

International Balboa Park: The House of Pacific Relations

By James Vaughn

The House of Pacific Relations (HPR) resides in one of the world's most beautiful venues. Located directly across from the Spreckels Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park, San Diego, the organization occupies nineteen different cottages rather than a single house. Although it is now best known for its Sunday afternoon lawn programs and festivities, this organization boasts a long and proud history of "international cooperation" dating back to 1935. Dignitaries and foreign ministers, most notably president and first lady Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, have toured

its premises and been greeted on its lawn.¹



Foreign Nations Haciendas, 1935. ©SDHC #89:17738.

This article provides an overview of the organization's rich history, beginning in 1935 with the California Pacific International Exposition from which the HPR arose and ending with the House of Palestine in 2003. From its founding, the HPR was an organization that was internationalist and diverse, looking to create a better world

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through understanding and tolerance. Underlying this framework, however, were American nationalist sentiments that revealed themselves through exhibitions of American cultural forms, displays of patriotism, and an inherent belief in American ideals. The HPR claimed to have global importance and fame but, after World War II, its most important work took place at the community level. The organization brought together people of different nationalities to share their cultures, doing so in a way that celebrated America as the ultimate purveyor of these ideals.

Background and Bylaws

The House of Pacific Relations (HPR), founded as part of the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park, was intended to be an “experiment



Frank Drugan, first director of the House of Pacific Relations. ©SDHC Research Archives.

in international harmony” that drew together representatives of thirty-two nations.² The word “Pacific” in the title meant peaceful. Frank Drugan, executive secretary of the exposition and a former field representative for the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain, served as the HPR’s first director. Fifteen Spanish-vernacular style cottages were constructed on the site of the Montana State Exhibition from the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Over the course of the 1935 exposition, the organization produced over fifty major cultural programs featuring dancers and singers in their native costumes.³ Drugan believed that a successful exposition should “fascinate and instruct” the minds and imaginations of the audience and

promoted “dramatized entertainment” rather than “beautiful symbolism.”⁴

Drugan was enthusiastic about the potential of the HPR, particularly after hearing that President Franklin Roosevelt had praised the endeavor. Drugan initially imagined that the organization would become “a permanent Latin-American clearing house of vital economic, political, and social information,” and anticipated government funding. He told *The San Diego Union*, “The President enthusiastically indicated his wish that San Diego in this way would develop something lasting from the Exposition.” Drugan envisioned a perpetual exposition “for all nations of the hemisphere, subsidized by our own government as an



House of Pacific Relations. ca. 1935. ©SDHC #82:13422.

effective agency for the perpetuation of peace and profitable relationships among all." He and others thought it had the potential to make San Diego "a great international city." To that end, he formed an advisory committee of leading San Diego businessmen that petitioned the city to continue the activities of the HPR.⁵

In 1936, civic leaders permitted the HPR to remain in Balboa Park under the direction of Drugan. The organization was allowed to occupy the 15 cottages already built, without charge. Elated, Drugan spoke in lofty terms about the growing crisis in the world, the lackluster outcomes of the various disarmament conferences, and the role the HPR could take in offering "a healthy distraction from the quarrels now oppressing it." Its aim would be to "provide a natural, healthful means of keeping the international mind from going insane under the sordid strain that world events are putting upon it."⁶

In 1937, the first cottages belonged to the British Empire, China, Italy, Japan, Latin America, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, and the Irish Free State. Mexico and Sweden were slated to join shortly. By 1948, Denmark, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Scotland, Poland, Finland, Hungary, Switzerland, France, and the United States had joined.

The original bylaws of the HPR from 1937 provide valuable insight into the flavor and spirit of the basis of the organization. Article II described how the HPR served to "promote a better acquaintance with constitutional government," specifically aligning with the Constitution of the United States and its four



Women from the House of Germany, 1951. ©SDHC Research Archives.

guaranteed freedoms of speech, assembly, religion, and political belief.⁷ The bylaw further clarified this rule by stating that political beliefs shall be tolerated as long as they do not interfere with the first three freedoms. This hearkens to a distinctly American conceptualization of governance. In fact, the propagation of this type of government was one of the HPR's primary functions.

