaded her to return. She called me and said, "May I come back?" I said, "As far as I'm concerned, you've never left. Of course you can come back." So she finished out the year, but she never forgave me. It has been distressing in later years that we couldn't

Blaisdell: establish a rapport of friendly relationships, because I felt that she had contributed very constructively to the life of International House during a period. This is sort of beside the point. It shows some of the problems.

We did develop this retirement program, finally. And we paid. Later, the University came to the conclusion that International House should not only pay for the wages of the employees that they had taken over on their employment list, but that it should have to pay the proportion of the University costs for the state retirement program. This has become somewhat of a burden but I think was a justified procedure. It saved International House considerably more in the long run than if it had had to establish its own retirement program.

This went on for a considerable period of time. There were threats from time to time that the University would have to stop it, that the state might require that they discontinue it. However, it had also been established, I understand, with other peripheral groups dealing with such as the atomic energy program, and so forth, so that it had become a rather established procedure and was never discontinued. Indeed, when I

Blaisdell: left, I made the recommendation that the director of International House and the business manager also be employed full time by the University, which made possible their participation not only in the retirement program one hundred per cent, but also, they could join the Blue Cross program, which would carry on after their retirement, because deductions could then be made from their salary and retirement pay for the Blue Cross.

In my instance, I had no retirement income from the University, for I had served for less than fifty per cent of my salary and therefore there was not retirement income coming to me; consequently, therefore I could not join the University program on Blue Cross and medical care, because there was nothing to deduct the costs from. So it was a very great handicap to me; but this has been corrected in later years, in this relationship with the University, which I feel is a great step forward. There were many complications that developed under this, but this just indicates something of the problems we faced in the earlier days of relationship with the University.

First English Language Instruction Program

Blaisdell: In the latter part of the thirties, I think it was, we started the first English language instruction program for foreign students.

Ariff: At the International House?

Blaisdell: Yes. Because there was nothing at the University, and these students would arrive without adequate English. The Admissions office was not familiar with the admission of foreign students, and was far too lenient in many ways in the admittance of foreign students. The office did not inquire into their financial circumstances; it did not inquire particularly into their linguistic abilities. So foreign students would arrive both without linguistic abilities and without finances, and the University had no facilities to assist them in any way. International House entered into this picture. We began to develop the English language program for foreign students under the auspices of Miss Quiros. This program later was taken over, first, by the Extension Division of the University, and then by the speech department of the University itself, and we discontinued it at International House. This is the kind of thing we

Blaisdell: did. We had initiated certain things and then they were taken over by the University.

Problem of Self-sustenance

Blaisdell: Then this problem of self-sustenance became perplexing. As we went on, it became apparent that International House, to really do its job, could not be entirely self-sustaining. You could not load onto the costs of room and board for the students all the things that needed to be done for foreign students. And yet, we had set no pattern for raising funds. In the mid-30's I went back and forth to New York for meetings and discussions, and I came back saying that we needed to start a fellowship program for foreign students. There were no special financial facilities for foreign students at the University at that time. There were certain funds that had been given for certain specific purposes, like students of German descent. There were a few specifically stated funds that were endowments for certain purposes and that could be used in certain instances.

The Dean of the Graduate Division--in all my experiences every Dean of the Graduate Division--

Blaisdell: cooperated wholeheartedly in the life of International House and the foreign students. The Deans were very close friends of mine. They were on the board of directors, along with the president, and later, the chancellor of the University.

Well, I came back and said, we needed to raise funds. In the first instance, the board of directors was hesitant, and largely, I think, because they saw that they would have to be participants and contributors to International House. They had come on the board with the specific understanding that we were not to raise funds. Secondly, we ran into the University priority list on raising funds, and International House was way down in the program.

I remember one instance in which I had interested the father of a girl who lived at International House to donate considerable funds to International House, largely for foreign students' scholarships. I went to Dr. Sproul and said, "If you will encourage this, I think we can get our funds." And he said, "Allen, I am sorry, there are priorities at the University, I have to have a girls' dormitory. And I can't go to him and ask him to give funds to International House." As a matter of fact, I don't think anything

Blaisdell: was ultimately given. But Dr. Sproul tried to divert the funds that I had initiated into the University interests! This was the kind of thing that I ran into up until the very end of my administration, and it is still perplexing to the present administration, I understand, though the University has been much more cooperative in this matter since I left. But this was one of the problems I faced. Quietly I raised funds from organizations, Rotary Clubs, and here is where Mrs. Carlson came into the picture. And I got a little diverted, you see.

Program Office

Ariff: When did Mrs. Carlson join you?

Blaisdell: That came much later.

In the early forties I realized that the foreign students were getting a very poor introduction into American life. In my discussions with them, about the only thing they saw of American life was chewing gum, and television, and the radio. They weren't getting any rounded point of view of how the American economy

Blaisdell: and political life ticked. So I began to develop the idea of a program of community relationships in which the foreign student would be moved out into homes and to a program of visiting city councils, and boards of education, and P.T.A.'s to show how American life really operated.

Estelle Carlson had been an earlier resident while her husband was Colonel Carlson of the Carlson Raiders, a very prominent man in the war. She lived with us while her husband was abroad, and she took advanced work at the University. Then she had left, and they were divorced. Later I invited her back to International House to head up this program. She developed relationships with many organizations in doing this. She was very effective in organizing the program which Mrs. Prescott carries on to this day (and is making great improvements on it under her own name). But Mrs. Carlson began this whole program. It opened up doors of solicitation of aid for foreign students through the clubs and organizations that used it. I developed a scholarship program and we had the International Fellowship House Funds.

Only the other day a very prominent Chinese who

Blaisdell: is now an American citizen, the grandson of Yuan-Shi-Kai, the first president of China, visited me. He is now at the Brookhaven Institute in New York in Atomic Physics, and his wife, whom he married out of International House, is professor of physics at Columbia University.

Scholarships--Assistance to Foreign Students

Blaisdell: The Dean of the graduate division had the prerogative of waiving the non-resident tuition fee for outstanding students. The deans progressively--Dean Stewart, and others, very close friends of mine--used this in the interests of outstanding foreign students in cooperation with International House. Also, the Dean of Women's office had fellowship and scholarship funds that were given by various organizations; we would work together in developing fellowships for foreign students.

Ariff: During what years was this?

Blaisdell: This began in the late thirties and went on. I will speak of later developments of assistances.

Ariff: When you say "in the late thirties", would that be just before the war then?

Blaisdell: This Chinese student was there, I think, in 1936. He spoke about the fact of having been supported by a fellowship for foreign students--an International House scholarship program of room and board. He stayed only a year and then went to Cal Tech; but he came back to marry this very lovely Chinese girl, Gi-gi Woo, who has been honored with honorary degrees from Smith College and Princeton University, and has been invited to many international conclaves in physics. She is one of our most outstanding students who have developed, though there have been others that I'll come to later. This visit from him was illustrative of these early days, and he spoke appreciatively of what we were able to do.

The graduate dean was very liberal in waiving non-resident fees. We never could publicize it because he was fearful of the legislature in cutting down, which actually happened later, the prerogatives of waivers of non-resident fees for outstanding graduate students. But this policy of waivers was very helpful to me. Then, gradually, the departments began accepting foreign students as teaching assistants. This worked out fairly well, though in certain instances not enough investigation was made into their backgrounds

Blaisdell: before they came. Sometimes it was difficult, they could not speak English well enough for their own students to understand them! We never could trust the recommendations from abroad. It was very interesting. In quite a number of instances we checked up on the recommendations later, and wondered how they could ever have been given such a recommendation--that they spoke perfect English and all this! They did not! We had to develop ways and means of determining how they could participate more effectively in the programs of teaching fellowships and graduate student assistants and readers. We developed a system which was very helpful in cooperation with the University. The department would say, "Now, we want this, but we haven't got quite enough money." So I would say, "Well, all right, I have got a room-rent scholarship I can give." I raised quite a bit of money...we had one very generous member on the board and she should be given special credit. She was a darling, Mrs. E. S. Heller. She was generous almost to a fault. ^{We} ~~She~~ would pay for things and then she would give us a check. I could not even report it to the board of directors, and this was an embarrassment. Mrs. Heller paid for the

Blaisdell: redoing of International House Great Hall in later years. She once said to me, "Allen--"--I remember it was at a board of directors meeting--I presented a problem of a foreign student who was a very outstanding student; we simply did not have funds to carry him on. She listened, and did not say anything. After the board meeting she took me aside and she criticized me very strongly and said, "Allen, I have always told you that when you had a problem and needed money for a foreign student you were to come to me!" From then on in I did, in many instances; the students never knew where the money came from. Her donations in one way or another to International House must have amounted to thousands of dollars over the years.

Ariff: I imagine that the other members of the board of directors must have thought that you were rather extravagant in the things you did.

Blaisdell: I would report that this was done anonymously, and they all knew.

Ariff: Oh, you did that!

Blaisdell: Oh yes! They all knew who it was, but it never appeared on the minutes of the board that "so and so has given such and such funds for this purpose" when it was from Mrs. Heller. My relationship with her

Blaisdell: was one of the lovely experiences of my whole administrative life. She was just a darling! You could not get it (a donation from her) unless you laid your cards on the table pretty constructively. She was a lovely person. The Jewish community--it was evidence of the Jewish community in San Francisco in its earliest days--the Jewish community had been most constructive in the development, by their generosity, to the city of San Francisco and the Bay Area. That is why we had so little anti-Semitic attitude in this area. We have never been perplexed by that in this area as we were in other parts of the United States, like New York and Chicago.

Ariff: I noticed that out here. I noticed, also, the difference between the students coming here from other areas and those who were from here. Those from other Jewish communities in other parts of the country expected a certain prejudice when they **came** here; and those who were from this area did not.

Blaisdell: The Chinese girl that we have brought over is the daughter of one of my student assistants at International House, a Chinese fellow who was getting his Ed.D. in the School of Education. He worked with me with foreign students at International House. I

Blaisdell: paid him. We were associated for about five years. She is his daughter. He went back to China. I'll tell that story later.

In regards to her, she wrote to me and said, "I don't know if I should come to California because of the anti-Chinese prejudice." I had to convince her that there was no such thing now in California, that it had been washed out. The war did a great deal to overcome the racial antagonism toward the Asians. There is no anti-Japanese prejudice now, particularly, but it was very strong. The whole movement of Japanese out during the war was engineered by agricultural interests and others who did not like the competition with the Japanese. But that has all disappeared because of our experiences during the war, and particularly following the war, with the American G.I.'s again marrying Japanese and bringing them over. I'll go into that little problem later.

Foreign Student Program

Ariff: I understand that Mrs. Kerr was helpful in the foreign student program.

Blaisdell: That's right. Mrs. Kerr, as the wife of a chancellor, expressed real interest in the well-being of the foreign students at the University. She initiated a very helpful division of the University Section Club which, as you know, is the club including the wives of the professors and administrators at the University. She set up a foreign student committee within that organization. One of the main purposes of it, which she developed largely in co-operation with Mrs. Carlson, was to set a place where there might be stored materials that were important primarily to married couples--foreign students, who were coming to the University, but who had no supplies that were necessary to unfurnished apartments. They had irons and toasters, lamps, dishes and flatware, cooking utensils, linens and bedding, small tables and chairs, and one of the most important was supplies for babies, which none of these foreign students coming could bring with them. This was first stored in the garage, or in the basement, of the wife of a

Blaisdell: member of the board of directors of International House, Mrs. McLaughlin. Mrs. McLaughlin was very helpful. The staff and this committee used to meet rather frequently and discuss the needs of foreign students; and the committee responded in many helpful ways, as I've indicated.

One of the significant developments was the student adoption program, that is, they developed families who would take one student and would sort of incorporate that student in family activities over a period of time.

Ariff: American families in this community?

Blaisdell: American families. This was not confined to the faculty, but reached out into the community. They had quite a program. Whether it is going on now or not, I don't know, but it was exceedingly helpful because the families then got to know the student intimately, and the student felt that he had a place of recourse, of resource, that he could refer to. Many very firm friendships were developed out of this program. I felt it was one of the most successful programs of this organization. Mrs. Kerr was always behind it, and helping most constructively in this way. I do want to emphasize that it was one of the

Blaisdell: most thoughtful, constructive, and statesman-like programs for foreign students that I saw anywhere in the United States, or at other universities.

Religious Discussion Groups

Ariff: What about the religious discussion groups using the International House?

Blaisdell: There were those who were interested in this and there began to be spontaneous developments of the groups. We had student committees working with the staff on the development of programs. They wanted to start these religious discussion groups--which I was not necessarily opposed to--although I always felt that religious discussion groups tended to generate more heat than light! When you are dealing in the emotional aspects of religion, reason does not prevail very easily, and I did not think that this was too constructive a part of the program. But we did start one.

Then it came to the notice of Newman Hall, and the priest with whom I had co-operated very closely, a very fine man, came to me and said, "Allen, we sort

Blaisdell: of don't like this where there are to be religious discussion groups including Catholics." Of course, there were many Catholics, South American students, and so forth. "We'd like to take the initiative," he said. I could understand that. So, gradually we discontinued the religious discussions. They went on informally, of course. But as far as the organized program was concerned, this was the beginning of the policy that we would leave the discussion of religion to the peripheral religious organizations such as Newman Hall, YMCA, YWCA, Hillel Foundation, and so forth. We thought it was healthy, in later years, for the foreign student to participate in these kinds of programs because it brought them into a wider relationship with the community. The International House tended to become rather isolationist, self-sufficient. The program was so full, and so exciting and interesting, that the students tended to spend all their time in International House. They did not move out into the community life. So this was one effort for us to broaden their experience in this way, as was Mrs. Carlson's program of moving them out to become familiar with American life in many other ways.

Blaisdell: Oh, that program of Mrs. Carlson's! We had groups going on holidays and weekends as far south as Pasadena, Santa Barbara, way up to the northern part of the state by bus, and small groups by train, or other facilities. They stayed in the homes, over the weekends, of Rotary Club members. It was a very effective program, and very helpful in introducing the students to the life of the United States. I think it lent a great deal to the ability of the foreign students to interpret the United States as they returned to their home countries. I was concerned that all they could talk about was radio, and chewing gum, and movies, and so on. Later, as I met them in their own countries, I found that they were much better interpreters of American life as a result of the program. This is very interesting to me. They would leave the United States, particularly the Indian students, highly critical. And I would say to people, wait five years.

Ariff: What type of Indian students? Were they the ones who were here studying agriculture--the ones sent here by their government?

Blaisdell: Pretty much all of them. There were those who were more thoughtful; the majority of them caused quite a

Blaisdell: problem to the national program of foreign students because they were critical of the United States. Several programs were started on a national basis later--through the auspices of the National Foreign Students Advisors Organization--of post-university seminars before they left for home, so as to correct some of these attitudes as far as possible. But they were very critical, many of them, and I would say, "Take it with a grain of salt now, wait five years."

When I went abroad, I found them looking back at their experience at the University and International House as the 'golden age'. They were representing the attitudes of the United States much more constructively than they did in those early days. What happened was that they had lost sight of what was going on in their own home countries, they were gone so long, many of them--four years in the universities, four to five years on their Ph.D.'s and so forth. They got back and began to see American life in comparison to the life that they had left but which they had lost track of, and they made the adjustment in their thinking.

Ariff: The reason that I was trying to differentiate is that I feel there is considerable difference between those

Ariff: Indian students who come over here on government scholarships, and those who are sent by their own families. Oftentimes those who come on scholarships came from the smaller villages and a more orthodox way of living, whereas those who were sent by their families usually come from quite cosmopolitan families, anyway, and tended to look at life differently.

Blaisdell: In the early days the Indian government had a very extensive foreign student program, but the quality of the students was quite low because it was controlled by social and political elements, and we weren't getting the best. One of the men in charge was a Mr. Sundaram, who visited us here. He later was in charge of the Indian students in London. I visited him and his wife there. He died recently, a very fine man. And the program improved--the government program tended to decline, you know. I don't know if it is existing now at all or not. For a long time it was almost nonexistent.

Ariff: Foreign exchange had a great deal to do with it.

Blaisdell: Yes, it did, though they have a lot of American money there in their own accounts. Later, the State Department had developed the foreign student program of the

Blaisdell: State Department by using Fulbright funds. They could pay for transportation and initial costs out of the funds in India which came from U. S. credits there. They could pay it in Indian money to the air line, then the State Department would pick up with dollar funds here, and support them while they were here. There was a tie-in with these programs rather extensively in later years with a good many of the countries that were on foreign aid.

The foreign student program, as such, was very slow in developing. There were incidental foreign students in the earlier days, largely coming from missionaries sending their students over to study in the colleges of the United States, but there were never any large number of foreign students at any university or college until 1925 or so.

I remember the first Afghan student that came to the United States. You see, Afghan students were never permitted to leave the country for many years. Then quite a group of Afghan students came later. But as we began International House there was no flood of foreign students at all. They were coming in various ways, but in very limited numbers. There were no national programs for foreign students on

Blaisdell: the part of any country until well into the thirties.

The conference called in 1938 by the then Secretary of State was to discuss the development of a program with Latin America in anticipation of the war. The State Department began a program of scholarships for students from countries of South America. That was the first time the United States and almost any foreign country was to recognize education as an instrument of foreign policy. That program, after the war, became the pilot project for the whole educational program abroad of the United States government. Then the foreign governments began to see the importance of training scholars-- after the war they needed them. There were some that began a little earlier.

The Afghan program, when it began, began as an Afghan government program. You see, Afghanistan was closed to the West until well into the thirties, with almost no intercommunication at all. Then, when they began to open their doors, they saw the need of scholars, and they began to send students over. We had quite a group of them--on through the years a very fine group of students.

The 1938 conference is really the turning point

Blaisdell: in terms that I have indicated--the government being concerned with foreign students, and the State Department assisting us in interpreting the program to our local universities. It became a matter of national policy, and the universities and colleges then could not afford to turn their backs on it.

Ariff: Did you find a change in attitude after that?

Blaisdell: I have never had difficulty here at the University in interest in the program. The University was always very much interested, largely through the concern of President Sproul, and the deans of the graduate divisions, and the professors who had begun to travel abroad more and more.

Foreign Student Advisor

Blaisdell: In some of the smaller institutions, and some of the other universities, they had considerable difficulty to interest them in setting up foreign student programs with advisors to foreign students, and so forth. That's another point as far as International House is concerned. There was no program of advising the foreign students at the University until around

Blaisdell: 1940. We started the program at International House again. We did all the advising to foreign students.

Ariff: Actually, as just another part of your job.

Blaisdell: Yes, and as another service to the University for which the University did not pay until 1942, when they appointed me as Foreign Student Advisor.

Ariff: Were you then given a certain salary for this?

Blaisdell: Well, this is another problem in relationship to the University. I saw the administrative costs of International House going up. For quite a number of years my salary remained at five thousand dollars-- there was no advance whatsoever while all the professors were getting advances. But in later years my salary increased until I was put on pretty much the full professor's salary, which I guess was about fourteen thousand dollars. International House was paying for all this, and it was charged against the cost of room and board. I saw this developing, and so I worked out a program with President Sproul whereby 49 per cent of my salary would be paid by the University and the other 51 per cent would be paid by International House.

Ariff: Did this take place after the agreement in 1942?

Blaisdell: Yes, and this considerably eased the administrative

Blaisdell: cost of International House. But then, the Foreign Student Advising Office was at International House, and facilities of International House were used as offices of the University, for which the University paid no remuneration. Fortunately for the new director, many of these things were worked out in my administration--things (!) which caused considerable difficulty in my day, for which now there is probably no problem for International House because of earlier developments.

Ariff: Was this ever resolved?

Blaisdell: Not completely, no. There was one instance about which I do not mean to complain because it turned out all right for me under my private circumstances. I was always kept at 49 per cent, which meant that I was not involved in the retirement program of the University. I could not join the University Blue Cross program, so the deductions could not be made from my salary for Blue Cross. When I retired, my retirement income was solely on the 51 per cent of my salary from International House--so that my retirement income is about one half of what it should be--it is lower than the retirement program of the University. Fortunately, International House

Blaisdell: implemented its retirement program for me with an additional small sum, but even at that, it does not measure the retirement program of the University. These are part of the problems of the relationship between the University and International House. I am not complaining, because I am leading a very satisfactory life.

Ariff: It sounds like it was very exciting and challenging.

Blaisdell: But the University, I felt, never quite did assume its responsibility in this regard. I did it out of a sense of well being of International House, but I paid the price later. Now this has been corrected with the new director, as well as with many of the staff; and I'll talk about this later as we go on. In the early days the employees of International House were paid by International House. Later we worked out a scheme, and I have to amplify that, in which the employees became employed by the University and we paid the University; thus they were on the University retirement program. This was all the employees of the dining room, the janitors and so forth; but it did not include the staff. The staff, I recall, was distinct from the others--the group in charge of the programs and advising the foreign students.

Ariff: The administrative staff.

Blaisdell: Yes.

Graduate Assistants

Blaisdell: I have mentioned earlier the matter of keeping the house full because International House was established on a self-sustaining financial policy. It was important that we build up the graduate students' residence, and to make it decreasingly necessary to take undergraduates. I, therefore, fairly early in the game, conceived the idea of establishing five or six room and board positions for carefully selected graduate students who would, in return for their board and room, work with me to promote the interests of International House within the graduate departments of the University.

Ariff: That is very interesting. Why did you feel that you wanted to promote the graduate students?

Blaisdell: The early contract of the house was that it would be largely a graduate students' center. There were undergraduate residence facilities, and, also, the fraternities and sororities provided undergraduate

Blaisdell: facilities, but there were no residential facilities for graduate students. Then too, we wanted to increasingly stress the fact that foreign students should be graduates, and not undergraduates, as far as possible.

Ariff: This would not eliminate the foreign students who would be undergraduates.

Blaisdell: We always accepted the foreign student regardless of his standing; however, there was a national as well as a local feeling that it was not wise to encourage, unduly, the undergraduate foreign student to come to the United States for his undergraduate work for four years, and if he stayed on for his graduate work, it meant that he was away from home for five to nine years, and then he became de-nationalized. His return home, therefore, became more problematical. He became used to the American way of life, and even if he did return home, his readjustment to his own national way of life was difficult. Therefore, in the early days, as soon as there was any sort of a program for foreign students on a national basis, the emphasis was placed on the graduate student, feeling that that was the place where we could make our greatest contribution to other countries; also, so that the foreign student

Blaisdell: would not be away from home for so long to become rather de-nationalized.

Ariff: How did the students which were selected for the program which you described enjoy the program? How did they work out?

Blaisdell: I selected men from various departments in the University, after consultation with departmental representatives as to who were outstanding in their departments. I drew in, as I have indicated, four or five of those whose main responsibility it was to speak for the interests of International House among the graduate students of their department. This seemed to have very satisfactory results. The applications for residence of graduate students grew considerably out of this program. Then, further, they were very good advisors to me in many matters dealing with International House and the internal life.

Ariff: Yes, I imagine they would be very valuable.

Blaisdell: They were a sounding board for student opinion within the house as well, and I found them very helpful. Some of these men grew and developed later into leaders in University life--Dean McHenry, Richard Jennings, Tom Vasey...

Ariff: Were they foreign students or American students?

Blaisdell: They were largely American students. Earlier I indicated that I had appointed nationality student secretaries. The graduate assistants were in addition to the nationality student representatives; however, the nationality student representatives dropped out as we proceeded. They became less and less necessary. The graduate assistants, I found, were just as helpful within the nationality groups as they were within the American group. Primarily, they were there to encourage qualified graduate students to apply for residence.

Selection of Students to Live in the House

Blaisdell: This brings me to a question, which we might comment on here, that was raised many, many times. How did you select the students to live at International House? Actually, the selection of students to reside at International House was a comparatively simple procedure. Most of the students applying were self-selected. They had been chosen abroad very carefully. The graduate students had developed their own standing

Blaisdell: and reputation, so that we did not need to question most of the applicants for International House. Then, too, in the earlier days, we took those who applied simply to fill the building, and keep it economically solvent.

Later, we developed a concept that 50 per cent of the students should be American, and 50 per cent should be foreign students as far as possible; though this was never held too stringently because, again, of the economic necessity of filling the building. We never allowed any foreign student group to constitute more than 5 per cent of the total residents. We ran into this difficulty in the later thirties because of the Indian students who were there in large numbers. We did not want any nationality to predominate, therefore we limited the applications of foreign students to 5 per cent of any nationality group. This never really was applied stringently and was never necessary to do so.

Ariff: It seems to me that there were a great number of Chinese students. Perhaps this was because of language that they stuck together and appeared to be more in number than the others.

Blaisdell: It was more than language. As I have indicated,

Blaisdell: there was the Chinese Students Clubhouse; and there was a strange sort of pressure from Chinatown in San Francisco that kept the Chinese students apart. This took some time to break down, particularly with the students coming from China. We worked on them, and not so much on the American-born Chinese students, though we always accepted American-born Chinese students. They were never in the foreign student quota, as we would call it. They were in the American quota.

An interesting thing developed. In the early days, there was an indication on the application blanks of the University relating to racial and religious matters. The religion question was voluntary, and we followed that procedure. Later, however, the University changed it and did not put on the racial question, and I think the religion was dropped also as a voluntary. In the later days we did not require it either, so that we never knew an American student as to his racial background, and I always felt that this was very important. But we never knew whether they were Negro or white or anything else--we just took them. Of course, there were ways of determining, but we never paid any attention

Blaisdell: to it. There was some accusation that we did, but actually we never did pass on applications in terms of race or nationality except within the quotas for foreign students.

The New York house had established a 75 per cent foreign students and 25 per cent American students ratio. This was due to the fact that there was a larger company of foreign students to draw on in New York. I always felt that this was a mistake because it developed something that went on rather considerably through the years, namely, the accusation that International House tended to become a ghetto for foreign students, that it was an isolationist procedure for foreign students rather than a policy which integrated the foreign students. We had to meet this accusation all along the line. That's why I always felt that fifty-fifty was a better percentage. Then, too, I was convinced that it did lead to a better integration of foreign students.

Ariff: I feel this, too. I think one of the lovely things about the Berkeley House is the community feeling among the students. I think that the student living there has the chance to get to know the American students. For instance, we used to gather under the stairway and sing folk songs...

Blaisdell: That's right!

Ariff: ...after Sunday supper, and things like that.

Blaisdell: Sometimes that went on rather late at night, too, and had to be squelched in the wee hours! [Chuckles]

Ariff: And there was always someone who played the guitar.

Blaisdell: Yes, the Latin Americans usually took the lead in that. They had some delightful people who were very fine singers and guitar players who added greatly to the life of International House. I always thought that the value of the house was more in the informal relationship than in the actual formal program. The formal program was merely a stimulus, in my point of view, to initiate the informal relationship in the house. It was this kind of thing that developed almost spontaneously that was more important from my point of view than the formal program.

Let me go back to this question of isolation before I forget it. There was some feeling on the part of the University students on the whole that there was a tendency for International House residents to be so self-sufficient among themselves--that the foreign student became isolated from the general campus life of the University. This had some facets that were understandable. In the first place, the

Blaisdell: foreign student was hesitant to break into the complex life of the University, was not politically minded, he was not used to the American student life and the way it manifested itself in organizations and programs. Too, the University was not entirely receptive to the foreign student. There was no effort on the part of the campus itself to encourage them to come into the, let's say, ASUC life, and so forth. On the other hand, we tried to meet this in some ways by encouraging the foreign student to participate in campus activities. We had exchange dinners with the fraternities and sororities. Foreign students would go to the fraternities and the fraternity people would come to International House. I never felt that this was very successful. On the other hand, it was successful enough so that it continued, and may continue today, I don't know. But the foreign student never really got into the inner workings of student life on the campus. He did participate, as I have indicated earlier, in the religious organizations, at the YMCA, YWCA, Hillel Foundation and Newman Hall, though not extensively. Almost inevitably residents of the house did become self-sufficient in their social and intellectual life.

Ariff: Did the year of the oath, which occurred when you were there, have any effect on the house?

Blaisdell: The year of the oath did not, as far as International House is concerned, have any real effect. You did not notice it. I did, of course. I was never required to take the oath for some reason or other. I don't remember whether I ever signed a contract or not, I may have. I personally became interested in the issue, but it did not penetrate into International House. That was very interesting. Most of the disturbances at the University, even in later years, did not seem to penetrate into International House, largely because it was a graduate student group who did not become involved in, shall we say, the maelstrom of undergraduate life and interests very much.

