

This is a complete transcript of the oral history interview with **Arthur Frederik Glasser (CN 421, T6)** for the Billy Graham Center Archives. No spoken words that were recorded are omitted. In a very few cases, the transcribers could not understand what was said, in which case “[unclear]” was inserted. Also, grunts and verbal hesitations such as "ah" or "um" are usually omitted. Readers of this transcript should remember that this is a transcript of spoken English, which follows a different rhythm and even rule than written English.

... Three dots indicate an interruption or break in the train of thought within the sentence on the part of the speaker.

.... Four dots indicate what the transcriber believes to be the end of an incomplete sentence.

() Words in parentheses are asides made by the speaker.

[] Words in brackets are comments by the transcriber.

This transcript was made by Bob Shuster and Kevin Emmert and was completed in June 2011.

Please note: This oral history interview expresses the personal memories and opinions of the interviewee and does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Billy Graham Center Archives or Wheaton College.



Collection 421, Tape 6. Oral history interview with Arthur Frederick Glasser by Bob Shuster on April 18, 1995.

SHUSTER: So, I guess that what you're saying is this is a typical California day.

GLASSER: Well, this is the only season. California doesn't have the...the blessing of nice four seasons, but Dr. McGavran used to say, it's not too great a hardship to spend the winters in southern California [both laugh].

SHUSTER: Well, this is Robert Shuster talking to Dr. Arthur Glasser on April 18th, 1995 at 2:00 pm, and we're talking in Dr. Glasser's office at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena [California, USA]. Dr. Glasser, you mentioned a couple times when we were talking yesterday about the conference in which CIM decided to talk...decided what its future was going to be and where it should go after it left China [noise on tape briefly drowns out the interview]. I want to talk about that this afternoon. Let me start by asking, when you came out of China (you and your wife came out of China in 1946), was there any kind of debriefing of you by the mission or discussion of your experiences.

GLASSER: Well, when we came out of China it was in the late spring of 1951, actually.

SHUSTER: Oh, I'm sorry.

GLASSER: Yeah. The only debriefing we had was with the U.S. State Department in Hong Kong.

SHUSTER: Really?

GLASSER: They wanted to find out what we had seen in China and to recount, you know, our various impressions. Well, we had been in such a remote part of southwest China, there weren't the exciting political events taking place there. So we were not much use to them. But we came home, and of course, there were so many members of the China Inland Mission, almost what, around eight or nine hundred of them. But it wasn't easy to just for the administration to start interviewing all of these people. So each person was...in a sense went to his own home and with his [unclear] and immediately started thinking about the future. And it was during this time Dr. [Robert] McQuilkin started corresponding with us seriously about going to Columbia Bible College. And so my thoughts that summer were thoughts of getting...getting our health back together in measure, and getting ready and then thinking of courses that I would be teaching and going down to Columbia Bible College [in Columbia, SC].

SHUSTER: What kind of contact did you have with the mission when you came out? There must have been somebody that said something to you...

GLASSER: Well, surprisingly little. We came and we met, of course, we helped to get on our way home. That was the [unclear] took care...took care of its personnel. We never felt abandoned by them, but we realized that there was no immediate decision as to what the mission was gonna do next. So, there we realized that we better have...get home and get back on our feet, tell the story to the churches of what God had been doing, how He had brought us out safely. But at the same time,



the mission didn't have ideas for us concerning the future. They just...it was just too complex a administrative problem. Suddenly you have nine hundred missionaries. Nowhere... how can you put them to work? You only have one field, it's China. You don't have mission fields any place else. So, it was a difficult time for the administration...I didn't know much about this, so...but all I knew was that I had to make sure that, as I said to you yesterday, I wasn't interested in jockeying into position, getting ready to go to another mission field. I had to sort of digest my experience, those years in China, and see just what the Lord was saying. First, putting me through the military, through the war, and then through a communist revolution! [Chuckles] You know, you don't live in tranquility after that. So, I was thinking about Columbia Bible College. When the idea came around by about September of that year...about...

SHUSTER: This is September of '51?

GLASSER: September of '51. The...the idea of being that the mission leadership had to get together and decide the future of this...of the society. And that...

SHUSTER: How did you hear about that?

GLASSER: Well, a general letter was sent to all of us, giving us the details and telling us to begin to pray, that this would be a most serious time of consultation and leading of the Lord. And it was just to get us to pray. And of course...

SHUSTER: And of course, you were saying....

GLASSER: ...yeah, and of course, you know, me, just a person who had not really finished the first term in the.... You know, in the China Inland Mission the first term needs to be about six years, and the second term could be as long as ten years. It wasn't like today, where you fly back and forth for a weekend. But I was a very junior member of the mission. I was in a remote part of China, and so I thought, "Well, they'll meet together, we've got to pray about it." We had to decide a new name. We can't use the word *China* Inland Mission, and immediately leadership....

SHUSTER: You can't use *Inland* either [both laugh].

GLASSER: Well...or...the way CIM always was gonna go where someone else was not going. And very often when the mission came into China and parked alongside of yours there were many...many occasions when the CIM turned over that church to them and went further inland. There was that loyalty to "inland."

SHUSTER: It reminds me of the story about Daniel Boone [American frontiersman, 1734-1820] who, when he looked down from his porch and could see smoke from a cabin fifty miles away, would say, "Molly, pack up. They're gettin' too close. We gotta move on" [Glasser laughs].

GLASSER: Gettin' too close. That's right. But this...this enabled us to see China widely distributed. You know, when we left China...when we left China, you could draw straight across China in any direction, and about every ten to fifteen miles there would have been some expression

of the Christian movement. It was very widely scattered. Now, the total number of Protestant Christians did not equal one million then. Catholics num...numbered a bit more, but...but the gospel was widely scattered, and this was a great joy to us to realize. And later on that produced seed plots for a massive growth within the church in China. Well, anyhow, we started praying about this conference that they held in England, which was very natural. The English orientation of the China Inland Mission was still very dominant. You know, the average American, when he joined the China Inland Mission, was interested in going up in the woods and being a tribal worker. Let...let the British run the show. That was what happened [Glasser laughs]. It was funny. You could not get Americans to get...to advance much in the administration of the China Inland Mission. It was largely a British organization.

SHUSTER: Now, you mentioned lat...yesterday that Don Hillis was an important leader with the....

GLASSER: Dick Hillis.

SHUSTER: I'm sorry.

GLASSER: Don was in India. Dick was in China.

SHUSTER: Were there any other Americans that come to mind as important leaders?

GLASSER: Well, John Kuhn, of course, in further [?] Lisu work with J.O. Fraser. We think of him. But, I didn't think much of Americans...our leaders were...my leader [unclear] was Australians and this and that, and some British. But no, I don't know. Americans were not prominent in field leadership in the China Inland Mission. Okay, in the middle of all this I got a letter saying that they were going to bring into this conference not only the top leadership (there were twenty-four I think altogether attended), but they wanted to bring two people who had had no contact with the administration - two young workers. And they told...took two people. One was Jim Bloomhall [?], a medical doctor from England, and you can see his books there up on the top row [Glasser points to some books on his bookshelf]...his books he later wrote. He was a...he was a tribal worker from the Nasu [?] in the province north of us. And then myself. Same tribe, but in Huanan. Now what....

SHUSTER: What was the reason in bringing in people with no contact with the administration?

GLASSER: Well, maybe they would give a fresh view, I guess. It was...if you're gonna reorganize an organization, don't just get the top people, because they've been bureaucrats for a while. You got to get people who have been in the trenches, who know something about jumping in the foxholes. [Glasser chuckles] Well, that's a...there is always a possibility that they have something to say. That was what...what they...they didn't say.... I had to go to Dr. McQuilkin and say, "Hey doctor, I'm just starting in here at CBC, but lo and behold, I have to go to England." He said, "This is great. You can come back and tell us the story." [Glasser laughs] I said, "I don't know. The OMF..." or the CIM or whatever it is... "The CIM is very reticent about sharing its inner thoughts with the outside world." But I said that...but he gave me release from that. So....

SHUSTER: Let me ask you, either then or later, did you find out why they picked you?