Americanization was intrinsically tied to the organization's desire to promote understanding among various nationalities. By citing freedoms of religion and

political belief, the bylaw allowed for those from varying backgrounds, or different nations, to express themselves through cultural exhibitions as they saw fit. This conceptualization of tolerance and freedom, in some respects, fit neatly within the idea of the American "Melting Pot" that had been envisaged in response to the massive influx of immigrants during the preceding decades. Immigrants were supposed to "become American," molding and reshaping their old ways to assimilate into a new society that was envisioned as hopeful, optimistic, and fair. Arthur Schlesinger described a "Melting Pot" as a society that viewed its ideal self as unilingual and primarily Anglo-Saxon in cultural form. Its citizens would become representatives of "a new race of man."⁸

The HPR did not seek to homogenize various peoples under one Anglo-Saxon banner, however. Instead, it saw itself as an organization that preserved and celebrated different cultures through education, song, and dance. Its membership included representatives from several different European countries, Latin America, China, and Japan.⁹ The original HPR statement of purpose stated that the cottages existed in order to "promote social and cultural education by the rendition of programs by members of the respective cottages typical of their native culture."¹⁰ The most notable example of this education remains the Sunday afternoon lawn program, produced by a different cottage every week to highlight its respective culture. Native languages were included as a part of their culture; the HPR housed speakers of a panoply of languages as opposed to only condoning those who spoke English.¹¹

Article III of the bylaws dealt with the membership and composition of the HPR. Of special note are the first two lines stating that a member of the HPR must be a citizen of the United States and be “of good character and reputation.”¹² This section adds the resolve to have membership requirements irrespective of race, even though a person’s national origin was certainly a determining factor for membership in an individual house, as “the membership of the House of Pacific Relations [was to be divided] according to Nationality into groups called ‘Cottages.’”¹³ Becoming a member of a cottage automatically made one a member of the HPR as well. The authors of the bylaws implicitly stipulated a difference between race and nationality. The HPR sought to focus on people’s cultural differences and richness, educating the public at large about them, rather than to highlight differences in appearance or supposed mental capacity. In this, it was a progressive organization touting ideas that sound strikingly modern during a time when eugenics flourished, racism abounded, and a world war loomed.

Americanization

The bylaws of the HPR established a uniquely American framework for the organization that found expression in a variety of ways. In 1937, the HPR hosted a



Gathering at the House of Mexico, ca. 1935. ©SDHC #86:15877-122.

“Festival and Dance” for Thanksgiving. While various countries and nationalities around the world had their own traditions for the giving of thanks, Thanksgiving was a uniquely American holiday. The festival included performances from each of the cottages of the HPR. They often took on a national flavor, such as the “Scottish National Dance” expounded by performers sponsored by the house of the British Empire. Others, such as the performance of “*Nadie me Quiere*” sponsored by the Latin American house, simply exhibited a popular cultural form rather than reflecting nationalistic sentiment.¹⁴ While each individual national group performed on its own, they all came together at the end of the show to lead the audience in singing “God Bless America” before the general dance began. The HPR symbolically sought to achieve a common ground among them via their new American homeland.¹⁵

Likewise, the fourth annual Fiesta of Nations in 1942, sponsored by the HPR, had an overarching American theme. The program included traditional folk music and dances such as “Krakowiak,” a traditional Polish folk dance, and “When Irish Eyes are Smiling,” by the Irish cottage. The beginning and end of the program, meanwhile, reminded those present about the stars and stripes uniting the diverse performers. The opening ceremonies consisted of the singing of the Star Spangled Banner and the presentation of colors by a color guard from the ROTC at San Diego High School. The festivities were concluded with a speech given by Carl Joachim (C.J.) Hambro, who was president of the League of Nations at that time and also president of the Norwegian parliament, entitled “The Melting Pot.” The printed program provided the names of women, or “Queens,” who represented their cottages and nations. The very first name on the list, however, was “Uncle Sam” played by a male, Allan Davis.¹⁶

After World War II, the HPR cooperated with other organizations that promoted American values. In 1952, the HPR assisted in a production, “This is America: An Evening of Brotherhood,” by the Race Relations Commission of the San Diego Council of Churches.¹⁷ The event featured cultural performances from various nations as well as displays of American nationalist sentiment. People at the time often used the terms “race,” “ethnicity,” and even “nationality” interchangeably in everyday speech, but there was a clear difference between the mission of the Race Relations Commission and the HPR as the latter specifically sought peace between nations. Nevertheless, the two groups shared common values.