Ariff: You feel there was a very distinct difference?

Blaisdell: Oh, very much so, yes. I was talking to Mr. Warrick about the present development at the campus, and that has not reached into International House to any large degree, either. It was rather continuous that it was sufficiently apart. Where students became interested, they took part at the campus, but it did not penetrate to a very large degree into the life of the house itself. Oh, there were discussion groups

Blaisdell: and things of this kind, but not to any large degree.

Ariff: That is very interesting.

Blaisdell: Curiously enough, that the students were not concerned with international affairs--that is not true. The nationality groups tended to bring into the house a broadening interest as far as the American students were concerned. The American students in the early days were quite ignorant as far as international affairs were concerned. The foreign students stimulated their interests, and these had their outlets in discussion groups.

One of the things that constantly was a problem was the Israeli-Arab situation. This came up continuously.

Student Council

Blaisdell: There was a student council, elected by the students, to consult and advise with the director and staff.

Ariff: In the International House?

Blaisdell: Yes. We had this set up on a regional basis, representatives elected on regional bases. Well, of

Blaisdell: course for the Near East region, you never could put the Israelis and the Arabs in the same region for the election of their representatives because they both had to be represented; so we finally split that up, and we had an Arab representative and an Israeli representative. This did not bother other areas so much. It was just in the near East that this seemed to have effect. Though later, the Pakistan-India situation did arise. The student council, as I remember it, numbered some twenty or so people. They elected their own officers and they divided themselves into committees as it was necessary from year to year. There was a committee on program, there was always a committee on food, a committee on the festival, and others of this kind. I found this group exceedingly interesting to work with. I always met with them. The committees met with various members of the staff, according to the area of the life of the house in which the committee was interested. Probably the most active always was the Refectory Committee--dealing with food. There was always a tendency there for the students to reach beyond their capacity, to be helpful. They would want to make surveys of the costs of this and that on the avenues

Blaisdell: compared to International House!

Ariff: These were male students? Or females?

Blaisdell: Oh, men and women. I would give them just as much leeway as possible, but had to constantly insist that they were advisory, and not managerial. There was always the tendency for the students to want to get in on the managerial side, and I never felt that they were qualified from the terms of knowledge and experience to be very helpful there. This was constantly an issue; and to keep them within their realm of abilities to be helpful was difficult.

Ariff: I imagine it would be. It would require great diplomacy.

Food

Blaisdell: Yes. There would be petitions for this and that. Food was always a question that was never really solved until we turned to women almost exclusively in the managerial side of the food service. That seemed to conquer most of the difficulties. Though, of course, food was difficult because of the various nationality tastes and to get something that was satisfactory to all of them was perplexing at times.

Blaisdell: We experimented from time to time on nationality dishes, but it was rather interesting that the particular nationality would never feel that a dish was really his national dish unless it was cooked by a representative of his national group--and it was impossible to have as many employees as that. So the nationality dish never went very far, though we always had rice for Asiatic students. That seemed to be all right. But it seemed to be impossible to operate the food service on a nationality basis. It just did not work, so we gave that up. The council had its committee on program working with us. We would make our suggestions to the staff, they would make theirs, and we would come to common agreement on the elements of the program.

Arab-Israeli Problem

Blaisdell: Going back into the internationality problems, the one that was constant, of course, was the Arab-Israeli problem. The Arabs are much more aggressive than the Israeli group. The Israeli group had its center largely in Hillel foundation, though they would come into the life of International House when they saw

Blaisdell: the Arabs were getting away with too much. The Arab nationality group, which was not a part of International House, sought constantly to get control of the discussion groups dealing with the Near East. They had several rather obnoxious individuals, who I always felt were nervously disturbed. We had considerable difficulty there. Some of the faculty who were sympathetic to the Arab group were critical of us, at times, that we did not handle that problem correctly. They may have had some justification. On the other hand, it was an effort to keep the balance and not let an outside organization move in and control the discussion group life and the program life of the house.

Ariff: I imagine it would be very difficult to maintain an atmosphere where there is freedom of speech, and yet to prevent two very volatile people from exploding.

Blaisdell: Oh, there were explosions, but as long as you kept the organizational responsibility within the hands of the resident membership you had very little difficulty. There was never any question of freedom of speech. It was always a question of balancing the freedom of both sides on an equal basis, and this was problematical. One thing I learned very early

Blaisdell: was that if you left things in the hands of students they might fumble a little, but I had considerable confidence that they controlled the things themselves and that we did not have to step in too much as staff. Occasionally we did, but on the whole the group living together maintained the balance of dignity and of equal participation.

Ariff: I imagine, in another way, it was a very valuable experience for American students to see, at close hand, how very deeply the political issues in countries so far away from here affected these students.

Blaisdell: I always thought that the American group was really the one that got the greatest benefit out of International House in the early days. It alerted them to world situations which were not, in the earlier days, of particular concern. We did not have Vietnam Day Committees interested in the war in Vietnam or in the African difficulties and so forth. There were none of the manufactured or real issues that very much concerned the American group up to the time of World War II--after that it was considerably different.

Ariff: You spoke of the India-Pakistan issue--that never divided the group as the Arab-Israeli situation.

Blaisdell: There was a common background between the Indians and

Blaisdell: Pakistanis, whereas the issue of separation disturbed them, it never split the group quite as much. I used to jokingly say, "Well, I'll give you twenty years, and you'll be back together." And they'd laugh it off. But it did not penetrate as deeply into the life of International House as the Arab-Israeli situation at all. There was the student council, and I presume that goes on today, I don't know. It was always difficult to get all the student opinions represented through the student council. But on the whole it worked as well as possible. The organization of the council was difficult. We never really did solve the problem of how to organize it successfully because every group felt that it ought to be represented rather than on a regional basis and the electoral process was changed from time to time. But it was always there. It was a sounding board of student opinions which was helpful though not always tranquil.

This was the background of the program. Now, as I have indicated to you earlier, my feeling was that the program per se was not as important as the informal give and take between students within their rooms, within the day to day meetings at the dining

Blaisdell: table, and so forth. I felt that we should leave it as free as possible from organized efforts, self-conscious efforts, to leave it more to the unconscious relationship. I felt that this was important; therefore we kept the program at a minimum.

Sunday Suppers

Blaisdell: We did have the Sunday Suppers. These, I think, were very constructive. We used to have them every Sunday night, but this became quite a burden both from the point of view of food service as well as from getting effective speakers. This was very difficult. The judgment of the students as to speakers was remarkably accurate, and they could not be fooled. They knew when a person wasn't a good speaker or did not know what he was talking about. Then, there was a tendency for the speakers not to prepare sufficiently in advance, and a good many of the addresses, particularly by the faculty, were not effective. So we gradually reduced them to once every two weeks and then finally, I think, they came down to probably once a month. I don't know what they're doing now, but it did give a chance for

Blaisdell: the group to see itself in its best form. We always stressed music very heavily, good music of some kind.

There was the tendency for the students to leave after the music--which was embarrassing. As soon as the music was over there'd be a great movement out of the auditorium that was embarrassing to me, representing the interest of the speaker. I could understand this--if students had listened to lectures and speeches all week, they did not want to hear anything more; they were tired of it. They had their dates and so forth, later in the evening. We tried to encourage them in one way or the other not to come unless they planned to stay for the program--the council was helpful in accomplishing this. But it could be embarrassing at times, as it was. On the other hand, they were a very gracious and polite group, even when the speeches disappointed me. The students, I knew, were disappointed, but they took it in stride.

There was one effort that never went very far. I tried to get a speaker in line with students' interests, or issues in the forefront of things, then to have discussion groups immediately following the address. I felt that this could have been carried further, but then the war came along and it became

Blaisdell: impossible to carry that out, so the discussion groups tended to organize around the committees that were organized in the student councils. They set up the discussion groups.

Ariff: So you are speaking really about the programs before World War II?

Blaisdell: To a large extent, though this continued later too, that the student groups determined largely the issues they wanted to discuss. They handled the discussion groups. But the Sunday Suppers remained.

Folk Dancing and Social Dancing

Blaisdell: Then I invited Miss Eugenie Carneiro, who had been at Mills College, (I don't know exactly what she was doing there) to join the staff. She, out of her own fine sense for the fitness of things, developed our folk dances.

The social dancing was difficult--not because of racial issues that popped up every once in a while. We had to indicate to the girls (and we had men's councils and women's councils for consultation with our staff for the interests of both groups)--we had

Blaisdell: to do some ground work with the women to meet the issue of social dancing. We never had any serious difficulty there. Once in a great while we would have a problem with a girl who would refuse a Negro, or something of this kind, but almost never; and if it did happen, it was taken in hand immediately and did not occur again with those individuals. But we found that most of the foreign students did not know the social dances, so we had to develop classes. The students themselves took that on. The student council developed classes for social dancing. Social dancing took quite a place later in the life of the house-- not so much in the early days. We felt that the opportunities for that were sufficient on the campus, so we did not overly stress the social dances, though the council did do it, because the funds, when they did make small charges, went into the coffers of the student council. We underwrote the student council from the general budget, but when they wanted to do special things they raised little sums of money of this kind. We made a definite effort to minimize the social dancing by developing the folk dancing, and this did take a very large part in the program of the house, particularly under Miss Carneiro. We had a

Blaisdell: teacher for the folk dancing of the various nationalities, a very effective teacher.

Ariff: What was her name?

Blaisdell: It was a man, first there was a woman, and then there was a man--Von Konsky. The first part of the evening would be given to learning the dances of other nationalities, and then the latter part of the evening was free for just general folk dancing. Out of this came the festival.

The Festival

Blaisdell: We took the folk dancing period as training for the festival, and this took a very large part. Miss Carneiro was particularly insistent, I think I have indicated this earlier, on the integrity of the dances as representing the finest cultural expressions of all the nationality groups. Actually, the nationality groups did not know their own dances; they had to be taught--though some of them did, and they were very helpful in training others. There was a tendency for the nationality groups to segregate themselves into their own dancing.

Blaisdell: It early came to my attention, and to the attention of the staff, that this tended to be a segregating influence. I remember one American-born Japanese girl who came to me one time greatly distressed. She indicated that she had never been conscious of her nationality background till she came to International House, because of her Japanese background she was supposed to be in the Japanese group in the folk dancing and in the festival. This was evident--this forcing people into their nationality expressions. So very early in the life of the folk dancing we integrated the dances so that there were not just the representatives of the nationality groups that did those dances but we encouraged other nationalities to learn those dances, and they took part in the festival.

Ariff: I noticed this. I thought it was just delightful seeing an Indian student doing a Czech dance!

Blaisdell: It comes to my mind that an Egyptian, who is now the head of the whole Aswan Dam development, a very prominent engineer in Egypt, was a Gaucho in the Argentinian dances! [Chuckles] I used to kid him about this when I used to meet him in Egypt--that he was a better Gaucho than he was an Egyptian. He

Blaisdell: enjoyed it, he looked back on it with great pleasure.

Then in costuming--we went to great expense to get proper costuming. The festivals got pretty professional and pretty expensive. They underwrote themselves to some degree, but they had to be subsidized, and they really became semi-professional.

There was always the tendency for a nationality group to be so self-conscious about it that they would bring in "ringers" from the outside--professionals. The Chinese would bring in professionals from Chinatown; the Arabs would bring in the belly dancers from the night clubs; and this sort of thing went on. Finally we had to say that we would not accept this--only for certain things could they have professionals from the outside. Now this effort on the festival was due to my reaction to what I saw going on at other universities and colleges through the Cosmopolitan Clubs. There was no professional advice in these matters, and the presentation of nationality cultures through dances and so forth were very sloppy affairs. I thought that if we were going to do it at all, it had to be done right; and Miss Carneiro, through the years, did develop a very fine program. When she left there was no one, really, to take her place.

Blaisdell: The festivals declined because they then became very largely the efforts of the nationality groups themselves. Then, too, I began to get the feeling that outsiders thought of International House as a "song and dance" place, and I thought there was not enough intellectual participation. I made an effort to develop the intellectual side. That was always difficult because the students were involved in intellectual matters at the University, and they wanted to relax at International House, but I thought that the intellectual life of the house could be lifted considerably.

I decreased the emphasis on the festival when Miss Carneiro left. Then, too, we got criticisms from the faculty that the students were spending too much time in the activities at International House as compared to their responsibilities to their departments. We had to take this into cognizance and reduce somewhat this emphasis in later years, because it became very time consuming, particularly during the spring semester.

Ariff: The festival?

Blaisdell: Yes, the festival took on entirely too much time of the students. So when Miss Carneiro left we tried to

Blaisdell: reduce its emphasis, and it never attained the distinction it had in former years. Then too, in the early days there was not the general interest in the folk dancing in the community at large, though that developed considerably later, and nationality groups in the community put on great festivals under the auspices of the International Institute in Oakland and in San Francisco and took the edge off of what we were doing.

Discussion Groups and Language Tables

Blaisdell: Then of course there were the discussion groups. We first started with language tables feeling that International House was the place where people interested in learning a particular language could get their practice by associating in a formal way with language tables. They would take their trays into the Sproul Room, which was originally called Room Three, and they would stress the speaking of a language at those tables. But out of different circumstances the language tended to be minimized, and they turned into discussion groups and were the

Blaisdell: outlet of nationality groups for discussion of their problems. They tended to become more nationality tables rather than language tables, and they became discussion groups.

Ariff: In case of the Latin group, there was some emphasis on music.

Blaisdell: Yes, there was music. That tended to move over into the folk dancing side of things. But again, as I have indicated, I learned very shortly that the informal life, leaving it to the students themselves and not organizing it for specific nights and for specific subjects, was more important.

Home Room

Ariff: How was the Home Room used?

Blaisdell: That room was reserved for the director and his wife. In the early days it had been anticipated that the director and his wife would live at International House; however, this never became really possible. That meant that the director would live, and eat and drink the responsibilities of the house--and their children--it would be impossible,



Blaisdell: it would be unwise for the children. And so it was given up as a residence place for the director and his wife. We always had a member of the staff, as far as possible, living in the house. I felt it was important that when they first became members of the staff they should live in the house for a while--for a semester or a year--so they would know the inside life of the students and could be more intelligent in representing student interest. But later it became almost impossible for staff to live in the house, and we depended, then, upon these graduate assistants to a very large degree.

Ariff: When you speak about the staff, what category of staff do you mean?

Blaisdell: Program staff. I make a distinction between the operating staff and the program staff. "The staff" included the business manager, the ~~Director~~, the student assistants, and those in charge of programs, like Mrs. Carlson and Miss *Carneiro*, and so forth; I always called them the staff. They were my responsibility.

The operating staff was the responsibility of the business manager. She and I had an agreement that no appointments would be made to top positions

Blaisdell: in the operations staff except as we mutually agreed upon. She never would appoint a top executive in the operating staff without consultation with me, but other than that she was left pretty largely free in the operational business side of the house.

Ariff: When you speak about the Home Room and members of the staff living there, were there separate living facilities in that section of the house adjoining the home room?

Blaisdell: Yes, we tried to develop, as I remember, rooms with private baths and so forth for the staff members in the house. But again, this did not work out too well, and we gave it up and the graduate assistants became our interpreters.

The Home Room, because of the absence of the director and his wife, was supposed to be the living room of the director and his wife, and was held apart from the general use of the house for the director. It was a privilege for the student to be invited in, and Mrs. Blaisdell and I were constantly alert to visiting scholars and dignitaries that we could invite in. We would have some of the most delightful evenings with little groups that we had invited in to sit around the fire in the Home Room with a

Blaisdell: particularly distinguished person.

Ariff: I remember Barbara Ward, the economist.

Blaisdell: Yes. Then Mr. Sundaram, who was connected with the Indian embassy. He was a delightful person; we used to invite him. There were representatives of the embassies that came along, ambassadors, the King and Queen of Greece came--people of this kind. Then we had three guest rooms. And I kept these particularly for the purpose of inviting distinguished people who were invited to the University. They would live there with us and mingle with the students. In our use of these guest rooms we got very interesting people to join us. The only responsibility they had was to meet with us on occasions with the students in the Home Room.

Ariff: Do you want to talk about Miss Sullivan and any of her activities?

Blaisdell: Yes. Miss Sullivan is now Mrs. Dobrzensky, she is with the chancellor's office. She was in charge of admissions. There we ran into an interesting thing. We called ours the Admissions Office, but it got confused with the Admissions Office of the University. So we had to change it and call it the Office of Residence.

Ariff: Oh yes!

Blaisdell: That was very interesting. By the way, the co-operation of the Office of Admissions was one of the remarkable and delightful experiences of all my life at International House. Miss Bray was one of the early ones, and Miss Love, and, of course, Dr. Herman Spindt. was delightful in those early days. They were very co-operative. And I might add here while we're on it that rather early an official Committee on Foreign Students was established.

Committee on Foreign Students

Blaisdell: I don't know just when it was organized, but fairly early, and certainly in the mid-thirties, President Sproul co-operated with me by appointing a Committee on Foreign Students of the University. That committee was exceedingly helpful.

Ariff: Was this before or after you were appointed Foreign Student Advisor?

Blaisdell: It may have more or less co-ordinated with that, but my memory seems to indicate to me that it was earlier than that. I requested that the committee be

Blaisdell: established, largely to get the advice of the faculty on matters pertaining to International House. The Committee gradually assumed wider responsibilities in terms of dealing with admissions to the University, dealing with the question of dual standards for foreign students. That was quite a problem at the beginning. The faculty tended to be overly sympathetic to the foreign student, and they'd pull their punches in regards to grades and so forth.

Ariff: The students or the faculty?

Blaisdell: The faculty, they tended to be a little easier on the foreign student than they would be on the American student. I always felt that this was a mistake and encouraged the committee to do something about equal standards.

There was one problem, however, of discipline. There was a committee associated with the Dean of Students on student discipline, and questions of cheating would come up on the part of foreign students. And that committee was very generous in inviting me to come in and sit with them whenever a foreign student matter was up. The only insistence I tended to make was not to be easier on the foreign student than on the American student, but to be sure that the penalty

Blaisdell: was really equal. You had to take into consideration the country from which the student came. Now in India, for instance, and among the Arab students, the question of honesty was quite different than the question of honesty in this country.

Ariff: There is a completely different set of standards.

Blaisdell: In those countries you almost have to be dishonest in order to get along.

Ariff: Yes, the whole way...

Blaisdell: It is a way of life, and it is not considered dishonest. In China 10 per cent graft was an accepted custom. There were foreign students who had come thousands of miles. The foreign student not only represented himself but, among the Chinese, for instance, and the Indians, he represented the family, and he represented the community. A thing was a disciplinary action for an American student where he lived locally, and he was an individual, and the community did not care very much. The family did, of course, but it did not penetrate very far. But for a foreign student, it was almost a national disgrace if he was discharged from the University. You have to measure these things. It was a very interesting discussion that went on within this committee as to what was equal punishment

Blaisdell: for Americans as well as for foreign students.

Ariff: In Latin America as well as in the Orient, bribery to higher officials is the accepted procedure.

Blaisdell: Yes, and this was the problem you had with foreign students, particularly with those that came from underdeveloped areas where living was hard. This was always a problem. Though I insisted, again, that we should not discriminate in any way in favor of the foreign student--that probably his experience here was good for him--if he got in trouble, to learn the standards that we had. Even our own standards were not above reproach, of course, as far as students are concerned. That Committee on Foreign Students helped in so many ways, in advising with us about International House. Then, gradually, it took on more official responsibilities as the Office of Foreign Student Advisor was developed. There, they became the interpreters to President Sproul on the problems rather than my having to represent them individually. They became committee recommendations directly to the President.

Ariff: When you were appointed Foreign Student Advisor did your activities actually change very much from what you had been doing before?

Blaisdell: Yes. I did not get to know the individual students so well in later years, largely because 1): I was responsible for International House on the one hand, 2) I was Foreign Student Advisor. I had only a part-time student assistant in the Foreign Student Advisor's office, and a secretary. That's all we had at the beginning.

Non-resident Membership

Ariff: You were not only Director of the International House, but you were advisor to the students who were not living at the house.

Blaisdell: Oh, all the time! But that had happened informally, anyway. The foreign students living outside...we had the non-resident membership at International House, as you will remember. Our effort was to draw the non-residents into association through this non-resident membership, which I think was three dollars a year, or something like this, and covered the cost of the Sunday Supper for a nominal fee. A great many of the foreign students did participate as non-resident members, though the differences of interests very often,

Blaisdell: between the residents and the non-residents, were rather marked. It was always difficult because so many of our activities occurred around mealtimes, and outside students were in boarding houses and other places where they got their own meals, so it wasn't as convenient for them. But they came for Sunday Suppers, and they participated in the dances, and the folk dancing, and things of this kind.

Ariff: There were, of course, some non-residents who did take their meals there.

Blaisdell: Yes, we had that privilege too--never a very large representation from that, but it was possible--some of those who lived close at hand did take advantage of that. Always, on the student council, there was a representative of the non-resident student group to reflect their interests. Sometimes there were special programs for non-residents, oriented to their interests and for their convenience, though this never was very successful.

But, in terms of foreign student advising, they did turn to us, even informally, before the Foreign Student Advisor's office was set up officially. We advised them in regard to passports, and visas, and dollar-exchange, and this sort of thing. In fact, we

Blaisdell: began it, and it was then taken over by the University because it was a service gradually expected of the University. This was happening nationally. All the University was doing was following the national development of other universities and colleges. The University of California was slower in developing University programs of service to foreign students because International House was doing it. At other universities and colleges where there weren't International Houses, the university very quickly responded to this. We were one of the last to develop things of this kind officially.

Ariff: Did you want to mention any more about the development of the Office of Foreign Student Advisor?

Blaisdell: As I have indicated, this was just a sort of a natural switch. There were many matters that pertained directly to the University, like admissions, and we also had to have signatures for various official things representing the University. There had to be a representative of the University speaking in the national developments, and it could not just be International House. This was soon recognized through the Committee on Foreign Students, and they would make recommendations along these lines. Such things had to come, so that the

Blaisdell: Foreign Student Advisor was merely the official of the University speaking in the interests of the foreign students and officially with embassies and consulates and groups of this kind. This is what really forced the issue in the long run--that it had to be a University representative; and I became that representative.

The Foreign Student Advisor was set, I think, around '42. Yes. But it was just a natural switch. It was just an official action and an absorption on the part of the University of some of the costs there were involved in rendering University services to foreign students, so that it wasn't a sharp change at all. It was just sort of natural. It was just like the English language program. That was taken over by the University.

In the early days of International House, President Sproul was president of International House. I cleared with him directly in matters dealing with International House and in matters dealing with foreign students. When the switch came, and Kerr became Chancellor, complications entered in, not only with International House but, I think, with many other things related to the University. Sproul was slow to release the

Blaisdell: responsibilities. He thought that International House was his "baby." He always was very much concerned with it and was always...we never had a board meeting without President Sproul. Sometimes the times of the meetings were manipulated to meet his convenience. I remember in the early days, in the first ten years-- I don't think he missed a meeting of the Board of Directors of International House.

Board of Directors

Ariff: How often did the Board of Directors meet?

Blaisdell: Oh, it varied. We tried to have meetings once a month. Later it turned out that we would have committees of the board and they would meet and the board would meet once every two months, something of this kind. Possibly this was too often. But both Dr. Sproul and I agreed that we had to keep our Board of Directors close to the house, that even if you did not have important issues it was wise to call them together and create matters for their consideration so that they could be kept informed. One of the difficulties was that the board never really knew the house. I encouraged some

Blaisdell: of them to come and live at International House, again through use of these guest rooms. But that never went very far. Once in awhile it did happen. One of the things was that the board felt they never quite knew what was going on. Now as I serve as a member of boards, I can understand better their feeling--that it is almost impossible to have the staff reflect to the board the total problem of administration. I developed a technique later to have individual members of the staff report on their particular problem when we had a meeting of the board. I did not want to overly encourage relationship of staff to board. Sometimes the board felt that I was a little, what shall I say, exclusive in the matter, feeling that possibly I was hiding something. But I thought that it wasn't wise to have a close relationship between staff and board--this was something of my feeling inherited from President Campbell, who was struggling with the same thing between faculty and the Board of Regents. Everything should go through the director. I did not want individual staff people going to the board with individual recommendations on things that hadn't passed through me and that we did not have thorough discussions on, and had come to a consensus of opinions on. I wanted to be the

Blaisdell: one to make recommendations. Later, I did have the staff come in and present various aspects of the program to the board, but I tried to keep the board as close as possible to the daily routine of life of the house, so I found this extremely difficult. Dr. Sproul and I did insist on rather frequent board meetings, and this, I think, is still important just as a matter of administrative policy.

Ariff: --for communication?

Blaisdell: Because we had to keep the board and the students informed...if an issue suddenly arose within the student group, it would strike the board as a new thing, and they would react without all the background information--all the complexities that had gone into the development of the situation. This was a constant concern of mine.

I have here a list of the board of directors from the earliest days to the present time. Remember that the board of directors, I think I've indicated earlier, was originally appointed by the Regents of the University. There were five members that were appointed: Mrs. Mary Gibson of Los Angeles, the mother of Hugh Gibson, who was quite an international figure in Geneva. Her appointment was largely due to the original concept,

Blaisdell: namely, that International House would be sort of a state-wide organization, and not just for the University of California at Berkeley. Mrs. Gibson did not serve for any length of time, though she was one of the original signers of the articles of incorporation for the International House corporation. She resigned very early, and she was replaced by Mrs. Imra W. Buwalda, Mrs. John Buwalda of Pasadena, whose husband was a professor at California Institute of Technology and formerly dean of the summer session at the University of California. The original group, in all reality, were Dr. Sproul, Dr. W. W. Campbell, Mr. O. K. Cushing, an early Californian who was an attorney in San Francisco, and Mr. Mortimer Fleishhacker, head of the Anglo-California Bank, and Mrs. Bewalda. That group continued for several years.

Then it was decided to enlarge the board of directors--I believe to fifteen, I don't remember the exact numbers. In 1933 Mr. Ralph T. Fisher of the American Trust ~~...or the American Bank...~~ which was later joined with the Crocker Bank--joined the board of directors. He was in the Oakland Branch, and was one of the most helpful and interested members of the board of directors all through this period. I could

Blaisdell: turn to him at times when I did not feel I could go directly to the board with the matters, and he was very clever in getting over rough spots and was my confidante in many respects. His passing later was a great loss to International House.

Then, also in 1933, Mrs. Clara Heller, Mrs. E. S. Heller, was appointed, and served as a member from 1933 to 1956, and as an honorary member from 1956 to '59. Also in 1933, Mrs. John Howard McDuffie; she was wife of the owner of the real estate firm in Berkeley. Chester Rowell--a very prominent figure in those days--who was one of the editors of the San Francisco Chronicle in the early days, served from 1933 to '43. He was a very outstanding newspaper man in this area and was exceedingly helpful in many ways.

Frank S. Gains came in on the board in 1934 and served to '52. He was formerly a mayor of Berkeley, and one who was a friend of mine. I, with a group of people, was somewhat responsible for his election as mayor of Berkeley. He had had wide international relations in his own business and also through the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco.

Then Dr. E. D. Dickenson, who was dean of the Law School, continued ~~namely~~, to 1943. Dr. C. B. Lipman was dean of the Graduate Division. (As we

Blaisdell: expanded the board, we decided to include the deans of the Graduate Division as ex officio members of the board, so that anyone who was dean of the Graduate Division, right down the line, were some of the most constructive members of the board. Indeed, to establish closer relationship with the University, I kept urging President Sproul that more members of the University be included on the board, so that the directives to the director could be consistent with the situations prevailing on the campus. This never really took effect, because it seemed wiser--and I think probably Dr. Sproul was right in this--that we have more community members than we did official members of the University, and also not to further complicate the situation as between International House and the University, and its independent status. In later years, this proved to be very important.

