Dear Friends

After a break of more than four months, ANS is now back with the publication of another double issue. ANS apologizes to all its subscribers for this delay. The last issue of this year will be published mid-December, and we hope to publish ANS bi-monthly in 1995.

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**ANS Feature 1:** Excerpts From The Letter Pages of Tian Feng

**ANS Feature 2:** How Many Christians Are There In China
1994 Bible Production In China Higher Than Ever

The 8 millionth Bible came off the Amity Printing Press in Nanjing in September of this year. For 1994, the production of Bibles for distribution in China is expected to reach 2.26 million. According to the United Bible Societies, this will surpass the number of Bibles printed by the American Bible Society in the US in 1993, which was 2.2 million. With more than 11 million copies printed and distributed in China since 1980, the Bible is now the second most widely published book in the country after the Selected Works of Mao Zedong.

So far this year, the Amity Press has also printed 35,000 Bibles for export, among them 15,000 Children's Bibles destined for India, 10,000 Bibles in the Jingpo and Lahu languages for Thailand, and 10,000 Chinese Bibles which the Hongkong Bible Society plans to distribute to Chinese living in Russia.

With a second US$ 1.7 million Timson printing press to be installed, the Amity Printing Press' capacity will reach four million Bibles annually. [ANS]

ANS 94.4/5.2

Positive Experience With Religious Venue Regulations: Zhenjiang Church

The new Regulations Governing Venues For Religious Activities can be used to protect churches in cases of conflict. This is the experience of Daxilu Church in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu Province.

The church is situated next to a shoe factory which had rented out some of its buildings to a privately owned clothing store. The store's manager insisted on putting the exhaust fan of his airconditioning unit into the church courtyard, claiming that the church yard was public space. When church members tried to argue with him, he called some of his friends for help and installed the fan anyway, threatening to use violence against anyone who tried to remove it.

The church's pastor then complained to the city's Religious Affairs Bureau, which, upon investigation, concluded that the store owner's actions were a clear violation of the government regulations governing religious venues. The Public Security Bureau then ordered the store owner to immediately remove the exhaust fan from the church yard and to make an apology to the church.

The report from Daxilu Church, published in the September issue of the church magazine, Tian Feng, makes two recommendations based on the church's experience: It calls on government agencies to widely propagate the new regulations so that citizens are aware of the rights of religious believers; and it calls on churches to seek their respective RAB's help in cases of conflict instead of taking action themselves. [ANS]
RAB Publishes Commentary On Religious Venue Regulations

Small scale Christian home meetings do not need to be registered with the authorities. This is stated in a commentary on the "Regulations Governing Venues For Religious Activities" issued by the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council in June and published in the church magazine Tian Feng in September.

The commentary distinguishes between established churches, large scale worship meetings in purpose-built places (often known abroad as meeting points), and small-scale home worship gatherings. The latter are described as meetings in family homes for prayer and Bible study, comprising of family members and friends. Such "traditional home meetings" do not fall under the regulations and therefore do not need to register. But once such home meetings expand to gatherings of several dozen, hundreds or even thousands of people who congregate for a more formal worship, Christian festivals and evangelism and discipleship training, such meeting points are defined as "provisional places of worship" and need registration similar to an established church. [ANS]

Commission On Publications Reports Increased Book Sales

After cutting the prices of many Christian books, sales have gone up by almost 60% in the first half of 1994, reports the Publications Commission of the China Christian Council which met in July this year. Made up of representatives from all provincial Christian Councils and seminaries, the commission aims to coordinate publication of Christian literature within China.

The commission regretted that there was insufficient networking between the publication departments of different seminaries, and also criticized churches which had published Christian literature without first applying for a publication number. Furthermore, the commission learned that several local publication departments had been cheated by dubious printing companies that took their money but never produced any books. The commission called on all publication departments to always work within the legal framework existing in China. In addition, the commission is now planning to coordinate all publications by seminaries and provincial Christian Councils for the next two years.

The commission passed a resolution calling on all publication departments not to engage in joint ventures with publication houses from abroad. The commission also stressed that publication work should center on Chinese publications, while appropriate materials from abroad which met the needs of Chinese Christians might also be translated.