The HPR was also an active proponent of Christmas, hosting an annual Christmas Pageant in which traditional Christmas carols were performed and sung. It recognized Christmas as both a universal celebration and one that represented an essential part of what it meant to be a twentieth-century American. There was pageantry, lights, glitter, and a Santa whose mission covered the whole

world in one night, bringing presents and joy to children of all nationalities and cultures. In 1943, members wrote, "The immediate program for this organization is to invite and assimilate all of the various nationalities of American citizens who live in San Diego."¹⁸

In the early 1940s, the HPR under President John Johnson began a relationship with the Adult Education Department of the San Diego School District. Lenore Panunzio, superintendent of the district's Americanization work, discussed with Johnson joint activities such as a radio forum entitled "New Americans," "I am an American," or "We the People."¹⁹ San Diego's Americanization work was a part of a larger federal project called the National Citizenship Education Program that appropriated \$14 million for the education of those born in other countries, in conjunction with the Immigration and Naturalization Service. While the Americanization Department was especially interested in the education of foreign-born Americans, it also sought to educate those born in the United States and to bring the two groups closer together. It viewed HPR as an ideal partner as the latter could represent and gather together representatives from San Diego's various immigrant and ethnic groups. Both organizations sought to educate "all foreign-born groups" in American symbolism, values, and culture while allowing them to preserve their own traditions.

The HPR also began a tradition of close interaction and involvement with the US military. In 1952, Ruth Pearson, the president of the HPR, asked the Marine



Board Members (L-R) Jeanette Lundberg, Hans Jepsen, Ruth Pearson, Frank Steiner, John Johnson, Magdalene Poltere, Charles Winkler; House of Pacific Relations, 1953. ©SDHC Research Archives.



Mrs. Hagan in the House of Norway, 1958.
©SDHC Research Archives.

Corps for their usual assistance in providing a color guard for the annual Fiesta of Nations. In her letter, she stated, "We usually have a number which is representative of the thought that the US is a melting pot for various nationalities, and the color guard is symbolic of the US, with the statue of liberty against a background of the costumed people in our organization."²⁰ It is interesting to note that these requests were made less than a decade after the Navy's wartime occupation of the cottages during which, notoriously, the Russian cottage had been ransacked. Old qualms were quickly forgotten, however, as the HPR needed something to provide a very American flair to ground the festivities of the Fiesta of Nations within a traditional American context. Singing the National

Anthem and the presentation of colors by a military color guard served as salient reminders for the audience and diverse participants that, despite their various differences, they were now all Americans, first and foremost.

Despite the HPR's broad commitment to preserving immigrant cultures within an American context, not all San Diegans approved of their activities. In 1950, Mrs. Fred Kleimann criticized the HPR in a letter to the editor of *The San Diego Union*. She wrote, "It would be a safeguard to our young Americans to do away with those cliques and foreign flags and clinging to old-country traditions. They were glad to leave their native lands. Let them teach young Americans the beauty of the U.S.A." She continued, "We are a new nation. People should spread out and mix. Some of those old-country races need new blood mixtures to clean up a one-track mind. There should be but one flag in Balboa Park."²¹ Ruth Pearson, vice president of the HPR, responded, "This local organization has long been recognized by people from many parts of the United States, and even from across the waters, as a small United Nations," assuming that most people saw the UN as a beneficial organization with positive ideals. She described HPR as a club where foreign speakers could communicate in their own language and a venue in which young people could learn about the arts and culture of "the old country." She emphasized that members of the HPR, if questioned, would all reply "I am an American," and that most were US citizens.²² Kleimann, who had attended activities at the HPR, responded that she, too, was a foreign-born citizen who



The United States House, 1959. ©SDHC Research Archives.

had “worked side by side with many races of people.” She insisted, “And if a person becomes a citizen, he renounces the old for the new. He can be but a son of America.”²³

Kleimann was not alone in emphasizing the importance of embracing American culture at a time when it appeared to be challenged by Communist ideals. The period between 1950 and 1956 experienced what has been called the Second Red Scare, marked by fear that American institutions were being undermined by Soviet agents. US Senator Joseph McCarthy led an anti-Communist political campaign that targeted thousands of Americans suspected of being sympathetic to the Soviet Union. Kleimann’s opinions were indicative of a deeper societal tendency during the early 1950s to combat anything that seemed foreign or “un-American.”