Mrs. Helen Crocker Russell, of the Crocker family, came in in 1939 and served to 1950. Mr. J. K. Moffet, who was a banker in San Francisco, was a delightful person, and exceedingly helpful. He and Mr. Fisher and Mr. Cushing were continuing members of the finance committee of the board, and we would meet in San Francisco. They were delightful gatherings, as we

Blaisdell: gathered at the Palace Hotel. Mrs. Sanford and I would always go over to meet with them. They would get so started in mutual memories in early California we could scarcely get them to divert to the business of International House. But it introduced me in many ways to early California life as I heard these men discussing things pertaining to their experience in early days. Mr. Moffit used to call me on the phone rather frequently and ask me how things were going. Other members of the board didn't do this, except Dr. Sproul; he kept very close. Dr. Sproul had established the procedure in his office with his secretary that "Mr. Blaisdell was to have access to him at any time he felt it was important to have it." This was a very great help to me, and I used it rather frequently, as frequently as I thought was necessary for the best interests of the house.

Then, Mr. Roger Trainer, who was then at the law school and has later become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of California, served from 1944 to '51. And Mr. Charles Wheeler, a business man with--oh, I've forgotten the name of the firm, but it dealt with lumber and shipping in Northern California, served from 1945 to 1958.

For a short period of time, and only for a short

Blaisdell: period of time, Dr. Henry F. Grady, who was dean of the College of Commerce, I believe, became a member. But he was later appointed as ambassador, first to India, and then to Greece. His short period on the board, however, opened a very delightful friendship for Mrs. Blaisdell and me with Dr. and Mrs. Grady. When we went to Greece, he was then ambassador and we were entertained royally by them, and became VIPs in the eyes of the Greeks while we were there.

Then John D. Hicks came on. He was dean of the Graduate Division for a short time. He was exceedingly helpful, though he served only for a short period of time, 1945 to '47, when, I believe, he discontinued his relationship with the Graduate Division. Paul Smith, editor of the San Francisco Chronicle, was a member of the board from 1947 to '52, and then he left the Chronicle and went to Collier's magazine, which later folded. And I have not followed his destiny since then.

Dr. Peter Odegard, professor of political science, was a stimulating member of the board from 1948 to '56 and was always, sometimes almost embarrassingly, challenging Dr. Sproul as to the responsibility of the University for International House, and bringing to the foreground all these problems of relationship with

Blaisdell: the University. Sometimes I felt he pressed it a little too far, but he was helpful and constructive.

Then, as dean of the graduate division, one of the ones who was most helpful throughout the years was Dr. Morris A. Stewart, from September, 1948 to his death in ¹⁹⁶¹ ~~1958~~. His loss was one of the things that contributed, as I will indicate later, to my decision to leave the directorship of International House, because I felt an era of relationship had passed with his death.

Donald McLaughlin, a member of the Board of Regents, was on the board of directors. (I might say here that we always had a member of the Board of Regents on the board of directors of International House, as interlocking with the Board of Regents, whose responsibility was to keep the Board of Regents informed about International House and to soften any criticisms that might arise by explaining the situation, because he was intimately involved in it.) Mrs. McLaughlin, his wife, as I have indicated, was very helpful in Mrs. Kerr's program of assistance to foreign students.

A long-term member of the board from 1952 and still acting, I believe, to this date, 1966, is Thomas C. Blaisdell, a professor of political science. But he's definitely an economist, who came to the University

Blaisdell: on the recommendation of the committee on international relations of the University, from Washington, where he was Assistant Secretary of Commerce with the State Department under the Truman regime. He was... well, as we always used to say, we'd rather be friends than determine whether we were related! As a matter of fact, I think he is my seventh cousin, twice-removed. But he and Mrs. Blaisdell have always been close friends of Mrs. Blaisdell and myself. He was very helpful and very influential on the board.

Mrs. Martha Gerbode was one of the delightful members of the board, from May, 1952 to 1960. She was of the Hawaiian family background, of the families that went to Hawaii to do good, and did well. I've forgotten the name of her father now, but I had dealt with him in earlier days and he had been helpful to International House in small ways financially, in problems that I brought to his attention. He ^[Mr. Alexander] was the head of one of the steamship companies. She was delightful.

John L. Simpson was one of the sweetest and loveliest men that I have ever known. He had been a member of the board of directors since 1953, and I think is still serving. He is of the Bechtel

Blaisdell: Corporation (now retired). As I have indicated, we co-operated with that corporation, through his helpfulness, in the training of Korean engineers who took over the operation of engineering enterprises that the Bechtel Corporation, under contract to the United States government, had developed in South Korea.

Mrs. Emma McLaughlin was on the board from 1953 to 1957. She was a prominent, liberal, forthright lady of leadership in San Francisco, and was most generous and thoughtful in her relationship to International House.

Then Dr. Stanley McCaffrey, who later became vice-president of the University under Dr. Sproul, but was at that time the executive secretary of the Alumni Association, served from 1953 to 1960.

There was an effort, as I have indicated, to draw us closer together, under the International House Association, to the Alumni Association of the University. The Alumni Association became increasingly helpful to us in many ways, but my plan for having an international section of the Alumni Association, to which our former members could be directed, never seemed to really get underway. Though, by Dr. McCaffrey's presence and his later role as executive secretary of the Alumni

Blaisdell: Association, we've always played a very close role with them.

Louis H. Heilbron, an attorney from San Francisco, has been a member of the board from 1953 on. He, I think, has been president of the State Board of Education for some years--very constructive in his relationship to the board.

Dr. Clark Kerr became a member of the board in 1953 as Chancellor of the University, which became an ex officio member of the board of directors. He never took a very large part in the board. In fact, I find very little record of his ever attending board meetings. He was not involved in the early negotiations for International House, as Dr. Sproul was. He didn't feel a sense of responsibility to the Rockefellers, to the commitments made in the early days, because he didn't know about them and was not involved in them. Later, as president, he was honorary chairman of the board, taking Dr. Sproul's place. President Sproul was always chairman of the board.

Ariff: From ex officio to honorary, neither of which were actually involving.

Blaisdell: Yes. Well, I think he's actually president of the board. The chancellor, however, has taken the seat

Blaisdell: of chairmanship of the board since Dr. Kerr's regime started.

Then there was Otto Hebe, a business man of Oakland, from 1955 to 1963. He was a very prominent Rotarian, and helped Mrs. Carlson very extensively in establishing her program in relationship with the Rotary Clubs. I might say at this point that the Rotary International had one of the most constructive and statesmanlike programs of scholarships and fellowships for foreign students in the United States. They raised a fund of two million dollars, I think, the income of which was used for such programs. Through Mr. Hebe we were brought in touch with this program and we had in later years quite a number of the "Rotary Scholars," as they were called, from different countries.

Also, the local clubs had their committees on international relations. Mrs. Carlson's program brought us in touch with them. Several of the clubs would open doors to me because of this appeal for help or aid to individual cases that needed assistance which I didn't have funds to provide.

Russell G. Smith, vice-president of the Bank of America, I think, was a member of the board from 1957 to 1966 and later became the president of the Asia

Blaisdell: Foundation in San Francisco, in the interim, between other presidents. He was a very helpful man in the business management of International House--very tactful and thoughtful in many ways.

Later, 1958 and still serving, was Mortimer Fleishhacker, Jr., son of the original Mr. Fleishhacker, who was a member of the board of directors in early days. He is one who has taken a very prominent role in many worthy causes in San Francisco and the Bay area, and was a very thoughtful and co-operative member of International House.

Mr. Gerald H. Hager served on the board from 1958 to 1964, at the time of his death, I believe, or just previous to his death. He was, in his term, an interlocking member of the board of directors with the Board of Regents.

In later years, only in 1958 to 1965, a very close friend of mine, Mrs. Frank Shuman, of Berkeley, was elected to the board. She had earlier been a social worker in Martinez, under the school department there, and later married Mr. Frank Shuman of a prominent law firm in San Francisco. Through her influence during her period an interesting thing happened. The Morrison estate, which was under the jurisdiction of one of the

Blaisdell: members of this law firm, was being closed out. They had made large appropriations to the University in the library, as you remember, and other things. But they decided to close out the estate. It was decided that wives of the members of the firm should have the right to indicate where they would like a portion of the Morrison estate to go; and through Mrs. Shuman ten thousand dollars was given to International House for a program under the community relations program of International House to provide, in the early days, tickets to theaters, to opera, and things that would bring foreign students into familiarity with the cultural life of the Bay Area. Also under it, I suggested that we provide a fund, and that the income from the fund be used to provide books and equipment for foreign students returning to their home countries--students who would not have the books and equipment in their own country. How far this went, I don't know, but it was part of the program.

Ariff: How was that to operate?

Blaisdell: They would be purchased here and given to the students as they returned home. Whether that happened or not, I don't know. The income was comparatively small. Whether it is still being used for theater tickets and

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Blaisdell: other cultural events, I don't know. There were problems in that. We always wanted an American student to attend these occasions with a foreign student, and sometimes we found the foreign student would get the tickets and turn them over to their American friends, rather than using them themselves. But on the whole it worked rather satisfactorily.

Mrs. Shuman was exceedingly helpful to me, as you know. When I retired, she joined Mrs. Blaisdell and me for our tour in England and Europe. She did not go around the world with us, but left us in Paris to return. At that time her husband had just died. We had a delightful experience. We would tuck her into the back seat of the automobile and call her Queen Victoria. She was most helpful to many enterprises. She was also on the board of the International Institute of Alameda County, so that her interests centered around these organizations of international concern.

Then, of course, as chancellor, Dr. Glenn Seaborg became the presiding officer of the board in 1958 to 1960, when he left to become chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. served from 1959 to 1960. He was an invalid, as you know, and died very shortly

Blaisdell: after he became a member of the board.

Dr. Robert Blum, president of the Asia Foundation preceding Mr. Smith, was a member of the board from 1960 to 1962. This was an effort to draw us into closer relationship with people who were very knowledgeable of situations in foreign countries. While he did not serve for a long time--he later went to the Carnegie Foundation organization in New York, and died very shortly after he assumed responsibilities there.

Then Dr. Strong replaced Dr. Seaborg as chancellor of the University. He came in 1960 and served until 1965, when he retired.

Then, after I retired, Dr. Sandburg S. Elberg, as dean of the Graduate Division, was appointed in 1962, and is still serving.

Now, there were others in later days for which I was not responsible, though one of them in later appointment was due somewhat, I think, to my recommendation, namely, that we seek to get a member of the Negro race, locally--and Mr. Byron Rumford was appointed.

Oh, I passed Harley **Stevens** by in the nineteen-fifties. He was an oil man with interests in the Near East, and he was exceedingly helpful. After his death, his wife, Mrs. Harley **Stevens** became a member

Blaisdell: of the board and, I believe, is still serving. She, in her own right, is an authority on the Near and Middle East. She had written books on the division of the Jordan River water and other matters dealing with Israeli-Arab problems in the Near East.

Mrs. Bartlett Heard, of Berkeley, also, I knew. Whereas I think she came on the board following my administration, she was on the borderline of joining it as I left.

Whereas the earlier board of directors, the original ones, were appointed by the Regents, the board of directors then became a self-perpetuating body. It was their responsibility to elect new members. The Regents never entered into the appointment of later members of the board.

Somewhat later--I don't know just when it was, I suppose in the late forties--it became evident that we didn't have a mechanism for a program of retirement for older board members and inclusion of new ones. I believe that Dr. Sproul and I figured out at one time that the average age of the board of directors had reached well on into the seventies! So Dr. Sproul cooperated with me in getting the board to establish a rotating system, two consecutive terms of three years,

Blaisdell: then going off the board, but could be used in committees of the board as non-board members. Then if we wished to re-elect them, they were still available. This caused some feeling among the older members of the board, but most of them accepted it very graciously. And this did make it possible for the board of directors to keep more current in terms of developing life at the University, the younger life at the University, and allowed the director, in some degree, to wash off any personal antagonisms that might have developed. Any administrator is caught in this situation, and some mechanism had to be established. It's being followed now by most institutions with boards of directors, so that this accumulation of antagonisms didn't build up on an administrator. This was one of the helpful factors of this. As a result, the misunderstandings and some element of criticism in the early days faded out, and in the later days my relationship was one of mutual self-confidence. I used to dread the board of directors meetings in the early days. But I began to enjoy them and anticipate them, because there was a constant expression of mutual confidence in each other that made it a very happy relationship.

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE WORLD WAR II 1941-1945

Blaisdell: Anyway, very shortly after we got into the war the question of what the International House would do came up. There were applications on the part of the military to use the building...they had to have residence facilities for training military groups. Very early the facilities of the University in many respects were called upon, and the question came up as regards International House. It was going to be difficult to operate International House as a building during the war. The members of the staff were being drawn off for war duties, like Mr. Burton King, who was then business manager, and who was called to Washington to participate with the former business manager of the New York House in developing the military and housing facilities in Washington. So he was gone. That's when Mrs. Sanford came into the picture as business manager. She was an office manager and she merely moved in, temporarily at that time, as business manager.

Then there was the question whether I would stay, too. For a period of time I went over into the War

Blaisdell: Relocation Authority in charge of the Japanese relocated into camps.

Relocation Program for Japanese

Blaisdell: I tried to get the general in charge of things here to allow the language training program for military personnel that was developed by Miss Walne, who was formerly on my staff--the Japanese language program for the Navy which was developed under her auspices--to allow us to use International House for that purpose. There were Japanese professors, of course, in that program, some Japanese who were American-born and some 'nationality' people. But the general was insisting that all the Japanese should be removed from California, and would not listen to reason. We pointed out that they would be the first ones who would be liquidated if the Japanese ever got into California, so that they weren't a dangerous crowd at all. But that broke down, and that program moved to the University of Denver. So that was out.

Then there developed a large program for Latin American students during the war, under the State

Blaisdell: Department. That was the program that came out of the first recognition on the part of the State Department that education was a matter of national policy. A large number of Latin Americans came. I did not stay long with the Relocation Authority because I went in largely to get the extension divisions of universities surrounding the camps to extend their courses into the camp for the Japanese students, the American-born Japanese students, so that they would not lose their educational progress. I travelled a good deal then. I went to Salt Lake City to work with the extension divisions of the universities in Salt Lake City and Logan to develop their extension courses in the Japanese camp close at hand. Also, the various camps all over the western part of the United States would do the same thing. And from those we got pretty good co-operation, except the University of Arizona, which took the propaganda attitude that all Japanese were enemies, regardless of their place of birth.

Very shortly the decision was made, largely on my recommendation, that the Japanese students should be released from camps and sent to eastern colleges and universities. Then I went east to get those

Blaisdell: colleges and universities to accept the Japanese students as students. This was an interesting thing. You ran into the prejudice against the Japanese right down the line. Though some colleges were very co-operative, others were resistant on the same line that the University of Arizona took. I might say that the extension division people at the University of Arizona were very co-operative, but they couldn't move without the approval of the president. As soon as that happened then I came back to International House.

Ariff: Back east, were there any particular universities which would receive the greater number of the Japanese students?

Blaisdell: There was a tendency for a good many of them to center around Chicago; they were part of International House. From my point of view that was one of the best things that ever happened.

Ariff: ...moving to the Midwest?

Blaisdell: It moved the Japanese out of California. They became integrated into the national scene and were not as conspicuous as a national group locally. Many of them, after the war, stayed on in those areas and it was one of the most healthy things that ever happened. I used to meet them in later years, and they felt so.

Blaisdell: It broke up the family cohesion that was rather strong. It made them independent of their families. I think it was a very constructive move, though it was a move out of desperation, involving one of the worst national actions we ever took in our history--the isolation of these Japanese. It was a black page in the life of the United States, and has so been recognized. Even Justice Clark has later indicated that he thought that it was a mistake, and he was one of the prime movers of it in the early days.

Anyway, I came back to International House. I always felt that International House wouldn't be worth very much if it could not exist during war as well as during peace. So we entered into an agreement with the University that we would lease International House, and it was used by the Navy.

Ariff: Entirely?

Blaisdell: Yes.

Temporary Location of International House

Ariff: So, any foreign students who were here during the war would use what facilities--boarding houses?

Blaisdell: Well, we went out and we rented four, five fraternity houses; they were in difficulties. Instead of using the money we got from the Navy to build up our reserve

Blaisdell: fund, we used the money to continue the program in fraternity houses which we hired. I don't remember for how long it existed, but we operated these houses. We had central eating facilities--the fraternities were rather close together. We would eat together, and we had our programs together. There was one interesting episode, though, in that life that made it difficult. There was very evidently a planned infiltration of International House.

Ariff: By whom?

Blaisdell: Well, the left-wing crowd. I would almost say Communist--I think I have enough proof, although I always hesitate to identify a person as a Communist without definite proof--the term is used too loosely, and so I always say 'the leftist crowd.' But I think it went deeper than that. There were a number of instances with individuals. I remember the FBI came to question me about one student that was living in one of the fraternity houses that we were operating at the time. They pointed out his history. He had been at the University of Hawaii, he had been at a university in Florida, he had been to a university here. And they said, "Does this look like a normal educational experience?" Well, it was perfectly

Blaisdell: evident that he had been planted, and it was an effort on the part of the Communists, definitely, to move in on us. This caused difficulties, because I could not come out and say this to the student group. They would have reacted against my accusations; I knew that, and these individuals would have been martyrs. So we had to handle it very delicately.

Ariff: How did he behave when he was in the house? Did he attempt to organize the students?

Blaisdell: Oh, he would agitate. You would have a student meeting, for instance. I remember one episode in which there was considerable criticism of the food and the food manager. It finally came to a climax, and I called a student meeting, and this group got control of the meeting. I was present. I finally rose and said, "This discussion is becoming useless. There is no foundation for the accusations being made. I know the circumstances involved. If this meeting goes further, I will order the eating facilities closed by next noon." Well, they didn't have any place else to eat and so it stopped the whole thing. But I had to say that either you stop this or everybody will suffer, and you will have no eating facilities. I meant business, and this cured it. I have never known

Blaisdell: what became of the individuals--I would like to know--that were involved. I know who they were, but I never followed them up. There was a group of graduate students which came to my assistance with very great helpfulness--men like Dick Jennings, who is now a professor of law. I forgot who all of them were. They came and sat with me and advised with me, and I took their advice very seriously. They helped me tremendously through that period.

Use of the House by the Navy

Blaisdell: Well, using the fraternity houses continued the program--it gave us an organization to move back into the house. The Navy was very slow to relinquish the house. They wanted to continue. They had no facilities to move into following the war, and they wanted to continue to use International House.

Ariff: Who in the Navy used the house? The officers?

Blaisdell: Oh, no! It was the Navy student program. They filled the house. They double-tiered every one of the rooms. They housed anywhere from eight to nine ^{hundred} ~~thousand~~ students in there. And when we went back to the house, after considerable pressure--and Dr. Sproul helped a great deal--the Navy released the International House back to us and we moved back in--the damage had been very heavy. We had to take care at that time not only of the

Blaisdell: returning veterans, I already told you about that, and match them up with foreign students--we had, in the first two years or so following the return of the house to us, oh, six to seven ^{hundred} ~~thousand~~ students. This meant that we had to enlarge the dining room, and we had to repair the damage done, which was rather extensive.

Ariff: Physical damage? Furniture and walls, etc.?

Blaisdell: Yes. I remember going into the house one time when they were moving out, and they had a great packing box they were carrying down those lovely steps--the Spanish steps down from the Home Room.

Ariff: Yes--the tile.

Blaisdell: They just threw it down the steps, and it--bang! bang! bang!--went down the steps and broke the tile. They did not give a darn!

Ariff: Who paid for the damage?

Blaisdell: This is the question! The Chicago International House had given over their building to the Air Force, I think it was, and they did not go out and conduct a program but they put their money in reserves--the income, the rent they received.

Dr. Sproul was on the national board for the Navy. And he unfortunately put into the lease that there would be no re-evaluation of the contract at the end.

Blaisdell: Now, the Chicago house had a re-evaluation program at the end, and they got a considerable amount of money for re-establishment of the house. We never got anything. Well, we had put aside certain amounts of reserve. We built the new dining room; we re-did the Great Hall, and there was quite a bit of reconstruction. At that period I felt that certain violation was done architecturally to the house. One of our board members had her own architect, I won't mention names here, it isn't important, but without consultation with me, she moved rather strenuously on her own. I remember going to Dr. Sproul and saying that I think great violation had been done. The Great Hall was always a rather dark and gloomy room--I don't think you knew it before the war, but the Spanish architecture, while very lovely, made the room very dark. There were small pane windows. Then too, the Great Hall had been the entrance so that the traffic coming into the house went through the Great Hall. We conceived the idea of roofing over a part of the porch and of having the access to the house go around the Great Hall and of putting the information desk, you will remember, in front of it. The information desk used to be at the entrance of the Great Hall. I think they did a great deal of good to

Blaisdell: the house, I think it lightened the room up. For instance, we had great beams across the Great Hall at the top and the nationality insignias would be on these beams, even the Communist Sickle, Star, and Hammer were on one. But those were wiped out, which I thought was very unfortunate. Later we had to do it over again because there was such agitation against what had been done. But it cost a great deal of money, and this wiped out our reserves.

Ariff: These were not reserves built up during the war, these were reserves you had previously?

Blaisdell: That's right. We always had in our budget what we called our depreciation account. We never depreciated the value of the building, but we did depreciate the furnishings and things that were temporary in nature, so we had to keep up our reserves for replacements of furniture and things like that. We built up several hundred thousand dollars of reserves--never quite enough. We never could quite meet the demands of the reserve costs. In later years Mr. David Rockefeller gave several hundred thousand dollars to put in new elevators, and things of this kind, which could not have been underwritten by our own reserves. Well, that for the war period. And then we moved back in,

Blaisdell: and life again became fairly normal.

Ariff: When did you move back in, right after the war?

Blaisdell: It must have been very shortly after the war. The war ended in ~~September~~^{August}, was it? We must have moved in either in the spring or in September. I think there was a lag of about six months from the end of the war until we took it back on.

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE 1945-1951

English Language Program

Blaisdell: The Office of the Foreign Student Advisor went on; we had made very simple facilities for that in the fraternities, and that's when the English language program began.

Ariff: When you were in the small houses?

Blaisdell: Yes. We had instruction for foreign students in English. That was taken over later by the University, though it was never quite decided where it belonged-- whether it belonged in the Extension Division or in the Department of Speech. I can't go into that because I am not familiar with it. But there was a considerable amount of pulling and hawing as to where the English language program for foreign students belonged, and that was considered by the Committee on Foreign Students continuously as where it would be best and how much credit should be given to a foreign student. This sort of thing had to be a University matter in which I was consulted, but I had no large part in determining the nature of the program.

Ariff: After the war the Fulbright Act was passed. What

Ariff: effect did this have?

Blaisdell: Oh, it had a very large effect. Here, again, we get into the fact that the Latin American Program was the pattern of the foreign student program on a national basis worldwide. Unfortunately, they gave up the Latin American Program, and that caused hurt feelings in Latin America. The Latin Americans were only used when they were helpful during the war, and they were forgotten when they weren't of any particular help to the United States. The foreign student program became a matter of foreign policy of the United States, and they moved into strategic areas with these programs. The Fulbright Program came into effect.

Institute of International Education

Blaisdell: I think, before I get into that, I ought to deal with the development of the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors. The Institute of International Education had developed slowly. It was a small organization in the early years with which I had a good deal of association. It largely dealt with visiting scholars and things of this kind, developing

Blaisdell: an international program of scholarship. But this had very little to do, in the early days, with students. However, as the Latin American Program developed, much of the responsibilities for these foreign programs of the State Department were farmed out to agencies already in existence.

The Institute of International Education became the forefront of much of the national program for foreign students and scholars, not entirely, but considerably, and that organization became very prominent. Now we, as foreign student advisors, had operated largely as a committee of foreign student advisors with the Institute, although there was a growing feeling, immediately after the war, that the time had come for an association of foreign student advisors apart from the Institute of International Education, but closely related to it. With the encouragement of the Institute of International Education, we had a meeting in Chicago-- I think it was in 1945 or '46--and there was a group of us that gathered, representing the larger educational institutions that had foreign students.

National Association of Foreign Student Advisors

Blaisdell: We set up the pattern for a national organization called the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors. I was vice-president of that in the beginning. Later, in the third session, I became the president of it. There were four or five of us that continued on into the future. The others were older, and retired. The organization became very effective and rather large. It represented rather important facets and became advisor to the institute on the question of foreign students' interests on the nationality program. We were drawn into committees of the State Department in matters dealing with foreign students, and made recommendations to Congress through the State Department on matters. We were, to some degree, responsible and were consulted on the Fulbright Program--not individually, but collectively, as an organization. We dealt with Immigration and Naturalization on the laws and regulations of immigration as dealing with foreign students, and we were largely responsible for recommending the developments of visas for foreign students and visiting scholars. This drew me out again, it was a responsibility that took me apart from International House to

Blaisdell: a large degree.

Ariff: Yet gave you a considerable perspective.

Blaisdell: ...participation on a national scale--in many ways. There was some criticism, I think, that I spent too much time with this. But Dr. Sproul always encouraged me to participate, because he could see, as in other matters of the University, that it was important that we be in the stream of national development. There was a tendency for the University of California to become isolated because of transportation in those days. It took a week to go to a meeting in New York or in Washington--and not just five hours to fly there. You went by train, and it took you two or three days to get there and two or three days to get home. And this meant transportation cost too. The eastern universities could participate in these things rather easily.

Ariff: How were your costs in transportation met?

Blaisdell: We would usually divide them. I had the right to apply for travel funds at the University, and Dr. Sproul backed this up; but frequently I would go on International House business too--a meeting of the Directors of International Houses. This is another interesting facet, the co-operation of International

Blaisdell: Houses, that I haven't gone into. I would be going to a meeting of the Directors of International Houses as we tried to move together. There was a move at the beginning to try to develop a national organization, but the feeling of the indigenous character of the houses was more important because we were dealing with quite different problems than the International House in New York and Chicago. We were all divided in meeting our local situations, and a national organization would have just been an overhead and it would not have meant anything. So that died rather early, though co-operation was rather important. It was my hope that through this contact we would receive the interests of the Rockefellers in the continuing life of the house--as they were continuing their contributions to the New York house and the Chicago house--but not with us. It was my effort to try to keep this going, but I was not very successful there, I might say. I tied these things together into a package deal and Sproul always backed me up on that. If the University would not let me go, there again was my independence--I could go, I had a travel fund in the budget for the Director of International House, so I was free to go if the University turned me down.

Blaisdell: I went as Director of International House, and vice versa. I worked two ends against the middle in this matter and always to the interests of the house, and very largely of the University too.

The Condliffe Report

Blaisdell: I have with me this morning a copy of what is known as The Report on the Condliffe Survey of International House.* As I have indicated previously, there had been restlessness within the Board of Directors in regard to whether or not the house was fulfilling the purpose which had been designated for it by the donor. This referred back, of course, to my previous statement that it was difficult to justify the purpose of the house by the limited number of foreign students who were living there. As a result, the Board proposed that a rather extensive survey be made of the house, its program, its policies, etc. At my suggestion, therefore, Dr. J. B. Condliffe was asked to come to the University for this purpose. He was selected, also, because Dr. Sproul desired to have him appointed

*A copy may be found in the University Archives.

Blaisdell: to the faculty of the University. The sum of three thousand dollars or so was appropriated for this purpose.

Ariff: For this study?

Blaisdell: Yes. I personally felt that the study was not necessary, and within the limited funds available to the house for other purposes, it seemed to me that this expenditure was not necessary. However, I conceded to the wishes of the board, and the survey was begun. This, I believe, was early in the nineteen-forties. Dr. Condliffe had associated with him two other individuals: one was a Donald Grant, from England, the other was Mrs. Beatrice Mirkawich.

It was apparent that the survey was to a certain extent to be dominated by a British point of view as to education and educational procedures. He was from Australia, but with English background of education. This had its advantages and also its disadvantages. The survey is on file at the director's office of International House. It contains a very comprehensive, and rather accurate and sympathetic presentation of the history of the house and its purpose and its problems. I feel that it is unduly complimentary to me in many respects; however, this seemed to be

Blaisdell: necessary, as later in the report it was indicated that there was a possibility that my educational background did not make it possible for me to deal constructively with the faculty of the University. I felt that this was a misconception on Dr. Condliffe's part, as my education had included sufficient graduate work to have secured a Ph.D. had I chosen to take that course of study. However, be it as it may, this seemed to be the consensus of the report. It indicated that there was possibly too much of a sense of "mission" that the emphasis on international problems and concerns was rather immature, and that the 'activities' were too extensive.