To inform Chinese Christians about available Christian literature, the commission published a book catalogue that will be distributed to all churches in China. [ANS]
Xinjiang Churches Struggling To Build Up Organizational Framework

With the recent inauguration of the Urumqi Christian Council and the Urumqi TSPM (together known as the Urumqi lianghui), a first step has been taken to build up an organizational framework for the churches in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Rev. Huang Qingzhi, the chair of the lianghui, hopes that Christians in other places with larger numbers of Christians will follow suit, and that a Xinjiang Christian Council and TSPM can be set up before too long.

Christianity first came to Xinjiang through the China Inland Mission which began a very small congregation in Urumqi. During the first half of this century, several independent Chinese evangelists (like Dr. Li Kaihuan from Yunnan) and groups (like the "Gospel Band") were also active in Xinjiang, but by 1949 the total number of Christians from the different groups and denominations barely reached 100. Since then, churches in Xinjiang have grown dramatically, and there are now 20,000 to 30,000 Christians mainly concentrated in the region's capital, Urumqi, the towns of Yili, Shihezi and Hami, and the region south of the Tianshan Mountains. The large majority of Christians in Xinjiang are Han Chinese, many of whom moved to the region during the fifties and sixties. In 1986, pastors from Shaanxi and Gansu, sent by the China Christian Council, ordained the first two ministers in Xinjiang, both of whom are now in their seventies.

The churches in Xinjiang face many problems. There is a severe lack of trained church workers: still only two ordained ministers for the whole autonomous region. Of the ten or so theological graduates from Xinjiang, only three or four are still working in the church there. Many congregations are served by evangelists who have had no training whatsoever, and the spread of false teachings and heresies has caused many difficulties. Meeting rooms are another problem; there is not a single appropriate church building in the whole of Xinjiang. The few churches that exist are decrepit and far too small, and in most places congregations meet in private homes because no church building exists. And finally, Xinjiang Christians still have not been able to set up a provincial Christian Council or a provincial TSPM, which means that there is little or no coordination or cooperation between churches in different areas.

But the situation of the churches in Xinjiang is not all bleak. According to Rev. Huang, a strong emphasis is put on youth work and the training of young church workers. Thus far, one lay training class has been held, and more are planned. In many local churches, young people have taken up the main responsibilities of preaching and administration. And as a first step to solve the shortage of building space, Christians in Urumqi are now constructing a six-storey church which will seat 2,500 people as well as provide room for offices and guests. [ANS]
Call For "Comprehensive Policy" To Address Problems Of Rural Church

The three main problems of the rural churches in China, namely, the lack of trained leadership, the low quality of the faith of many believers, and the lack of appropriate Christian literature, need to be addressed by a "comprehensive policy." This was stressed by the chairperson of the CCC's Committee on Rural Church Work, Rev. Zheng Yugui, in a recent interview with the church magazine Tian Feng.

Zheng, who is also president of the Fujian Christian Council and of Fujian Theological Seminary, told Tian Feng that the Fujian Christian Council had set up a "Fund For The Promotion Of Pastoral Training". With capital exceeding one million RMB, the fund aims to subsidize salaries of church workers in poor areas as well as support theological training through Fujian Theological Seminary. Zheng said that while some theological graduates could earn as much as 300 RMB (US$35) a month, graduates working in poor mountain areas often make only 30-50 RMB (US$3.5-6), not even enough for subsistence.

Speaking about Fujian Theological Seminary, Zheng said that students from rural areas had a poorer educational background when compared to students from cities. He added that many of the rural students had also been influenced by false teachings and heresies, a big problem in some areas. Zheng stressed that seminary education aimed to build students up spiritually as well as provide them with a sound theological foundation. He admitted that Fujian's two-year program was rather short, but added that each year one graduate was chosen to further his or her education abroad. Upon their return, these graduates would join the teaching staff of the seminary.