As an organization dedicated to internationalism, the HPR likely attracted the attention of The House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). In 1954, it responded to social pressures calling for national solidarity and uniformity by voting that each cottage could decide whether or not to display its national flag.²⁴ Instead of backing down in the face of external pressure, the organization continued to encourage the display of flags from other nations but it allowed the cottages to act as semi-autonomous units. If the HPR was analogous to the



United Nations Building-House of Pacific Relations. Editors' collection.

federal government of the United States, and its cottages to American states, then the HPR made a bold statement about the nature of freedom in politics and society that flew in the face of an expanded Cold War government of the 1950s that tolerated and encouraged censorship and conformity.

In 1963, Balboa Park celebrated its annual Pageant of the Patriots with a 17-nation re-dedication of the House of Pacific Relations to America. The “queen” of each cottage marched to the stage of Spreckels Pavilion, along with a flag and a representative patriot, to greet Rear Admiral Leslie Gehrnes, USN, ret., then President of the HPR. Hungary’s cottage used George Udvary to represent Hungary’s 1956 Freedom Fighters. Udvary had participated in the nationwide revolt against the government of the Hungarian People’s Republic and its Soviet-imposed policies. He told *The San Diego Union*, “I was in the revolt...I just plain had to leave.”²⁵

American citizenship and the American flag found very prominent places at the HPR during the 1950s and 1960s. The letterhead of the House of Denmark showed the flag of the United States and the flag of Denmark, side by side. The recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance became a common occurrence at HPR functions and festivals like the Autumn Festival in 1968. In 1971, the HPR’s letterhead listed the nationalities represented by the organization in alphabetical order, with the exception of the United States which was placed first. Beginning in 1969, the HPR even hosted its own naturalization ceremonies for newly arrived immigrants seeking to become citizens.²⁶

In the 1970s, HPR began to emphasize “ethnicity” rather than “nationality.” On

July 4, 1976, HPR celebrated the bicentennial anniversary of America's Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. A portion of a speech given at that ceremony read:

This organization incorporates and includes many of this country's virtues and ideals; it brings people of *various ethnic groups* to its membership, fostering and cultivating a spirit of understanding among peoples of diverse cultures and backgrounds. It strives to promote tolerance and goodwill among groups who have differing social and cultural backgrounds, while promoting and encouraging the retention and recognition of the contributions these various groups have made to our society and way of American life [emphasis added].²⁷

Members of the HPR continued to believe that there should be unity among the nationalities living under the American banner, but they adopted new language in the 1970s. The tone of this document sounds more modern, with its discussion of "differing social and cultural backgrounds," "tolerance," and "fostering and cultivating a spirit of understanding." The HPR was not isolated from the world. By 1976 "ethnicity" was in vogue, not "nationality." While the HPR remained essentially nationalistic, it adopted new language to maintain a progressive appearance in a world with modified terminologies and labels. This response represented a more nuanced form of Americanization as the HPR fell into line with the prevailing language used in American society.



House of Hungary. Editors' collection.



House of England. Editors' collection.

Community Involvement and Notable Guests

The HPR participated in a variety of events hosted by the San Diego community, particularly those involving music and dance. An important cultural form, music historically held a special place in the functions of the HPR. In May 1949, the HPR offered a musical concert and folk dance as part of National Music Week. They also participated in the musical "Music of California through the Years," showing the organization's commitment to the history of California and its musical traditions. In 1951, the HPR participated in "This is America," a presentation sponsored by the San Diego Civic Light Opera Association.²⁸ While it is unclear what exactly the program entailed, it is likely that the HPR sent people from various cottages who were talented musicians or dancers.