Actually, this was one of my main concerns. One of my main emphases at the beginning was to develop close and co-operative relationships with the faculty, and I had felt that I had been fairly successful in that. I felt that International House could only prosper as it was supported by the faculty and by the administration of the University. That nothing could ever be done, in terms of policy and procedures, that would violate the educational standards of the University. However, I think he also did not quite understand that the activities had developed, ~~not~~

Blaisdell: not because I wished them to develop, but because of the pressure of the student group, and particularly from the graduate students whom he indicated were restless with the amount of activity and the amount of disturbance it caused as against the importance of their graduate studies. I had constantly emphasized this to the staff and to the students, but I acceded more than I thought wise at times to the students' insistence upon activities or programs. As a matter of fact, I insisted that we cease to use the name 'activities' and use the word 'program!'

Ariff: Well, tell me, which students were the ones who wanted more activities? Were they the undergraduate students that you had in the house or were they the graduates? Could you tell?

Blaisdell: Both, the graduates and undergraduates, but I tended to follow the leadership of the graduate students and play into their hands more than into the undergraduates' hands because we were endeavoring to make the house, whenever possible, almost completely graduate, except, of course, for the foreign students.

Ariff: Then too, there were lots of activities on campus for the undergraduates.

Blaisdell: That's right. I emphasized that we would not duplicate

Blaisdell: social programs such as dancing, and so forth, which were provided on campus. Then too, by the very nature of the composition of the members, controversial issues were raised on international problems that they wished to explore. As I have indicated earlier in this interview, I felt, and I agree with Dr. Condliffe when he points out that the ultimate contribution that International House would make would be through the individual's informal experience and that the program was merely an incentive to encourage the informal day to day give and take between the students themselves unorganized.

I realized the danger of overorganization. This was pointed out to me particularly in terms of the festival, which I have indicated: that it took entirely too much time. I endeavored in every way to discourage its development in this direction, but I was always overruled by the students. I remember I tried to stop the festival, and there was tremendous protest from the students. But I always had in mind the feeling of the faculty that was expressed to me not only by individuals but through the Committee on Foreign Students that overactivity at International House was looked upon with some degree of criticism--

Blaisdell: that it was unduly disturbing to the pressure of graduate studies.

Mr. Condliffe also points out that it was this factor, to a large degree, that discouraged the non-resident members of International House. However, as he points out, there were many factors that affected this. In the first place, they were living at a long distance from International House. They were tied in, in many instances, to board and room contracts, and most of the programs of International House were around mealtime. Also, there were graduate students who were married; there were graduate students living with families; there were graduate foreign students living in San Francisco and Oakland, for whom it was quite impossible to participate in International House. And by the time you had boiled the statistics down, there was a comparatively small number left who could have, if they had wished to, participated in the non-resident program. But primarily I realized that the main emphasis of the program and participation would be on the part of the residents and not on the non-residents.

Ariff: I don't think there is really that much difference between undergraduate work and graduate, and yet there

Ariff: are so many activities on campus for undergraduates-- when you think about the band, and the glee club, and the games, and so on.

Blaisdell: Well, this was the problem, you see. To keep International House full and keep it economically solvent meant that we got a divided group of comparatively young people and comparatively older people. To get a program that bridged this wide gap was difficult; but it was necessary to do the best we could under the circumstances to keep the house on an economically even keel. We worked gradually as we could to narrow this age gap. As graduate and upper division students applied for residence, they took precedence over the undergraduates except for the foreign students whom we had to serve, regardless of age or scholastic standing, because of the character of the facilities outside and the problems that International House was established to help with.

Ariff: What do you think was the effect of this Condliffe Report? What did it bring about?

Blaisdell: It had two effects: in the first place, it was highly disturbing. It gave a chance for the malcontents to express themselves, and the malcontents are always more expressive and vocal than the contented ones.

Blaisdell: It therefore played into the hands of the malcontents. There were matters which I was aware were justified criticisms but which were largely forced upon us by circumstances over which I had no control. The malcontents did not understand the situation that we were facing, and it was highly disturbing. The staff and I went through a period of great difficulties because of the maelstrom that it had developed within the life of the house within the period of the survey.

Ariff: Was the survey publicized?

Blaisdell: All the students knew that the survey was going on. I told them because the members of the staff of the survey were living in the house. I felt, in co-operating with Dr. Condliffe, that it was wise to let them know what this group was up to and to call on the co-operation of the students to work with them. As a result of this, in Dr. Condliffe's report, he insisted that no further survey should ever be made of this character unless there was a definite feeling on the part of the board that there needed to be strategic replacements of personnel. I also decided that if any survey of this nature were again undertaken I would resign, because it is too disrupting, and it undercuts confidence in the administration. It was evident to

Blaisdell: the students that there was lack of confidence.

There was a reason for the survey, they felt. This was not the reason the board had, but at the same time it gave that appearance to the students.

The second result of the survey was, it seemed to me, rather constructive. I found myself in hearty agreement with much that Dr. Condliffe recommended. As I have indicated, I was as skeptical as was he in regard to the overbuilding of activities. I was as concerned as he was that the house should be kept as quiet a place as possible, with the encouragement of concentration on scholastic responsibilities.

On the other hand, I could not quite agree with him that the English point of view could be adopted by International House in an American environment. I was faced with circumstances that made it necessary to move slowly to the readjustment toward the aim and goal which he represented.

Ariff: What would you describe as the English point of view?

Blaisdell: Oh, it's the tutorial system, the more leisurely approach to things, really a more adult and individualistic attitude toward the student, not so concerned with his rounded experience in educational life, but a pretty great concentration on the scholastic rather

Blaisdell: than the extracurricular activities. American universities are quite different from the English or European universities in this regard. Though they are changing now somewhat, and come nearer the American pattern of concern with the total person rather than with just his mind and his scholastic work. So I made real efforts with the staff and with the students to move constantly toward the goal that he had suggested, but I always had in mind the letter of commitment of the University in accepting the donation from Mr. Rockefeller.

There is a letter dated in 1930, but which apparently was delayed in receipt by President Sproul till 1932, which outlines the desires of the donor in explicit form. This could not be disregarded, and it differed to a certain extent from the Condliffe Report. Whereas the board never took any real action in regard to the Condliffe Report, it did give the staff and me support for the kind of thing we were already trying to do, in a certain sense, without the full implication of the final conclusion.

Ariff: What were the aims of the donor? What did the donor want?

Blaisdell: Well, this is rather explicit in the letter, a copy

Blaisdell: of which I have. I don't know whether we want to go into it completely, but it lists the fact that the title of the International House should remain with the University, and the way of organization which had been agreed upon, and that the students, through their elected representatives, and under the ultimate authority of the director and the board of directors, share in the adjustments of such internal matters as discipline, admissions, and activities. While co-operating unofficially with the various organizations, especially with the University of California, International House will be managed as an independent institution. You see, here again, the novelty of the situation, which Dr. Condliffe points out so constructively, made administration very difficult in the early days because I never really knew to whom I was responsible. Mr. Edmonds of the International House was the representative of Mr. Rockefeller, and particularly Mr. Fosdick, and was constantly visiting us. I was in rather constant correspondence with him about matters. * At the same time, I was responsible to the board of directors, and I was trying constantly to bring the

* See ~~University Archives~~. *BLAISDELL PAPERS, BANCROFT LIBRARY.*

Blaisdell: two into accord.

Another item is Mr. Rockefeller's understanding that the property will be tax exempt and it will be maintained free of debt. This was one of the most complicating problems in the whole thing because you had to constantly be readjusting your administrative policy to the economic situation which, as I had pointed out earlier, President Campbell had emphasized strongly with me. If the house had not succeeded financially the whole thing would have gone down the drain, and would have to be completely readjusted. ... "And will be maintained free of debt and be self-supporting" ... now this element proved to be, later, very perplexing because many things became imposed upon International House financially that were never anticipated it would have to face, namely, fellowships and scholarships to make it possible to encourage the increase of foreign students at the University, and also to make residence at International House possible for foreign students who could live less expensively outside. This became a great burden, and it had to be included within the costs of room and board of the other students. This became a point of concern and conflict with the American students who were not quite

Blaisdell: ready to accept their responsibility for rates that underwrote the foreign students.

Then, too, the question of self-support was so fully accepted by the board of directors of International House that when these new problems developed which required additional financing they would not approve any financial drives external to International House to assist in this matter. Mr. Rockefeller and those with whom he was influential in New York, did come financially to the assistance of International House in New York. I was never able to get the board of directors and the President of the University to permit solicitations on the outside, because of priorities of University needs, as I have previously pointed out, and because the board of directors did not personally want to become involved in the responsibility of support that any board of directors of any educational institution it was assumed would take responsibility for. Only in small ways was I able to get funds to support foreign students' financial program of assistance. Also, as I have pointed out, Mrs. Heller was about the only member of the board that did anything financially for this matter. She was, as I have pointed out, extraordinarily

Blaisdell: unselfish and generous.

Well, let me go on: another item, "...while each International House would be administratively independent, it is hoped that contact and union may develop between them through which ideas and experiences may be shared in carrying out of a kindred purpose..." Now here came a point with which I don't think Dr. Condliffe deals.

Ariff: Was there to be an overhead organization?"

Blaisdell: This never seemed feasible, though I think Mr. Edmonds may have had it in mind. But it was to be an informal relationship. To find ways and means in which we could co-operate together in common projects and purposes I will go into later. The question of the Alumni Association comes under this heading. Condliffe points out that in places we tended to become sort of YMCA in character. This was, I felt, quite contrary to what I and the board had tried to do. I had pointed out earlier the conflict with the YMCA in the development with the New York house. It was, therefore, explicit that we should not be associated with movements of this kind, or that we should not be a reflection of their particular policies. He was quite right that the architecture of the house tended to develop what

Blaisdell: was, as he thought, a sort of a YMCA pattern of residence--namely, individual rooms with long corridors. But International House had been built, really, before progress had been made in the architecture of student housing.

Ariff: Which International House?

Blaisdell: The Berkeley house, in fact, all of them. Then, also, the expense of operating a house architecturally constructed with more individual privacy and leisureliness and space made it impossible.

Ariff: Yet I think the Berkeley house has a lot of charm and character with its inner patio, with the olive trees, with the tables overlooking that patio and the view of the Bay.

Blaisdell: That's right! On the other hand, the residents' areas were pretty bleak--long corridors without social facilities on floors where people could get together on a floor basis and where they could make coffee and have little informal social gatherings. We tried to obviate this by taking certain areas and developing them along this line. We also put in coffee machines, and we put into the corridors fountains of hot and cold water where tea and coffee could be made from the hot water available, but we could never take

Blaisdell: enough of the space economically to develop the space as far as it should have been developed. The men's and women's social rooms helped somewhat, but the girls, for instance, and the boys wanted to get together without having to dress to go down to the main social room.

I agreed with Dr. Condliffe, but there was little we could do because of the economic circumstances. I re-emphasized this over and over again, but the policy of self-support made it almost necessary, and the students were constantly suggesting that we make drives for funds to reduce the costs. It was not an endowed institution. They felt it should have been endowed. In later years I felt that probably, in the early days, it would have been wise to face the donor with the possibility of an endowment that would have assisted in its operation. I have dealt with other organizations, and with universities and colleges in matters of this kind, where gifts were turned down for construction of buildings because endowment for their operation was not to be made possible. Colleges had to be very careful not to accept buildings that did not have sufficient endowments for the building to achieve its purpose. That was one of the limitations

Blaisdell: of International House during these days.

Now I seem to be problem minded, but largely because we are dealing with the Condliffe Survey~~y~~ here, which was problem minded. And I was constantly problem minded. Though I was always aware that within the give and take of student life, no matter how they reacted to it, there was something going on that was very valuable. Later, as I visited the students abroad, I was aware that something had happened. The sharp edges of prejudice and misconception had been softened to some degree.

At this point, I might say that the stated purpose of International House was a psychological disadvantage to us. The students were always pointing to the aim 'That Brotherhood May Prevail.' Well, of course, International House could never have been in the forefront of achieving the brotherhood of man. We could make simple contributions to it, but the students were restless that we were not fully achieving the full purpose of it. It was sort of a psychological introspection that was constantly going on. When the individual sets an aim for himself which is beyond the possibility of his attainment, he becomes psychologically maladjusted. The students of International House, and

1920

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF WORK

FOR THE YEAR 1920

BY

ROBERT A. MILLIKAN

AND

WALTER B. WHEELER

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WALTER D. HENNING

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WALTER B. WHEELER

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WALTER D. HENNING

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Blaisdell: we all, were psychologically maladjusted because our aims and goals, as stated on the front of International House in a plaque, indicating the donor and so forth and its purpose, constantly kept us dissatisfied with what we were doing. And probably this was good, though, as I said, it did lead to psychological attitudes which were rather disturbing from time to time.

Now there was another thing in the Condliffe Report which I appreciated very much. He pointed out the difficulties of administration, and the fact that the house had not become a problem to the University which many people feared it would become. He indicated there were plenty of chances for occurrences to happen that would have been embarrassing, and that the administration had handled them in a way that there was no incident that really came to the forefront of public attention that was disturbing. He thought that this was a considerable achievement--that we were dealing not only with international students but that we were one of the first, certainly the first enterprise in the West, for men and women to live together. There could have been problems. I suppose there were problems that were shoved under the rug that did not

Blaisdell: come to public attention. Condliffe was particularly complimentary to the administration in this, and to its success in keeping the house solvent financially.

But he did point out that the director's salary for ten to fifteen years was never raised beyond the five thousand dollars of the original salary, second, that there was no freedom of the director to travel and to gain perspective and that anybody would go stale and would not grow without these advantages which were available at the University through sabbatical leaves and other projects financed that gave them the possibility of moving abroad. He recommended that the director's salary be adjusted according to his responsibilities and that he be given chances to travel abroad and freedom from responsibility to reorient himself.

Ariff: Did this have any effect?

Blaisdell: Yes, whether it was that or other factors that brought it to the attention of the board, the salary was raised from time to time.

Ariff: After the report?

Blaisdell: Yes. Whether it was the report or not, I think that was helpful.

Trip to Near East 1949

Blaisdell: In 1949 Dr. Sproul called me in and said, "You have been at this thing for some twenty years and you haven't been abroad. I think it's time for you to go abroad." I said, "I have thought this for some time." And he said, "Where would you like to go, and how much time would you like to have?" I shocked him by saying that I wanted at least six months and that I wanted to concentrate my attention on the Near East and that I wanted to take Mrs. Blaisdell with me and that I would not go unless Mrs. Blaisdell went with me! I said that unofficially she had made a tremendous contribution to the development of the house, and that I felt that it was due her that it be recognized this way. I also, in every opportunity later, insisted that Mrs. Blaisdell should go with me, and this was always accorded. Dr. Sproul thought that the six months was a little too long, but he was interested in my concentration in the Near East, and he approved it and recommended this to the board.

So, in the fall of 1949, Mrs. Blaisdell and I went abroad for approximately six months, spending our time largely in the Arab world. We could not go

Blaisdell: to Israel, but we got to the borders of Israel; but just like Moses, I could not enter the Promised Land because of visa complications. I was able then to see a lot of our foreign students in England, and Egypt, and Turkey, and Iran, and Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and so forth, and also in France and Europe on our way. But we concentrated largely on the Near and Middle East. We were one of the first representatives of American education that had moved into the Near East with any expression of concern and interest in the educational problems of the Arab countries, and this was greatly appreciated.

I laid a background for the trip--that it was to be entirely unofficial and not related to the State Department in any way--that I was an individual, that I did not represent universities, or colleges, or even the University of California, but that I had these relationships. The State Department opened the door to me in many ways that were very helpful, but I had to be constantly on my alert that they did not assume, thereby, that I was representing in any way the State Department.

Ariff: Did you visit the individual students? Or, in the process of your trip, did you go to the various

Ariff: universities in that area?

Blaisdell: Oh yes! I visited them individually and collectively. I will speak later about the alumni association that came into the picture at this time and somewhat dictated the group gatherings. But I had delightful experiences in England, and Egypt, and in all these countries, of a gathering of all these former foreign students, not only of the University of California, but from American universities in general, though concentrating largely on former students of Berkeley.

Ariff: Tell me of some of your experiences.

Blaisdell: Well, for instance, in Egypt, the monarchy was still in power, but shaky, but the former students were rather free to be representing western points of view.

There was quite a colony of these former students, not all residents of International House, but former students of the University of California who were at the University in Cairo and Alexandria. They gathered together and took Mrs. Blaisdell and me to the zoo at Cairo for a delightful dinner. We laughed about this, because, as Dr. Condliffe points out, and as we were all aware, very often the International House was referred to as the 'zoo!' So we gathered at the zoo.

Blaisdell: There were young men there who were beginning to attain very large influence in the educational and public life of Egypt. I have the records of that meeting, and the names and so forth, but I will not go into that.

In Baghdad we had a very interesting time. The cultural attaché of the embassy was a very fine fellow, and he gathered together at the embassy the former students of the University of California and the residents of International House. There must have been some fifty of them. We had a meeting in the evening in the embassy, dinner, and then afterwards, a gathering. The occasion got to be rather raucous because they all wanted to sing the California songs and give the football yell, until the cultural attaché became concerned that the police would be called to quiet the occasion--but it was very delightful.

There was another experience in Baghdad which was very significant. The British had never been very happy about our intrusion--the intrusion of the United States into the Near and Middle East. It had been their prerogative for many years, and they did not wish to release their influence to the Americans, or to the United States. In many ways the British blocked

Blaisdell: the intrusion of programs by the State Department into the Middle East, and this became obvious there. For instance, I was invited to go to the University of Baghdad to meet with the faculty and the leaders of the student groups. There on the faculty was a young Englishman. I gave my talk and stressed American points of view regarding education, not politics. In the discussion afterward this young English professor began to bait me, and so I took him on in no uncertain terms. It just amused the Iraqis present to see the American and the Englishman taking each other on, because in higher brackets this had been going on for some time, and they were aware of it. While I was there one evening...I was at the home of the ambassador having dinner, and the ambassador had a phone call.

Ariff: Which ambassador?

Blaisdell: The American ambassador to Iraq. He had a telephone call and went out to answer it, and came back. He said, "Mr. Blaisdell, I wonder if you would be willing to go to the Foreign Ministry of the Iraq government with me tomorrow morning." It turned out that the Foreign Minister had received permission from the British to allow the Foreign Student and Educational

Blaisdell: Program of the United States to begin to operate in Iraq, and the ambassador wanted me to illustrate to the minister what this program of the State Department involved. We had a very interesting discussion. Following that, not because of my influence, but because it had already been approved, the program of the United States State Department began to work in Iraq.

This later also became evident in Iran--that the Americans and English could not co-operate constructively in matters, but really undercut each other in terms of foreign policy. And this, I felt, was very disastrous.

Of course, one of the first stops I made was in Greece. The former professor of economics, Dr. Henry F. Grady, was then ambassador to Greece. He and Mrs. Grady were close personal friends of ours. They invited us to stay at the embassy. One evening there was quite a dinner party given for the British ambassador, and again this problem came to the foreground. The British had found that they had overrated themselves financially to carry on their program in Greece, and were relinquishing it to the Americans. It was quite a blow to the dignity of the British ambassador to be

Blaisdell: giving this over to the Americans. This was the beginning of the Truman Policy in regard to Greece. I did not have any part in it. I could see what was going on, and was very much interested. I might add that my staying at the embassy, or the residency, was something of a difficulty for me in Greece, because there again it looked as if I was an official representative of the State Department, which I was not. I had to move out into individual relationships with former students. Then, too, we could not have any large gatherings because there was a ban against more than two or three getting together in an evening because of the political complications, and the revolution which was going on in Greece at the time. But it was a very delightful experience. I got an inside look at things that I could never have gotten in any other way.

Dr. Grady gave me letters of introduction to all United States ambassadors in the countries of the Near East which we were to visit. I used these letters with discretion. They knew I was coming; they had been informed by the State Department that I was coming, and I had written in advance. When I got to the country I would take Dr. Grady's letter to the

Blaisdell: ambassador, and I would present it to the cultural attaché because the cultural attaché was mainly demoted in the main emphases of the embassies. I felt that I could add to his prestige by saying, "If you can use this letter in any way, feel perfectly free to do so. I will make no direct approach to the ambassador, but if you wish to share this letter with the ambassador so that you will be included in anything that I do, I will be very happy to do so." As a result, in every instance this was done, so that the cultural attaché and his work was brought to the attention of the ambassador as being of large significance to the universities and colleges of the United States--that we were interested in the cultural program, and not so concerned with the political program with which the embassy was largely concerned. This was a very interesting experience. We had dinners with the ambassador and a selected group of people, both representing the country itself and the American community within it. It also gave us freedom to develop relationships with individuals, the students and former students, and not have it a matter of suspicion that I was dealing with them without the embassy knowing.

Blaisdell: You had to be very careful these days. Remember, this was very close to the post-war period, it was really in the post-war period. The matter of dollar exchange and financial currency, the controls on financial currency to cross borders were very strict, and buying local currency within the stated rates made it very expensive. I could not use the Black Market which was perfectly available to everybody, though I did in one or two instances, but with great [chuckles] caution as to source. All the Americans were doing this. They had to, to live, to get along.

Ariff: Tell me a little about the former International House students you met. Do you recall any individuals?

Blaisdell: Oh, I remember them, I can see their faces, but I can't name their names. Within the countries there were great varieties of uses made of them. The Egyptian government was most constructive in its use of its former students.

Ariff: Do you remember any of your former International House students, do you remember their names?

Blaisdell: I have the records somewhere of some of these gatherings. I was interested in the use that was made of the graduates of the American universities in Egypt under the monarchy. They were immediately absorbed into the

Blaisdell: universities of both Cairo and Alexandria. I visited the university in Alexandria and found quite a number of our former students there. The Egyptians made very constructive use of them. I felt that this was largely responsible for the fact that very few Egyptians stayed in this country, because there was opportunity for them abroad. This led to my conviction, which I stated to the State Department, that if we were going to stem the tide of foreign students staying in this country, we would have to work with foreign governments to see that opportunities for them consistent with their training were made available.

Ariff: I think this is one of the primary problems.

Blaisdell: Now, in contrast, when I got later to India on another trip, I found that the American-trained Indian students had great difficulties in breaking into the official life, both educational and political, of India because of the fear of the entrenched older personnel of their bringing forward new ideas, and of their advancement over them. There was resistance, therefore, to including them except in very minor positions where they could not challenge the establishment within the universities as well as within the departments of government. Therefore, our former foreign students

Blaisdell: would be sitting around for six months with nothing to do.

Ariff: In some cases the Indian foreign students' studies were so advanced technically in their subject matter that there was nothing for them to do in India. There were not the facilities for them to do the advanced work in their fields.

Blaisdell: I think we have pointed this out earlier in our discussion, but it needs re-emphasis. In Iraq, at the time, there was very constructive use made of our former students. They were in good positions at the universities, and in government.

On one occasion there was a banquet for Mrs. Blaisdell and me out at the agricultural college at Iraq, outside of Baghdad. This was a very interesting occasion: they had there four complete sheep, and great fish from the Tigris, and fruit, and it was tremendous. I had to learn to eat with my proper hand because one's left hand is never used for food. It was amusing as they instructed Mrs. Blaisdell. There were present the professors from the University of Baghdad, and also one of the top administrators of the agricultural college who was one of the former students at Davis, at the University of California.

Blaisdell: They were used in engineering on the Tigris River in building dams. We visited some of the barrages, as they called them, and saw their experiments and what they were trying to do. Iraq, at that stage, was making great use of them.

Now I might add this: that I had great confidence that Iraq was on the road to becoming one of the leading countries of the Near and Middle East, and I was greatly disappointed in later years in the revolutions that took place, to have this concept destroyed. Both in Egypt, and in Syria and in Iraq, in later years, our American-returned students had great difficulties as the co-operation of these Near Eastern countries with Russia tended to cloud the influence of the American-educated students. They had to move into the background in many instances, and they could not talk freely with us. This was in later experiences, but on this first trip it was very helpful.

I was interested in this banquet; there were great amounts of food left, and I expressed concern as to the waste. "Oh," they said, "there would be no waste." There were criteria or classes established within the institution that one would come in first, and take what he wanted of what was left, and if there

Blaisdell: was anything left, the next class got it, and so on, down until there were nothing but bones left. This was necessary because there was no refrigeration; things had to be eaten within the day they were served, or be wasted, and there could be no waste of food in these countries.

Ariff: ...also, food is cooked the day it is killed, too.

Blaisdell: Absolutely. And, of course, they were limited to the fruits and vegetables to the season, because there was no way of freezing or canning them. There were just a few beginning canning factories, I discovered. But that practice had taken no real root at that time. I don't know what's happened since.

Josephine and I moved on into Iran and we had very interesting experiences there. I spoke to the American-Iran Society which was made of the American community, missionaries, officials of the American government, and also of the officials of the Iranian government. I had an interesting time with the minister of education. He gave me his conversation beads and I have them still. Do you know these conversation beads?

Ariff: No, I don't.

Blaisdell: Every Arab has these conversation beads which he twirls,

Blaisdell: and keeps in his hands, and is constantly playing with them as he talks, and walks on the street. Some of them have rather beautiful ones; the common people have rather ordinary ones. But almost every man has these conversation beads.

Ariff: What is the intent, the source?

Blaisdell: I don't know. I suppose originally, and to some extent also, they were prayer beads in the earlier days. The common people, particularly the women, had the prayer beads, which they counted as they said their prayers. I presume this was the origin. But also remember that there was never a close relationship between men and women, socially--and, in gatherings for Mrs. Blaisdell and me, it was very interesting at times.

Ariff: Rather awkward, I would imagine, in some places.

Blaisdell: The wives were included; but the wives would be off in one corner tittering among themselves while the men were over here.

Ariff: Poor Mrs. Balisdell! [chuckles]

Blaisdell: Oh, in one instance in Baghdad we had a very interesting time. We were invited to a dinner party at a home of a former student. We avoided, as diplomatically as we could, going into homes for meals because of our concern

Blaisdell: for health, and we tried to discourage invitations for dinner. So, in this instance we said, no, we were occupied for dinner, but we would come for tea in the afternoon. And so we went for tea. But all they did was to move the dinner up to the tea hour! So we were faced with this tremendous banquet which we were very concerned about participating in. But we saw our way through that.

Mrs. Blaisdell was the only woman in the crowd among the guests. Later she was invited to join the harem upstairs that was looking down on us men. I was not permitted to go. This was valuable--to have Mrs. Blaisdell with me, so she could do this sort of thing which I could not do. Her very presence made it necessary, whenever we were entertained officially, to include the wives of the officials, which would not have been included had Mrs. Blaisdell not been along.

Ariff: Did Mrs. Blaisdell ever tell you of any of her experiences in talking with the women in these different countries?

Blaisdell: Oh, yes. But that was rather ordinary. It was perfectly apparent that the women were concerned more with the management of the house and the family, and not concerned with social matters external to the home.

Blaisdell: In many instances, they were confined--in purdah--and still wore the veils. Now, in Iran we ran into an interesting situation. I always had great admiration for the king, what's he called?

Ariff: Pahlevi.

Blaisdell: Yes. But there was a name for it--'King of Kings' (Shah-in-Shah). I was always rather an admirer of his in many ways. I think he was sincere in all he was trying to do. This was the beginning of his influence in Iran after the war, you see. Purdah was still very prominent in Iran, but the king ordered it stopped-- women were not to wear veils. But nothing happened. So he finally issued a decree--and this may be apocryphal, but it was told there--that only prostitutes could wear the veil! This put the Iranian woman on the spot, and the men of Iran who were opposed to the removal of the veil had to approve its removal, because they did not want their wives known as prostitutes. This happened while we were there, and we saw that working. How far it's gone now, I don't know. Another organization I dealt with was the Near East Foundation, which was doing very constructive private work.

Ariff: That's an American foundation?

Blaisdell: Yes. They were very helpful to us in all the countries where they are operating. They took us out into the communities, and showed what was being done in the villages in which they were operating to provide fresh water, and told us of the resistances which they were meeting.