GLASSER: I have no...no...that is...I have no, no reason. No. Mind you, they may have thought, "Here's a guy who has been in the military, who has a university education." Not everybody in the CIM had a univer...had a university and a seminary training, you see. And maybe they thought later on they'd make a bureaucrat out of me. You know, I don't know. All I know is suddenly I was told...given a ticket, sail across the Atlantic. Didn't fly in those days. And we met at a place called Bournemouth [England]. Now Bournemouth was on the south coast of England. It's sort of a nice place where you go on a holiday. A lot of nice hotels. Very British, very Victorian. And the idea was we would be in one of those sort of small hotels. We were practically the only people in the hotel. It was sort of like a large hostel. And that no one would know we were there, and we would cut ourselves off from the world and we would gather and discuss the past and the future. Well, it was...and you can be sure it was a very serious thing. I was meeting for the first time many people who were the leaders, and listening to them, hearing them report. I didn't have to give a report. I just sat in the back. I was part of the wallpaper for a good part of that.

SHUSTER: Now, was this vote...dividing into voting and non-voting participants or was it...?

GLASSER: No. They were all considered legitimate attenders, but in the China Inland Mission you do not work by majority rule. If a group is divided out of decision, you must just pray. "Maybe the Lord has something for you." And so that there were...there were a lot of times when they tried to assess the meaning of the group...the opinion of the group about a particular subject, and they all failed. And this was rather significant because it begat.... Begat! It brought the twenty-four down, really down. For instance, what name should be the new name of the organization if we're to continue? Or should we continue? You know, some weren't so sure about that. "Should...shouldn't...didn't we serve the Lord with distinction, in a sense. Hasn't the Lord kept us? Hasn't He brought us out? You know, not a hoof remained. We came out of Egypt, you know," that sort of thing. "Well, why didn't we just close down?" And there was no agreement. And then, "Well, let's go ahead. Well...well, what name would you call it?" We tried to vote on a name. And....

SHUSTER: Do you recall any of the names that were suggested?

GLASSER: No, but the thing was that we couldn't agree on anything. And this was a very serious matter because here was the OMF, which...CIM, which believes in the unity. "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us." You remember Acts 15[:28]. That sort of mood wasn't there. And this caused problems. And then people started to reveal the...for the first time some of the inner problems in the administration in Shanghai.

SHUSTER: Now, how long had the meeting been going on before this revealing began?

GLASSER: I would say that the sense of uncertainty...you know, they said we'll take about two weeks, and here we are halfway through and we hadn't accomplished anything, and that there was a tension rising and a concern deepening. And I don't recall (I didn't keep a diary as I should have and so forth), but the prob...(I keep diaries now) but the...but the whole point was that there was

something basically wrong, and everybody loved everybody; everybody had confidence in everybody. These were spiritually-minded people. There was no doubt; there was no Judas or anything like that in our midst. These men has ser...had really served the Lord. I remember Mr. [John R.] Sinton. I met Mr. Sinton for the first time, and he was the kind of guy you almost wanted to touch. Why? Because on one occasion in Shanghai, years before, he said, "I think that the Ch...the China Inland Mission should move a skeleton staff to west China, because something is going to happen politically that we do not know about, but it would be good for us to have...supposing Shanghai is suddenly cut off and we're not in touch with our missionaries inland. What are we gonna do?" So he suggested, "I think we should move a skeleton staff to Chungking." That was his thought. "And set it up there." And you know, that is what happened was shortly thereafter.

SHUSTER: Those listening to the tape might not, so....

GLASSER: Well, shortly thereafter the Japanese invaded China, and in no time at all they had...their armies control all the...the main cities along the coast, and then the entrance to the rivers going inland. And in no time at all China was in a sense cut off from a lot because Shanghai.... But Chungking was never occupied by the Japanese.

SHUSTER: That became the headquarters...

GLASSER: Headquarters....

SHUSTER: ...or the capital...

GLASSER: ...wartime capital of the Kuomintang and General Chiang Kai-shek and so forth, was there. So that, you know, when you're with men of that sort who make decisions like that, and you know later that they were such significant decisions in the will of God.... Listen, if you're in the back seat you s...you remind yourself you're in the back seat, you're to keep your mouth shut [Glasser chuckles].

SHUSTER: Let me ask you about the beginning of the meeting. When you first started, how was it...how was it outlined you were going to proceed or how was...how was...?

GLASSER: Well, they had worked out an outline of some sort, but you know, I remember Bishop [Frank] Houghton got up and talked about the twenty-four elders seated around the throne. And we were twenty-four, and so that was the biblical text [Glasser laughs] that things were conditioned by. And...and they...they had it planned, but....

SHUSTER: That's why twenty-four people were chosen, because...?

GLASSER: Don't ask me. I was not in on any of this planning. I...I was just a little person pulled in from the side, and I knew I think only one or two of the people that were there before I met. I remember it was the first time I met B...Bowman, Emmanuel....

SHUSTER: Ed Bouman? Oh....

GLASSER: No. No, he was the head of our Swiss center.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

GLASSER: And being German and Swiss (my family came partly from Switzerland, partly from Germany), so that I remember meeting with him, and later on the two of us were almost blood brothers in the...or I met [unclear]. But I didn't...I was meeting a lot of nice guys for the first time and being impressed with the quality of them.

SHUSTER: You mentioned that you knew only one or two people. Who did you know there, before you came?

GLASSER: Well, I knew John Kuhn who had been our superintendent, and I knew one of the Australians, Mr. Butler, because he...I had to send him a report very three months and...oh, I knew him as the one who replied my letters. I knew Frank Houghton, the general director, because he had been in Shanghai when we first arrived. I knew Fred Kimble, who was the treasurer of the mission. But about...that's about all.

SHUSTER: And you mentioned that you met J.O. Sanders.

GLASSER: Oh, J.O. Saunders was there and we...that was our second meeting after...during the war I had been there in Auckland, New Zealand, when he was the head of the Bible school.

SHUSTER: Now, this group had representatives from all different home boards, from Britain, and Australia, and United States, and Canada?

GLASSER: Well, you have to understand the structure of the old China Inland Mission. The home centers, like in Britain and America, this...these centers, they had a great deal of authority when it came to the selection of workers and the orientation of workers for the field, and the making of arrangements to ship them to China. But their authority stopped when people got on the ships and went to China. They never monkeyed around with what was happening in China. Th...the bish...the being...the idea being of course, "You're not in touch with the field." And if there's anything that's easy to do, it is to theorize about mission work and become a mission expert, a s...a Monday-morning quarterback sick...sitting back and deciding what should be done. The average problem facing missionaries in China was such that a person living hundreds of miles away in a home center couldn't possibly interact...he wouldn't have all the facts to make any decision. So that we...later on I found this out very much so, that if I wanted to...well, I just did not invade any of the things I heard of coming and taking place in the field because I...

SHUSTER: "Did not invade," meaning you did not...?

GLASSER: I didn't seek to say, "You gotta do this or do that. What are you doin' this for or why are you doing that?" see. "You people know. I don't," and so forth. And if I made an argument based on only part information because I did not have the whole picture, that was sort of..... And



that was part of it. So that we don't have letters...we had people from home writing in and saying, "We're praying for you, having special meetings for you, having prayer," but nothing about advice.

SHUSTER: So who was represented at these twenty-four meetings? I mean, what...?

GLASSER: Well, your field, your...your central administration at Shanghai, and all of your field superintendents. People...there's each...each province of China. Not each province, 'cause some were more than the rest of them.

SHUSTER: Each region?

GLASSER: Yeah, yeah. It was pretty widely scattered. But here were the key....

SHUSTER: Was there any major segment of the mission that wasn't represented at the meeting?

GLASSER: Well, you have the top level, the second.... I wouldn't say so. All our...there were only two of us who were just ordinary plain field missionaries. We were selected, and maybe that was just a tokenism, I don't know. But the thought was that we were representing the mission, that's it.

SHUSTER: You talked too about how the mission was divided up denominationally too by different denominations....

GLASSER: Oh, well...

SHUSTER: Was there any kind of attempt to have a balance among the twenty-four as far as different traditions?

GLASSER: No. Now you see, the bishop, head of the China Inland Mission, the general director, he being an Anglican, that might mean that Szechwan, which was a province in China, that was were all the Ameri...all the Anglicans were. They had an actual Anglican diocese there. They had no more word...no stronger anyone else. It was understood that the denominations' differences were meaningless.