The HPR also established ties with local youth organizations, particularly the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and the Girl Scouts. These two groups dispensed a typically "American" formulation of the ideal young woman who was active and involved in her community. In 1950, the HPR assisted the YWCA with an event it hosted. In 1953, the HPR began providing educational programs for Girl Scout troops. The HPR lent the scouts flags intended to be used at their annual meeting. The HPR was invited by the local YWCA to provide a luncheon speaker to discuss the activities undertaken by the YWCA in its World Fellowship Activities. In 1962, a local Brownie troop asked to become associated with the HPR,

stating that the “interfaith and interracial composition [of their group made] unity with [the HPR] fascinating in its potential.” Finally, in 1966, the YWCA established a relationship specifically with the House of Finland, demonstrating the autonomy of individual houses to act apart from the HPR mainframe.²⁹

In 1950, the “Orchestra of the House of Pacific Relations” was formed under the directorship of Boris Picaizen. In addition to making music, the orchestra dedicated itself to the education of orphaned children, particularly who had lost parents in the Korean War, and who were “deprived of a musical education.” The Orchestra sought to collect funds to organize a school for these children, ages 6-14. It went to the Del Mar Fair and purchased government bonds as one way of building the fund. The presence and activities of the orchestra demonstrated the HPR’s commitment to both to music and a specifically “American” agenda.³⁰

HPR became locally renowned as an excellent source of multicultural dancers and musicians. In the late 1950s, both the San Diego Women’s Association and the Musical Merit Foundation of Greater San Diego asked the HPR to send dancers to perform at its monthly meeting. The Red Cross requested entertainment for its naval hospital in San Diego. Likewise, the National Federation of Music Clubs was grateful to the HPR for its fine provision of dancers at its annual meeting in San Diego. Most prominent among the organization’s performances in 1959 was its provision of entertainment for the Twelfth Session of the International Civil

Aviation Organization, at the request of the city of San Diego. The meeting hosted people at the apex of the aviation industry from 74 different nations.³¹

The HPR participated in more eclectic community events as well. In 1957, Autorama asked the HPR to provide authentic European singers to perform at an exhibition of European cars. In 1963, the group was invited to the First Annual Fallbrook Avocado Festival. It also provided Crawford High School with costumed performers.³² In 1967, the South Bay Travel Center invited the HPR to participate in its International Fair. This was



House of Spain. Editors’ collection.



House of Finland. Editors' collection.

an era in the HPR's history when it occasionally sent members on group flights and tours to Europe to visit their homelands.³³ In that same year, the HPR participated in Hi Deber Varsity's teen event "Hi Deber Varsity Around the World" and began participating in the annual "Trek to the Serra Cross," a yearly hike to the monument in San Diego.³⁴

The HPR also hosted a number of foreign dignitaries during their visits to San Diego. In 1941, the League of Nations President C.J. Hambro became the first notable person to visit the organization.

He returned in 1942 to attend the Fourth Fiesta of Nations mentioned above. *The San Diego Union* reported that Hambro presented John Johnson a gold medal from the members of the HPR in honor of the latter's work as president of the organization.³⁵ Crowned heads of Europe also came to Balboa Park. In 1939, the HPR hosted a luncheon "honoring their royal highnesses crown prince Olav and crown princess Martha of Norway."³⁶ Twenty years later, in 1959, the House of Sweden hosted a reception on the lawn of the HPR for the ambassador of Sweden with Princess Margaretha. HPR also sent ambassadors to foreign nations. In 1962, a "Mrs. Landry" went to England and France where she served as the "ambadress" of the HPR and the City of San Diego. While in England and Ireland she met with the mayors of York and Dublin and persuaded an English newspaper to mention the HPR. When HPR president Paul Dugan invited US President John F. Kennedy and others to be guests of honor at the 1962 Fiesta of Nations, the American Consulate General in Tijuana accepted the invitation.³⁷

Media outlets were also aware of, and interested in, the HPR. In 1952, the Gene Norman Show in Hollywood requested that the HPR send a representative to do a television interview about its annual Fiesta of Nations. In 1955, the Authenticated News in New York City requested that the HPR send photographs so they could do a picture story on the houses.³⁸ In 1969, *The San Diego Union* ran a special series on each international cottage, drawing attention to the various lawn parties.³⁹ To some degree, the HPR was San Diego's "go-to" organization for multicultural events and education.