Zheng stressed that the low quality of faith of many rural believers made the production of good-quality Christian literature even more urgent. While churches were growing rapidly, especially in the coastal areas, he said, the re-emergence of denominationalism was a serious problem. Several foreign sects had also been active in these areas and distributed large amounts of their literature, adding to the confusion of many uneducated Christians. Zheng noted that while some rural Christians called the "Three-Self Church" the "Babylon", he felt that the Christian Council and Provincial TSPM should work in a spirit of tolerance, and deal with all groups in a way that would build up the unity of the body of Christ. Zheng added that he strongly believed that God wanted the church in China to be self-supporting, and that God also wanted the church to be united. [ANS]
Yunnan Minority Evangelists Strengthen Ties With East Coast Christians

The large majority of the at least 300,000 Christians in Yunnan belong to one of the 25 minority peoples who inhabit the province's more remote regions. Few of these Christians ever get the chance to travel further than the next mountain, or to meet Christians from other parts of China. Likewise, Christians in China's eastern provinces know little about the life of minority Christians in the "wild west".

A delegation of 18 evangelists from nine different minority peoples visited Nanjing, Shanghai and Beijing in July with hopes of strengthening the ties between Christians in different parts of the country. Meeting with pastors and congregations, visiting the Amity Printing Press and the headquarters of the China Christian Council, the delegation got a broader picture of the situation of Christianity in China, while helping eastern Christians and church leaders to gain a better understanding of the situation in Yunnan.

The delegation of 15 men and three women evangelists included several village heads from villages in which the majority of inhabitants are Christian. They told about the poverty in their areas, where the per capita income is often less than 400 RMB (US$47) a year. There is a severe shortage of clean drinking water and very limited economic development as a result of insufficient infrastructure. Church buildings in minority areas are often dilapidated and too small to meet the needs of believers. Since pews or benches are non-existent in many buildings, the congregation stands for worship. As many Christians live far from any church building, numerous groups worship in the open air.

There are many lay training classes held in rural Yunnan, the delegation reported. These classes usually last three years, since they meet only during the slack farming season. Revival meetings led by groups of pastoral workers from different churches also play an important role. Finally, there are seminars to enhance believers' understanding of the gospel and to ward off false teachings and heresies.

Christian workers from the eastern provinces who met with the delegation were impressed with the Yunnan evangelists' dedication. Receiving no salary, and with little education, they still work wholeheartedly for the church, often with insufficient clothing, and sometimes even going without food. One of the women evangelists, of especially slight build, turned out to be serving nine different meeting points besides raising several children. When asked whether she ever got tired, she smiled and replied "never." [ANS]
Bishop Shen Yifan 1928-1994

The Vice-President and General Secretary of the China Christian Council, Bishop Shen Yifan, died suddenly of heart failure on 7 August. His untimely death has been a hard blow for the CCC which already suffers a lack of trained and experienced leaders. Because no theological training was possible between 1966 and 1980, most Chinese church leaders are now either very old, in their seventies or eighties, or very young, in their thirties and forties. With Bishop Shen, who was sixty-six, the CCC lost the most outstanding man of its 'middle generation'.

Bishop Shen, a fifth-generation Christian, had been a leading figure within the Chinese church for many years. Appointed Secretary of the Standing Committee of the General Synod of the Chinese Episcopal Church in 1955, he soon became involved in church reconstruction in accordance with the Three-Self Principle. Since 1958, he served as a pastor in Shanghai, first at New Grace Church, and later at Community Church. Harassed and disgraced by Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution, Shen was assigned to work in a factory for seven years. But when churches began to re-open in the early eighties, he resumed his ministry as pastor of the growing congregation of Shanghai Community Church. At that time, he also began to do research work at the Institute of Religious Studies of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. In 1980, Shen became a member of the Standing Committee of the newly formed China Christian Council. Since then, he had played an active role in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the church on the national level. In 1986, Shen was elected resident Vice-President of the CCC, and in 1992, General Secretary. He was consecrated bishop by the Shanghai Christian Council in 1988, a position which gave him greater pastoral responsibility in the Shanghai area.

Bishop Shen was a well-known theologian who published many substantial essays. His lyric "Christ The Everlasting Lord" (1982), which is included in the Chinese New Hymnal, testifies to Shen's faith in Christ's abiding presence throughout China's years of social turmoil and the subsequent church revival. As the chairperson of the CCC Commission On Theological Education, Shen greatly contributed to the development of China's 13 theological seminaries. He also taught Systematic Theology and the History Of Christian Thought at East China Theological Seminary in Shanghai.

Fluent in English, Shen Yifan had, since 1981, traveled widely in Asia, North America and Europe, helping to re-establish ecumenical relationships with many churches and church agencies.