SHUSTER: You mentioned about the men who were there. Were there any women at the meeting?

GLASSER: No. Listen...but there was a woman who came in and that's...that's the key to the whole thing, but no. As I recall there were only men. Twenty-four men. Twenty-four elders, don't you read the Bible? [Glasser chuckles] Oh boy.

SHUSTER: So which tribe were you representing then? [Glasser continues to laugh] The...you were starting to say how about after you had been there for about a week, and you were unable to come to, as the Quakers would say, "the sense of the meeting...."

GLASSER: Yeah.

SHUSTER: And things were starting to unravel a little bit. People were starting to talk about some of their problems and difficulties. What did you mean by that?

GLASSER: Well, the thing is this: we who had lived at such a distance, we thought that every time Shanghai acts, there's always unity of decision, and there's always been unity of decision when individuals are involved and when money is involved. That's the basic rule, yeah.

SHUSTER: So that means individuals, any kind of personnel decision....

GLASSER: Personnel decision, moving someone, this and that. Disciplining someone, this and that. Yes, money. Okay. What we found out was that Shanghai was divided.

SHUSTER: "Shanghai" being, of course, the administration.

GLASSER: The top, the top [the mission leadership]. Yeah, the admin...yeah. But Mr. Sinton had to express...you...you cannot conceive of a meeting of that sort where one stalwart has to face another stalwart and say, "We didn't keep the rules." You know. Now, we didn't keep the rules because Frank Houghton was a bishop, and you know when you get to be a bishop...if you've ever played chess, bishops can do a lot more than just knights and castles or anything else, they can. Now, the bishop had a bishop's purse in...in Anglican parlance that's common, so that if anything comes to your attention as a bishop, that a person is in need, you can always provide....

SHUSTER: Like a contingency fund?

GLASSER: Contingency fund. Now, that contingency fund was not small, but there were occasions when people in the Shanghai council were...had to...when they were thinking about budgeting and this and that, and there were funds directed to projects and they didn't agree with.

SHUSTER: That was from the bishop's purse?

GLASSER: The bishop's purse. They would not have...they did not agree, and sometimes they [the council] challenged him, but they had a sense that, you know, "I...I...I...I believe this is right and I believe God is leading us and so forth, but the rule was broken," and....

SHUSTER: The person then who was saying "I believe this is right and that God was leading us" would be Bishop Houghton?

GLASSER: Houghton, yeah Houghton would always [unclear]. Now he would [unclear] what we had learned in the past. But there were big decisions made [?]. We learned, for instance, why we weren't allowed to get out of Shanghai earlier. Things of that sort. Those matters...now I don't recall the details of it 'cause I...see that's...don't forget, that's a long time ago. But I...but the thing that...the thing is that it showed that there was...there was something basically wrong with the way in which the mission conveyed the impression they operated a certain way but in actuality they were not that way, see. And that was just enough to cause eventually...the thing that happened was

those who were in charge who were members of that Shanghai council, they increasingly did not want to go ahead under Frank Houghton's leadership.

SHUSTER: And this became clear to the meeting?

GLASSER: This became clear to the meeting.

SHUSTER: You mentioned that Mr. Sinton said, "You broke the rules," so is what you're saying the mission had a tradition of communal leadership and the bishop's were much more individual and....

GLASSER: As a bishop of a church, he felt that he had an authority. After all, his wife was the daughter of one of the Cambridge Seven [early group of CIM missionaries who had been converted and recruited at university under Hudson Taylor]. He had blue blood flowing through some of those veins. He was just plain old [unclear; Glasser continues to laugh]. You see, there was that sort of a thing. Imagine the bishop, of course, is a very gracious, very gentle; beautiful writer of poetry and brilliant exegete, and this and that, but he was a bishop and the bishop's purse, and this and that. And there it was, they did not want to go ahead under his leadership.

SHUSTER: Did he outline at the beginning of the meeting or give any kind of hint of what his expectations were?

GLASSER: Oh sure. He was...he would go into the impression that we were going to move forward.

SHUSTER: And were did he anticipate moving forward to?

GLASSER: Well, you see, we already...we had survey teams all over East Asia by this time. That was only natural, to see if there were any others who had been bypassed in ear...earlier decades in missionary advance. We were in touch with what was happening in Singapore and in Malaysia. We knew the great unmet needs in...in Thailand and in Laos, and Vietnam. And we were in touch with Indonesia, Japan.... [phone rings; tape recorder is turned off and on again]

SHUSTER: So you were talking about the surveys that CIM had been doing...

GLASSER: Yes.

SHUSTER: ...how at the beginning the bishop was indicating what he expected to be happening.

GLASSER: Yes, for instance the bishop would say, "Now, there is quite a part of...of Malaysia where we could be reestablished in an Anglican diocese. There are the hospitals that we had in various parts in China." He said, "Thailand, south Thailand in particular, we...you know, central Thailand, we could establish a new hospital situation. So far as theological education is concerned, this and that." Those surveys were very carefully done, and you know, being done and being brought in. We had only preliminary details at this time, but we knew that there was a lot of unfinished business in East Asia and on that basis, the bishop was talking, so that he was thinking

about the future. But the leadership around him was saying, "Now wait a second, we need definite changes in leadership."

SHUSTER: It wasn't so much disagreement about the projects he was outlining?

GLASSER: No, but they didn't discuss the projects. They weren't interested in discussing that. He was talking about that. And that's the way we went.

SHUSTER: And so about, as you say, halfway through people were bringing up some of these hesitations or doubts....

GLASSER: They were coming to the fore, yes. And the more we talked the more heavy we became, and the more aware we were...now, time was running out and we hadn't made any decisions, and this was significant because the China Inland Mission leadership always was supposed to know the mind of the Lord. And people...we'd get letters, telegrams, this and that, people all over the world calling in, praying about it, telling us, encouraging us, saying that, "We believe you're on the threshold of something new and wonderful," but nothing new and wonderful was happening at Bournemouth..

SHUSTER: You felt that way in Bournemouth?

GLASSER: At Bournemouth, yeah. At Bournemouth, yeah, yes. Okay, then there was a knock on the door, [Glasser pauses] and this knock on the door.... Here was a...an elderly woman, tall and angular, she had a scarf that hanged into...in...in her hair with a long lethal hairpin of the old sort that came from Queen Victoria's and there...and this scarf and there she was, and with a companion. And she said, "I've come to you." And no one knew who we were and she came in, and lo and behold, it was General Booth's daughter.

SHUSTER: Evangeline?

GLASSER: Evangeline Booth. The book written about her [unclear; sounds like Glasser may have spoken Mandarin], the one who as a teenager...as a young woman preacher to the crowds in Paris. She was a revivalist [Glasser chuckles]. She came and she said, "I think the Lord would have me come and visit you." Well, of course, everybody's pretty gracious to the lady, etcetera, etcetera. And she wanted to know who we were. Now, her mind would cloud over a little bit every so often as if she was.... At one time she looked at us...she said, "You look like...oh, I know who you are, you are Belgian businessmen and I'm talking here." And her companion said, "Now, Mother. Now, Mother" [Glasser laughs].

SHUSTER: But she was very elderly?

GLASSER: Elderly. And very vigorous, let me tell you. Tall, as I say, quite a person. She came and they asked her to speak to us. She asked that she might speak to us. "Well," of course, she said...she said, [Glasser imitates an elderly feminine voice] "I'm gonna start in by asking you, the leadership of the China, oh yes, the China Inland Mission, yes, the China Inland Mission, yes. Now how do you spell 'love'?" That was her first question [Glasser chuckles]. "Come on, tell me." And

here she...of course, now I was sitting in the back, but she was looking through these guys like character out of Dickens' novels...she [Glasser chuckles].... "Now, how do you spell 'love'?" And we just, you know.... [Glasser laughs].

SHUSTER: [Unclear]

GLASSER: [Unclear, Glasser laughs] ...are drawn back [?]. That was sort of a very moving time. There was a sort of a laughter. And alas [?], I think it was Freddy Kimble or somebody else who said, "You spell love L-O-V-E." [Shuster laughs]. She said, "That sentiment. The way you spell love is S-A-C-R-I-F-I-C-E."

SHUSTER: Significant.