I became very interested in an individual under the employ of the Near East Foundation, a young fellow who was doing exceptionally fine work in one of the villages, and I tried desperately to have him come to the University. But unfortunately, he did not qualify scholastically, which I thought was a great shame. We should have brought him and fitted him in somewhere according to his needs, or taken him to an institution like Cal-Poly, where he could have been better adjusted, probably, to his needs.

Then we visited our former students. I have gone over all the material, which is rather extensive, in regard to this trip. I have copies of letters which I wrote back to the board, and pictures of groups in Egypt and Baghdad, and a few pictures of individuals and groups in Tehran.* However, the names are rather

* Deposited in Archives, Bancroft Library.

Blaisdell: important and the official nature of the trip is outlined by Dr. Sproul in a letter which I could present to ambassadors and important people of these foreign countries, these foreign officials.

Ariff: When was your second trip abroad?

Blaisdell: The second trip was in 1956, and that was financed by the Rockefeller Foundation. It was a six thousand dollar grant again, to include Mrs. Blaisdell,--for her and me to go to the Asian countries to do very much what we had done on our former trip, but with Asian students.

Now I don't know, maybe I have covered the trip enough. I was very careful to keep a thorough diary. I have that diary.*

Ariff: There are a few questions I'd like to ask about the trip to the Near East. What do you think was the all-over result of this trip, looking back on it?

Blaisdell: As far as I was concerned personally, it was tremendously valuable. I remember one Iranian student. Before we left, I got the students from various countries together separately and had them in the home and said, "Now I am going to your country and I would like your advice in regard to what I should do, and how I should act, and what I should be looking for." And one student

*Deposited in ~~Archives~~, Bancroft Library.

Blaisdell: said to me, "Why are you going to my country?" he said. "I know, you are going so that we can't fool you any more."

The trip actually, not in that way at all, made me familiar with the situation which our foreign students were facing, and I could, therefore, consult with them very much more constructively in terms of the problems they were going to face as they returned home. And it made it possible for me to co-operate with departments and administrative offices in the universities in regard to the interests of students from various countries. I remember Barbara Kirk of the Psychological Counselling Service of the University. They were counselling professionally as a sort of an investigation of individuals as to professional inclination. She conferred with me. They were advising the students psychologically. Also the psychiatric division of Cowell Hospital was very much interested to know the conditions which the students came out of, and to which they were returning. To counsel them psychologically, apart from the circumstances from which they came and to which they were returning, would be rather useless. My trips helped in this respect, in co-operation with the various facilities of

Blaisdell: the University itself dealing with foreign students. They also gave me insight as to admissions problems, credentials, and so forth, because I conferred at every instance with the top officials of the universities and the governments.

Take the Iranian students, for instance. We were never impressed with the quality of the Iranian students, by and large. Well, I discovered that the students who came to the United States were those who had failed to receive admission to the universities of their own country because of the limited nature of the facilities, and so they had to look elsewhere for their education! We were not getting the top flight students--we were getting largely those who had been denied the facilities within the country itself!

Ariff: That's interesting.

Blaisdell: That was known by the Iranian officials, and it therefore to some degree affected their attitude toward our returning students.

Ariff: I am curious about the Iranian students. I have known three or four who have stayed in this country extensively--continuing all through their Ph.D's--but not primarily to continue their education but because they did not want to return or because of political or other untold reasons, they found that they would not be comfortable

Ariff: when they returned.

Blaisdell: Well, this is true. (I think we've dealt with this somewhat in the earlier part of this discussion.) There were some of the students who went back to Iran and stayed a year or two, and then returned to the United States because the limitations imposed upon them were so severe. They could not be happy in their work there. Quite a number returned to the United States after going back. The Iranians were the largest percentage of any foreign group which stayed in this country.

ARIFF:

This was true also, to some extent, of the Arab students because of political conditions--particularly later as the revolutionary forces got to work. They just could not go back and face it. There was one doctor whom I knew who married a girl from the University of California; I am not sure where he'd gotten his medical training. He went back, and he tried desperately to make his contribution, but found that it was impossible. He was looked on with such suspicion in his country. I know of several Indian students to whom this also happened.

Blaisdell: Yes. I formed this rather general conclusion. Of course, generalities are more important for their exceptions than for their generalities. But in general,

Blaisdell: I found that the foreign students remaining in this country, to a large extent, were those from countries where there were few opportunities to return to, and I was very sympathetic with them.

This sometimes placed me in conflict, in terms of my policies at International House and the University of California, with the State Department, and with the Institute of International Education. Now I can understand their points of view. They had programs of assistance to foreign countries using government funds, and if these students did not return, Congress would look apprehensively at these programs. Therefore, they had to take a very strong stand that the students should return. I, however, indicated to them that as Foreign Student Advisor at the University of California, I was interested in the individual, and in his rights, and his problems, and that it was my responsibility to work with him sympathetically. If he was to remain in the United States because of situations in his country, I would point out to him how he could stay in the United States.

One of the top officials of the Institute of International Education wrote a very strong letter of criticism of me and sent a copy to the Dean of the

Blaisdell: graduate division, on one instance of a Polish student. The State Department had a Polish program that was exceedingly important, and any variation from those people returning to their countries tended to threaten the whole program. I could see that. This student I had no particular confidence in, except that he was a human individual with human rights. Actually, if he had returned to Poland with the aggressive points of view which he had, he would have been in serious difficulties, probably open to arrest. I took his side. I kept the local San Francisco Office of the Institute informed at all times as to what I was doing, but they apparently did not share that with the New York office of the Institute at that time. This letter criticized me for this particular case.

Also the departments were at times thoughtless-- the departments of the University. They would have an outstanding student whom they would encourage to proceed to the advanced degree which the program of the State Department did not include. The State Department, at the beginning, tended to have a one-year program. The student would get here, and he'd get caught in the machinery of advanced degrees in the University. To send him home after one year would have been a great

Blaisdell: embarrassment, and he would have gone back very unhappy. The departments would very often encourage the student to stay. Then I, as a Foreign Student Advisor relating myself to the State Department, would be placed in a very difficult situation.

One case is outstanding on this. In the Department of Economics we had the chairman of the department who was a Greek, and a very distinguished economist, Dr. Papandreou. There was a Greek student who had come under one of the programs of the State Department. This student came under a limited contract, and he was to return to Greece. He turned out not an outstanding student, but he got caught in the ambitions of the advanced degree program, and this Greek man, the head of the department, encouraged him. The State Department wrote to me repeatedly, "When is he going home?" And I talked with the chairman of the department and he said, "He is going to stay and finish his degree." And I said, "He is violating the promises he made when he entered the program of the State Department." He said this made no difference. Well, it finally got to the point of crisis, and the chairman was away. I went to the department, to the acting chairman, and I said, "I am going to Washington, and I want to know

Blaisdell: what exactly your program is for this person, what commitment you will make that I can make to the State Department when I go." And we agreed that no further continuance would be requested by the department for this purpose beyond this point. I went to the State Department, and I made this commitment and they accepted it, reluctantly. Then, when I got back, the chairman of the department had returned, and he questioned my authority to have committed myself to the State Department. I pointed out that I had only done so on the approval of the then acting chairman of the department in his absence. Well--he violated this arrangement.

Ariff: Who did?

Blaisdell: The chairman of the department. He undercut my influence with the State Department on all other cases. "Because," they said, "you can't be trusted. The departments are not co-operating with you." This was only one instance. In most instances there was co-operation, though at times I had to bring to the attention of the department that they were encouraging the individual students beyond the limitations of the program in which they were involved.

Ariff: There are only so many highly educated individuals

Ariff: the countries can absorb.

Blaisdell: Yes, and the State Department was interested that the student not be educated beyond the point of usefulness to his country--in which, to a certain degree, I think they were right. But this machinery which starts from the early days of a student's experience in a university--the machinery of degrees, and the priority of the master's degree, which has declined, but of the Ph.D. are essential passports to what they want to do in their future professionally. So the foreign student got caught in it. And the departments would emphasize it to the foreign student. This was one of the problems that developed and is still going on, I presume.

My point is that an educated man is valuable _ regardless where he goes. If he could not find his place ^{at home} ~~abroad~~, which I hoped he would, and which I was constantly emphasizing as his responsibility, that it was important that he get a place where he could be contributive to society in general. I was constantly pointing out to the State Department, "You are insisting upon a policy with foreign students that you would never think of imposing upon American students. You will never say to the American student that he must

Blaisdell: return to the community from which he came and help solve the problems of that community. Do you insist that the Southern student who comes to a Northern university go back to the South regardless of circumstances and contribute his services to the South regardless of circumstances? You are developing a false standard for foreign students as compared to your attitude to American students. You are being inconsiderate of the individual. And my responsibility is to protect the individual against undue intrusion upon his rights as an individual human being." This would bring me into conflict. But I would always support it.

And I was always supported by the Deans of the graduate division. They were remarkable people to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude. They were men of great vision, and always interested in promoting the reach of the University and its influence through its foreign student program. One of the most outstanding, in later years, was Dr. Morris Stewart, who is now dead. He will come up later, when I deal with my leaving.

One other thing--you asked me for names. One of the things the Alumni Association wanted me to do was to name individuals who had attained distinction, and

Blaisdell: I would always say that I was not so much interested in the individual who has pulled the ropes in his country to attain distinction; and you did have to pull wires in some of these countries to attain distinction. I was more interested in the little fellow doing a constructive job in an agricultural community, or in a village in Iran, or India, who never received recognition. But they were lost, and you did not know them.

Now there were, of course, men of distinction for whom I have great admiration--take the ambassador from Afghanistan at the present time who, this last year, (1966) was awarded the award which was established by the University by the Haas International Award fund to bring to the University a former distinguished foreign student, and give him recognition. The ambassador from Afghanistan was the first recipient of this, last spring. He was a former resident of International House, a delightful person. I had a very interesting time. He is modest, constructive in all his outlook and emphases. After my last trip, I said to Dr. Sproul, we ought to have an opportunity to invite back to the University those who are making constructive use of their education at the University, and recognize them. It would help

Blaisdell: them to have their own work recognized by their own governments, and it would also emphasize to the University its world responsibility. I never got very far with that. But later the Haas family endowed this in honor of their parents, and it is now a definite program of the University. Every year an individual former student will be brought back for recognition by the University. I don't know whether this originated with them, or whether this was an outgrowth of the ideas that I had earlier presented, but I was delighted to see it work out. Very important! Because the individuals abroad are doing jobs which are sometimes thankless, and to be recognized by their alma maters in the United States, in most instances, would be of great assistance to them.

You had to be very careful, however, that you don't do it to an individual where it would become an embarrassment because of political circumstances. You have to choose your time and place very carefully. For instance, now you could invite back an Indonesian student; two years ago you could not. You have to watch those situations. In Egypt, a few years ago, you could have invited back, and I think you could now,

Blaisdell: an Egyptian. But there was a period in which it would have been a great disadvantage.

I did not finish the story about this Greek chairman of the Economics Department. He finally returned to Greece. His father was Prime Minister Papandreu. I have been interested in the news items in regard to him--he had married an American woman--but he renounced his citizenship and became involved in the politics in Greece. There was great controversy, for which apparently he was responsible, though approved by his father, the Prime Minister. That made him unacceptable to the King and, through manipulations, the Papandreu family moved into the background. One of the later news items that I had in regard to Papandreu was that he was involved in, if not responsible for, what was termed in Greece the 'leftist movement,' which would have been embarrassing to the King and to the Greek government, and that he was still under some cloud of suspicion. I don't know the details, and probably what was leftist to Greece would have been rightist to us. But this is an interesting anecdote in this problem. Papandreu was

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Since this was written the military in Greece has engineered a coup--young Papandreu is under arrest and will probably be tried for treason. Many of his friends here and around the world are pressing for his release.

Blaisdell: interested in Greece, and he was unconcerned with the State Department. He was interested in what was helpful to Greece. As a matter of fact, he took back with him when he went to Greece one or two of our former Greek students--one of whom I think should never have returned. He was a very dear friend of mine, whom I saw on our trip. He was at home fulfilling his military duty when Josephine and I were in Greece, and he was very helpful to me. I visited his home, and the homes of his wife and others, and he loaded us with gifts, many of which I had to refuse because I could not carry them with me, and I did not think that it was wise to get involved. He later came back, and was professor at Davis for some years. I was really closely in touch with him for a while, but I have lost touch since he returned to Greece, though I understand that he broke with the Papandreou regime.

Ariff: What was his name?

Blaisdell: Adam Pepalastas.

Trip to Asia 1956

Ariff: How did the trip to the Asian countries come about?

Blaisdell: The trip to the Asian countries came about through a grant--I believe I referred to this earlier--from the Rockefeller Foundation. Mr. Rusk was then President of the Rockefeller Foundation and I had known him personally when he was professor at Mills College. You will remember that he married a Mills College girl while he was here. He was very much interested in the work I was doing--had seen International House personally in earlier days--and Dr. Sproul followed the proposal up. This was about at the turn of the administrations of President Sproul and Dr. Kerr--Dr. Kerr as Chancellor of the Berkeley campus--and there was a good deal of pulling and hawing between them, apparently. I cleared this trip with President Sproul, it was authorized by him, and certain commitments made to the Rockefeller Foundation, namely that the salary would continue both as Foreign Students Advisor to the University and Director of International House. I felt that this should have been cleared with Dr. Kerr; however, Miss Agnes Robb indicated that President Sproul

Blaisdell: would do that, and that there would be no difficulty. However, in the Philippines I received a letter from Dr. Kerr indicating that my leave of absence from the Foreign Student Advisors Office of the University had never been approved.

Ariff: This was after you had left?

Blaisdell: Yes. And that my salary would be discontinued until my return! This faced me with considerable perplexity as it involved, then, financial sacrifice for Mrs. Blaisdell and me. However, we decided to continue. I wrote him a letter indicating what had happened.

Ariff: To Dr. Sproul?

Blaisdell: No. To Dr. Kerr--sending a copy to Dr. Sproul. However, the salary was never re-established for the period. Dr. Kerr, I think, was justified in this, except that it seemed to me that I was an innocent bystander to misunderstandings between Dr. Sproul and Dr. Kerr. The trip was very satisfying to Mrs. Blaisdell and me. We had large groups of gatherings in Japan, in the Philippines, in Hong Kong, Singapore and not so successful in Indonesia. However, we ended up in Australia.

Ariff: These gatherings you are speaking about, were they of the alumni?

Blaisdell: Yes, they were of the alumni of International House and

Blaisdell: of the University. There were duplicate organizations, I'll refer to this later under the development of the International House Alumni Association.

Korea

Blaisdell: Also, through the very great kindness of an American officer in Japan, in the Far Eastern Division of the Armed Forces at that time, I went to Korea by myself. Before going, this officer had introduced me to the commanding officer of the whole area. When I went in, the orderly said, "How long do you want?" And I said, "As far as I am concerned, five minutes." However, I stayed over an hour, and the orderly constantly poked his head in to see whether the matter was finished. But the commanding officer was very much interested in the students from American universities. Also, the University Extension Division, was, at that time, co-operating with the Armed Services providing courses for the Armed Forces personnel in the Far East. He was interested in this program, which was apparently contributing very largely to the advanced education of the soldiers and officers, and we went into it a great deal. Then, when I started to leave, he said to me, "Is there anything

Blaisdell: I can do for you?" I said, "Yes, I am going to Korea and I find that I can get a commercial airline in, but I can't get one back." "Well," he said, "we'll arrange to have you come back on a transport to Japan." And this worked out. I also indicated that I had a nephew on the front line in Korea and I wanted very much to see him. He said, "That will also be arranged."

When I got to Korea, the embassy immediately got in touch with me, and said that they had been trying to reach my nephew at the front lines. It was a difficult thing, as there were relays of telephones to the front lines, and it had to be passed on. But finally, my nephew showed up. He indicated that he was on maneuvers when suddenly a loudspeaker asked for Private Warren to appear at headquarters. He came, and they said, "Immediately return to camp, here's a jeep." They took him back to camp and they told him there, "Get dressed! You are going to Seoul." He did not know what it was all about. Finally he showed up at the hotel with his driver and a jeep that had been placed at his disposal and we spent several lovely days together--he mostly in the bathtub! [Chuckles]

Then there were conferences in Seoul in regard to the educational problems that we were facing in regard to Korean students, and so forth.

Ariff: Was Mrs. Blaisdell with you?

Blaisdell: No, not in Korea, she stayed in Japan. It was going to be a rather rough experience; it was decided she shouldn't go.

Then also on our board of directors at International House we had an official of the Bechtel Corporation. We had, I believe it was earlier, co-operated with the Bechtel Corporation in housing and developing a program for young engineers from Korea who were being trained to take over the operation of engineering enterprises in Korea that had been constructed under contract of the American government for Korea.

Ariff: When you say "we," do you mean the International House?

Blaisdell: Yes. We had co-operated with the Bechtel Corporation in setting up the education program, and the housing of these students during their stay here. Well, this opened the doors. I had a letter from John L. Simpson, who was an officer in the Bechtel Corporation. He gave me a letter to the Bechtel group in Korea. Upon arriving at the airport, there was no transportation--it was just a tiny little airport. I saw a car marked Bechtel Corporation. I presented my letter to them, and they took me into the city, and later showed me some of the enterprises that they had constructed. I had a very

Blaisdell: constructive time in Korea. I met some of our former students and educators, some of whom I knew, who had visited the United States. I returned by large air transport of the Armed Services. I had no money-- that is, you had to have U.S. Army script.

Japan

Blaisdell: When I reached the airport in Japan which was our military airport, I could not buy anything, but there was another civilian who treated me to lunch and dinner and things of this kind, until I could get back to International House.

Ariff: To International House in Japan?

Blaisdell: Yes, in Japan. The International House in Japan had been developed in co-operation with Mr. Rockefeller. It was half paid for by Japanese financing, and the other half was paid for by Mr. John D. Rockefeller III, I think it was. We were treated very cordially there. It was quite different from the International Houses in the United States. It was not a student resident center at all. It was a center for visiting scholars from all over the world who would stay there temporarily until accommodations had been found in the city for them.

Blaisdell: It was a great gathering place for conferences on a high level.

Ariff: There is something like that in Washington, D.C., too. Isn't there?

Blaisdell: Well, I don't know. Then it is not called International House, at least. There are various enterprises like that in Washington dealing with visiting scholars and students, but I don't remember residences for them. There may have been.

But Mr. Matsomoto, who was the director, in Japan, I had known. They were very cordial and very helpful to us in arranging our conferences in Japan. And indeed, it was at International House in Tokyo that the Alumni Association of the University, and the International House association got together. I have pictures of that, I think. Miss Komata was very helpful there. Miss Komata was an older woman who had been a student at Mills College, and had been brought back to Mills College under some grant. However, she wanted to go to the University of California, and so she came and lived at International House, and took courses at the University. Being an older woman, she found a great deal of difficulty in her role as a student. We were drawn together in consultation on her problems, for which

Blaisdell: she seemed very grateful. She was in Public Health there in the Japanese government and helped Mrs. Blaisdell in her interests in planned parenthood and birth control by taking her to various agencies in Tokyo. Oh, I can tell you many things about the trip but it will be entirely too long.

Taiwan

We proceeded from there to Taiwan. In Taiwan we ran into our friends, the Websters. He had been an official in the embassy in Turkey when we first made our trip in 1949 to 1950, and we had stayed with them there.

Ariff: In Turkey?

Blaisdell: Yes. We found them again in Taiwan, where he was second officer of the embassy, and we stayed again with the Websters. It was very interesting--we were having lunch one day at the main hotel in Taipei, and as we sat down, we saw the ambassador sitting at another table, the American ambassador. Webster went over and invited him to come and sit with us. In the discussion it turned out that the ambassador and I had served in the same battery of field artillery in the First World War at Camp Taylor, Kentucky! Neither of us ever got

Blaisdell: abroad. We were able to clear our memories of individuals whom we knew. Well, we conferred with the cultural attachés in Taiwan, and met with our former members there. Then, too, there was an International House that had been developed there, largely through the efforts of the returned students from the New York and Chicago and Berkeley International Houses.

Ariff: This was in Taipei?

Blaisdell: In Taiwan, yes, in the city, and somewhat connected with the university there. It was a very interesting enterprise and, I thought, fairly successful. I have not followed its destiny very much since then, but around it were gathered many of the people whom I had known at Berkeley and some I had known in Chicago and New York. Then, also, the University was under a U.S. government contract at that time. As I say "we" I mean the University. I am alternating here between the University and International House--as you can see, the anomalous situation goes right on through the history of International House.

Ariff: Yes, it is best to clarify...

Blaisdell: The university in Taiwan was under contract in agriculture with the University of California. There

Blaisdell: had been a good many problems arising in that contract. I visited the enterprises under that contract--I was taken out into the countryside to see the developments of agriculture which had been made in Taiwan--very remarkable advance. I think, probably Taiwan was one that had lifted its agricultural life to a higher degree than almost any other Asiatic country, and due largely, of course, to help of the United States' counselors and advisors, and to our contract with the University. Then we went down to the southern point of Taiwan, of Formosa, to visit the university, Tung Hai University-- I think the name of it was--and we spent two days there. There we found former members of the International Houses--but more interesting, we found the remnants of the faculty of the American College in Peking--Yen Ching who had gone with the university at the time of the Japanese invasion, way back into the interior, walking all the distance. We stayed with two lady missionaries who were very kind to us, and who gave us the history of their experience in China during the Japanese invasion, and of their finally arriving in Formosa.

Hong Kong

Blaisdell: From there we went to--as I remember it--Hong Kong.

Blaisdell: We had a very delightful experience there with large gatherings of alumni of the University and International House group. The main driving force of the gatherings was Mr. Wai Hon Tam, who had been my Chinese assistant at International House in the mid-'30's while he was getting his masters degree at the School of Education at the University. I thought he probably had been liquidated. He had been Dean of the College of Education at Canton University, and had escaped to Hong Kong, and then back to Canton. Then when the Communists took over, he went again to Hong Kong. He and his lovely family met us at the airport and took us in tow; and we became 'Uncle Allen' and 'Aunt Josephine' to the children of the family. I have pictures of all of this, which brings forth very dear memories.

Philippines

Blaisdell: From Hong Kong we went to the Philippines, as I remember it. The exact course of the trip is a little confused as I speak off-hand. There, there was a large group of former members of the International Houses and alumni of the University. Again, I have pictures that would illustrate this group.

Singapore and Thailand

Blaisdell: Then we went on to Singapore, and later Thailand. We found, both in Singapore and Thailand, that many of our returned members were of Chinese descent. This is perfectly understandable in Singapore, because 90 per cent of the residents in Singapore were Chinese. Although in Thailand we had some students of Thai ancestry, many of them were Chinese. The division between the Thais and the Chinese was rather marked. The Chinese had gained control of the economic life of the country as they had in most of the Asian countries. They were energetic, ambitious, and moved into these countries through the years. Throughout this Asian trip we found this hesitancy, this suspicion on the part of the national group that the Chinese might infiltrate through their relationship with China itself, and it caused considerable difficulties. There were laws passed in most of the Asian countries antagonistic to most of the Chinese communities, even though many of the Chinese families had been there for several generations.

Ariff: Acquired citizenship, and so on.

Blaisdell: Yes. We ran into this situation: that the Chinese,

Blaisdell: even though they were loyal to the countries in which they lived--most of them--they were still very proud of the fact that China was now a recognized country, regardless of its being Communist. They were proud of the fact. Also, there was a tendency to hold on to their own cultural background; they had their language schools; they had their own newspapers in many instances. This was a problem we found that existed in all of the countries of the Far East, less in Thailand, I think, than in the Philippines, and in Indonesia later. In Singapore, it did not make very much difference, because they were all Chinese anyway; but as the Chinese in Singapore would say to me, "Sure we are proud of China, we don't like Communism, but if the Communism of China moves down into this area, what are we going to do? Are we going to adjust or are we going to jump into the sea? You won't let us come back to the United States." And this was the problem as they expressed it. There was some infiltration, without a doubt, of the Communist element taking advantage of the situation, and it made the nationality groups and the governments rather suspicious of the Chinese group. We found our former students in all these areas doing constructive work. There was very little difficulty

Blaisdell: in these countries because they were being made use of. They had been moved into government positions, into education and so forth, and we found them constructive and taking full advantage of their experiences in the United States.

Indonesia

Blaisdell: From Singapore we went to Indonesia. There, as I have indicated earlier, we had to be exceedingly cautious because Sukarno had begun his rather anti-American attitude at that time. Then, too, the security situation was very bad. The University of California had a contract with the medical school in Indonesia. In talking with the dean of the medical school here, and Dr. Charles Smith of the School of Public Health in Berkeley, I discovered that our American group in Public Health and Medicine had tried to have the Indonesians develop a public health program rather than a medical school. They felt that what were needed were down-to-earth services to the people in public health, rather than building up a conspicuous medical school from which the graduates would stay in

Blaisdell: the big cities, and would do very little for the public health life. However, you could not overlook the ambitions of the Indonesians to have a medical school. It was to be a prestige institution. We were entertained by the group that was in that contract there at that time, and they had done a remarkable piece of work with the Indonesian medical school. The contract ended, and later, of course, all relationships with the United States were cut off. What has happened since then, I don't know, although the later revolutionary movements in anti-Communism are beginning to re-establish relationships. Maybe the by-products of the earlier experiences will be effective. However, our experience there was very delightful. The former International House students were in government, but at that time it was difficult for them to be identified with the United States, and we had some difficulties.

I did not find the United States government offices there very helpful. They were in the process of being rotated home, and here I come to one thing that happened all throughout Asia--namely, that the officials of the American cultural program, the United States Cultural Program, tended to stay only two years, and they could not, therefore, become in any large degree familiar

Blaisdell: with the background of the cultural developments, the language, and so forth.

Ariff: That is a very good point.

The Asia Foundation

Blaisdell: And this, I think, has led to a book like The Ugly American, because they sometimes did very foolish things because they just were not familiar enough with the situation. However, to offset this, I found that the representatives of the Asia Foundation were very much more helpful to me in all of the Asian countries, Burma, Thailand, Singapore, and in Indonesia.

Ariff: Which Asia Foundation was this?

Blaisdell: In San Francisco, the Asia Foundation. Mr. Robert Blum was President of the Asia Foundation, and later a member of the board of directors of International House. He has since died. He was helpful to me, and gave me letters of introduction to all the representatives of the Asia Foundation. They remained in the country for considerably longer periods, and they assisted enterprises arising from (I hate the word) 'grass roots' needs such as providing libraries to universities,

Blaisdell: assisting in youth programs that seemed constructive. They were not officially related to the United States government, so they were more readily received as an expression of sincere interest without political motive.*

Ariff: What about language?

Blaisdell: Oh, most of them became proficient in the language, at least, much more so than the cultural attachés of the area.

Ariff: I think this is really very distressing. I was amazed to see, in India, the efforts of the Russian government to put out Russian-Hindi dictionaries, Russian-Tamil dictionaries, and dictionaries for all the languages in India.

Blaisdell: Well, the Asia Foundation saw this. Not only is it true what you say, but the Russian government had libraries and book stores with very cheap books that could be bought within the ability of the ordinary person to pay. But we [Americans] had no such; our books were very expensive. I ran into this later through a man named Blaisdell, who was the head of a

*It has since (1967) been revealed that the Asia Foundation has been supported by C.I.A. This will probably greatly diminish their influence.

Blaisdell: publishing firm in New York. He visited me en route to Indonesia and the Far East to sell books. I talked with him about this problem, that he would not have very much success, except through governmental programs, of selling books because they were too expensive. However, he did build up quite a trade with Indonesia, I understand, in providing educational and scientific books--and later with other countries. But we were very much behind the Russians in making available inexpensive literature that could be purchased by the common people in those countries.

Ariff: What do you think about our reluctance to publicize what we have done in different countries? I noticed in India, in the movies and on the newsreels, that if the Russian government would donate a microscope to a school--a simple microscope--it was in the newsreel with all sorts of publicity.

Blaisdell: Well, along this line--when I came back, I went to the State Department and said, "What is important is the development of information through public channels internally so that the American people would know what was going on." That never was followed because of the situation between departments of government and Congress on congressional appropriations. If you did publicize

Blaisdell: it, Congress accepted the fact that you were trying to justify your appropriations from Congress, and this stymied the internal dissemination of news within the United States that kept the American people unaware of the constructive things that were being done abroad.

