"Religious Work Should Reflect Reform And Openness"
(Excerpt)

Bishop K.H.Ting’s Speech to the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), March 22, 1993

The Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee and the China Christian Council receive each year well over a thousand appeals for assistance from the grassroots... Among the appeals which we receive, those which tell of refusal to approve venues for normal religious activities, refusal of protection and even criminal accusations preceding permission, and the banning of large assemblies, are specially numerous. There are also those which deal with choosing leaders in the church: cadres have their say and the churches can voice no opinion, with the result that persons without religious training or with bad reputations, or who are not even members of the church, have become its leaders... The authors of our letters are also citizens who should enjoy freedom of religious belief. As head of our two national Christian bodies, I often find my ability to help them out of their difficulties falls short of my wishes and I feel deep remorse over this.

-- Refer to this issue of ANS 93.3.10 for further excerpts. A complete translation of Bishop Ting’s speech is available on request by writing to The Amity Foundation Overseas Coordination Office.

Delegation From The Moscow Patriarchate Visits China
More Problems With "Christian Identity Cards"
Better Implementation Of Religious Policy Needed
At The Grassroots
Church-Run Middle School Dedicated In Longquan
Tujia Christian Weaving Exhibition Held In Nanjing
Zhejiang Christian Council Holds Retreat For Pastoral Workers
Thanksgiving Service For West Church In Shantou
International Exchanges
ANS Feature: Training Course For Five Hundred Evangelists In Henan
ANS Documentation: "Religious Work Should Reflect Reform And Openness" (Excerpts)
Delegation From The Moscow Patriarchate Visits China

A four person delegation from the Moscow Patriarchate visited Harbin, Shanghai, Nanjing and Beijing at the invitation of the China Christian Council from May 11 to 20. Led by Metropolitan Kyrill, this was the first official visit of the Russian Orthodox Church to China.

Speaking with Bishop K.H.Ting and faculty members as well as church leaders at a reception held by the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary on May 15th, Metropolitan Kyrill said: "There are many similarities in the history of our churches. There is hardly another church in the world which can understand your history as well as us. We should therefore strengthen relations between our churches and peoples."

Metropolitan Kyrill told ANS that the delegation was impressed by the pace of China's economic development, and by the extent of religious activities among China’s Christians. "We learned about the Three-Self principle, church rebuilding, Bible printing and seminary education during our visit. The Church has been resurrected; Christianity is growing in China. And we see that there are many opportunities to worship, to preach, to proclaim the gospel and to witness to Christian values in society."

Speaking of the situation in his own country, Kyrill explained that 80% of Russians are Orthodox, and that there had been great changes since 1989. There are now more than 15,000 churches in Russia, 183 monasteries, and more than 100 bishops (including 16 Metropolitans and 32 Archbishops). In addition, there are three post-graduate level theological academies, ten four-year seminaries and 38 lower level theological training centers. "The Church is a unifying force in society," he said. "Like China, we do not have enough priests, and so we are training lay workers."

When asked about the influx of aggressive evangelical groups from the USA, Kyrill said, "We suffer a lot from them. They take advantage of our people's economic difficulties, and think that Russia is a spiritual desert...On this point we agree with the adherence to self-propagation in the Chinese Church." [ANS]

More Problems With "Christian Identity Cards"

The China Christian Council and the Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee have formally asked the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council to put a stop to the practice of selling "Christian Identity Cards." (See ANS 93.1.1)

However, Tian Peng recently reported that in some areas "Christian Identity Cards" have been replaced with "Christian Patriotic Pledge Cards". These are simply the old I.D. cards under a new name, complete with photo, age and signature. Christians [Over]
Christian Identity Cards/2

are required to purchase the cards and carry them at all times or risk being accused of "illegally believing in religion".

In addition to personal information, the cards list certain regulations. One such card states that the bearer must produce the card for inspection on demand by Public Security Bureaus, United Front Departments and Religious Affairs Bureaus, as if religious believers are dangerous elements who need to be controlled. In fact, many cadres view Protestants and Catholics in just this light, even though statistics show that Christians are seldom involved in criminal activities. A card issued in another county is clearly labelled "Protestant/Catholic Identity Card" which shows that these two groups are special objects of control. Some cards stipulate that the holder may participate in religious activities only in designated venues. According to Tian Feng, these are all unacceptable restrictions. Faith is a private matter and freedom of religious belief is guaranteed under the Constitution. It is contrary to the policy of religious freedom to require people to purchase an identity cards in order to secure that right.