Bishop Shen Yifan will be greatly missed as a theologian and as church leader. [ANS]
Memorial Service Held for Bishop Shen Yifan

More than 2,000 people crowded into Shanghai's Community Church to attend the Memorial Service for Bishop Shen Yifan on 28 August, mostly members of his own congregation. Bishop Shen, who was the senior pastor of this church, died suddenly on 7 August while attending government meetings in the northeastern coastal city of Weihai in Shandong Province. He was sixty-six.

Tributes to Bishop Shen have come in from churches around the world. Representatives from the World Council of Churches, as well as from Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and the USA attended the two-hour memorial service, which was organized by colleagues of Bishop Shen from various levels of the Chinese church. The choir sang "Christ the Everlasting Lord", a hymn written by Bishop Shen, and set to music by his widow, Ms. Hung Luming, who accompanied the choir on the piano.

Bishop Jonas Johnson from the Church of Sweden represented the World Council of Churches at the service, where he said: "Bishop Shen Yifan was instrumental in opening the Chinese church to the whole world. As an ordained bishop he symbolized continuity in ministry through the centuries. He felt a particular responsibility to maintain an episcopal tradition which must not be lost to the Chinese Church at a time when it is being strengthened and renewed in other churches."

At the time of his death, Bishop Shen was Vice-President and General Secretary of the China Christian Council, as well as chair of its Theological Education Commission. He was ordained in 1952, and consecrated bishop in 1988. Bishop Shen is survived by his wife, a son and daughter, and two grandchildren.

China Christian Council Hits Out At Taiwan Travel Restrictions

The China Christian Council has strongly criticized new regulations on "Mainland Religious Personnel Coming To Taiwan For Religious Activities." Bishop K.H. Ting, the president of the CCC, called the regulations "restrictive."

The new regulations, published in issue No. 1475 of the Taiwan Christian Forum, prohibit church workers who also hold office as members of people's congresses or consultative conferences from visiting Taiwan. It also distinguishes between the "official" and the "underground" church, saying that members of the latter would have great difficulties in obtaining travel documents from the Communist government.

In a declaration published in the September issue of the church magazine Tian Feng, the CCC rejects the new regulations as restricting contact between Christians on the mainland and in Taiwan. The declaration states that hundreds of pastoral
workers on the mainland have been elected to serve on people's congresses and consultative conferences, and that their work has greatly helped the implementation of the policy of religious freedom in China. In rejecting these people, the declaration says, the Taiwan government is trying to split the church on the mainland. The declaration adds that the regulations would, for example, prohibit a visit to Taiwan by the CCC president, Bishop K.H. Ting, because he is a vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

The declaration also rejects the distinction between the "official" and the "underground" church, saying that all Christians in China, whether they worship in a home or in a church building, belong to the one body of Christ. The declaration stresses that all Taiwan Christians are welcome to visit their Christian brothers and sisters in China, and that mainland Christians highly value their contacts with Christians on the other side of the Taiwan Strait. [ANS]

News In Brief

Leaders of city churches in Jiangsu Province recently met in Nanjing. Stating that the 800,000 Christians in the province are served by only 85 ordained pastors many of whom are very old, the meeting called for the training of more pastoral workers. The conference also adopted a resolution calling for an increase in pastors' salaries which in many cases do not even cover basic living expenses.

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Christian women in Chengdu have founded a Christian Women's Service Committee, to organize and coordinate their work in children's welfare, health care, literacy campaigns and other issues related to the position of women in society.

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The church in Zhongshan, Guangdong Province, and Baimahang Baptist Church in Macao organized a joint choir concert held in Zhongshan, Easter 1994. Churches in Southern Guangdong hope for more such joint activities with Christians from Hongkong and Macao.

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The Chinese Religion and Peace Committee was formally established at a conference in Beijing in July this year. Chaired by Bishop K.H. Ting, the meeting brought together more than 200 delegates from all major religions in China. The committee was set up to unite Chinese religious believers in their efforts for world peace, and to connect them to religious peace efforts all over the world. Bishop Ting was elected as a vice-chair of the committee.
Nanjing Union Theological Seminary graduated its tenth class on 8 July 1994. There were 43 graduates from different programs. From 1985 to 1993, the seminary graduated 463 students, of whom 415 are now working in the church. About 60 Nanjing graduates teach in seminars all over China.