Ariff: Not only that, but abroad the public oftentimes is not aware of what the United States is doing.

Blaisdell: Now that was partly due not only to our reticence but to the propaganda of the Russians, who would undercut the American program. For instance, in Burma, it was very interesting--there the Russians had built a large high school. It was standing there idle because they had no teachers, and they had no equipment for it--it was a scientific high school.

In another case, the Americans had built a large sugar plant; it seems to me it was in Thailand or Burma. There again, they were far away from the source of supply--not only for the agricultural supply, but they did not have laborers trained in the process, and so the sugar mill was standing idle. This kind of thing was done.

On the other hand, there were good things that were done. The Asia Foundation was doing very constructive things. In Indonesia, and in Singapore,

Blaisdell: for instance, the Asia Foundation representative was very helpful to me. This was true in all the Asian countries, but it was particularly significant to us in Indonesia where we had difficulty trying to find our way around and trying to get people to co-operate with us. We did arrange, but it was very unsuccessful, a meeting of the former students from the United States. They simply, at that time, could not afford to be identified with us. Now, I think, in this later development these men will come to the foreground. The Indonesian students at the University were some of the outstanding individuals in spite of the complexities and the confusion of Indonesian politics. They were tranquil; they were polite; they were courteous, and stood out as one of the delightful groups of students we had at the University. Of course, later they were discontinued, but there was quite a deposit, because they were brought not only under the Indonesian government sponsorship but under the American government sponsorship, by the State Department and by American industries that were represented in Indonesia.

Ariff: When was the student exchange stopped?

Blaisdell: Well, I don't remember exactly. It began to dwindle out as the Communist influence in Indonesia began to

Blaisdell: develop, and finally was stopped when the relationships between the United States government and Indonesia were cut off. That was after my days. There was a trickling of them later, but then it completely stopped.

Of course, Mrs. Blaisdell and I had a delightful stay there. We went to Bali--one of the high points of all our trips was our experience in Bali. You have to remember the difference in religions and the security situation in Djakarta. You could not leave your room with anything in it of any consequence. Your luggage had to be tightly locked up if you left. In fact, we tried to leave our luggage with the representative of the medical contract group. They refused it. Because they said, "We can't be at all certain when we are going to be broken into." As we sat for lunch, they locked the doors. They said, "We never know." Then we got to Bali. The hotel was a delightful old rambling structure which was comfortable, beautiful, and had lovely service. When they assigned us to our room, they gave us no key. I went back to the desk and said, "You gave us no key." And they said, "Nobody ever locks their doors over here." It was an entirely different situation, a Hindu-Indian background as compared to the Muslim of Indonesia itself.

Australia

Blaisdell: We went from Indonesia to Australia. I wanted to go there particularly because in Melbourne the former members of the International Houses had developed a small International House. Later the director of that house was selected from England. I arranged with the Asia Foundation to bring him through the United States on his way to Melbourne so that we would develop a relationship between the International Houses here and the one in Melbourne. He did constructive work there. They were largely in contact with Asian countries such as Thailand and Indonesia, too. It was sort of a center for Asian students--not many western students at the Melbourne International House. I have known Mr. Harper, professor at the university, and others who were there and who had been helpful in the development of the International House.

Ariff: You said there were Asian students in Melbourne?

Blaisdell: Oh, yes...of the Asian countries...in Melbourne. Yes--large deposits of them, and in other universities.

Ariff: This is interesting. They will permit Asian students there?

Blaisdell: Oh yes, that's the white policy.

Ariff: But they will not permit them to become citizens!

Blaisdell: That's right. There were colonies of Asians in Australia that could not become citizens, I believe, under the white policies, but this did not affect the educational relationships with the other Asian countries. They were very helpful. In fact, in several instances, in Shanghai, particularly, and in Singapore, where the expense of coming to the United States seemed to be impossible for families to provide, I recommended that they go to Australia for their education. We found there some of our friends from Shanghai and from Singapore whose children had gone to the Australian universities. This was due to the Colombo Agreement. There was an Organization of Asian Countries at that time which promoted this relationship with Australia.

One of the interesting experiments was the study that was being made at Melbourne University. They were investigating the reading habits of children. Television had not come in, and they were studying the reading habits of children, pre-television, and then they were going to continue with a study of the reading habits of children after television. But they gave up the project because in the pre-television days, they found the children weren't reading anyway, [chuckles]

Blaisdell: so there was no need of studying afterwards.

Ariff: Which age group was this?

Blaisdell: Well, I suppose this was a high school teenage group that they were involved with. One of our former Australian students here was heading that project. He later came to the United States and was, I believe, at the University of Oregon.

A good many of the Australian graduate students stayed on in the United States, or returned to the United States after returning to Australia because of the limitations of higher education there--libraries, and scientific equipment, and so forth--these were very modest. Again, they could not find opportunities consistent with their training, and the freedom of American education from governmental intrusion was rather marked. So they returned to this country, many of them, which I thought was a great loss. Some of them stayed and made very good contributions to the educational life.

I was sorry not to go to Canberra where there was quite a group of returned Australian students from the United States. But I did confer with the university officials at Sydney and with former students there, and we discussed the university's problems of dealing

Blaisdell: with foreign students. There was a movement in Brisbane, engineered by the Rotary Club of Brisbane, for an International House that I think, however, never developed. They had visited us here--representatives of the Rotary Clubs--and were very enthusiastic about it. But I don't think it ever developed, as far as I know, and I did not get to Brisbane. My stay in Melbourne was very delightful and illustrated the good use that was being made of our returned students there. Then we flew home via Honolulu. And that ended the Far Eastern trip of 1956.

Trip to Puerto Rico and Venezuela 1958

Blaisdell: Before we leave trips I think I can refer very briefly to a trip that I had to Puerto Rico. A conference was called by the State Department and the Institute of International Education, in Puerto Rico to confer with Latin Americans in regard to educational programs, and I was authorized to proceed there for that conference. Of course, that was pre-Castro. I found evidence of very threatening conditions--that we really were not doing sound work, though much was being done. There

Blaisdell: were representatives of American industries in the Latin American countries there. Great efforts were made at the conference to encourage far more educational relationships. There was a plan to start an organization similar to the institution in Hawaii. The State Department would also establish an institution in Puerto Rico which would be the liaison between Asia and the United States. I could never be very enthusiastic about these. In the first place, I never felt that any institution that was established with a gold spoon in its mouth was very successful anywhere. Also, it was not indigenous--it was planted there, as in Hawaii, and would be in Puerto Rico. Things of this kind were discussed.

The president of Puerto Rico invited the representatives of the International Houses to meet with him and discuss the possibility of an International House at the university in Puerto Rico. This never developed, of course--there was a coming change at that time. The emphasis had been on the English language, and then, through self-consciousness, it became Spanish again, so that instruction was beginning to be in Spanish in the schools and in the university as compared to the earlier days when English was the language.

Blaisdell: I was much interested in seeing the experiments in planned parenthood and birth control there. I visited the Planned Parenthood Center there. Dr. Gamble had financed an experiment there with the pill that was just coming on the horizon. I was very much interested in how materials for birth control were supplied in curious ways--in barber shops, and dressmakers, teachers, and places of this kind. They could not do it officially because it's strongly Catholic, of course, but they had been very successful in getting the information out informally through channels of this kind rather than through regular drug stores and other places. They did it in very constructive and amusing, but effective, ways.

Then I was interested, also, to find the record of one of my favorite aunts, Auntie Frank. (Frances Carrier) She was one of my mother's sisters. She had gone to Puerto Rico originally under the missionary society, the American Board, (the missionary organization of the Congregational Church) as a teacher of English, and then the program was taken over by the United States government. She had taught English out in the rural districts. I found the records of her teaching experience and where she had been, and I marveled that she had ever

Blaisdell: survived it. I remember her coming home to Beloit, in summers, (and the long trip it took by boat to get home) and bringing us little trinkets from Puerto Rico. I was very happy to find this record of her experience there.

Ariff: How long had she been there?

Blaisdell: She had been there from about 1901 to 1927, something like that. I could not find any of her earlier friends. It was too late, most of them had passed away. But this was a very interesting thing to me, to find the record of her experience there in Puerto Rico.

Ariff: Yes, I imagine it would be.

Foreign Student Advisors Meeting in Venezuela

Blaisdell: A Mr. George Hall was connected with the Creole Corporation, which is the Standard Oil Company of New York, and which has done very extensive work in community and educational projects in Venezuela. George Hall had formerly been connected with the Institute of International Education with which we had been closely in touch through all our experience from the earliest days. He had resigned from there and gone to take this corporation position--Fundación Creole--and

Blaisdell: had been instrumental in the development of their educational program. They had been sending students to the University of California. George Hall and I had been very close friends through the years, and he had arranged, under financing from the Fundación Creole, to invite a small group of Foreign Student Advisors from the universities to which they sent most of their students. Jim Davis of Michigan was my roommate, Ivan Putnam was another, from Florida, and there were several others. We proceeded to Venezuela, and there we were given a very extensive program of conferring with American corporations doing business in Venezuela trying to encourage them to participate more fully in matters consistent with the best interests of Venezuela. Also, they had arranged conferences with government officials of Venezuela. Then we went out to Lake Maracaibo and visited the oil installations in that great oil center. You will remember that the oil from Lake Maracaibo went over to Curacão and was refined there. Imports to the United States financed a great many things in Venezuela. Venezuela to me seemed very promising at that time. The elections had been stabilized, they had a fairly liberal government.

Ariff: Who was president at that time?

Blaisdell: I have forgotten the personnel then of Venezuela.

Ariff: A dictator?

Blaisdell: No, he was not a dictator. He was the first elected president; the dictatorships had fallen. And therefore Venezuela seemed well on the road to democratic institutions politically. Furthermore, it was one of the wealthiest countries. If they used their wealth constructively, as they were beginning to do, it would have been very constructive, and later was.

Ariff: Did you by any chance come across any of the Rockefeller projects?

Blaisdell: Only indirectly, Nelson Rockefeller had a good many interests in Venezuela--his large ranch there--and through him many constructive things had been done.

Ariff: He had a corporation, the International Basic Economy Corporation.

Blaisdell: Yes, and they had started the first supermarkets in Caracas, the capital, which were later turned over, as I understand it, to the Venezuelans themselves.

Ariff: Did they seem popular?

Blaisdell: Oh yes, very popular. And Nelson Rockefeller was very popular in Venezuela. As you know, the Rockefellers had set out certain areas for each of the boys to manipulate. Nelson was largely in South America, and

Blaisdell: as you know, he later was in the American government dealing with South America before he became Governor of New York.

Then we went to various universities and schools. Some of the private Catholic schools were doing very good work. We visited one that was exceedingly interesting; I have forgotten where it was. But we spent a very constructive time there. And of course I re-cemented my relationship with George Hall and his lovely family. This trip was the only one on which Mrs. Blaisdell did not go. She had been diagnosed with an ultimately fatal cancer disease, and it did not seem possible for her to go. I felt that I did not get as much from this trip as I had on the earlier trips.

I have a copy of the report which I made to Dr. Seaborg, then Chancellor of the University. And curiously enough, previous to going on the Asian trip, and this one to Puerto Rico and Venezuela, (both through the Rockefeller Foundation) it was understood that I would be included, provided that the University had anticipation that I would continue to carry on the work here, so that I and International House of the University would profit from long term influences. And I'll go into this later. Here's a picture of Jim Davis

Blaisdell: and Ivan Putnam at the hotel in Caracas, and I have the copy of this report which can be later filed in the archives with the official papers of this interview.

Trip to Germany 1959

Blaisdell: There were many foreign students in Germany. I haven't told you about the trip that I had as Foreign Student Advisor, the last trip, I forgot it, it was a trip to Germany with a group just after Mrs. Blaisdell's death. I was invited to join this group, and we went to Germany because Germany was being faced with foreign student problems and they wanted to confer with us as to how we were handling them.*

We travelled extensively through German universities, and talked with them about their problems, and we about ours, and became pretty well informed about situations in Germany. There was over-employment in Germany, and they wanted to use many of these foreign students in the technical work of their industries, so many were kept over.

Ariff: There was over-employment?

*Interestingly enough, although not now important, to get this appointment, the University Chancellor had to indicate that plans were such that I would have a continuing influence and appointment at the University, which I did--even though the plans of the University itself were contrary to that commitment.

Blaisdell: Oh, yes! Over-employment--they did not have enough employees! Germany was doing remarkably well in those days, and still is in many respects; but it is not over-employed as it was then. It was a very serious problem. They simply could not keep up with their expansion.

I became more interested then than formerly in the university philosophy of education in which the emphasis is placed solely upon the intellectual life of the student and not the rounded interest in the student as a person. The students had to find their own housing; though they had begun to develop some student housing and small International Houses, some of which had developed out of the interests of former residents of the New York House. That was a very interesting and constructive trip for me--probably one of the best in many respects. I was drawn into relationship with former students from the University who were in Germany at the time, many of them. I also established relations with the official government agencies of Germany responsible for many German students coming to the United States. That lasted only, I think, a month or two. But it was very constructive.

Some of the friendships that have grown out of that continue to this day. I am still in correspondence

Blaisdell: with the woman who was assigned to us by the West German government to direct our program, a most delightful woman. Later I was co-operating with others throughout the United States in bringing her to this country, and she came to live with Mrs. Blaisdell and me for a week or two, and we have been in touch with her ever since there in West Berlin. Many things have grown out of that; it was very fascinating and really one of the most important trips I have ever had.

Well, that completed all the trips external to the U.S. that I took as Director of International House and Foreign Student Advisor of the University. Of course, there was much going and coming in the United States because of my relationship with committees of the State Department and other agencies in Washington. Later, as President of the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors, we often had to meet in Washington to co-operate with various government agencies such as Immigration and Naturalization, and Passports and Visas, to clear up problems that we were facing on the front lines in our universities and colleges, and to interpret the problems that we were facing at the University. Remember, the University of California was one of the most significant universities of the

Blaisdell: whole foreign student movement in the United States, and this resulted in placing pressure on me to be present at various occasions.

One occasion I was sorry to miss was in Washington toward the latter part of my regime. There an award was made to the University of California, Berkeley, for its outstanding work in foreign student and foreign scholar relationships. The Institute of International Education held these annual conferences throughout the United States and it was important to be there. Also, in the state of California there were many small colleges and universities that did not have the background and experience that we had here in admissions and in foreign student matters. They would lean back on the University and on me, as Director of International House, to advise them in regard to what they should be doing with smaller numbers of foreign students, and how to meet their problems. All this, it seemed to me in latter years, diverted me, to some degree, from close relationship with students of International House, and I think developed some criticism of me, felt in administrative circles, more apparent under the Kerr regime than under Sproul. Sproul was very insistent that I do participate in this way, just as he was insistent that various

- Blaisdell: faculty members should co-operate with national movements in establishing the leadership of the University of California. I fell into that category in Dr. Sproul's mind, and he was always encouraging me to do these things. Well, enough on trips.
- Ariff: I wonder why Sproul had this broad vision and such a large perspective, and why this was suddenly...
- Blaisdell: Largely, I think, due to Dr. Sproul's early relationship with the Rockefellers in planning for International House at Berkeley. He had caught the vision of Mr. Edmonds and Mr. Rockefeller as to the significance of the International House movement, and he had made certain commitments which he felt needed to be carried through. He was President of the Board of International House in the later years after Dr. Campbell, and, even in earlier days, he insisted that he be included in anything that dealt with International House, and particularly as Chairman of the Board of Directors later. He felt a sense of responsibility, and he was protecting International House from the ambitious intrusions of other offices within the University, such as the Dean of Students Office and the Chancellor's Office, to gain control of International House and bring it into the main stream of the University. He wanted it to stand

Blaisdell: apart as the Rockefellers did, as a significant institution that would make its own contribution and be free to develop its own life apart from the circumscribing regulations of the University. This was necessary, for instance, in having women at International House. Had we been under the Dean of Students, they would never have allowed us, probably, in the earlier days, to have women at International House. But as a peripheral institution, not responsible to the Dean of Women's Office but directly responsible to President Sproul, we could do it. I'll go into this later in regard to the Dean of Students Office. I always endeavored to co-operate very closely with these offices, and I think, on the whole, our relationships were good, though there was always an undercurrent of criticism, largely from those who felt that it should fall into the regular routine of university and college administration rather than being this separate institution.

Ariff: I guess it is the continuous desire of many people for conformity.

Blaisdell: That's right, and I'll go into that later--into this problem. But you asked a question about President Sproul and I think that's the background of it.



Allen C. and Josephine Blaisdell
Front door of International House
in the early 1950's

BERKELEY INTERNATIONAL HOUSE IN THE FIFTIES

Ariff: Would you like to talk about the Alumni Association now?

Blaisdell: Yes. You will remember that in the letter of 1932 that I referred to, from Mr. Rockefeller to President Sproul, the letter laid down the broad outlines of what the Rockefellers had anticipated for International House. Item number seven in the letter says: "While each International House will be administratively independent, it is hoped that a contact and union may develop between them through which ideas and experiences may be shared in carrying out of kindred purpose."

Well, in this respect the directors of the three houses met on various occasions and discussed common projects that might be worked out together. There was never any strong move to join us in corporate organization. This was not anticipated, though there may have been some hope on the part of some that this might become true; however, it was avoided. As we conferred together the idea was suggested that we develop an organization of former members of the International Houses, with chapters throughout the world, and also a publication of a common magazine called the International House Quarterly. Things at Berkeley were quite different

Blaisdell: from what they were at New York and Chicago, and this constantly came up. Mr. David Rockefeller became very much interested in this Alumni Association, thinking that it might become a very large influence in world relationships as we kept in touch with our former members and co-operated together--the three houses--in this matter.

However, at the University of California, connected closely as we were with the University, there was an undercurrent of antagonism to this development with which I somewhat, and later a lot more, largely agreed. However, it seemed important, because of David Rockefeller's concern for the movement, for us to co-operate. He came out to Berkeley with the Director of the New York house, Mr. John Mott, and met with the board of directors. It was apparent from the very start that finance was to become a considerable matter to be dealt with in this way. The cost of keeping records was to be very expensive. I had conferred with the University Alumni Association here and had seen how costly it was to keep alumni records. It had been my feeling that at Berkeley it would be better, rather than starting a separate Alumni Association at International House to co-operate with the Alumni Association of the

Blaisdell: University, using our former members within the larger organization and emphasizing the importance of international relations.

Also I had the experience that Berkeley was quite different than New York. There was not the development of loyalty to the International House in Berkeley, as compared to New York; the loyalty of the Berkeley group was to the University. Their residence and membership at International House was incidental to their larger experience at the University, and you could not expect a year or two's experience at International House to develop the same feeling that it did in the development of alumni associations with four-year colleges and universities. Not only that, but my emphasis was not to draw the former members of International House into relationship with International House so much as it was to move them out to be effective in other community organizations in which they lived--to emphasize the spirit of International House in those community enterprises. Then too, the Quarterly came under criticism by the University, and rightly so, I think. We had developed it because there were some ambitious members of the New York staff, and the Berkeley staff felt that this could be done. It was published for two or three

Blaisdell: years; but it came under criticism of not coming up to the standards of university publications, with which I agreed. Further, it seemed to me that the contributions, if they were qualified, should be in the California Monthly of the University Alumni Association.

The situation in Berkeley was quite different from New York and was never clearly understood. But Mr. Rockefeller came out with Mr. Mott, and because of Mr. Rockefeller very largely, and to retain his interest in International House, the board voted skeptically to proceed. They appropriated funds from the reserve funds of International House for the first year.

Ariff: To run the Alumni Association?

Blaisdell: Yes. There was to be a subsidy from our house budget for the local group to endeavor to build that up, and also a subsidy for the national office for the association which was to be at International House in New York. There were to be advantages to this in many ways. I thought it would lead to opportunities for staff members, who were somewhat isolated in Berkeley, to travel to various countries. Indeed, already paid for by International House, Berkeley, Miss Carneiro

Blaisdell: went to South America at one time.

There was criticism after Mr. Rockefeller left, largely led by Mr. John Hicks, who was then dean of the graduate division, that we'd better beware, that this would lead us into expenses which we could never really afford, and this proved to be true. The board of directors voted to take the funds of the initial underwriting from the reserve funds, assuring me and Mr. Rockefeller that these funds would be replaced by the board of directors. This was never done, and so the administration of International House at Berkeley was loaded with these additional costs, and they began to mount. Then there began, again, to be a considerable misunderstanding in regard to the commitments of the Berkeley house.

My trips abroad, particularly the Asian trip, led further to my feeling that the division between the alumni of International House and the alumni of the various universities was artificial. For instance, in Hong Kong there were two organizations where there should have been one. In the Philippines it was the same way, as far as the University of California was concerned. Then the alumni associations of the various universities like Cornell and Harvard had their alumni

Blaisdell: associations in these foreign countries, and it seemed to me a tremendous duplication of effort to keep these going.

We encouraged the development of the local alumni association. The New York house had a very constructive experience with some of its former members and its alumni association. There was a group coming out of the New York house along about 1927-30--they were very fine, and very constructive. They were leaders in banking, and in law, and in other outstanding enterprises. They were men of distinction and influence--many of them. They were not clinging on to their experience, and therefore trying to recreate or continue their useful experience by relating themselves to it. Not at all! They were helping in the development of International House in many ways. We never had a group of that kind at Berkeley. This has all been a mystery to me. I think it was largely due to the development of the alumni association. We were younger than the New York house and, therefore, had not developed the leadership of earlier members that New York has had.

Well, anyway, it went on, and finally it came to a crisis. I think we had spent some \$75-80,000 on

Blaisdell: this experiment. It seemed hopeful from the start. But gradually as we came back again and again for additional appropriations, and the board had done nothing to raise the funds apart from the operating costs of International House, it became perfectly apparent to me that we could not go on, and, with considerable feeling, we withdrew from the Alumni Association.

I endeavored then to create closer relationships with the Alumni Association of the University, and was to some degree successful, particularly under Mr. Stanley McCaffrey. Stanley McCaffrey was a member of the board of International House, by the way, he was brought on for that very purpose. The later secretary of the Alumni Association was not a member of the board of directors, but was very co-operative. Cliff Doctorman, who later went to the statewide president's office, and still is with that, was very helpful to us. But the Quarterly was killed, and also our relationships with the International House Association. I could go into details on this thing, but I think it is unnecessary.

The first director of the International House Alumni Association was a Mr. Herrick Young, who later became president of Western Women's College in Ohio--

Blaisdell: a very fine fellow. But most of the funds were used allowing him to travel abroad and develop these chapters throughout the world, so nothing was left for the staff of the local houses to participate in this at all.

Then after Herrick Young, David Rockefeller brought over a Frenchman. I have forgotten his name, probably psychological, because our concepts were entirely divergent in terms of the house. I remember his thumping his desk when I indicated to him that we could not hope for more than a small percentage of the members of the house at Berkeley to participate as members of the International House Alumni Association. He thumped the desk and said, "You should have 100 per cent!" I told him that was impossible, and so it went. Finally, we withdrew. This brought an alienation, to a certain degree, between the Berkeley house and David Rockefeller, which I thought was unfortunate, but I could see no way out of it. Mr. Rockefeller had underwritten a great deal of the cost, as a matter of fact he had underwritten the first appropriation of the Berkeley house, in consultation with President Sproul, to give us a start in it. Well, the Alumni Association itself was killed,

Blaisdell: and then we had the local group. The local group here, in contradistinction to the New York Alumni Association, was not representative of the more influential members.

Ariff: You are speaking now of the local alumni association of the house.

Blaisdell: Yes.

Ariff: You withdrew from the national alumni association?

Blaisdell: Yes, and then we still had the local group, and as I have indicated, it was not made up, as time went on, with representatives of the more influential members of the communities and the state. It tended to become a group which was looking back upon the house and maintaining its relationship with the house rather than finding its place in the life of the community--a sort of an immature clinging to the past, rather than moving out and taking part in the constructive life of the community--becoming members of boards of directors of agencies akin to the spirit of International House. Then too, it was a group, because of this, who had time for programs. The busy people of the outstanding membership were entirely engrossed in their professional work and in their relationship with other communities.

Blaisdell: I remember Dick Jennings of the Law School. Some of these earlier outstanding people like Dick Jennings were influential in the early days of the International House Association, but dropped off. Now Dick Jennings-- I was instrumental in introducing him to the International Institute in San Francisco, and he followed me. I was a member of the board at the International Institute, and then I suggested that Jennings take my place. He found a very fine outlet for his interests in the International Institute in San Francisco.

The International Institutes are community agencies. There is one in San Francisco and one in Oakland. It is an outgrowth of the YWCA interest in foreign minorities, and it broke off from the YWCA and became a separate institute by itself. It had agencies in the various cities of the United States.

Ariff: What does it attempt to do?

Blaisdell: It deals with the nationality minorities, assisting them in the adjustment to American life, and also it was very helpful in passport and visa problems, in establishing the right to citizenship, and this sort of thing. They worked with the nationality minorities

Blaisdell: and racial minorities in San Francisco and Oakland and in the cities through the United States. One of the most outstanding social workers in San Francisco, it seemed to me, was Anna Chloe Watson, who was the executive secretary of the International Institute at San Francisco. We worked very closely together with the Department of Immigration and Naturalization in San Francisco. We joined hands in matters that were pertinent to foreign students, and those who wanted to stay in the United States.

Ariff: This was when you were Foreign Student Advisor?

Blaisdell: Yes. When I was Foreign Student Advisor, and Director of International House. They were a participating agency with me in matters pertaining to Immigration and Naturalization. I was interested also in the nationality minorities in the Bay Area, and this was the best institution to work with in this regard. It was a Community Chest enterprise.

Well, Dick Jennings, to go back to him, was not interested in attending programs at International House. He was too busy. He was interested in International House. Now, my hope had been that the Alumni Association would of itself disband, and leave the director and the International House free to select an advisory

Blaisdell: committee of distinguished, outstanding former members to help us in developing whatever relationships were ~~used~~^{useful} that could be made of our former members; however, this never transpired. Up to the very end, I hoped to discontinue the Alumni Association so that the new director would have a free hand in starting a constructive program of informal relationship, maybe having annual meetings or something of this kind, or to use alumni in developing solicitation for funds for International House which the local Alumni Association could never do because it was made up of people largely who were not particularly influential in community affairs, or in higher reaches of education and professional life. It sort of boiled down to a narrow little group--they would put on their annual gatherings at International House, and we had to come to their assistance and "pull the nuts out of the fire" because they were not able to. Later, we had to divorce ourselves completely from them because the programs were so bad. I did not want them representing International House. This has continued to this day. I think it is very unfortunate, but it is sort of a hangover of this alumni association business. Of course, the chapters abroad phased out. I ran into this situation abroad

Blaisdell: where our alumni associations were in some of the underdeveloped countries where they simply could not afford to participate. They could not afford to go to dinners and banquets. Many of our former students did not have sufficient funds to buy stationery and postage to correspond with us on, to say nothing of facing the responsibilities of financing a local chapter, which, again, was an embarrassment.

I could tell a great deal more about the alumni association, but that's the general outline of its history. It was finally dropped completely. Its central office was closed. It became exceedingly expensive, and we were contributing about five to ten thousand dollars a year to keep the central organization going, with very little results of value to the local house. This was imposed upon the costs of room and board for the students living at International House, because the board of directors never followed through in their commitment to replace the funds in the reserve fund at International House. I have jokingly said to some of them that I thought they were open to suit on this matter if it had ever come to a crisis--but of course we never took that attitude, we underwrote it. As I've said, I think it cost us in the experience of the effort some \$75-80,000, and that

Blaisdell: could not go on. It was perfectly clear that we could not afford to keep up alumni records and so forth. It was too expensive a process.

The Quarterly was killed by the board, and I agreed with them that it should be, because the cost of that was external to the experience of living in the house. My feeling was that we should put all our funds available into the experience of the current members of International House and not throw out our funds to support enterprises that should be continuously supported by those foreign members themselves, and not underwritten by the local house. Our efforts should be to make the experience of International House at Berkeley as significant as possible for the students living there, in the hope that, as they moved out, they would not organize among themselves, but that they would move into enterprises consistent with the spirit of International House.