GLASSER: Yeah, significant. In other words, "Are you people taking a risk? Are you willing to sacrifice?" You know, that sort of thing. And then she said, "Are you watching my fingers?" And her fingers would go up and down the tassels on this business on her head and down the side, and someone said, "How can you keep from watching? She looks like the Witch of Endor." [1 Sam. 28: 3-25] [Both laugh] She said, "You...are our...I'll ask you a question, are my fingers touching the tassels? Are they holding the tassels? What am I doing with the tassels?" And no one could say, "You are just touching the tassels."

SHUSTER: Nobody could answer her question?

GLASSER: You couldn't answer her question. So she explained it, see. "Now, what does the China Inland mission know about faith? Only touching the tassels?" You know, when the punch line came it was a punch line right between the eyes, see, about that meeting.

SHUSTER: And what did she mean by that?

GLASSER: She didn't know. She didn't know who she was talking to. She didn't know any of the crises. We were a bunch of well-dressed, middle-aged people, I guess. Most of 'em. Some older. But that's all she said. But let me....

SHUSTER: How did you interpret what she had said?

GLASSER: Oh boy, this...we were praying, "Lord speak to us." Did the Lord spe...send this woman? See. What did He...she say? "Are you willing to sacrifice and are you willing to, you know, really trust God after you've made the sacrifice." Well, now mind you, I don't recall the actual mechanics of how things happened, but after she left, then it became apparent that the unity of the body was, with the exception of Frank Houghton, did not want to go forward under his leadership.

SHUSTER: And how did he react to that?

GLASSER: Well, he stepped out, you see, when they were discussing this. He stepped out and there was unity, agreement. And...and so, "Are you sure you want to take this step?" This was

[unclear]. "You're sure?" And you know, we tested it and tested it, and it was obvious. So, someone had to be appointed to talk to him, and fortunately they took the other guy and not me. [Shuster chuckles] Ji...

SHUSTER: Bloomhall?

GLASSER: Bloomhall. He had to go and tell her...tell him.

SHUSTER: Why...it see...it would seem that something like that they'd want to choose the most senior person to go tell him something like that. Why did they choose the most junior person?

GLASSER: Don't ask me. Don't ask me that one. Unscrew the inscrutable ways of the British people [Glasser laughs], but that was what it was. He had to go and tell her...tell him, and...and so, he just dropped out of the meeting, see. He went....

SHUSTER: Bishop Houghton did?

GLASSER: Bishop Houghton, went back to London, and after that all the decisions, one after the other.... Yeah, the name was Overseas Missionary Fellowship. I did not particularly like Overseas Missionary Fellowship. I could...Fellowship, that doesn't...that doesn't have a punch to it. You know, Fellowship. And...and...and the word *koinania* ["fellowship"] is a good biblical word.... Well, anyhow....

SHUSTER: I thought decisions weren't made unless everyone was....

GLASSER: Well, but everyone was...on a name. I'm not going to fight over a name. Sure, I would endorse it, that was the thing. But things worked out and [J.O.] Sanders was appointed our leader there, Sanders was the next leader. After Houghton they wanted a missionary, who had missionary experience. And would he give...and in this case became a real problem because there came times later when I worked for him as an administrator years later as the Home Director of Canada and the United States, and some of his decisions I found just...they weren't in touch with the world of t...the world of that day. So, the Viet Wa...the Vietnam War was getting hot, and I was trying to recruit people. I remember going to...to colleges and here...I remember going to Wellesley in Boston, and I was supposed to speak and everything to be ready, and the woman of the group saying, "Now you're listed to speak on thus and so tonight. But tonight you're going to say, 'What are we doing in Vietnam?'" And, you know, to recruit people for mission service during that period, the interest was, let me tell you, it was...people were very troubled. There was the anti-war movement. And we, having gone through the communist movement, and I said, "Do you realize what the communists are like?" You know, I would...come over...they said, "Are you for military intervention in Vietnam." I said, "Frankly, the color of our faces is absolutely against us in Asia, holding guns. It's a nationalistic movement." And I don't know, to me it's a great mystery, but.... We knew so little about what was really taking place, and it's just coming out now. [Robert] McNamara's revelations, you see, and so forth. And I belie....

SHUSTER: You're referring to the book that the former Secretary of Defense just wrote about explaining why we did the [unclear] the way we did it concerning Vietnam and why he now thinks it was a mistake.

GLASSER: They knew that the war could not be won militarily, yet they enlarged the war. You know, all of that stuff there, yet they were consuming American lives, you see. Well, in those days I was quite impressed with American military power. If you'd been with the Marines and you saw how tenaciously the Japanese opposed you, and yet we overwhelmed them. Well, to me military power...of course, Americans would be able to win whatever they're fighting for, etcetera, etcetera. And...and yet...and yet, boy, you know, it was just a...students, they were thinking differently and I just was...

SHUSTER: And Sanders was not in tune?

GLASSER: I don't think he was aware of that. He was from New Zealand, you know.

SHUSTER: What part did he play in the meeting, in the meeting in Bournemouth?

GLASSER: Oh, he was...he's a very knowledgeable man. A very organized.... So he could always add stature and seniority and leadership. At a meeting like that he was superb, you know. And so we felt fully confident. "Sure, let the mission go forward under his leadership." Yeah.

SHUSTER: Now you were....

GLASSER: We moved to Singapore. See, the city that....

SHUSTER: That's when the decision....

GLASSER: Yeah, s...move to Singapore.

SHUSTER: What was the reason for that?

GLASSER: We must be...see the old China Inland Mission always wanted to have the center of administration where the work is being done. Not at a distance. See, back in the days of the sailing vessels, it would take a long time for a letter to go to China and come back, so that none of this leadership from homeland. The D [director?] leads from the field. Now Singapore was a good city. Good communication center. A growing Christian presence in Singapore that would be supportive. Resistance to the communist movement, which was very strong at that time in Malaysia. You know, and it was...it was better than Hong Kong. It was...it just seemed to be the natural place. But...but the arguments for it were all poured out and decision taking, you know, one thing after another.

SHUSTER: What about the areas in which the mission should be working? What kind of decision was made there?

GLASSER: They were trying to open up work in other countries in East Asia. Let's say that all East Asia should be...on the basis of the surveys we had to make the decisions. At that point they made the decision that Thailand would be the co...country that had the greatest concentration of personnel at first. "And build up in northern Japan, Hokaido, the northernmost isle. That's where Japan needs it. Let's work there." You know, work here and there. Some of the islands of Sumatra, of...of...of Indonesia, Java, and Sumatra. [Unclear] "Let's go to...and allocation of places where there was not as extensive gospel work being done. Let's go there, and so forth."

SHUSTER: Were there other important decisions made at this meeting that you can remember?

GLASSER: No. No change in the financial policies. No change...there was a...there was a sense in which they were going to get rid of the...the...the missions that joined ours, like the German missions, the Swiss missions...

SHUSTER: Associate....

GLASSER: ...the associated missions. But...but I remember [E.F.] Baumann giving an impassioned plea, "Listen, we must express the unity of the body of Christ. Let us continue with this," you know.

SHUSTER: Why had they wanted...why was it even thought about?

GLASSER: I don't know...I don't know. I didn't know the background then, but, you know, I thought having these G...these Swiss Reformed with us, and having some of the German Lutherans with us, you know...we had some people from Scandinavia, they added something and why not. To us that was the enrichment of being outside of America in the middle of a multi-national missionary community. I think that was great. We expressed the Christian unity, the Christian oneness by having people of all sorts of races and nationalities, except blacks and except Chinese, you see. No Asians were allowed to be in.

SHUSTER: I was going to ask you, were there any Chinese church leaders at the meeting?

GLASSER: No. No, just...it was typical, you know, white-faced Americans, well, white-faced with Angl...Anglos. We were all Anglos.

SHUSTER: Did you first meet Bishop Houghton after the....

GLASSER: No, never saw him again. No. I never, you know, wrote a letter commensurating this and that. I felt, "Boy, this is something." And he occasionally would write letters to you in China. I'd get a letter from him, and it was always very strange. Why should I, a person so far removed from the actual...why should I get a personal letter from him? He wa...he liked the idea of a bishop being a father, especially to the young men, you know, this...encourage them in this and that. But I...I found I'd get a letter from him, maybe one or two. I don't think there were very many, but then, how do you answer a letter like this? He was that kind of...here was...I found out later that he...he cultivated certain men. And he never could get much out of me, I just didn't know what to say, so

he just, you know, lost interest. But his wife was horrified at the decision. Boy, to think that her husband had been dropped.