Finally, Tian Feng notes the disparity between the production costs and the price of the card. Sometimes churches are required to purchase the cards in bulk and resell them to believers in their area. But they must buy many more than the number of Christians in that area. Is this a new way of "creating profits" the author asks? [ANS]

ANS 93.3.3

Better Implementation Of Religious Policy Needed At The Grassroots

Support for openness and reform in dealing with religious issues at the national levels of Party and government organizations needs to be better implemented on the provincial and local levels, according to a recent article in Tian Feng, the Chinese Protestant monthly. At a Spring Festival Tea Party with 10 religious leaders, Mr. Li Ruihuan, member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Communist Party commended patriotic religious bodies for their sincere cooperation and emphasized the need for Party organs at all levels to do religious work well, handling religious issues in a positive, conscientious, careful and reliable manner.

Mr. Li affirmed that the guideline for religious work should be "cooperation in political matters; mutual respect in matters of faith." This requires cadres who are "skilled in leadership" and take a "seek truth from facts" attitude to their work, such that normal religious activities may proceed unimpeded. Tian Feng affirmed that although central government policies are good and reasonable, the crux lies in whether they are carried out in a comprehensive manner at all levels, particularly at the grassroots.

In certain areas government bodies "oversee much that they should not oversee." Expending a great deal of effort but achieving nothing, they succeed only in complicating [Over]
Policy Needed At Grassroots/2

the issues. Many examples can be cited. One county has issued "evangelism permits" which have caused arguments and rifts among pastors within the churches. In another city, the government decided when a pastor should retire or who could preach. A government leader in yet another area decided "spirituals" could not be sung in church for reasons of overseas infiltration. But "spirituals" referred to hymns written by Chinese Christians and set to folk tunes! In one county, a person wishing to be baptized must be approved by government authorities. In another county, one religious cadre wanted to take control of all donations. And in yet another area, lay training classes could only be held with official permission. "Are these examples of good administration?" Tian Feng asks. Such things are internal affairs of the church and while local government bodies can assist the church and pastoral workers, they must not attempt to supplant them. The author cites a dangerous "new phenomenon" in the countryside: cadres rely on the civil militia, whose members do not understand religious policy, to supervise and control religion. This method leads to unfortunate consequences.

Premier Li Peng has emphasized that "cadres involved in religious work must study to continually raise their political quality, and do a good job in religious work." To be "skilled in leadership" in this way means that before we can begin to speak of respect in religious matters, cadres must understand politics and law and regard religious believers as friends. [ANS]

Church-Run Middle School Dedicated In Longquan

The new teaching building of China's only church-run junior middle school was dedicated in Longquan, Zhejiang Province on May 20. The Yangzhen Private Middle School was reopened eight years ago on the initiative of Mr. Guo Fuwu, whose family had been involved with the school since the first part of this century, along with the Christian Council of Longquan. Funds from church organizations in Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands were given to the Amity Foundation to support the construction of the new teaching building and related facilities. The school now has more than 300 students and 34 teaching staff, 16 of whom are from the church.

In the words of 71-year-old Principal Guo, "God has provided for us throughout this process of restoration. We want to do all we can so that Yangzhen Private Middle School can make a contribution to the education of China's young people."

Yangzhen Private Middle School operates under the guidance of state educational policy and according to the set curriculum. Four of the six board members are from the local church. Established as a Christian elementary school in 1908, it was turned over to the government in 1951. Yangzhen Middle School was restored and given back to the Christian Council in 1985, when it was housed in the small local church on East Street. [ANS]
Tujia Christian Weaving Exhibition Held In Nanjing

The Amity Center for Chinese Christian Art co-sponsored its first art exhibit together with Nanjing Union Theological Seminary from May 8 to June 8. The exhibition features 26 designs in weavings done by Tujia minority people of Biblical stories to express the Christian gospel. Biblical characters are depicted in minority dress and the brightly colored motifs reflect the Tujia weavers' folk art. The Amity Center, which was established earlier this year to help promote Chinese Christian art, sees such folk weavings as a means of self-propagation that helps contextualize Christianity.