This was quite different from New York and Chicago. This brought a conflict which I think was unfortunate. For some years I felt that both Dr. Sproul and I had lost influence with the Rockefellers through David Rockefeller as a result of this matter. This situation continued, and was one of the elements which I will



Twenty-fifth Anniversary of International House, 1955

Mr. and Mrs. Blaisdell guests of honor at table

Blaisdell: refer to later as the reason why I left International House a year earlier than a normal retirement.

Twenty-fifth Anniversary of International House

Blaisdell: In 1955 we had a rather significant gathering in recognition of the twenty-fifth anniversary of International House. This was a very outstanding occasion, though it did not come up to my anticipation. In laying plans for it, we could never determine whether to use the year 1928 or 1930 as the beginning of International House. We finally took 1930, and in 1955 we had the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration. Dr. Sproul and I had hoped that we might work out a series of lectures at the University on international relations that would be the representation of International House on foreign affairs. This, however, fell through largely because of finances. We could not finance it. So it boiled down to about a week at International House.

*
Here is a copy of the program of this twenty-fifth anniversary of International House, and here are the pictures. We had a week of celebration. Honor was

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In the University Archives.

Blaisdell: done to Mrs. Blaisdell and me on that occasion. We had a special Sunday supper on the anniversary weekend-- a Sunday supper attended by Dr. Sproul, as the president of the board of International House, who spoke. And then I think I spoke; Later in the week we had the annual meeting of the International House Association, which was still in existence then. Then we had an International House Day and had a banquet at the auditorium at which Dean McHenry, now Chancellor of the University of California, Santa Cruz, who was a former member of International House, spoke on the subject: "International House, the University, and the Community." We had a recital of songs and tales on American Indian folklore by Ataloa, an American Indian princess, who was a former member of the New York International House, who was a very close friend of mine and living in Los Angeles at the time. She put on these programs throughout the country, and she gave a very delightful program on the interpretation of the American Indian on that occasion. The Centurion Choir sang. Gene Bush was the director. There were representatives here from the various houses, the three International Houses. There were articles written in the California Monthly, copies of which I have.*

*California Monthly, November 1955. "International House," p. 21.

Blaisdell: *
 Here is the Jubilee twenty-fifth anniversary
 publication of International House. I remember
 President Sproul, when he saw that futuristic illus-
 tration of International House, commented in his address
 at the Sunday Supper that he knew International House
 was in a bad way, but he did not know it had crumbled
 to pieces quite so far as that! [Chuckles] But we
 had a member of the staff then who was quite a modern-
 istic artist, and he had developed that. The staff
 thought it was good, but I was not particularly
 interested in it.

 Here is a picture that I think is significant.**
 One of the most interesting places at International
 House was the Post Office, with the mail boxes, and the
 letters that came in from all over the world, and the
 collection of stamps that was made.

Ariff: Yes, I imagine someone had a field day there!

Blaisdell: Yes. Miss Carneiro developed an enterprise of stamps
 with one of the social agencies, and we donated the
 stamps that we could collect from foreign countries to
 this agency. Well, there is a picture of Mrs. Sanford
 and the engineer.*** He, Mr. Van Dyke, was employed by

*A copy of this issue is deposited in the University Archives.
 **In the University Archives.
 ***In the University Archives.

Blaisdell: the contractor who built International House. When International House went under its own administration, I employed Mr. Van Dyke as engineer, because he knew where all the pipes were, and where everything was. He served for many years as a very loyal and efficient engineer of International House, and retired only shortly before I did. There is Mrs. Sanford, who was then Business Manager of the House. Here is the report on the Pomona College Alumni Association on the occasion.

This is the occasion where Mrs. Blaisdell and I were given a beautiful silver bowl and candlesticks by the board of directors. It is out there on the mantle piece in the dining room. I still have that. And here is a picture of the presentation.* These are very valuable to me. There is one of Mrs. Blaisdell and me. That takes me back to very fond memories, of course, that are hard to forget. But I think that's enough. So the feeling to that time, 1955, even on for several years after that, was very cordial and very warm with the University, and with Dr. Sproul, and the board of directors.

After the Condliffe Report, confidence began to

*In the University Archives.

Blaisdell: develop. I began to know members of the board of directors on an intimate and personal basis. It was a very tranquil and constructive time from about 1950 to 1961, in which I felt that real achievements were made toward the purposes of International House. As I met the students on my official trips abroad, and later in my own personal experiences abroad, apart from International House, I began to believe that International House was living up to its anticipation, which in early days it could not do because of the limitations of foreign travel. After the war, with the students flooding in from abroad, the House really started to accomplish its purpose, and I felt that I was justified in the earlier decision that I referred to: namely, would I stay on and see it through to its culmination or would I withdraw in these earlier days, when it could hardly anticipate being illustrative of its purpose.

Foreign Student Officer

Blaisdell: Now we are coming to the period of my latter days as Director of International House and Foreign Student Advisor. I always can speak more authoritatively about

Blaisdell: the problems that developed first under Dr. Kerr, and his relationship to Dr. Sproul--Dr. Kerr as Chancellor.

The campuses, as I saw it, and probably rightly so, were becoming self-conscious, and there began a movement for the development of ^{independent} indigenous administration of the local campuses as apart from the statewide organization. Dr. Sproul, I think it is no secret to say, was one who did not relinquish administrative prerogative easily, and there was considerable struggle between him and Dr. Kerr in this matter. International House was caught in this somewhat confused period. International House was not really a statewide organization. Dr. Sproul, however, felt responsible for it, and never released his relationship with International House to the chancellor of the Berkeley campus. Dr. Kerr, and his colleagues in the Berkeley campus administration, became concerned that International House should fit into the administrative organization of the Berkeley campus, and Dr. Sproul never relinquished his prerogative as related to International House.

Ariff: I think it is rather hard to 'disinvolve' oneself.

Blaisdell: Sure. I was caught in the cross fire. I had felt that the interests of International House were best

Blaisdell: served by direct relationships with the president of the University. I would have been perfectly happy to have had this transferred to the chancellor of the University of the Berkeley campus; however, Dr. Kerr did not take the interest that Dr. Sproul had taken. He apparently wished it to take a relationship through the Dean of Students Office. I felt that this, as far as the director of International House was concerned, was not only demoting the director of International House, but demoting the whole emphasis of the place of International House on the campus. Indeed, it was the Vice-Chancellor in charge of student affairs through whom they wanted matters pertaining to the foreign students to go! Also, we were caught in the cross fire there between the Vice-Chancellor on student affairs, and the Dean of Students. There was no clear-cut responsibility as to which one was dealing with which. It was a confused period--I not knowing to whom I should report, and how things would go. The Vice-Chancellor was appointed to the board of directors. I don't believe he has been on this list, but he served as a member of the board of directors, but not as the chairman. The chancellor following Dr. Kerr served as chairman of the board.

Blaisdell: Well, when Dr. Kerr became president of the University, he again took the attitude that there should not be any director reporting to him, even though according to the by-laws of the house, he was president of the board. But he never attended a board meeting, and then it automatically became the chancellor who was the president of the board of directors. You can see the confusion.

Ariff: Yes.

Blaisdell: I was caught in the backfire of this, and became somewhat disturbed and unhappy because I never knew how to administer. It became apparent very shortly, and certainly very emphatically, after Dr. Kerr was president, that plans had been developed with which I had not been consulted. They had not consulted with me. There were very definite plans on foot to have the University appoint its own Foreign Student Advisor, and to move the Foreign Students Advisor's Office to the Dean of Students Office. And in the plans for the new administration building to which the Dean of Students Office was to go, there were plans for a definite Foreign Students Advisor's Office, directly related to the Dean of Students. I became aware of it only because of rumors that came to me.

Blaisdell: Finally I had to go to Dr. Kerr. I came down one summer from my vacation, when I was informed a definite move was underway for the appointing of a Foreign Student Advisor without any consultation with me, or warning to me. So I came down and had a conference with Dr. Kerr, and he admitted at that time that these plans were underway. It was the first time that I had had any official notification of it. He indicated to me very generously that he appreciated my administration of International House and my advising to foreign students, but that he thought that this should be incorporated into the routine administration of the University--that the foreign students were students and that the relationship with the Dean of Students Office was a logical administrative procedure. He indicated that, though this was to be taken over by the University, I should still be in a place of usefulness to the University, and so he had it arranged that I would be appointed Foreign Service Officer of the University, and that I would develop that office largely in relationship to visiting scholars as apart from students, though I was to have responsibility for the foreign graduate students, and that the undergraduate students were to go to the Dean's Office. This again,

Blaisdell: you see--they were caught in the fact they were going to transfer this to the Dean of Students Office, and the graduate division was not happy about this because the graduate students were not responsible to the Dean of Students Office. So they had not seen this thing through. This Foreign Service Officer was to be relieved of the undergraduates but serve in this and other ways, advising with the University on matters pertaining to international relationships on the faculty level and graduate student level.

Well, this was just an instrument to get rid of me, I could see that; and I was not unsympathetic to the general thought of administrative reorganization. I could see that it was a problem in the change of administration, and I worked as constructively as I could with the development of these plans. However, on reporting it to the board of International House, it raised a considerable storm of antagonism to the University program. They said the Foreign Student Advisor's Office was placed at International House to be of conspicuous service to foreign students, and their attitude and mine was that the foreign student should be drawn apart from the maelstrom of general student activities at the Dean of Students Office, and have a

Blaisdell: place of recourse apart from the administration-- that the Foreign Student Advisor would work closely with the Dean of Students Office but that the Office should be retained at International House, so that International House would continue to be the place to which the foreign students would automatically turn. They felt that it would be a great disadvantage to International House and to the foreign student to have this office removed from International House, and, for a year, negotiations went on with the chancellor's office in regard to this matter. Heavy protest was made by the board of directors against this plan.

Well, I was caught again in the middle of these shifting plans for administration, and the whole program of the University administration was postponed on and on. The office was not removed. However, I did as best I could and reported through the Dean of Students Office in regard to undergraduate students. But then I went on that Puerto Rico trip, and I found when I returned that they had appointed a Foreign Student Advisor. I had recommended a man for this purpose-- or I guess they'd recommended the man, a professor from Davis who is now the Director of International House. And I said, "Well, that is fine." But when I

Blaisdell: came back I found that they had given him authority not only over the undergraduate students, but also over the graduate students, and had removed that element from my administration again. I protested against this, saying that that was not the agreement reached with me, and finally had to say to the Vice-Chancellor, "I will never believe a thing you say again, unless you put it in writing, because you have almost entirely disregarded the agreements we have reached in our negotiations!" The board of directors backed me up in this in all of our negotiations. It was the members of the board of directors themselves, in meeting with the local administration, that kept pressing these issues, but it became an unhappy relationship that was almost intolerable to me. I interviewed one who had been rather high in the business administration of the University and was leaving the University for another appointment. I went down to him and said, "Now you are free to talk, what is behind all this?" And he very frankly admitted that it was an effort to get rid of Mr. Blaisdell. I never revealed this to anyone else, I will not name the man because he is now back in the administration of the University and it would be an embarrassment to him. But he

Blaisdell: revealed to me very clearly what was behind all these moves.

The board of directors still was very loyal to me, and I was ready to go back as full-time director of International House. Indeed, I thought the time had come where a full-time director of International House apart from the foreign student advisor function was essential, and that that person could promote the interests of International House, seek to raise funds for International House apart from the University and really have a stature in the community life of the Bay Area that would emphasize the importance of International House and its program for foreign students, foreign scholars, and the international emphasis of the University. So I was perfectly willing to go back as full-time director of International House. However, this did not seem to work out, and we were still in the negotiations. Things did not crystallize, and this was one element in my feeling that I should probably leave earlier than the retirement date.

Then a very sad episode in my own personal life added to my conviction. Josephine Blaisdell, who had been by my side for some thirty-three years in this whole work, and who had played a very prominent though



Josephine Bell Blaisdell

Middle 1950's. Original from which was made large picture hanging in Josephine Bell Blaisdell room at International House.

Blaisdell: unofficial role in its life and development, died, and it left me feeling that I could not face the responsibilities of the administration because I had no helpmate who could take on many of the responsibilities that Josephine had carried. I will not go further into this but I felt that the wife of the director of International House should play a very large role and that a new director with a similarly helpful wife was essential to the functioning of International House. I married again, very shortly after my wife's death, Mrs. Sears, the wife of Dr. Laurence Sears, my life-long friend and earlier professor at Mills College who had died. She, however, was a professional woman and could not take on the responsibilities that Josephine had taken. This was another factor.

Ariff: What is the present Mrs. Blaisdell's profession?

Blaisdell: Mrs. Blaisdell is a psychological counselor for maladjusted children and parents; she is also a marriage counselor. Professionally, she has her office here at the house, and has also her official office in San Leandro in an organization there that is working... a very unique organization...along psychological and psychiatric developments that are necessary to

Blaisdell: community life now. And she is exceedingly busy in her own professional work.

Ariff: So you felt that you could not go on.

Blaisdell: Yes. Then too, let me put it this way, I had always felt that one could not effectively work intimately with student programs beyond the age of sixty-five. This is one reason why I established, first informally and later formally, the retirement age at sixty-five for all International House staff. I just felt that when you got to that age that you just could not deal sympathetically with younger students, and the developing interests of younger students. I found myself, even earlier than sixty-five, restless, under the continual barrage of student unrest. I found that one could not be as sympathetic as one ought to be, and as statesmanlike as one ought to be, in dealing with these later student developments. I could see the whole unrest developing at the University which culminated later, as you know, in the disturbances. The beginnings were there both with faculty and students. I just became restless under it all. It was too time and energy consuming.

RETIREMENT ACTIVITIES

Blaisdell: So I laid my plans a year or two ahead that in September 1961, I believe it was, I would retire, and I so announced this to the board of directors.

Ariff: I notice that you were given a year's leave of absence from then.

Blaisdell: Yes, to age sixty-five. The board was very generous with me. There was clear recognition that the University had not played its part or played its rightful role in my retirement program, and therefore they bought a special policy, an additional policy to my retirement program, which eased the situation somewhat, but never brought me anywhere near the retirement income that is accorded to University people. I had to supplement this on my own, and I have not been unhappy regarding it, though it was an element of feeling on my part in those days. The board did its best, certainly, to handle their portion of it constructively. You see, my retirement also involved the retirement as an official of the University and International House. The retirement program of International House, due to the initiation of the policy at a certain date, did not take effect until October 1. So I set my retirement

Blaisdell: date at September 1, which was not the usual procedure at the University, which would have been June 30, the end of the fiscal year. But I could not afford to do that, and so the University did pay me their portion of my salary to October 1, giving me a month's leave of absence. I postponed my vacation for the summer to do this. Then the retirement program of International House actually did not start until I was sixty-five, October 1, 1962, I believe, and so the board of directors kept me on minimal salary to continue the retirement program and social security as an employee of International House to October 1, 1962. They were very generous in this regard.

I think it might be interesting to point out, although I have no authority or responsibility for it, that out of the whole discussion in my later days in regard to the Foreign Student Advisor's Office, and its relationship to International House, that not only was it decided ultimately that the office should continue at International House, but through procedures with which I am not familiar, the office has been greatly expanded at University expense. I can't be authoritative about the exact numbers, but I think there are now three full-time advisors to foreign

Blaisdell: foreign students who have status of assistant deans of the University. They also have an administrative assistant and a secretary. The work probably has increased in proportion.

Ariff: By the number of students.

Blaisdell: But remember, when I operated that office I was supposed to spend half-time on it with one part-time student assistant, and with a secretary! So that I think the negotiations in those early days, that began to clarify the relationship of International House with the Foreign Students Advisor's Office and the University, were helpful when I left. I felt that many of the problems with which I was dealing would be aided by my leaving and a new person coming in who could avoid all the antagonism of earlier negotiations, and start fresh.

Another interesting feature of this which developed: back in the early fifties and before the death of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., I had had rather close relationship with a man from the Rockefeller brothers' office in New York. He was very much interested. He was assigned by the Rockefellers to come out at one time and review the needs of International House. He did not immediately recommend to the Rockefellers that additional funds would be necessary for it to assume

Blaisdell: the costs of the new burdens that were being placed upon it (which I referred to earlier). But several years later I returned and talked with him, and he said, "Allen, I think the time is ripe. Go back to Berkeley and tell your board of directors that they should immediately appeal to Mr. John D., Jr. to help in these matters." I came back to Berkeley, and I reported this to Dr. Sproul, Dr. Kerr, and to the board of directors. They never followed it up. I have never known the reasons why, though I think again it was a matter of the division and the chaos in changing administration at the University. Very shortly thereafter Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. died, and that door was closed.

You remember, as I referred to the International House Alumni Association, Mr. David Rockefeller was very much interested in that and had contributed heavily. In the process of the association's death, both Dr. Sproul and I, I think, antagonized David Rockefeller. I felt that possibly a change of administration both at the University and at International House might open the door again. After I retired I wrote a letter to David Rockefeller expressing my appreciation for the opportunity I had had for a life-

Blaisdell: long relationship with the movement of International House, and said that it had given me one of the most satisfactory lives that I felt anyone could have had. That closed the door of my relationship. I had suggested when I left that the new director and the new chancellor of the University should make a direct approach to Mr. David Rockefeller. They did, within a year or two after my retirement, and they received the sum of some \$300,000 to finance important repairs and renovations at International House that were necessary because of the depreciation of the building. See, we never depreciated the building. We depreciated the furniture and the equipment, but the building needed adjustments, and he contributed \$300,000. I think this was largely due to the new administration that could take advantage of the mistakes and the feelings that had developed under the old administration.

Ariff: I am sure that your letter also helped to create a pleasant atmosphere.

Blaisdell: I am sure that it did. Now I think that closes the door as far as my relationships to International House. I can only add that no man could have had a richer, fuller life. My children grew up in the midst of the International House atmosphere. It developed their thinking on international affairs and race relations.

Blaisdell: Our whole family was a part of it. We had our Thanksgiving dinner at International House with the foreign students. In many ways the children were brought into relationship with it, though we had to be careful that they did not get petted too much at International House. But, as I repeat, in spite of any differences of opinion, in spite of any antagonism of personalities, I am grateful to each and every one who helped me in this long experience of delightful relationships. Well, I think the record that I have reported reveals this.

Ariff: Yes.

When you retired, what did you first think about?

Blaisdell: I retired because of the feeling which I felt existed at the time. Certainly the feeling I had was that I would draw aside completely from International House and my relationships with the University, and establish an entirely new pattern of life. This did not mean that I lost interest in International House. I had been invited back on occasions graciously by the new director, but it meant that I would not unduly intrude. I knew that if I remained on in any way or attempted to, in relationship to it, I would get hurt, and that it was better not to go through those experiences.

Blaisdell: Further, I had seen in other institutions the unfortunate effects of an administrator attempting to stay on in an informal relationship, so I decided to pull aside completely. I had other interests. I could not embarrass International House and the University, while I was an official, to participate in some of these interests of social issues like Civil Liberties Union, Birth Control and Planned Parenthood and Population Control.

Trip Around the World

Blaisdell: Well, the first thing Mrs. Blaisdell and I decided to do was to leave Berkeley for at least six months. And this would serve as a good departure point. So we went abroad for not fully six months but for four or five months, and, as I have indicated, Mrs. Frank Shuman joined us. We drove around England, and France, and Germany ourselves, and later rented a car and drove down into Italy and back into France. Then we had planned to settle down some place in Europe for a month or two; but it was a very bad winter--cold--and so, at the last moment we decided to take a boat from Genoa, Italy to Hong Kong, stopping at various Asian ports

Blaisdell: along the way. It allowed me to pick up a few personal relationships of earlier years, but I intentionally stayed apart from looking up former students that I did not know intimately.

Ariff: Oh, you went through the Canal?

Blaisdell: We went through the Suez Canal, and it was a very delightful experience. We were second class and we were drawn into relationship with returning students and scholars from America, England and Germany. When we got on the boat they had assigned us to a single table by ourselves. But I went to the steward and said, "We don't want to be by ourselves." So they placed us first with a group of older people and it was a delightful experience. But one day a group of the students had learned who we were, and they went to the steward and said, "Would you kindly assign Mr. and Mrs. Blaisdell to our table?" And so we rotated between the tables of these returning students. We had a delightful experience with them. There were students from Iraq, India, Ceylon, and Singapore, and Hong Kong; and we enjoyed it very much. Indeed, around us and through us a good deal of the life of the second class revolved. The people in the first class saw us having such a good time that they would come down and

Blaisdell: want to join us because they were having a rather uninteresting, though sedate and luxurious, experience up above. [Chuckles]

Then, in Hong Kong, we met our former friends. Also in Japan we flew via Taiwan to Kyoto and spent some time there, and then, again, to the International House in Tokyo, and met former friends there, many of them who had in earlier days been related to International House. But I made no point to press International House or foreign students' interests because I knew I would be diverted from doing things I wanted to do.

Ariff: Were the students on board ship students who had been in American universities?

Blaisdell: Some of them. There was a girl, for instance, who had gotten her medical degree from the University of Chicago.

Alameda Planned Parenthood Association

Blaisdell: Later, while being abroad, I received correspondence from the Alameda Planned Parenthood Association asking whether I would accept an appointment to the Alameda County Board, which I did accept.

Ariff: How did you become interested in that?

Blaisdell: Well, Mrs. Josephine Blaisdell had shown great interest in this in her early years. She could do many things I could not do, you see. I was invited to be a member of this board in earlier days, but I turned it down because I felt that I could not do it, but suggested that Mrs. Blaisdell take it on, which she did. It was a very simple organization in those days, and somewhat in line of considerable community criticism. Indeed, she had served as president of the organization for some four years, and was still president at the time of her death, or very shortly before her death.

Ariff: You say it was a simple organization. How was it set up?

Blaisdell: Well, it had a board of directors; it was part of a national program on birth control. Of course, there were laws of the state at that time which made the dissemination of information on birth control devices illegal. I remember one time when she was going down to the meeting of the State Federation of Social Work. They wanted a table representing their organization there, but because of the Catholic protest they were denied; so they decided to set up their table outside. There were threats that they would be arrested, so I told Mrs. Blaisdell at that time that I would be glad

Blaisdell: bring her lunch to prison any time. [Chuckles] This never developed, but it shows you that in the early days the atmosphere was so entirely different than it is now.

Ariff: When was this?

Blaisdell: Well, this was in the forties and the early fifties and even into the later fifties. It's within the last five to ten years that this whole matter has become an open book until you hardly pick up a magazine or turn on the television but something in regard to overpopulation and birth control comes before you. It is an entirely different situation now. Mrs. Blaisdell went through these pioneer days in which Mrs. Sanger was still very active. You remember Margaret Sanger? Well, I merely picked up the pieces she had so effectively broadcast there in her earlier days. Indeed, there is on the new building of Planned Parenthood a plaque in her memory, and in memory of several others who took prominent place in the life of the organization in earlier years. And this consumes a great deal of my time--on committees, and so forth, of Planned Parenthood. This will not go on much longer because I vowed, out of my experience at International House, that no person should stay on a

Blaisdell: board of directors after they are seventy years of age. [Chuckles] So I will finish out my term and that will terminate that.

The Blaisdell Institute on World Cultures and Religions

Blaisdell: Then my father had started an institute down in Claremont in relationship to the colleges. The large proportion of his estate went to the Institute. Payments are made to the existing children, but when we die it will all go to the Institute. The name of the institute is The Blaisdell Institute on World Cultures and Religions. Father was very much interested in the whole problem of Asiatic-Western relationships. He felt that we were on the forefront of the United States in relationship to Asia, and he felt that a great many misunderstandings and antagonisms had developed in the meeting of East and West because of the variety of religions. He thought that if people could get together and consult, they might have a chance of finding common ground of belief and influence, and so he developed this institute. It has never grown very large, the plans were rather extensive but whether they will ever develop I don't know. But I have continued as a member of the board of directors of that institute.

Blaisdell: That brings me into relationship with the colleges and, indeed, the foreign students down there, to this day. The Blaisdell Institute house, which is the old family residence in Claremont right across from Claremont College Center, is the center now for foreign students of the various colleges in the complex of colleges there.

Ariff: How is the Institute operated?

Blaisdell: Well, the funds for it under my father's estate are established within the Claremont College Organization. There is a board of directors, that has been built up over the years, of prominent Southern California people. The president of the Seminary, the School of Religion that was formerly associated with USC, moved to Claremont and he is on it. John Anson Ford, the former member for twenty-five years of the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County, is on it or has just retired from it. The former president of Claremont Graduate School is on it, Robert J. Bernard. The present president of Claremont College, Dr. Louis T. Benezet, is a very thoughtful member. Mr. William Remple, a businessman who was under the influence of my father when he was president of Pomona, is now president of the board.

The Institute is not only interested now in these

Blaisdell: relationships, but is trying to explore the religious development in the United States. Where do our senses of values come from? Do they come from organized religion?--decreasingly so, apparently. What is the source? To bring some order out of the confusion of the sense of values by which Americans live, it seemed to me and to others on the board, that it was just as important to investigate our own religious life as it was to go to Asia and do research in Asian religions. But the Institute is rather minor at the present time; I think it possibly has a future, though I don't know what the future will be.

Ariff: What are some of the activities of the Institute? In other words, how do the people get together?

Blaisdell: Well, they bring over students and scholars under our auspices in relationship to the colleges, in particular the graduate school. They live at the center, and elsewhere if they are married, and they are brought into relationship with the scholars. Some of them are a little more advanced than undergraduate students. They have had a symposium or seminar on Shintoism, bringing over the Shinto priests. Indeed, the Crown Prince of Japan, the next Emperor, was at that gathering. The director of the Institute is employed part-time by the

Blaisdell: Institute and the School of Religion. His interests have been in Japan and the Far East. He has started relationships through his research with the Shinto organization in Japan. Not much has been done with other Asian religions as yet, but it's on the books to undertake them as soon as we have the finances to be able to develop a staff. We use professors of the various colleges as counsellors to the board of directors, on programs. This practice has brought us into relationship with the faculty of the colleges in Claremont. It is still in an experimental stage. We hope that we can secure funds that will allow us to develop a rather significant building that will allow the Institute to develop in many other ways.

Then too, there were my own interests. I was always interested in doing things with my hands. I loved my garden, though I couldn't do very much with it when I was in full-time employment.

I have a place at Inverness where we escape for the weekends. It's the original Episcopal church of Inverness, which was built over when the church moved to larger facilities. But the old altar of the church is still in our garden. It was an outdoor altar, where they had outdoor services. The original ^{Ionic} ~~Maltese~~ cross

Blaisdell: is on the gate. I could never quite, with my perspective toward religion, put the Virgin Mary on the altar. But I did go so far as putting on Saint Francis of Assisi, a stone cast given to me by my daughter. I went that far, but I couldn't go any further. But we enjoy going up there for weekends. We take guests with us, and enjoy our times up there very much.

Then, of course, we have our summer cabin in the mountains. We each have one; Mrs. Blaisdell has one, and I have one. We can't get rid of them because our children of the two families are interested in the two cabins. It seems ridiculous to have all this, but we're conserving them for the children of the two families.

Ariff: How many children?

Blaisdell: I have two, a boy and a girl, and Mrs. Blaisdell has two boys.

As I've indicated, I love to do things with my hands, and I've developed some capacity with machine tools. I have quite a shop in my basement--for woodwork. When I get completely fed up with life and other things, or disturbed and worried about civilization, I go down there and forget it all. I've shown you the various things I've done.

Marriages Performed

Ariff: I understand you performed some marriages while you were with International House, and since your retirement.

Blaisdell: Yes. It was rather natural that students a long way from home would look to International House as a sort of home away from home, and that it was a place they thought might serve interests that would normally be faced by homes if they were near at hand. This was not true only of the foreign students, but you remember that in colleges very frequently the chapels of the colleges will be used for wedding ceremonies. This happened at International House.