SHUSTER: How did you know that?

GLASSER: That was rumor.

SHUSTER: Oh.

GLASSER: People were saying in Shanghai...in...in London, see, people went back to London [Glasser chuckles], I went back to Columbia Bible College, and I...all I did...I said there, I...I told the story about...about Evangeline Booth. Yeah, that was my story. Yeah.

SHUSTER: When the meeting was over you mentioned that you told people about Evangeline Booth. Who contacted you? What did they want to know? What questions...were people contacting you and asking you what...?

GLASSER: They didn't ask many details, and I...I tried to sort of guard the reputation of the mission. I didn't talk about Houghton. I said, "I felt there was a feeling that his leadership had been completed in China. That we needed new presence in the place." I used general things like that, and if he...I don't think that...the things I'm saying to you now I wouldn't say...I don't think I ever said them in public, the things about him. We try to guard one another's reputation. That's part of our Christian responsibility. But I know that...see, some of the older people...I guess of those who were at Bournemouth, maybe six or eight have been almost immediately retired then.

SHUSTER: Why was that?

GLASSER: Well, 'cause they had reached the end of their days. It was more of an age matter, that is removed from leadership, and a new mission leadership came into being, you see, as a result.

SHUSTER: So their retirement was not....

GLASSER: No disciplinary...no...no...no. They...they were all, you know, good people and much respected. People who had come up, you know, through the ranks as it were. They were appointed. See, in the old days you were...they would touch a man and say, "John Kuhn, you be the superintendent." And [Glasser sneezes]...and the missionary group around would say, "Sure, let's have him." [Glasser sneezes again] 'Cause it was obvious he was a man of some stature as to warrant putting him in a place of responsibility of that sort. Now during those days...years at...at CBC [Columbia Bible College], you know, as I had mentioned last time, I tried to go to the Philippines and be the fore.... That was negotiated and it was gonna be a good thing, but then I got sick. And so I was considered just bad show [?]. So, we didn't make it any further, and Alice was operated on for cancer. She had a tremendous growth, and so we were considered as people that had given to the mission what we could and that was it.

SHUSTER: You talked some about, again... (going back to Bishop Houghton again) about criticism that people have of leadership being too individual or authoritarian, but what were his



strengths? I mean, he was obviously...when he was chosen people saw virtue and ability in him. What were the...what were his strengths?

GLASSER: Well, his personality, his...have you ever seen a picture of him?

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

GLASSER: Yeah, he's a handsome man, and kind of a person you instinctively look up to. He was one of the, you know...he had good class background, he had university training, he was...he was everything that you like in a leader. He was always with polish and a guy who was certainly very articulate in manner, wrote the poems, the hymns that you sang. A man who, you know, who could write beautifully, who wrote...pr...produced books of one sort or another. Boy, thank God for him. You know, he was a man in many ways a leader. And of course, the leadership decisions as to the work, the closer you got to the work in a province, the...th...the local superintendent had more authority rather than Shanghai had authority. So that the...I don't think there were a lot of what I would call basic blunders made in China concerning the allocation of personnel, but I would say, as I actually said to you later...earlier rather, that somehow the experience of actually doing mission work should have been collected, written up, instead of writing up hagiography, you know, the lives of the great missionaries. But what did they actually do? And what achieved results? What didn't achieve results? You know, like Dr. McGavran, he was one of the first people that wa...wrote a book on why churches grow and why they don't grow. Now, you see that you think that's such a basic thing, of course, missionaries think about that, but that wasn't in the mood. In those days there was a great missionary walk with God, and God was with him, God used him [tape recorder turned off and on].

SHUSTER: I guess just like many things it was obvious once somebody thought of it

GLASSER: Yeah, once somebody thought of it, but it's not obvious before that. Yeah, you know, we have records on some of our faculty here [at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California, USA]. "When we first heard about church growth..." Take [C.] Pete Wagner. He was a missionary in Bolivia. When he...he read *The Bridges of God* [1955 book by Donald McGavran that introduced church growth theory], he said, "This is nuts." [Both laugh] And then he met McGavran, and then he went over the book in the summer, and he became the fervent disciple of McGavran's church growth. It's a funny thing we didn't think church growth as a matter of Christian thought. Asking, "What works? What doesn't work?" Asking a bit to...you have a picture of the Holy Spirit...it's too pragmatic. Yeah, it's...it's not physical, it's not spiritual anymore. Yeah, you know, it...

SHUSTER: Very American, though.

GLASSER: Oh, very American, right. Yeah.

SHUSTER: Looking back on this whole experience, from leaving...living under communism, then leaving China, and your participation at the conference to determine the mission's future, goals, and purpose, what kind of lessons would you draw for missions in similar situations today that have to make a radical change in their activities or are doing some kind of political crisis

situation or some kind of rapid growth situation where the culture of the country completely changes or changes very greatly in a brief period of time?

GLASSER: Well, the thing is this, going through that experience made me realize, "Glasser, you are getting...you are looking in on missions as they were carried out, and you've seen evidence of their flaws and things." But we're in a new ball game." And I must confess that when I...met Phil Armstrong and heard about the growing Far Eastern Gospel Crusade, when I thought of Dick Hillis and the beginnings of Overseas Crusades, what...although I didn't like the idea of the word crusade. That's a terrible word to use in missions [Glasser laughs]. It reminds you of the Crusades [religious military wars between Christians and Muslims in Palestine, Syria, Turkey, and Egypt during the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries], which were a terrible travesty on Christian mission. But the thing that made...I was drawn to those organizations and said, "Boy, I wish I could do that." But no, I'm in the...my commitment's to the Overseas Missionary Fellowship.

SHUSTER: What drew you to them?

GLASSER: Well, because they were young fellows. They were thinking differently. There was a lot of fresh air. There wasn't all this baggage of tradition and this and that. You know, thing of...I remember on one occasions speaking to Frank Houghton. I think it was at Bournemouth. I said, "Dr. Houghton, I...I read your book that you wrote about Amy Carmichael [1867-1951, missionary to India]," and I said, "You know, Amy Carmichael, the Dohnavur Fellowship [Christian organization Carmichael started], they don't receive Americans." You know, Americans were not admitted, and I said, "It is almost as though Americans just don't pr...produce that type of discipleship that was produced there." And he said, "Well, I think that's...I'd agree with you on that." You know [Glasser laughs], Americans don't have it in their chemistry to be saints.

SHUSTER: Are you saying that or are you saying that they were saying...that's what they seemed to say?

GLASSER: That's what he seemed to say. But no, he...he thought it was pr...quite proper. Actually, they did have an American there and it didn't work out very well. You see, well there are cultural problems.

SHUSTER: Sure.

GLASSER: But the Americans gave to...bu...but I'd like to see American missions by Americans. I...I just thought they were ex-G.I.'s, and I knew about that. And there we were and I was, "Hey, hey, OMF, loan me to them. [Shuster laughs] Maybe I'll stay with them for the rest of my life." You know, that was the feeling.

SHUSTER: You say their thinking was different. How was their thinking different?

GLASSER: Oh, there was much more venturesomeness. Much more, "Let's get on the street and preach the gospel," much more...I...somehow I felt we were encumbered with so much in the way of, "We do it this way, we don't do it that way, we..." this and that, "We...we...we have property and once you get a piece of property, the Lord's guiding you to improve that property." Now, that

property has to be kept in consideration when you're planning your advance, strategizing things. You know, there is a lot of mission strategizing based on the properties that you held. And I remember being sent up to Wuting [town in Yunnan Province, China where the Glassers served as missionaries] because the mission had a house there and that's why I was sent there. Now, maybe that was...maybe that was a good thing. We should have gone to that place at that time, and I thought I must believe that was.... But that was, I don't know, a feeling that after the war and after the revolution that...that somehow there...there...we ought to expect that the...there's gonna be pouring wine into new wineskins. And I later felt that the OMF wasn't a sufficiently new wineskin right away.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

GLASSER: It was too much of the old. That's why I was drawn to these new wineskins.

SHUSTER: You had mentioned about Bishop Houghton, how he was a very cultured man, and he was a blue blood....