Tujia weavings are also a means for the ecumenical sharing of resources as jobs are created in poor Tujia minority areas and weavings are to be sold to Christians around the world. During the exhibit, two Tujia women from Hunan Province demonstrated their weaving technique. Dr. He Qi, a lecturer in Christian art at the Nanjing Seminary, who has spent many long days with the weavers designing and selecting colors, believes "This exhibit reflects today's China and the use of minority culture to express the universal Christian gospel. I am glad it is being held here because both Nanjing Seminary and the Amity Foundation are helping to show the contribution Christianity can make to Chinese culture." There are almost three million Tujia people in China. [ANS]

Zhejiang Christian Council Holds Retreat For Pastoral Workers

The Zhejiang Christian Council organized a retreat for more than 200 pastoral workers in Hangzhou, May 25 - 27. Bishop Shen Yifan, General Secretary of the CCC, spoke to the gathering on "How To Run the Church Well". Mr. Zhang Jinglong of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary addressed the participants on the Chinese church in the ecumenical church.

According to Rev. Deng Fucun, Vice-President of the Zhejiang Christian Council, this retreat has been a popular yearly event for church workers, for it provides "a good way to share our faith and exchange experiences." There are at least 1.1 million Protestant Christians in Zhejiang, making it the province with the greatest concentration of Christians in China. [ANS]

Thanksgiving Service For West Church In Shantou

A service of thanksgiving and dedication for Shantou's West Church was held on April 18. The new church building, in this city on the southeastern coast of Guangdong Province, is perhaps the largest and most expensive new church in China. With a total floor space of more than 3,300 sq. meters and a 40-meter steeple, West Church is one of the most impressive buildings in the city. [Over]
Thanksgiving Service/2

It cost more than RMB 5 million to build, with at least HK$ 377,000 coming from Overseas Chinese. According to Rev. Chen Zemin, who preached at the opening service, "This is the best new church that has been built thus far in China."

The original church was built here in 1864, and Shantou Christians worshipped in this building into the 1950s. In 1982, after the end of the Cultural Revolution era, West Church was returned to Shantou Christians. Because of the tremendous growth of the Christian community, plans for the construction of a new church building were put into action in 1984. [ANS]

ANS 93.3.8

International Exchanges:

Ms. Zhang Guijie, who teaches Christian art to Nanjing Seminary students, toured the United States with an exhibition of 26 of her recent works. She was sponsored by The National Council of Churches of Christ USA, the United Methodist Church (USA) and the Presbyterian Church (USA), March 11 - May 14 . . . . . . . .

The third "Friends of Amity" Easter Tour (which included 13 people from eight countries), organized by the Amity Overseas Coordination Office and the CCC, visited 21 churches and meeting points as well as Amity projects in Henan Province, April 7 - 17.

The Taiwan Aboriginal Christian Singing Troupe visited seven cities on the mainland. They preformed Taiwan aboriginal songs and dances that express the Christian Gospel, April 10 - 29 . . . .

Led by Archbishop Michael G. Peers, a five person delegation from the Anglican Church of Canada visited churches and seminaries and met with Bp. K.H. Ting and other church leaders, April 17 - 30.

A 12 person delegation Presbyterian Church (USA) visited Zhejiang Province in late April to learn about evangelism... Also from the PCUSA, a delegation of Korean-American Presbyterians visited Chinese enjoyed fellowship with Korean Minority Christians in China's northeast, April 21 - May 4 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Dr. Philip Potter, former General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, visited Guangzhou and Nanjing and met with Bp. Ting (with whom he worked in the 1940s in the WSCF) as well as other church leaders and students in both cities, April 26 - 29.

A Lutheran World Federation delegation, led by President Dr. Gottfried Brakemeier, met with Dr. Wenzao Han and Bp. K.H. Ting and visited Nanjing Seminary and Amity projects in late April . . . .

A German delegation from the United Evangelical Mission (VEM) visited churches and seminaries in seven cities, April 27 - May 13.

A six person delegation from African Evangelistic Enterprise visited a large number of churches and seminaries, May 1 - 21 [Over]
International Exchanges/2

The visit from the Moscow Patriarchate (Russian Orthodox Church) is reported in ANS 93.3.1.

Dr. Judo Pervowidagdo, World Council of Churches Secretary for Theological Education, discussed theological education in China and exchanges between the CCC and the WCC, May 15 - 23...