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Since the beginning of 1993, 63 new church buildings have been opened in Inner Mongolia, the largest of which seats more than 1,000 people, while the smallest has room for about 100.

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A woman has become the first ordained minister of Dongming County in Shandong Province. Though a church was built there in 1917, it has never been served by an ordained minister until now.

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Eight young and middle-aged church workers were ordained as pastors in Hebei in May this year.

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The Third Hebei Provincial Christian Conference was held in Shijiazhuang, May 17-19. The 85 delegates passed new regulations concerning the ordination of church workers, baptism, and financial administration of the church.

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Shajiang Church in Xiapu County, Fujian Province, has been using the outside wall of its buildings for large wall posters introducing the Gospel to passers-by. The first three "editions" of this "wall paper" have met with great interest.

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Ninety percent of the inhabitants of Luoneiling village in Chugan County, Jiangxi Province, are Christians. The village has been lauded for its efforts to eradicate illiteracy.

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The church in Aojiang Township, Pingyang County, Zhejiang Province has more than 800 members, of which about 130 are illiterate. In May, the church started a literacy program in which more than 90 Christians are enrolled. The church plans to run the program for three years, after which the participants should be able to read and write 1,000 Chinese characters.[OVER]
The Hunan Provincial Christian Conference was held in Changsha, April 22-23. The 81 delegates represented churches from all the province's cities and counties. [ANS]

**Archbishop Of Canterbury's Visit Most Helpful**

The Archbishop of Canterbury's recent China visit has been described as "most helpful" by the President of the China Christian Council, Bishop K.H. Ting. Speaking in Nanjing, Ting said that Dr. Carey's visit had helped increase "the visibility of Christianity among the Chinese public." The Archbishop, who had been invited by the China Christian Council, visited Nanjing, Shanghai, Chengdu and Beijing, 11-22 September.

The Archbishop, in China for the first time, met with church leaders and Christians from all walks of life as well as with government officials and researchers in religion. In Nanjing, Dr. Carey addressed the students of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary. In Shanghai and Chengdu, he was invited to lecture at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and the Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences, respectively. Both academies are well known for their research into Christianity.

In Beijing, the Archbishop met with the director of the Religious Affairs Bureau under the State Council, Zhang Shengzuo, and with state councillor Ismail Adat, who is a Muslim. In his talks with government officials, Dr. Carey brought up several cases of harassment or mistreatment of Christians and churches about which he had been informed by the leadership of the CCC and other sources.

The Archbishop's visit not only generated considerable media coverage in Britain and Hongkong, but also helped to increase the visibility of Christians within Chinese society where little is known about Christianity. Even though the Chinese church is among the fastest growing in the world, Protestant Christians make up less than 1% of the population in the People's Republic.

Summing up his visit in an article for the London newspaper The Times, the Archbishop of Canterbury spoke about what he learned from Chinese Christians: "In this Decade of Evangelism, the Chinese Church has much to teach us about the way in which Christians can bring the Good News to a generation searching for spiritual truth. But above all they can teach us humility as we listen to the story of their faith, forged through suffering." [ANS]
International Exchanges

Visiting the China Christian Council:

- a 12-member delegation from the Seventh-Day Adventists led by Dr. Robert Kloosterhuis, 18 May to 1 June;

- a 14-member delegation from the Council of Churches in Britain and Ireland led by Rev. John Reardon, 7-22 May;

- the Rev. Dr. Ching-fen Hsiao, Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, 18 May to 3 June;

- seven women from the Asian Christian Womans' Federation led by Bunice Kim, 25 May to 7 June;

- four Chinese ministers from Malaysia led by Rev. Zheng Guozhi, 26 May to 13 June;

- a ten-member delegation from the East West Christian Outreach, led by Rev. Harold Jow, 1-15 June;

- a 17-member delegation from Columbia Seminary, Decatur, USA, 28 May to 9 June;

- Dr. Richard Marsh from the Archbishop of Canterbury's office, to prepare for the Archbishop's visit, 7-15 June;

- Rev. Kim Dong Wan, the new General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Korea, 14-21 June;

- a 20-member band from the Hongkong Salvation Army led by Jeffery Li and Rev. Alfred Wong, 16-29 August;

- a 14-member delegation from the Hongkong Christian Council, 17-21 September;

- Rev. Ingo Feldt from the Berliner Missionswerk, 27 September to 17 October;

- the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, USA, Rev. Robert Bohl, 19-26 September.