GLASSER: Speaker.

SHUSTER: Excellent speaker at the..., British university education. Was that generally expected of a leader...a top leader of CIM, that they would be that kind of person?

GLASSER: Well, D.E. Hoste, you see, the successor to Hudson Taylor was a Cambridge...one of the Cambridge Seven, you see, and...and then the...the general...th...the one who succeeded him...I gained the impression he wasn't as much that way.

SHUSTER: Who was that? [George W. Gibb]

GLASSER: His name just sli...slips me the minute....

SHUSTER: It wasn't Frost?

GLASSER: No, Frost was the American Home Director. But Frost was of that tradition. He was Princeton University man, you know, all that sort of thing [Glasser chuckles].

SHUSTER: Ivy League education.

GLASSER: Yeah, Ivy League and so forth. And I somehow thought maybe because that's why they selected me to be one of the two to attend Bournemouth, 'cause I was an Ivy League student. I attended Cornell [Glasser and Shuster laugh] and my brother went to Princeton, you know, all of that adds to your...to your...to your...roster or something. My wife used to say, "But you know, the funny thin..." (she could be very interesting about this) [Glasser laughs], she said, "You know...." It cost money for my brother and me to go to Ivy League schools. Well...well, altogether my...

SHUSTER: You mean you and your...

GLASSER: ...my father...

SHUSTER: ...you mean you, not your wife's...?

GLASSER: ...my...my father, you know, he ha...it was quite expensive to get us to go to Ivy league schools, and the income of an OMFer would be such that...the thought of sending your...your children to any school such as that, you know, it was just financially impossible.

SHUSTER: Unless your...

GLASSER: Unless....

SHUSTER: ...family was independently wealthy.

GLASSER: Yeah. Well, yes. For...of course, my father's estate made it possible for us to educate our children, and so...but that's another story.

SHUSTER: What kind of reaction was there throughout the mission to the decisions of Bournemouth?

GLASSER: Absolutely...they didn't know about Bishop Houghton, just sorry to see him go, and it was all covered over, you know, by the time.... He agreed it was time for him to step down, and I don't know how well he agreed to it, but [Glasser chuckles] I...funny thing, I saw Jim Broomhall and...and never asked him (I don't think I ever saw him after that. Oh yeah, once later.) "Jim, what actually did he say when you spoke to him?" You know. But he would be one who would accept the leading of the Lord. He was a governing....

SHUSTER: Jim Broomhall was British wasn't he?

GLASSER: British, yes. And you see his father and Hudson Taylor, you know, Hud...the Broomhall family was gilt edge beginnings. That was in the tradition. Broom....

SHUSTER: Maybe that's why he was selected.

GLASSER: Oh yeah. I think so. I think so. Now, some of the superintendents were not university men, but they were superintendents so they proved themselves as field men. So they were invited there. But why they should have taken two of us university people and made us go to...to c...to Bournemouth, that's...that's their business. I'm sure they were thinking of...maybe I would fit into something of that sort.

SHUSTER: Was there any kind of decision made at the meeting about not talking about these things or about sealing up the....

GLASSER: Well, th...of course, there's always that at CIM meetings. Let's guard the reputation of our brothers and sisters. Let's speak wisely about these things, but they...I don't...I don't recall that.



All I know is that I got back to teaching full speed, and Dr. [Robert] McQuilkin, he was all ears. He wanted to know all about it [Glasser chuckles].

SHUSTER: So for about, as you say five years, you did not have particularly close contact or touch with the....

GLASSER: Well, see, it after this that we tried to go to the Philippines, see. After a year or so, then that...my wife had this serious surgery then she got better and then I said, "Well, lets go," and we thought of going to the Philippines and, you know, I didn't want to do anything other than be in the field. That was my drive.

SHUSTER: You mentioned that Phil Armstrong. How had you met him?

GLASSER: I met him at some sort of conference. Maybe at Urbana [triennial student missions conference sponsored by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship at Urbana, Illinois, USA]. I used...started to go to Urbanas for...from Columbia Bible College, taking some of the Columbia Bible College students. We became very...you know Columbia Bible College is an amazing place. They had quite a lot of contact with world FMF (Foreign Missions Fellowship), and so therefore you'd go to a conference, you'd go around to Christian schools in the southeast [United States], and sure the best [unclear], just as you talk about Wheaton students going around, and so...Ben Lippen, the summer conference ground [in Columbia, South Carolina], this and that.

SHUSTER: Of course, Foreign Mission Fellowship was a group of college students or university students.

GLASSER: Yeah, but later became merged with the InterVarsity and became the Foreign Missions department of...yeah. Now at F...at...CBC had one difficult problem, that is that you would be supported during the nine months of the year when you would be teaching, but then as soon as the teaching was over you had to support yourself during the summer, which meant the only way I could support myself was to get out preaching. And to ask the CIM, the OMF now, to any...any meetings I should go to, any things and...and it was very difficult, but...and you...here you are tired at the end of a...of a s...of a year of school and in July, August pounding the pavements and then getting back pooped and that...I think that contributed to my coming down physically when we wanted to go to the Philippines.

SHUSTER: But...so you were maintaining those contacts with the mission at the...

GLASSER: Oh yeah, oh yeah, oh sure. I was in good relations...

SHUSTER: ...representing them....

GLASSER: Yeah...

SHUSTER: ...as far as...

GLASSER: Oh yeah. As they needed a speaker here and there I would take off for a weekend, that sort of thing.

SHUSTER: How would you describe Phil Armstrong as a person? What kind of impression did he make on you?

GLASSER: Well, he was very honest. He would every once and a while sit down and talk to me and say, "You know, there's things about you you better take seriously." [Glasser laughs] And you know, a brother who talks to you, that was something. And on one occasion he felt that I was...I had done something rather unwise. Well, in a message I'd give or something he challenged me, and I remember being quite humbled by it, but thankful, here was the first Christian brother who really talked to me. And that was a great...a great privilege to have that sort of a friend. He was a real friend in that sense, and...and then going with him to conferences where I would s...and I would go around and speak on behalf when I was going to the Philippines, then he would ask me to go speak on be...on [unclear] and I'd go around. And so, we were naturally drawn together. We would meet, and then d...David Adeney [BGC Archives Collection 393], first Eric Fife, and then David Adeney became active in the missionary end of...of InterVarsity. And so, sometimes I would go and speak at...or not just at in Urbana, but at their summer conferences, you know, for the IV [InterVarsity] and I'd run into Phil Armstrong, and so we just...we had a lot of contacts together, and I admired him. It was quite sad to hear of, you know, the air crash in Alaska. He came down.

SHUSTER: In which he died [1981].

GLASSER: Yeah, yeah. That was quite...boy, I thought I was a young fellow with a lot of drive. He...yeah. I...you see, on one occasion I became involved in trying to negotiate a fusion of the Far East Gospel Crusade with the OMF, and was suggestion was that Phil Armstrong ought to be our field leader...be our leader.

SHUSTER: When was that?

GLASSER: That was one of my dreams we worked out together.

SHUSTER: About what...when were you working on that?

GLASSER: It was in that period when I was at Columbia Bible College, and maybe later on.

SHUSTER: So it could be in '55.

GLASSER: Maybe later on too. Yeah, it could have been later on to. Well, I was trying to get the...here was contingent of...of Americans that really had missionary zeal and drive, but the...the leadership of the OMF never really responded. So, I can remember Phil Armstrong...I thought, "Oh, those guys don't..." He was a Crusa...the c...the Crusade willing to merge into the OMF.

SHUSTER: And why do you feel that would be a good idea?

GLASSER: I just thought we needed new blood. We needed blood. We needed that kind of Dick Hillis vision. I wasn't in touch with Dick Hillis. He's on th...on the west coast here. He was pounding up and down between Biola and Multnomah [two Bible institutes in California and Oregon], just up and down this tract. Whereas Phil, you know, from Michigan, we would see him frequently than we used to, and the.... But I know that was one of the things I...fact, in the correspondence you'll find a lot of those letters...discussion with Phil Armstrong trying to form...to get missions to get together. "Why are you reduplicating what we're doing? Here we are all over East Asia...you're all over East Asia, you know. Why don't we get together?" I became quite concerned about the unity of the church.