The “Anti-Pacific” House of Pacific Relations

HPR was established to promote peaceful cooperation and educational activities, not debates about the merits of particular governments. In 1936, Drugan envisioned the HPR as “a practical test of brotherly love,” that would show the nations of the world how “to live together and play together more closely than disarmament conferences or other types of peace-societies that use the form of debate to provoke not agreement but disagreement.”⁴⁰ In its bylaws, HPR committed to acting as a strictly non-politically oriented organization.

During the Cold War, however, the HPR could not help but engage in political discussions. In 1955, Lieutenant Liang Tien-chia, a member of the House of China, gave a speech for an event at the HPR detailing a rosy view of China’s national past and an oppressed, degraded one of its communist present. He stated that “throughout our 5000 years of history, China [has] always been a peaceful nation” that treated its neighbors with kindness rather than force. He described Japan’s invasion in 1937 as a year the Chinese would forever remember with a heavy heart, and held up Chiang Kai-Shek as the hero who saved China from foreign imperialists. He also lauded Chiang Kai-Shek’s enlightened battle against communism, as the force of evil, in China. This was clearly a political speech in which the author praised nationalists and condemned communists but, given the anti-Communist fervor in the US, members of the audience might have viewed this distinction in moral categories rather than political ones.⁴¹

The rules were bent again in 1969 when members of the House of Ukraine spoke out against the Soviet Union. An article in *The San Diego Union* provided a brief history of Ukraine and its short-lived independence from Russia after World War I before mentioning the House of Ukraine and its upcoming lawn program. The house’s very existence, celebrating a nation that technically did not exist, revealed HPR’s hostility towards the Soviet Union’s domination of Ukraine. The article reported, “The members of the Cottage... have set aside Sunday as a day to remember that event and to rejoice at the independence of their country, even if it was short-lived.” Many HPC members, including Wasyl Trochoda who had spent ten years in a Soviet concentration camp, had fled



House of Ukraine. Editors’ collection.

Ukraine to find a new life in the United States. "For many of our members, life in the United States has given them the first opportunity to share their customs freely and practice the religion of the Orthodox church," according to Alex Skop, vice-president of the cottage. He continued, "Increasingly now, the young people are following a strong trend of defiance toward the Soviets." Ukrainian nationalist sentiment and American nationalism are both presented in *The San Diego Union*, which provides an example of the unique, fluid, and dynamic nature of HPR's relationship with the world they sought to represent and improve. Anti-Soviet discourse was not defined as "political" within the context of the Cold War period in America.⁴²

The Cold War took its toll upon relations within the HPR. In February 1947 Benjamin Vogonov, the president of the House of Russia, sent a letter to both the mayor of San Diego and the board of the HPR, detailing the destruction of murals and paintings on the walls of the cottage during the Navy's wartime occupation. He asked for reimbursement to be made for the damages. Shortly afterwards, A.F. Keddy, the secretary of the HPR, sent a letter to Vogonov chastising him for "overstepping [his] authority" and writing that he should have brought the matter to the attention of the board rather than approaching the mayor on his own. Keddy implied that the Russians were not the only victims and that the city was not to blame for their misfortune. He later apologized to the mayor and the city for the cottage's apparent belligerence.⁴³

Two days after Keddy sent the letter to the city, HPR's board of directors passed a resolution to accept the association's formation of a House of Poland. The Polish-American Association had long wanted to have a place in the HPR, particularly now that their country was dominated by the Soviet Union. The fact that the board held a special meeting to vote the House of Poland into existence suggests that this may have been a move to spite the Russian cottage, given the current political situation in Eastern Europe at the time.⁴⁴

In 1950, the House of England asked the HPR board of directors to combine the houses of Scotland, Canada, and England to form a Cottage of the British Commonwealth. The House of Scotland quickly sent a letter stating that it wished for the cottages to remain separate. It stated, "at this time in history, Scotland is standing on the verge of political separation from England, and it does not seem a very propitious time to change our status... it is the peoples and their cultures and not governments of nations which should be stressed." Scotland later offered a compromise: let the respective nationalities keep their own cottages while allowing for a British club.⁴⁵

In 1969, the Irish cottage wrote a letter addressed to all the cottages detailing how the president of the HPR and his vice-president had "invaded" the House



A crowd gathers in the open area to celebrate the unveiling of a statue in front of the House of Norway, 1937. ©SDHC #18076.