- The Executive Committee of the United Bible Societies met in Nanjing, 27-30 September.

Chinese Christians visiting abroad:

- Dr. He Qi, Arts Teacher at Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (NUTS), lectured at Hongkong Lutheran Seminary, 6-12 June;

- Zhang Jinglong, a teacher from NUTS, participated in a conference on church leadership in Geneva, 18-20 June;
- **Rev. Liang Fuhuan** from Guangdong and **Rev. Deng Fucun** from Zhejiang participated in the 1994 Chinese American Christian Conference in Toronto, Canada, 27 June to 3 July;

- **Zhang Jinglong** from NUTS visited several seminaries in Canada in July and August, teaching, lecturing, and doing some research work;

- **Rev. Cao Shengjie** and evangelist **Wu Mingfeng** participated in the Presbyterian Church USA Women's Conference, 13-18 July;

- **Dr. Han Wenzao** and his wife, **Zhao Zhaohua**, participated in the Lutheran Laymen's League Annual Conference, 23-27 July; and were invited to be the guests of **Dr. Billy Graham** and **Mrs. Ruth Graham**, 28-30 July;

- **Bishop K.H. Ting**, President of the China Christian Council, is visiting the United Methodist Church, USA and the Presbyterian Church, USA, 5-23 October;

- **five church workers from the CCC** participate in the Ecumenical Parish Program of the Presbyterian Church, USA, 7 September to 31 October. [ANS]
Facts And Figures

Liaoning (population 40.2 million): There are now at least 140,000 Protestant Christians in the province, perhaps 20% of whom are Korean. The Christians meet in 100 churches and more than 300 meeting points. There are 37 pastors, about half of whom are of the younger generation, as well as more than 40 elders. In the provincial capital, Shenyang, the Chinese Christian community has grown from 5,000 in 1982 to more than 40,000. Sixty percent of the church members are illiterate women, but churches have been holding literacy classes for the last five years, and now many Christians can at least read the New Testament. There are an additional 5,000 ethnic Korean Christians in Shenyang, who, on average, seem to be more affluent than Chinese Christians. Christians in Shenyang worship in about 50 churches as well as at least 100 spontaneous meeting points.

Jilin (population 25.3 million): There are about 200,000 Christians in this province. In Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, 35,000 Christians worship in more than 45 churches and 200 registered meeting points.

Heilongjiang (population 36 million): There are at least 300,000 baptized Christians in the province, and possibly an equal number of unbaptized seekers. Sixty percent of the Christians are reported to live in mining districts, and most live in areas where there were no Christians before 1958. Rev. Gong Yushan, the head of the Heilongjiang Christian Council, attributes this tremendous growth to three factors: Christians who were sent down to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution; the work of untrained evangelists; and gospel broadcasts. There are only 20-some ordained pastors in the province, and a total of only 50 professional church workers, including 30 recent seminary graduates. In addition, there are 1,200 voluntary lay workers. There are more than 300 churches, and thousands of meeting points of all sizes. In the provincial capital of Harbin, there are 15 churches, ten pastors, and 30,000 Christians, plus more than 20,000 seekers who have not yet been baptized.

Northeastern Theological Seminary, founded by English Presbyterians in 1894, was closed in 1950 and reopened in October 1982. There were 54 graduates in the class which entered in 1982, who completed a four year program. The program was reduced to two years in 1992 because of the urgent need to train more leaders. There are now separate Chinese and Korean programs, with about 50 students altogether. The seminary is currently constructing a new building, funds for which are coming largely from Korean churches.

Heilongjiang Bible Training Center will soon be opened. Land and buildings were donated by a wealthy Harbin Christian businessman, who made his money doing business in Russia. The center plans to train 60 students at a time in a basic four-month program, and three such programs will be held each year.
Korean Churches And Ethnic Korean Christians In China's Northeast
by Kim Jong Goo

The Rev. Kim Jong Goo from the Methodist Church in Korea joined the Amity Foundation Overseas Coordination Office in August of this year. This report for ANS follows his trip to the Northeast in September.