SHUSTER: Were there others within the OMF that had the same concern that you did about bringing in new blood and about not duplicating other missions?

GLASSER: I don't know. These were things that I would be scribbling letters on, sending them here and there, but I don't know as I ever felt I had key guys in the OMF standing with me along these lines. It was more or less my own pipe dream. I started to hoist a lot of balloons, and a lot of them didn't really fly. And I'm sure that some of them were very premature, but I could not see why I should turn down a person just because he had a Chi...Chinese face. I said, "You know, this business here, we have Chinese people who love the Lord, and why can't we recruit them?" And that was one thing. And then people who would be married, whether it be multi-racial marriage, "Why can't we bring them in?" There were a lot of things that I used to contend for.

SHUSTER: You mentioned going to Urbana, of course you didn't go to the one in '48 because you were in China. What was the first Urbana conference you went to?

GLASSER: Well, when we went to China in...see, it was the winter of '46, they were having an Urbana, I think it was in Toronto before they moved to Urbana. And I remember the prayers on the shipboard, 'cause we were on the ship on December '26...'46, and that was something.

SHUSTER: Prayers for?

GLASSER: For what God was gonna do among students in Toronto because Toronto's always been quite a...quite a fruitful fishing ground for mission people and so forth, and that was.... But I remember...and then, let's see, '46, '47, '48, '49, '50...I...I don't know which ones, but I...I almost...I think I went to every one after that...after...soon as '51...'51. Did they have one in '51? I'd have to check, but every one after that I went to. And increasingly, after I became active in the OMF, I would spend summers with David Adeney over that and Eric Fife at the Cedar Campus conference in Upper Michigan and...

SHUSTER: Which is InterVarsity?

GLASSER: ...InterVarsity camp, missionary...we called it a missionary camp and, of course, with David Adeney, an old CIMer of real...tremendous guy. And Eric Fife and I wrote a book together and we...so there was a lot of things that I was very close to the...to the IV [InterVarsity] during those years.

SHUSTER: How would you describe the Urbana meetings you attended? What was their main...?

GLASSER: Well, you always felt that at an Urbana you'd get a new idea about missions [Shuster chuckles]. That was what made it interesting. What's gonna be the emphasis this time? And I remember arguing over this business of tent makers [missionaries who support themselves by working] and then beginning to see, "Hey, there's something here." And then a lot of things haven't had the wisdom to discern what others did and to...then they decided to set up a debate between...between Ken Pike and myself, and whether or not the city should be evangelized or the tribal I groups, you see. And the tribal groups in such small ki...in such contrast with the...the me...having been in the middle of a tremendous tribal group movement where the old CIM...I could see the advantage there, but the these enormous cities that are here. What are you gonna do there? We evangelicals are no good in cities, and so arguing for cities. What they did is they set us up really, so that we would debate this thing in *His* magazine [publication of InterVarsity] and then the people would come to Urbana to hear it really debated. And Ken Pike, his wife used to have a OMF prayer meeting in her house and...and I'm sure that there were times, "Well, now Fife is ahead...or now Pike is ahead." "Hey, Glasser, you're losing out." You know, but today certainly we talk cities all the time. And I love...this morning I here a...a Wycliffe Bible translator. We were talking about Wycliffe working in...in Israel amongst one of the minorities peoples there. The Sarcasian people. Oh, so. No.

SHUSTER: Do you think Urbana was important for American missions?

GLASSER: Oh, yeah.

SHUSTER: If so, why?

GLASSER: American...Urbana had...you see, you're in a little IV group...this was before the students were...groups were large. They were generally rather small, but you were in a small group in a big campus like a Princeton or some place like that, and then you'd go to Urbana and suddenly you're in the midst of thousands, and that does something for you. It gives you a sense of "Hey, I belong to a bigger movement" than comes across to me when I'm a student there at Cornell. And I can remember so...that the people who went to Urbana always came away with that which gave them a greater vision for working on their own campuses. I used to think that was...that's the best thing about.... It gave to the average evangelical undergraduate a vision of real evangelism. And of course, the Lord...the option of the Lord's work. But that to me was very....

SHUSTER: Not so much missions as just....

GLASSER: Just to give you a new perspective on the movement. And of course, they had me talk about China and how a small group that's disciplined can take over a country. You know [Glasser chuckles], [unclear]. People get excited. I remember talking about cities, talking about Muslims and on...on communist indoctrination programs and how do you produce...see, my Dawson Trotman elements would come to the fore. How do you produce men of God? Dawson Trotman had a way of drawing rather qualified people to himself, and that was also very American. And...and yet later on I used to disagree rather violently with Dawson because I didn't think they

built their work around anything other than any man of God. I...that...I say, when I step into the world of the Bible, I meet the church, I meet the community, and...and...and...I... Dawson Trotman sometimes would sleep in on a Sunday morning [Glasser and Shuster laugh]. "Not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing" [Hebrews 10:25; this portion of the tape is very unclear] I'd quote those verses from Hebrews at him. Oh, we used to talk about...he said, "You can't follow up a group. You gotta follow up man-to-man." I said, "The Lord followed up a group of twelve." [Glasser and Shuster laugh] And so, one turned out to be a skunk. Oh, we used to discuss those things.

SHUSTER: Of course, Dawson Trotman sounded, like what you said Bishop Houghton was, more of an authoritarian leader.

GLASSER: Oh, Dawson Trotman could...you...bring you under a sense of guilt. You...you know, if you didn't memorize your verses you could feel like a heel [Glasser laughs]. He had a way...I remember, see, Ralph Winter was one of his guys here, and I knew Ralph very well, he was in a Navy program. Oh, a lot of us in the latter part of the war got our eyeteeth cut on the Navigator movement, and that brought something different. That brought something different to the OMF.

SHUSTER: How did you come to be chosen as Home Director of the OMF in the USA.

GLASSER: I was just chosen by Frank Houghton - by J.O. Sanders.

SHUSTER: Why did he choose you?

GLASSER: Don't ask me. He asked me, "Do you feel free to come?" And I had been there [Columbia Bible College] for five years and I thought I was getting enough [?].

SHUSTER: "Do you feel well enough to come?"

GLASSER: Yeah. I was now recovered, I was well, I was being drawn increasingly to students, and I thought, "Well, this will maybe give me a different base upon which to, you know, participate in the student work here in the United States, and so...and mission, and it was a tremendous privilege. Dr. [Henry] Frost, you see [a previous head of CIM's North American branch], and these men before me had been men of God.

SHUSTER: You had mentioned that you had been active during those five years trying to bring some new blood into the mission...

GLASSER: Well, not the...what, CBC?

SHUSTER: Yeah.

GLASSER: No, no. I didn't go to any official meetings of the OMF. So there wasn't that. I just had been in friendly touch with them.

SHUSTER: But you mentioned writing letters to people or possibly merging....

GLASSER: Oh, that was...that was after I became the Home Director...I became...I had gotten to know these people and got to know their missions, got to know the quality of those missions. "Hey, Phil, now I'm in the OMF. Let's see if we can work out a deal."

SHUSTER: Oh, I was thinking that you had a reputation within the mission for having this kind of viewpoint...

GLASSER: No.

SHUSTER: ...before you were appointed.

GLASSER: No. No, I...I would say that they...many of the people in the OMF did not know I had these views because in the OMF the top does the negotiating [Shuster laughs].

SHUSTER: How...how did Sanders, when he talked to you about becoming director, what did he say was needed or what did he say was expected of....

GLASSER: I don't think he gave me...I don't think he gave me any word concerning something new. All he knew was that at CBC the longer I stayed there the more I was in demand speaking around all over the place and that meant, "Here's a guy who can recruit missions." I think he was thinking about my recruiting possibilities, that was all. And then, the...the existing leadership was getting older and maybe if I were brought in as a sort of Assistant Home Director maybe I...that would, you know, be the way it would work.

SHUSTER: What did you and Mrs. Glasser talk about as you were trying to decide the....

GLASSER: I think Alice was getting restless. As I said to you, the southern atmosphere, the racism, and that sort of thing, it made us a little bit disenchanted with the...with the Columbia Bible College. It wasn't yet moving into its present vision. Roberston McQuilkin...Robertson McQuilkin, he came to me later, wanted to join the...the OMF. I said, "No. We won't accept you." "Why?" he said, "I hear you have two new children." See, see, and that was.... You realize Ken Pike, he once applied to China Inland Mission. He was turned down. Amy Carmichael joined...applied to the China Inland Mission. She was turned down. Gladys Aylward applied to the China Inland Mission and she was turned down.