The International Lutheran Layman's League visited seminars and churches and dedicated a recording studio in Shanghai which the League donated CCC, May 17 - 29.

Invited by the Canada China Programme, six grassroots church leaders went to Canada to share experiences of both the Chinese church and the Canadian church, May 17 - June 21.

Invited by the United Evangelical Mission (VEM), the Student Mission in Germany (SMD), and Evangelical Mission in Southwest Germany (EMS), Rev. Xu Minghan, Associate Secretary General of the CCC, Rev. Ji Tai, interviewed in ANS Feature, and Ms. Yao Cengyi visited Germany to take part in Kirchentag, May 24 - June 26...

Rev. Su Dece, Associate General Secretary of CCC and Academic Dean and professor of New Testament Studies at Hua Dong Seminary in Shanghai spoke at a public Theological Forum sponsored by the Hong Kong Christian Council on the subject "Exegesis of the New Testament from the Perspective of a Minister in China, May 29...

ANS Feature:

Training Course For Five Hundred Evangelists In Henan

Ji Tai, a 1988 graduate of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, studied in Germany from 1988 to 1991 and is now a lecturer in Old Testament and Homiletics at the Nanjing Seminary. Dr. Gotthard Oblau of ANS spoke with Rev. Ji about a training course he recently led in the northern province of Henan.

ANS: You are very busy teaching at the Seminary, so why did you give up your winter holiday to teach Biblical theology to peasants in Henan?

Ji: Over the last few years churches in China have been growing faster than theological training can possibly keep up with. Many churches or meeting points in the countryside only see an ordained minister once or twice a year. They are led by people who have only recently become Christians, preachers with a limited understanding of the Bible. Many among the congregation cannot read. This opens up the possibility of untrained people spreading heresies and false teachings under the cloak of Christianity. We need to provide crash courses for these evangelists and lay leaders so that a Biblical message is preached that both reflects the Gospel and satisfies the widespread hunger for faith.

ANS: Where did this course for village evangelists take place?

Ji: It was a five-week course in Hua County in northern Henan, [Over]
starting on Chinese New Year's Day and lasting until the end of February. Peasants have little work in the fields during this time of year so it is the best time to bring them together for such a course. In order to extend time for study everyone gave up the Spring Festival holiday. It would be like starting a course on Christmas Day in the West.

ANS: Were many able to participate?

Ji: An amazing number came. The course had been planned for 100 participants but more than 500 came, some from villages as far as 100 km away. Bringing a sack of rice or some vegetables, people came on bikes and donkeys, by horse cart or by hand tractor.

ANS: Who were they?

Ji: Many people become itinerant preachers after they experience a personal conversion. Meeting point leaders and evangelists, some with no formal qualifications, came. They walk the countryside and preach whenever and wherever. Their preaching often creates problems with church leaders in the city as well as the local police. But if such people are earnestly trying to preach a Biblical message, and they come to participate in such a training course, then, I think, we should recognize their call as from the Holy Spirit.

ANS: Who was responsible for organizing the course?

Ji: The village church. The interesting thing is that this church applied for registration but was turned down because the cadres here seem to be quite leftist, arbitrarily deciding that this church is unnecessary as there already is a church two villages down the road. In this sense, therefore, it is "illegal". But not being registered has in no way deterred the church or interfered with their worship.

ANS: In such cases where local cadres do not uphold the policy of religious freedom, how does the church leadership respond? Does the church go underground?

Ji: Why underground? If they invite hundreds of people to their village for a five-week course you can hardly consider them underground. They are very public. These meeting points are not against the state. They want to be registered. It is the state that makes them illegal without any reason. The China Christian Council continually lodges private protests with the State Council against these trends to restrict religious freedom. Unfortunately, some local Christian councils and Three-Self committees side with the local authorities and even speak out against unauthorized meeting points. We were left in peace by the authorities, but some people were quite afraid of being arrested. Some participants from other counties told about police harassment and persecution. The closure of meeting points by the police, seizure of Christian literature, fines and arrests - all of this happens.

ANS: What was the course content and structure?  [Over]
ANS Feature: Training Course for Evangelists/3

Ji: The aim was to deepen the participants' Biblical knowledge and their theological understanding. To achieve this we concentrated on the New Testament. I taught Revelation, word by word, from the very beginning to the very end. A theological student from Nanjing taught the Gospel of John. On top of four one and a half hour classes each day, we gathered for worship every morning, from 5:00 to 6:30. Late in the afternoon we spent an hour practicing hymns, and in the evening we often met until 9:00 discussing issues and questions that arose.