of Ireland and criticized the process used to expel some of its members, calling the president of the Irish cottage “a Hitler.” The letter used strong language to condemn the HPR president, stating that he had arrived unannounced and “berat[ed], condemn[ed], and malign[ed]” the board of directors of the cottage. The letter referenced HPR rules that allowed it to take the actions the HPR president had opposed. It also described questions posed to the “invader,” asking whether his actions represented “true democratic procedure.” In fact, the HPR president likely acted within the parameters of HPR’s democratic tradition. Democracies are inherently loud, messy, and prone to argumentative strife. The HPR, as a microcosmic representation of the greater world of nations, also embodied America’s democratic tradition.⁴⁶

Conclusion

The HPR blended American attitudes and patriotism with its international mission in a unique and dynamic way. Today, some organizations promote diversity and tolerance while others promote traditional American values; few promote both simultaneously. The HPR continues to promote international peace and goodwill among nations and to break with its nationalist tradition. In 2003, the organization accepted the House of Palestine under its international umbrella, despite the fact that Palestinians are a people rather than a sovereign nation. The House of Israel cast the first and most enthusiastic vote.⁴⁷ More than ever, the

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HPR exists to engage people through art, music, and culture rather than war and politics. It has been asserted that the HPR is the only organization of its kind in the world; this is not an unfounded claim. The House of Pacific Relations holds an important place in the history of San Diego and the chronicle of ethnic interactions in the United States.

NOTES

1. *The San Diego Union*, March 19, 1937, MS 158 Richard Amero Collection, SDHC Research Library.
2. Richard F. Pourade, *The History of San Diego: The Rising Tide* (San Diego: Union Tribune Publishing Company, 1967), 186.
3. Richard W. Amero, "San Diego Invites the World to Balboa Park a Second Time," *The Journal of San Diego History* 31, no. 4 (Fall 1985), PAGES; Roger M. Showley, *San Diego: Perfecting Paradise* (Carlsbad, California: Heritage Media Corporation, 1999), 109; Florence Christman, *The Romance of Balboa Park* (San Diego: The Committee of 100, 1977), 57.
4. Matt Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880-1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 196-97.
5. "S.D. Envisioned as Pan-Pacific Capital," *The San Diego Union*, November 17, 1935, A1, A6; "Keep Pacific Relations Unit at Expo, Civic Leaders' Plan," *The San Diego Union*, August 19, 1936, A1, A3.
6. *Ibid.*
7. House of Pacific Relations and International Cottages Collection, San Diego History Center, Scrapbook, 1937-1967 (hereafter HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967). All non-newspaper archival sources come from an unsorted collection currently titled "Scrapbook 68." The scrapbooks dealing with the HPR must be specifically asked for. They are very large and unwieldy brown notebooks containing all manner of paraphernalia, including letters, records, notes, programs, and the like, arranged semi-chronologically. The largest scrapbook contains almost 900 sources, the next largest almost 300. The same box also contains scrapbooks with pictures and one portfolio with sources detailing trips members of the HPR took to Europe.
8. Arthur Shlesinger, Jr., "The Return to the Melting Pot" in *From Different Shores: Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity in America*, ed. Ronald Takaki (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994; 2nd ed., 2007), 293.
9. House of Pacific Relations and International Cottages Collection, San Diego History Center, Programs (hereafter HPR Programs).
10. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967.
11. Today little has changed. Walk into any of the various houses and one is likely to hear all manner of languages being spoken, both by those in charge of the house as well as by residents of San Diego or those from abroad who have wandered in.
12. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967. While the citizenship requirement seems benign enough, at this time it was legally impossible for East Asian immigrants living in the US to become citizens. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 severely restricted immigration from East Asia and made it nearly impossible for those from that region who were not already citizens to attain citizenship. While the law was originally a temporary one, it was made permanent in 1902. The law would remain in effect until 1943 when the Magnusson Act was passed. It cannot be said for certain whether the framers of the HPR bylaws intended the citizenship requirement as exclusionary toward Asian immigrants or not. However, in 1937 there were cottages for Japan and China, suggesting that the bylaw framers were probably not aware of the various citizenship laws in place, or simply chose to ignore them.

13. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967.
14. "*Nadie me Quiere*" means "Nobody Loves Me." It is interesting to note that the early HPR had the house of the British Empire and the Latin American House, despite the fact that neither of these was a "nationality." The HPR often bent its own rules in its history: this is one example of such. However, while the British Empire was not one nation, the Scottish National Dance performed by members of that cottage was representative of a single nation.
15. HPR Programs.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. HPR Programs.
19. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967.
20. Ibid.
21. Mrs. Fred Kleimann, letter to the editor, *The San Diego Union*, May 27, 1950, A12.
22. Miss Ruth Pearson, letter to the editor, *The San Diego Union*, June 6, 1950, A6.
23. Mrs. F. Kleiman[n], letter to the editor, *The San Diego Union*, June 8, 1950, B2.
24. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967. During this time the House of Russia remained associated with Russia, despite that country's membership and dominance of the Soviet Union. While there is no information available dealing with the specific flags flown by the countries, it is highly likely that the Russian cottage flew a Russian nationalist flag of some sort rather than the flag of the Soviet Union, especially given the anti-Communist climate in America at the time.
25. "Dance Highlights Patriots Pageant," *The San Diego Union*, July 1, 1963, A15, A18.
26. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967 and HPR Programs.
27. Ibid.
28. "Music Week Observance Set May 1-8," *The San Diego Union*, April 24, 1949, A21; HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. House of Pacific Relations and International Cottages Collection, San Diego History Center, Scrapbook, 1937-1967. The history of the flights of the HPR can currently be found under: "House of Pacific Relations and International Cottages Collection, San Diego History Center, Flights of the House of Pacific relations" although under the new organization of the HPR materials at the archive it is likely they will be under "Tours." These large, organized trips began in 1958 and continued until 1975.
34. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967, and HPR Programs.
35. *The San Diego Union*, February 2, 1941, W.B. France: MS 158 Richard Amero Collection, SDHC Research Library.
36. HPR Programs.
37. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967. These notes are somewhat vaguely written. Although it does appear that Mrs. Landry was indeed sent to these various officials as a sort of "ambassador,"

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it cannot be said for certain that she was not simply travelling on her own and happened to know these officials.

38. Ibid.
39. *The San Diego Union*, 1969, various authors: MS 158 Richard Amero Collection, SDHC Research Library. There is a series of newspaper articles throughout the year, all under B-1.
40. "Keep Pacific Relations Unit at Expo, Civic Leaders' Plan," A3.
41. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967. The speech was originally written in Chinese and then translated. While the source only says that Tien-chia was a "member" of the cottage, it can be assumed that he was either an elected leader in the cottage or one of its long-standing, influential members if he was giving a speech. If membership functioned in the same way in the 1950s as it does today at the HPR, then a cottage's membership would have consisted of a core "elite" group that did most of the work and was the most knowledgeable about the nation's history and culture, and a "tertiary" group that consisted of all others who were associated with the cottage by paying a very small fee (\$5 today) and volunteering a small amount of time in the cottage. Today there is ostensibly a great deal of crossover regarding nationalities and cottages. One can be of Polish descent, but also be an active member of the House of Ireland, for example. However, the core members of each cottage are still representative of that cottage's nationality.
42. Tina Qualls, "Ukrainians Recall Freedom," *The San Diego Union*, June 6, 1969, B1. See also MS 158 Richard Amero Collection, SDHC Research Library.
43. HPR Scrapbooks, 1937-1967.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid. Member cottages of the HPR send two delegates apiece to form the central body that votes to make decisions, much like American states send two senators apiece or like the member nations of the UN send delegates to represent them in the General Council and vote on pertinent issues. In this way, then, the form of the HPR is democratic. In practice the functioning of this body also looks like a democracy. One recent meeting featured a vibrant and vigorous debate that took place over whether the HPR should procure new chairs. Many people weighed in on the issue, some passionately, yet it remained respectful and ordered.
47. A parallel can be drawn between the House of Palestine and the House of Ukraine because both had a house at the HPR during times when their people did not have their own nation state. However, Ukraine was independent at one point, even if its independence was tenuous and constituted a somewhat Potemkin façade. The areas that are currently claimed by Palestinians (Gaza and the West Bank) have not yet comprised their own state.