SHUSTER: She [Aylward] was the one whose story was told in [the movie] *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness*.

GLASSER: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Audrey Hepburn [Ingrid Bergman], you know [Glasser and Shuster laugh]. A...yeah, well, there were a lot of people of who...who rece...attained distinction by being turned down by the CIM.

SHUSTER: They didn't quite fit the profile of the mission.

GLASSER: Well, well, the Lord knew they were on a bigger work than to be a member of the China Inland Mission. You know.

SHUSTER: So, when you were deciding whether or not to accept this position, what were....

GLASSER: It didn't go...it wasn't much of a struggle with us. And we would say, "Okay, we're done." Yeah, we had enough of the south. "Okay, let's go north."

SHUSTER: Now, who was the Home Director then?

GLASSER: Oh boy. Isn't that something. Isn't that something, a dear man of God. A lovely fellow. Oh, dear me. This is awful. I must have old-timer's disease or something.

SHUSTER: I can't remember either [Herbert M. Griffin].

GLASSER: But he was a dear man and he was very gracious to me and so....

SHUSTER: Now, were you brought in with the understanding that in a certain number of years you would be director...Home Director?

GLASSER: Well, Assistant Home Director sort of implied that, but there was no certainty because I might go out overseas again. You know, that was always the possibility, and...and so...[Glasser pauses] so we started to try and help work for the OMF and, of course, the...almost the...the biggest thing that I ever did for the OMF came when I went up to Canada one day and they [?] said, "Listen, you Canadians should be by yourselves." I said, "You know...."

SHUSTER: Who did you say that to?

GLASSER: Oh, to the leadership in Toronto. I said, "You know, the thing is this, you know, here you are, Canada is a big country, and you're directed from Philadelphia. You don't direct...you don't work directly with Singapore. You have to come through Philadelphia." I said, "That's not right." And...and we...we went to the board and they just, "Just the Canadians together?" We didn't talk about...talk with Singapore about this. Sanders didn't have to give us the [all] clear. We were deciding this among ourself...they were gonna almost approach him with an...a *fait accompli* [an accomplished fact]. But...but they...and the interesting thing is a few months after the decision was taken a Canadian official went to the...to the offices of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship in Toronto, and said, "May I ask you a few questions? When Canadian money is given to you as a...you receive it and this and that, what happens to that money?"

SHUSTER: Now, who was asking this again?

GLASSER: This was a Canadian in...somebody in the Canadian government. They were... "Does that money go to America?" They said, "No. It goes to Singapore, to our headquarters." If they had asked that a few weeks before [Glasser and Shuster chuckle].... Yeah, yeah.

SHUSTER: So, the impetus for separating came from...

GLASSER: The American.

SHUSTER: ...the American side, you rather from the Canadians?

GLASSER: Yeah, oh yeah. I said to them, "You listen...listen, you people, you've got to...you do things in a Canadian way, continue them in a Canadian way. You don't really need...you sending money to Philadelphia and then Philadelphia sending it? Come on!"

SHUSTER: Was there any of the Canadian leaders who had doubts or having different...?

GLASSER: Everybody rejoiced in it. We had this heart-to-heart [conference] and, "Why hadn't the idea occurred to someone before this?" And it was such a natural thing. You know, after the war, nationalism, not evil nationalism, but a positive love for country.... And there is a great deal of impatience when you get up up in Canada with America. America is just too big and domineering, and too this and too that, and why not break away? Let them...now, we'd go up there and they'd come down here when...and so forth. But that's worked out. It's been a very happy solution.

SHUSTER: It seems strange though that there wouldn't be some feeling developing toward us among Canadians, that it would need to come through you.

GLASSER: Never heard about it, that's the...maybe some of them had, but in the old CIM you more or less, as they said, "You join the mission, you keep your mouth shut," you know [Glasser and Shuster laugh]. Oh, yeah.

SHUSTER: You talked a little bit about how decisions were made on a communal basis in the old CIM. Does that continue to be a tradition, at least during up to the time....

GLASSER: I would think so. I would think so, but they've done a lot of...they've revised greatly the financial policy.

SHUSTER: In what way?

GLASSER: Well, you see, the ideas of Hudson Taylor, "God's work done God's way will never lack God's supply." Now, that's not a biblical concept. And I believe that, you know, you're supposed to talk to the Lord about the money. Well, the Lord is in the midst of his people. He's not somewheres removed from his people. So I...I was always...you know, I was sort of impatient with this business. We're going be mysterious. God is gonna come and slide up and put some money in your back pocket without you even knowing it. That's spiritual. But if you go and tell a church, you see...I just...to me, I felt...I felt that we were producing good CIM films, we were producing all sorts of...and that soft sell. Nobody can tell you it's not. And so they would tell me...produced a new film. We're asking for money because we talk about a financial policy. I s...you know, I said, "We're so naive. We say we're only talking to God about our financial needs." Okay. Secondly, the...the first place, I didn't think we were honest. The second point was that the...the...there were

countries that were riding on other countries. For instance, Australia was seemingly...seemed never able to provide enough money to support their own Australian missionaries. And America was always being drawn, you know, giving generously and bailing some of the other places. When Switzerland was doing more than that. Canada was generally more faithful in bearing the immediate financings of its people than America even was. That was another reason why I said, "Listen, you people, you draw your own money. You know, you're a self-contained operation. Continue that way." Well....

SHUSTER: What about New Zealand?

GLASSER: Huh? New Zealand, I don't recall New Zealand. All I know is that Aus...leaving New Zealand, Australia almost...almost the same. The Australians...the New Zealanders don't like you to use Australasia, Australia...but that's the word they know in the banks, Australasia. People like to be themselves. They don't like to be brought under some bigger person. But, so that now...nowadays, each country is given the target on the basis of what we think it's going take to keep your missionaries for the next year. Okay, this is Australian money we need for Australian people. You know, and that would be a natural target, prayer target. Not everyone is gonna be able to meet that target. Some are gonna go above or below. But, let's...everybody bear his own burden, and that's in one of the things. And there's much more candid explanation of financial needs. Sometimes they wouldn't share.

SHUSTER: Were those policies you introduced as Home...?

GLASSER: No. No, they've come in later. But they were sort of things I chafed against. I would say, "Listen, when are you...so forth." And....

SHUSTER: You became Assistant Home Mission Director and then later the Home Mission Director. Were there certain things you wanted to accomplish? Did you...had you set goals of things you wanted to be changed?

GLASSER: Well, you wanted to, but you realized there...there were certain...lots of things you...you did not touch field matters. So your to...y...your areas of responsibility are rather limited. Stimulate prayer, speak to as many students as you possibly can, you see, and try and produce films and things that could be of use, so forth. And you know, try to stimulate, sell books, go around, do as much as...but don't interfere with the field. Well, I felt that...that the f...the mood in America, the anti-war mood, these problems, did the...do the leadership in Singapore know what's going on in America? That was what I felt that the...there was a need for definite interaction.

SHUSTER: And that was towards the end of your time..

GLASSER: Towards the end of my day. We would go to these councils. They would bring...call the home directors to Sha...to...yeah, Singapore to, you know, think through what was happening in mission. You have them every three or four years, and then Mar...Morry Rockness...Morry Rockness, he came in and joined me, sort of the Assostant...As...Assostant [Glass mispronounces either assistant or associate; Morris Rockness was Associate Home Director for the United States

from 1963-1968]. He was in Washington, the state of Washington. But he was asked to sort of help out in Philadelphia. And I said, "You know, Morry, why should both of us go to the next council. You go, I'll stay here." And this offended Fraser...J...J... Sanders [Glasser corrects himself] very much. I said, "I don't really want to go."

SHUSTER: Why was he offended?

GLASSER: Oh, I s...I wasn't responding in the way...everybody should want to go to headquarters and listen and learn. And I said, "Morry, why should two of us go for America. Only one goes from each country. So you go." And he liked to go to things like that, and, "You go. You'll do a better job than I could," and so forth. "Why don't you keep doing my work." But that....

END OF TAPE