ANS: What kind of questions came up?

Ji: There were a great many questions about eschatology: What about the end of the world? When will Jesus come back? Who will be saved? - and many more. There was also a lot of interest in practical and ethical questions: Are Christians allowed to get rich? How should the church respond to divorce?

ANS: What impressed you most in Henan?

Ji: The attitude of the peasants - they risked everything for God and expected everything from God. They were terribly uneducated but they were the most enthusiastic students I have taught. They sought the truth with all they had. They were like those Jesus describes in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice..."

ANS: How does this course apply to your life as a theologian?

Ji: I realize that we theologians at the seminary have no reason to be proud; I have become far more humble. I believe that more of us should minister in the countryside, be it for just a few years or for a lifetime. Perhaps the church should rethink the principle that seminary graduates always return to their home churches and communities. Shouldn’t city people go to the countryside? Without question it would be difficult. The poverty I saw and the conditions in which the course was held were incredible.

But the most important question I now ask is: How do we teach theology in China? How do we best equip our students to build the Church of Christ in the hinterland? If we cannot connect with the peasants in Henan, if we can not answer their questions, what is our training for? [ANS]

Correction: ANS 93.2.2 Theologian Appointed Vice-Principal Ms. Peng Cui’an received her M.A. from the University of Birmingham not Selly Oaks Colleges.

Abbreviations used in this issue: CCC, China Christian Council; TSPM, National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China; CPPCC, The Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference; RAB, Religious Affairs Bureau; WCC, World Council of Churches
"Religious Work Should Reflect Reform and Openness" (Excerpts)

Bishop K.H. Ting’s Speech to the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), March 22, 1993

... I would like to speak today of how religious work can keep up with the national situation, creating a favorable environment for economic construction, reform and openness, while at the same time bringing into play the initiative of citizens who hold religious beliefs to involve themselves in socialist construction.

Since the return to normal following the Cultural Revolution, religious work in our nation has achieved a number of things: 1) Reversing wrong verdicts in cases falsely brought against persons in religious circles...; 2) Assisting religious circles in reclaiming property and in obtaining permission for simple religious venues...; 3) Supporting the publication and distribution of religious scriptures and other books and periodicals; 4) Supporting religious circles in initiating overseas relationships as well as religious and academic exchanges; 5) Assisting each religion in training a new generation of religious personnel...; and 6) Cracking down on the tiny minority who use religion as a cover for political and economic fraud.

These gains were made possible by the efforts of cadres at all levels and the influence of Document 19, issued by the Central Committee in 1982 and reaffirmed by Document 6 in 1991. What set this document apart was that it overturned the long-term domination of Soviet-style religious work, an anti-religious line bent on the destruction of religion, which influenced Chinese religious work...

Today our nation wishes to speed up economic construction. In order to do this, we must have an environment conducive to reform and openness. The proper implementation of religious policy, unity and stability, are all very important to the formation of such an environment. However, there are many signs which indicate that transgressions against the spirit of Document 19, disregard for the masses’ morale and arbitrary methods of opposing, suppressing, controlling and attacking religion are rearing their ugly heads in some areas. If we do not take serious note of such phenomena the results will be disastrous. Taking the example of Christianity, the Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee and the China Christian Council receive each year well over a thousand appeals for assistance from the grassroots. Of course we are unable to verify the allegations of each and every letter, but this enormous number of appeals come from all over and from every province, so we must suppose that overall they are basically genuine. Among the appeals which we receive, those which tell of refusal to approve venues for normal religious activities, refusal of protection and even criminal accusations preceding permission, and the banning of large assemblies are specially numerous. There are also those which deal with choosing leaders in the church: cadres have their say and the churches can voice no opinion, with the result that persons without religious training or with bad
reputations, or who are not even members of the church, have become its leaders. Recently, quite a large number of letters and calls allege that in some places, in the name of urban construction and expanded enterprise, units have occupied church land and demolished church buildings without prior consultation. These petitioners call upon the two national Christian bodies and the State Council Religious Affairs Bureau for urgent assistance.