You will remember that I mentioned Dr. Campbell's earlier hesitancy about me, as a former clergyman. This hesitancy disappeared rather rapidly as Dr. Sproul took over the administration of the University and as chairman of the board. It never was mentioned. And as this interest of the students to use International House for culminating their romances, the so-called "Home Room," which is now the Josephine Blaisdell Room, was a very lovely place, and I was asked whether or not it could be used for wedding ceremonies. I indicated

Blaisdell: it could be, and so reported to the board, and there was no feeling otherwise. As a result, the room became used. There were Jewish services; I remember particularly a Greek Orthodox service, which by permission was held--I believe the wedding was not held there, but the reception afterwards. Frequently there would be weddings in churches that required marriage in the church itself. It was therefore used as a reception center after the service. Though there were many services in the Home Room. In several instances, the students did not have any relationship with churches, either locally or by preference, at all. They had, however, desired to have rather beautiful ceremonies, even though not distinctly religious in character. Sometimes they were individuals of diverse religious origins, such as the Jewish and Protestant marriages, and others of this kind. In several of those instances I decided that I would, at their request, perform the ceremony myself. I did this with considerable discrimination because I did not wish to become known as the "marrying parson of the University." However, it seemed to serve a very real purpose.

Later, it was rather rumored around that I was available. I responded to requests largely from personal

Blaisdell: friends, from faculty of the University, and from friends of my children. I would not perform ceremonies in the churches themselves, indicating that I thought that if one were to be married in a church, it should be done by the presiding official clergyman of that church. I, for a long time, did not do larger home ceremonies, but did break down once in awhile in later years along this line.

As a matter of fact, a very interesting occurrence this past weekend brought this into the foreground. A Mrs. Jill Silver called us, and spent the weekend with us. She was an army nurse and he a former resident of the house. Many years ago Ernest Silver and Mrs. Farquar, the former Florence Walne, who was on my staff, asked whether I would perform the service in her home. He was Jewish, and his bride-to-be was of Protestant background. I did this, and we had a lovely service in the Farquar home.

Later I visited them in Japan. He had gone there right after the war to establish an airplane parts sales service to Asian countries, and later airplanes themselves. In the Treaty of Japan it was indicated that Japan would not develop airplane service of any

Blaisdell: kind, either military or civilian, so that he was not allowed to land in Japan, but went on to Hong Kong. Jill, his wife, stayed in Japan and initiated the firm there, in co-operation with a firm in the United States. Later, of course, the whole prohibition against the development of air facilities in Japan broke down, and they developed the Japan air service. Ernest was later killed in testing out a new airplane over Lake Biwa, I believe it was, in Japan. Jill, a very remarkable woman, carried on this enterprise, and has become a remarkably effective woman, not only as a woman, but as a leader, in many things in Japan. She's lived there for twenty years now, by herself, with her three children. You can see the relationship that was started. Mrs. Blaisdell and I have visited her several times in Japan, and she returned our visits this past weekend. This brought me, also, with her visit here, into touch again with an eminent Indian nuclear physicist, an atomic physicist, who developed the first reactor in India. He was a great friend of Ernest Silver, he and a fellow by the name of Breese. When they were students the three of them owned a boat that they sailed on San Francisco Bay--and that worried me considerably because they sank it several times! My

Blaisdell: mind could go on, how the relationships of my officiating at this marriage have broadened out into many other relationships.

There have been a lot of marriages out of International House, and I've always said to them all, when I had a chance, "After your first million, the next ten thousand goes to International House for foreign student scholarships." It has not happened yet, but it may. That is, I felt they owed something to International House.

I remember, in this Jill Silver wedding to the Jewish boy, there was violent opposition on the part of her family. So, after the ceremony, I wrote them a letter indicating what I had done, and told them about Ernest. I think it softened the feeling. Of course his family felt the same way. We sometimes feel that our families are the only ones that protest these things. But actually the foreign families react even more violently than we Westerners do to these inter-marriages.

Ariff: Whom else did you marry?

Blaisdell: Well, I can give you a list. There was, of course, my own daughter, that I married in the Josephine Bell Blaisdell Room. My own son I married just after he

Blaisdell: returned from the Second World War, where he was a pilot. This was done in Dr. Cross's church. This was one time I broke down and did a ceremony in a church.

Ariff: Lawrence Cross?

Blaisdell: Yes, Lawrence Cross, who was very co-operative and understood the situation, so we conducted the wedding ceremony of my son there. My son married the daughter of Professor James Martin of Soil Technology at the University, who has since retired and is now deceased.

Some of the earlier marriages--Florence Walne and Mr. Farquar^h; he was the director of University Press, and she a former member of the staff of International House. Mrs. Sanford, who was office manager and later business manager of International House, married a former resident of the house, and this was conducted in the then Home Room. On through the years, I married--only recently--the daughter of Professor George Foster of Anthropology. Mr. Robert Radcliffe, an eminent architect in Berkeley--I married two of his daughters: one in 1960 and one in 1965. I married the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Petray; he is a businessman in the Bay Area, she is a member of the faculty of the music department--Brook Petray and Marjorie Petray.

Blaisdell: Then a very interesting occasion occurred. We had been friends, through the years, of a refugee Jewish couple, who had spent three years underground in Denmark and then escaped to the United States. His first wife, who was very close to us in many ways, died, and he decided to marry a widow who was related to the family but was living in Chile. She came up here, and a simple ceremony was held for them in our own home parlor.

You can see that many of these were either so personal or were dealing with circumstances that could not be met by the organized religious churches or synagogues. These two were liberal Jews and had no relationship with any church. It was a very lovely, simple ceremony here. Then, my own mother died, in the early forties, after a long period of illness, and my father married an old family friend; and I married them in the Home Room. I think it was around 1943.

Ariff: Whom did your father marry?

Blaisdell: Mother Anne--Stickney was her former married name.

Then Dr. Torres-Rioseco of the Spanish department I married in the Home Room, in 1949. Then, in their home, I married the daughter of Dr. Carl O. Sauer of the geography department. A rather interesting episode

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Blaisdell: was connected with that marriage--some years later I was on jury duty in Oakland, and I was called for this jury and there were challenges as to whether any of the jury knew the attorneys or any of the participants in the suit. I indicated that I didn't know anybody, but the lawyer for the defense rose and said, "Well, Mr. Blaisdell doesn't remember it, but he married me." That was the son-in-law of Dr. Sauer!

Then I married the daughter of Dr. Paul Taylor of the department of economics, in 1955; then friends of my children, Dorothy Mel, who is Mrs. Kulp; and a Nancy Black, who is married to a Stanley ^{Noyes} ~~Nogu~~. They are ceremonies I performed.

I remember one interesting episode with one of those marriages. The groom and I, and the best man, were waiting for the ceremony to begin, and it was a little delayed. I saw that the groom was very nervous, and I asked him whether he didn't want a drink, and he said by all means he did, so I handed him a glass of water. And he never forgave me! He said he wanted something much stronger to steady his nerves!

Then I married a former secretary of International House, a Nisei, Lily Fukui. I have never known what happened to them.

Blaisdell: I married Professor Charles Tobias. He was a former resident of International House, and his wife was a former member of International House. He is in the department of chemical engineering here. He was a refugee from Hungary, right after the war. His brother had lived in International House before the war. Afterwards we were able to get him, and later, through their influence, they were able to get the whole family into the United States from Hungary. I assisted them, in some degree, in getting proper visas, and so forth.

Then I performed the marriage of the daughter of Professor Harold Jones, of psychology, who was the founder of the Child Study Center. He later died in Paris, France.

There was an interesting young fellow at International House, name of Jean Revoir; I've never known what became of him.

Ariff: Did you perform his marriage?

Blaisdell: Yes.

Then I married the daughter of Dr. William Donald, who was in charge of Cowell Hospital at that time, in 1943, I think. Her husband was killed in Korea, and she married again. But I did not preside at the second

Blaisdell: ceremony.

That is some of the list, to show you the reach of relationship within the University community. It was very highly appreciated--I have letters of warm appreciation from the various faculty members--that there was a service of this kind available, to which people could turn when they had no relationships with organized religions, or where there was a complication of interreligious relationships. I felt that it, rather than detracting from International House, brought us and the house into close relationship, into appreciative relationship with the University in general.

Ariff: Yes. It would serve as an integrating influence. That was somewhat the concept of the house.

Blaisdell: I never extended, as I say, beyond these intimate, personal relationships. I protected myself against unfortunate situations that might develop with this, and turned down many requests simply because I had no relationship with the people who requested the service. I might indicate too that along this line, I conducted the funeral of Florence Walne Farquar. We had been very close friends, and I was asked by Mr. Farquar to do this. However, that, I think, was about the only funeral ceremony that I conducted.

Blaisdell: I custom-tailored the wedding ceremonies to the individuals. I never used the formal church ceremony, because so much of the verbiage of that seemed to me to be completely outworn and meaningless. So I used my own phraseology and I always conferred with the young people, and said, "Now, you can write your own vows if you wish to, saying exactly what you want to say in the way of promises to each other." And also I would indicate to them that if they were from varied religious backgrounds there might be phrases or sentences that could be used from those earlier religions. It was very interesting to see these young people work seriously on their ceremonies. I remember one of the last ones--the young couple even protested against use of the Lord's Prayer. I was always ready to acknowledge the traditional things that seemed to be meaningful, but without doing violence to the intellectual concept of religion; but they didn't even want that, so we searched out phrases or a paragraph that could take its place, from some literature that they thought was relative to their relationship and to their life. This led to very interesting discussions. They really took these things rather seriously. It wasn't just a formal thing. But I insisted that each

Blaisdell: ceremony should be phrased in a way that related to the individuals involved. For instance, when I married my father--he and Mother Anne wanted to draw the two families close together, so I referred to the earlier family life of them both, and so forth. But this is the kind of thing I could do. I wasn't tied to the formal church phraseology which had always bothered me.

I suppose that if Bishop Pike were to be placed on trial for heresy, if they wanted to the church could place me in the same position; but nobody has ever protested this, as it has not come to public attention. But, as you see, once you are a minister, or a clergyman, you have the prerogatives of the clergy, regardless of your retired status from formal activity within the church; and it cannot be denied unless the church organization takes some action to deny you that privilege. This is the basis on which I operate.

Religious Philosophy

Ariff: Tell me, do you think that since the time that you retired from preaching, back in New York state and Massachusetts, that your religious views have changed very much?

Blaisdell: Oh, yes. Very markedly.

Ariff: In what way?

Blaisdell: I've become a complete secularist in my philosophy. I have come to the feeling that religion is a creation of man's mind, that he has created it out of his fears and his aspirations, and his thinking about the universe in which he is, and he postulates his theories of God and the unknown. I never quarrel with a person who wants to make his postulates out into the unknown, but what I've reacted against is making those postulates so sanctioned or so sacred that they can't be questioned. The churches use the word "truth" in regard to their theology. Well, truth is relative, and my feeling is that if one wants to postulate into the unknown, that's his business. But to assign them the sanctity of truth, eternal truth, and not be ready to place his postulates into the marketplace of discussion as to what is true and what isn't true, is not acceptable to me. I can talk perfectly easily and in a friendly manner with an open-minded person who has religious points of view, provided he does not impose upon me and close the discussion by saying, "This is true and what you believe is not true." I remember in the early days I was related to the

Blaisdell: organization--I've forgotten the name of it now, it still exists--of the Prestant, Jew, Catholic. In the discussions with the Catholic you were perfectly free to discuss up to a certain point; and then he would say, "Beyond that point I am not free to discuss because it is designated by the church that it is final, and that it's not open to discussion." This seemed to me to narrow the area of intellectual give and take so markedly that the dialogue was not promising or hopeful in developing relationship.

Ariff: I know what you mean. There was a very similar situation many years ago relating to the party line in Communism.

Blaisdell: Yes.

Ariff: One could discuss music up to a certain point, up to a certain period--up to Debussy. Any music after that period was bourgeois, capitalistic music, and did not exist--art, the same way.

Blaisdell: Well, in the article I sent to you in the Blaisdell Journal, I have dealt with this. I came to realize that the progress of civilization, if it is called "progress" (and I think we have made advances in human relations), may be due in some degree to the church, or to religions.

Blaisdell: On the other hand, it was only as many forms of culture broke from the religious organization of the churches, that those cultural things did develop. For instance, take music. Some of the most beautiful music is religious music. At the same time, it was in the confines of the theology then existing. Only as it broke from the church did music begin to develop its much broader secular influence in cultures. The same way with art--art in the early days was confined to the religious theology of the time. One could not break from it. But later when it did break, art gained a new freedom.

 Or take the cultural approach to human relations, such as the Negro. It was only as our concept broke from the church, which maintained that the Negro was inferior and therefore he could be enslaved--which was upheld by the church--that the whole civil rights movement began to develop. The churches, by and large, were not in the forefront of developing civil rights; they were in the background. That struggle is on today, whether the churches can take initiative in the forward reach of civil liberties.

 Take the field of economics--the church didn't initiate the right for workers to unionize. On the

Blaisdell: contrary, they stood against it, because the churches were made up largely of the owners of industry who sought to protect themselves against the intrusion of unions, and so forth. So, outside the church was a great area of secular development that was resisted in the first instance by the church itself, so the church became an instrument of the status quo. I ran into this in New England and New York, as I told you, in my experience in the church in Utica, New York. The employers were in the church, not the working people; and when I took the side of the working people, I became persona non grata to the church itself because I was moving against the interests of the members of the church, who were the employers. All this began to pile in upon me.

Only as I went further and began to read further, did I see what was happening. Then, of course, my theological points of view changed radically, until I am a complete secularist, without denying the parts of my inheritance that came from organized religion. I could be selective, whereas before I had to accept the whole thing, lock, stock, and barrel; but now I could become selective.

Ariff: When you say that you are a secularist, what is this?

Blaisdell: Let's say that I'm a non-theist.

Ariff: A non-theist. Does this mean that you're agnostic?

Blaisdell: I dislike terms, just as I dislike commenters who use the term "Communist" in challenging people with liberal points of view. I don't believe you can organize secularism. I am a non-theist. I use that phrase so that it does not carry with it the connotations that agnosticism has built up over the years. I presume the word "agnostic" would be all right, but I avoid using terms of this kind.

Ariff: Yes, it does have rather a negative connotation.

Blaisdell: For instance, in a society such as today, if one says he's agnostic, why, he's immediately assumed to be a Communist, and should be deported to Russia. This comes up all the time. There's so much going on today in this field that I'm growingly interested in following, not only Bishop Pike but the "God is Dead" movement and the New Theologians that are coming along, attempting to establish religious theology in line with non-theistic points of view. It's a very serious, very impressive and interesting movement that is fascinating to me--how we're struggling out of the concepts that have encumbered organized religion; and Bishop Pike is symbolic of that movement

Blaisdell: in our area today. I'm following that with great interest, largely because of my past relationship with the church and my growth out of it in this respect.

Ariff: It would seem that progress is hampered by pigeon-holing.

Blaisdell: The use of the word "truth" is the most dangerous one to maintain. Here are all the denominations insisting that their brand of religion is truth. I visited friends of mine, who are of the Mormon faith, up in Salt Lake City recently. When you see all the superstition that moves not only in that particular organization of religion, but in all religions--and we're going to be shaken very seriously, I'm sure, by later developments of the Dead Sea scrolls, in which the very existence of Jesus may be questioned. Certainly it's going to show that much we thought Jesus said was never said by him at all, but was an expression of the philosophy of the Essenes, which was an outgrowth of the Jewish religious background, and who were finally wiped out completely by the Romans--or by the Jews, we don't know which, yet. But there is much going to be discovered that is going to shake the very foundations of the Christian theology

Blaisdell: and background and belief.

Then when you begin to compare religions, it comes out in the open; why have people any more right to say that Christianity is true than the Buddhists, or the Shintoists, or the Taoists, or the Mohammedans? What must be done is to compare them in terms of their values to humanity--which seems better because of contributing to a philosophy that brings peace and order into the world, rather than how much they can fight among themselves and bring dissension.

Actually, organized religion has been responsible for some of the most brutal and cruel experiences in human history. You can read the Bible and find within the Bible things that by any person of any degree of honesty and fair play cannot be accepted: "Thou shalt dash their children's heads against the stone," the fall of Jericho--all those were brutal things. They are incorporated in what people call the sacred literature, and you had to take the whole thing, lock, stock, and barrel. You can't do that any more. You have to be selective, just as you have to do with literature. and music and art today. I think that's enough on my theology. It's not unusual. The pains of growth and development along these lines are going

Blaisdell: on all over the world. The church has become in many respects irrelevant to many people, and growingly so. And it is this breakdown of the so-called "moral control of organized religion" that is leading to a circumstance that is very disturbing, because we have lost any organized moral standards for society; and somehow we've got to build up a secular moral code that will hold us. How this is to be brought about I don't know. But this is a thing which, in my retirement, I am considerably interested in.

As a member of the Blaisdell Institute on World Cultures and Religions down at Claremont, as I have referred to earlier, I am interested in it only so far as it can study the whole question of what is happening to organized religion and how we can be drawn together in common agreement as to what is to the welfare of human society and what isn't. In fact, I have just written a long letter on that to one of the board, who is disturbed because the Institute has not moved into this area dynamically enough. It is associated with the colleges, and the men at the colleges are more interested in depth research than they are in attacking current issues and bringing the minds of people to bear upon the current issues of

Blaisdell: religious thinking and breakdown. This will come, I think, in the long run.

Ariff: I think you have really hit upon the core of the problem.

Blaisdell: It's very hard to get these matters before educational institutions, because educational institutions must be very scholarly, and the individuals cannot threaten their scholastic standing--their scholarly standing--by doing things that are not based on thorough research. So they spend their time, from my point of view, on research, so much that they never come to the conclusions of the research and what must be done. All that we do so frequently in these matters is to appoint committees to study matters and do surveys. Then we never follow the surveys out with direct action, and we're in an era of direct action, and scholars had better adjust themselves to the whole field of direct action, rather than being lost in the laboratory or in the study, doing depth research. I have nothing against research; I think much of it is very important, but it has to be related to things that are important to human society. I think it would be interesting to go over the Ph.D. theses that are on file at the University, and see how relevant those

Blaisdell: theses may be to other than just the scholastic mind at work.

Typical Week

Ariff: I wondered whether you could describe a typical day that you have now that you're retired.

Blaisdell: They vary a great deal. It would be better to take it for a week or a month, because things don't come in one day.

Ariff: Then, perhaps a week...

Blaisdell: For instance, yesterday I went to Hayward to attend a meeting of the board of directors of the Alameda County Planned Parenthood, which has a center in Hayward. That lasted for--well, I left at eleven o'clock and got back at three. Then that evening we went to San Francisco Airport to meet Christine's sister, who was coming.

Last weekend it was the entertainment of Jill Silver, as I've indicated, from Japan. A week or two before that, it was entertaining Peter Durr of Germany, and Luke Yuan, of the Brookhaven Institute on atomic physics.

During the past two weeks, I have spent several

Blaisdell: days on a panel of the United Bay Area Crusade, helping in developing the budgets for the Legal Aid Societies of the Bay Area: Marin county, San Francisco county, San Mateo county, and Alameda county. That's taken a great deal of time. Then when Mrs. Aaron Gordon was running for the city council, I was on her committee, and was treasurer of her committee.

Ariff: As you said, there's nothing very typical about your weeks.

Blaisdell: There's nothing typical about them. They vary from time to time, and I meet circumstances as they come up. Of course, when I get all fed up with civilization, as I am today, and wonder if it's worth saving, I just go down in my shop and work with the lathe. I can't afford to let my mind roam, or I'll cut a thumb off. Then I get out in the garden and "commune with nature." This takes my mind off anxieties in regard to the world as it looks to me today. Then, of course, we go to Inverness for weekends, and we very frequently take friends with us. So we have a delightful weekend together.

Then we do some traveling. Last January we went to Mexico and spent the whole month traveling in Mexico, driving in Mexico with friends of ours who

Blaisdell: could interpret Mexico to us. So there's nothing typical day to day. Really, even from month to month, it varies as new circumstances develop new issues. For instance, on Monday I spent the whole morning writing a letter to the San Francisco Chronicle, which they won't print, protesting against the games that have developed around the oil companies and the food stores --trading stamps--saying that this should be taken into account when we protest against the cost of living going up.

Ariff: Well, we've covered quite a number of years in your busy life. I'd like to thank you for letting me talk to you all these hours.

APPENDIX

ADDRESSES DELIVERED by A. C. BLAISDELL
SEPTEMBER 1928 THROUGH APRIL 1929

A sample of the number and variety
of meetings to which Mr. or Mrs.
Blaisdell brought information on
the foreign student program.

ADDRESSES DELIVERED
A. C. Blaisdell

Sunday	Sept. 23, 1928.	Filipino Group.	Brief address.
Thursday	Sept. 27	Outlook Club in Oakland.	Brief outline.
Tuesday	Octob. 2	At home Dr. Evans of Pacific School of Religion	Brief outline. Dinner with faculty of School.
Wednesday	Oct. 3	Rotary Club	On invitation Dr. Sproul.
Friday	Oct. 5	At home of Dr. Fisher, Assoc. Minister Congregational Church.	Brief outline. Strong exception taken by Dr. Swartz of Pac.School Relig.
Tuesday	Oct. 23	Northbrae Community Church.	Luncheon talk by Mrs. Blaisdell.
Tuesday	Nov. 6	Hillel House	Invitation from Rabbi Goldstein.
Friday	Nov. 2	So. Calif. Committee on the Cause and Cure of War at L.A.	Invitation of Mrs. Gibson.
Tuesday	Nov. 13	San Francisco Theological Seminary at San Anselmo	On invitation from Dr. White.
Friday	Nov. 23	Berkeley Hi-Twelve Club - Masonic Group of which Mr. Ocheltree is a member.	
Saturday	Dec. 1	Mt. Holyoke Alumni	Mrs. Blaisdell spoke on invitation ^{and} Ralph Fisher.
Sunday	Dec. 16	Parents' Club of First Congregational Church, Oakland.	Invitation of Prof. Stone, Law Department.
Saturday	Dec. 22	Americanization Dinner, Concord.	Brief address on invitation Mrs. Darst.
Wednesday	Jan. 16, 1929.	Mobilized Women of Berkeley	Spoke on invitation Mrs. Stratton.
Thursday	Jan. 17	Sixteenth District of Calif. Parent Teachers Association and International Relations Seminar of Womens' City Club.	Veterans Memorial Bldg. Berkeley. Spoke on invitation Mrs. Grady.
Tuesday	Jan. 22	Golden Gate College at YMCA, S.F.	On invitation Mr. Mack.
Wednesday	Jan. 23	Mothers' Club of U. of C.	Invitation Mrs. Mouser.
Thursday	Jan. 24	Rockridge Womens' Club	Invitation Mrs. Grady.

Pres. of all Womens Clubs in Berkeley

Monday	January 28, 1929	Oakland Forum	Invitation Mrs. Turner
Monday	Feb. 4	Town and Gown Club, Berkeley	Invitation Mrs. Hinckley
Saturday	Feb. 16	Cosmopolitan Club, Y. W. C. A. Hut	Invitation Mr. Abelarde
Friday,	Feb. 22	Fellowship of Races, Y.W.C. A. Hut	Invitation Mrs. Dobbins
March 7		Fellowship of Churches at Richmond Miss ^h helma Brown, Musician	Invitation Mr. C. C. Kratzer and Rev. Mr. Webb of the Christian Church
Monday,	March 11	Men's Union, Congregational Church, Berkeley	Invitation by Mr. Mend, representatives of various church clubs present.
Tuesday,	March 12	The Art Industrial Club of Oakland, at the home of Mrs. Emma Bolner, 3321 Market Street, Oakland--a group of Negro women.	Invitation of Miss Beasley
Sunday,	March 17.	First Congregational Church, Fresno,--morning service and at Forum in the evening.	
Wednesday,	March 27.	Foreign Trade Fraternity, Economics Department of U. of C.	Invitation of Mr. J. P. Webster.
Wednesday,	April 17.	Pacific School of Religion Chapel	Asked by Dr. Saunders
Monday,	April 22.	Foreign Trade Club, Chamber of Commerce, San Francisco.	Invitation by Mr. Montgomery
Friday,	April 26.	California Federation of Women's Clubs, San Francisco District, San Jose.	Through Extension Dept. of University.

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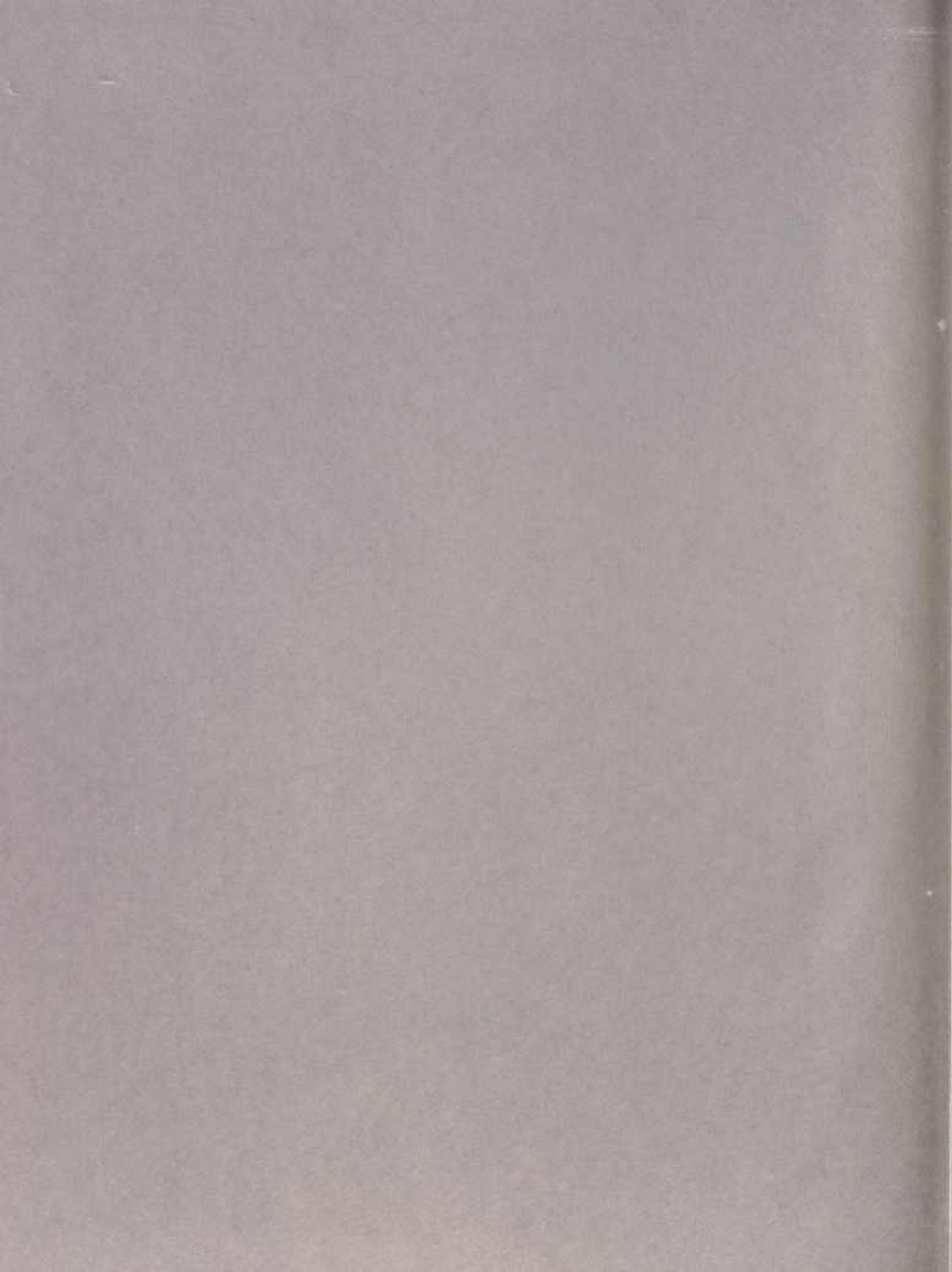
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Joann Dietz Ariff

Born 1929 in Newark, New Jersey.
Attended New Jersey College for Women
(Rutgers), Columbia University, and Seton
Hall College.
Graduated in Latin American history from
University of California at Berkeley 1949.
Did graduate work in economics at Berkeley;
Lived in International House, Berkeley.
Studied painting and printmaking at the
University of Mexico 1953; continued this
study at schools in the United States for
next five years.
Lived in Calcutta, India, for two years.
Worked in Brazilian Consulate, San Francisco.
Assistant to research director of National
Foreign Trade Council; assistant to general
manager of an import-export company in New
York; assistant to the statistical director
of the market research division at the
American Weekly.



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