The two national Christian bodies, together with the United Front Department and the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council have sent teams to investigate conditions in two provinces and have found more than a few instances of the kind cited above...

When Chairman Mao went down to investigate conditions, he did not halt at the cadre level but went deep into the masses. The authors of our letters are also citizens who should enjoy freedom of religious belief. As head of our two national Christian bodies, I often find my ability to help them out of their difficulties falls short of my wishes and I feel deep remorse over this.

My point is this: there are places today where the guiding thought of the Party Central Committee with regard to religious work is not being disseminated but is actually being resisted and assailed. There are persons who even today do not truly believe that religion is long-lasting and complex in nature, do not truly believe that religious work should be stressed, do not truly believe that the Party Central has not given them the task of destroying religion, and do not truly believe Chairman Mao's teaching that one cannot deal summarily by administrative methods with the religious beliefs of the masses. They see themselves as warriors struggling against religion. Attacking religion seems to be their pleasure. They do not realize the profound depths of the wellsprings of religion and so they are hindrances, driving religion underground, reducing it to a lesser status, offering the masses to lawless elements on a silver platter...

In addition to giving people moral guidance, religion touches upon questions which have fascinated people through the ages and which are of profound concern to them: questions touching on life and death, and on the final things... It seems that as long as human questions about ultimate matters are not satisfied, it is far too early to shift the discussion to the destruction of religion, and it is by no means an easy matter to arbitrarily control, weaken, suppress or ban religion.

There are people who think that since cracking down on religion is always a good thing, a blind eye can be turned. This is one kind of subjectivism, and is extremely destructive. In Wenzhou (Zhejiang province) during the Great Leap Forward, high pressure tactics were used in dealing with religion and it was proclaimed that the city had become a no-religion city. Today the Christian population of Wenzhou is six per cent of the total population, the highest in the nation, higher even than Hong Kong's five per cent. The only scientific way to deal with religion is to respect it, not to aggravate it. The best approach is to allow religion to be self-regulating; not to make vain attempts to control and attack it...

Religious believers are in the minority in China, their right
to religious freedom and other legitimate rights are easily overlooked. For this reason, propagating the policy of religious freedom should be an ongoing effort...

Three groups are involved in religious work at present, and these three should work closely together: 1) religious affairs organizations of the government (RABs); 2) the different religious bodies; 3) social scientists involved in religious research.

Among the cadres of the government departments involved in religious work are many who are able to stress the thorough implementation of the policy of religious freedom and thereby create conditions beneficial to reform and openness. But there is also a group who have a self-reform problem in terms of viewpoint, function and honest government. They must change their mistaken view of religion as "a hot bed for peaceful evolution," or "forces alienated from socialism," they must change their view that the control, restriction, weakening and even destruction of religion is part of their own task. They must become clear that what they as cadres involved in religious work are to carry out with regard to religious groups is political leadership and not professional leadership. Their role lies in overseeing politics, not overseeing church affairs, in controlling that which is illegal, not that which is legal. The primary task of cadres involved in religious work is still to propagate and implement the policy of religious freedom. Their function should be to set a clear line between themselves and the governing organs of each religion, maintaining separation of government and religion, avoiding interference or supplanting these groups. They should protect the financial rights of religious bodies and religious believers, rather than encroach upon them. They should not resort to fines and other measures to make use of the monies of religious bodies and believers.

The governing organs of each religion should strive to bring their initiative into play; stress building themselves up; overcome the age gap in pastoral workers created by the extreme left line; raise the standard of their religious activities, management of daily affairs and international work; run their affairs democratically; and be bold in representing their religion's legitimate rights in order to win the trust and support of the masses of their believers. Thus they will genuinely become bridges between the Party and the masses...

Scholars today have affirmed that China’s religious culture and socialism can be compatible in political and moral values, and have developed a Marxist religious view for China in accord with religion’s "five characteristics," thus providing a strong theoretical foundation for the safeguarding of religious freedom...

The people in these three groups should not forget that as individuals they should serve the people with all their hearts and minds, taking the masses' pulse so that they in no way offend the people in word or action, while uniting the masses for the four modernizations. At the same time they should have mutual respect and make a concerted effort to draw the attention of cadres and important persons in all circles to doing religious work well, so that religion in our country is well managed in accord with its special Chinese character and compatibility with socialism. [ANS]