1. Historical Background

Koreans started to migrate to northeastern China at the end of the 18th century. At that time, the Chosun dynasty was collapsing; corruption and exploitation caused numerous peasant rebellions which were brutally suppressed. The first Koreans to migrate to what then was Manchuria were peasants looking for a better life. With the arrival of the Japanese in Korea in the middle of the 19th century, the stream of emigrants increased. Korean patriots fighting against the Japanese occupation of Korea and building the base for a national independence movement, found shelter across the border in China. The Koreans in Manchuria settled on harsh virgin land, cultivating it with painstaking effort.

With the great wave of Korean immigration to China, the mission of the Korean churches to Koreans in China began. As far back as the 1920s, churches in Manchuria were constructed with Korean funds.

It is with this history in mind that Koreans in Korea still feel akin to Koreans in China. Many Koreans have relatives in China, and for the last 15 years they have been able to re-establish contact with them. Koreans in Korea see Chinese Koreans more as Koreans than as Chinese (a view that, incidentally, is not shared by the Chinese Koreans).

For this reason, the ties between Korean churches and their former mission fields are still very strong. Many church buildings that were constructed with Korean help at the beginning of this century still exist. For example, Xita Church in Shenyang was built by the Korean Presbyterian Church (KPC), and it continues to have strong strong ties to the KPC.

2. The Mission Work of Korean Churches in northeastern China Today

It is important to distinguish between the work in China of the National Council of Churches in Korea, the NCCK, on the one hand, and conservative Korean denominations on the other hand. While the NCCK cooperates with the China Christian Council and all its actions are above-board, many of the conservative denominations do not want to work with the CCC or the provincial Christian Councils, and in some cases are even involved in secret or "underground" mission work, of which the CCC is highly critical.

[OVER]
The most visible aspect of Korean mission work in northeastern China is the construction of churches. At present, the churches of ethnic Koreans are perhaps the most modern and most beautiful in China. Xita Church in Shenyang, for example, has marble staircases; and the new church now being built in Yanji, designed by a noted Seoul architectural firm, will cost more than 8 million RMB, making it the most costly church building in China. In fact, many of these new buildings are officially home gathering points, because ethnic Koreans can receive building funds from Korea without restriction. This stress on the funding of buildings has caused splits in some churches: The members of Manrong Church in Shenyang, for example, originally worshipped with the Korean congregation at Sujiatun Church, but broke away in 1991 when South Korean funds became available to construct their own building.

Recognizing that Korean Christians in northeastern China lack trained leadership even more than church buildings, the construction of seminaries has also become an important focal point of Korean churches' mission work, both in cooperating with the Christian Councils and apart from them. The new building housing Northeastern Theological Seminary is being constructed in cooperation with the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK). There are also many efforts to build informal seminaries, and there are several "underground" seminaries managed by Korean nationals.

Besides the re-establishing of old ties, conservative Korean churches see their mission work among Chinese Koreans as a base from which to evangelize North Korea. Like all Koreans, Christians hope for the reunification of their divided nation. To help prepare for post-reunification, they feel an obligation to spread the Gospel to North Korea. But South Koreans are not allowed by their government to travel to North Korea, while Chinese Koreans are able to travel freely there. Therefore, South Koreans are building "base camps" in northeastern China for the mission to North Korea.

In addition, the more conservative Korean denominations also stress the teaching of new believers among the Chinese Koreans. They have sent many young co-workers to China for this task.

3. Problems

The enormous involvement of conservative South Korean churches in China's northeast has created many problems, the root of which is their inability to see beyond the Korean communities in China. They do not see the Chinese Korean Christians as part of the greater church in China, and so their work has often been divisive. While Chinese Christians in the northeast are often poor and poorly educated, Korean churches there are much more affluent and ethnic Korean Christians better educated. But because South Korean Christians doing "underground work" have no chance to establish contacts with Chinese Christians, their vision is severely limited. This also leads to "churchism", stressing the construction of church [OVER]
buildings while ignoring the problems of the society at large.

Conservative South Korean involvement has also rekindled denominationalism, because each church does its own mission work and rarely cooperates with other denominations. This has led to divisions among Korean congregations in China; in fact, many ethnic Korean churches in northeastern China see themselves as members of this or that South Korean denomination.

Many conservative South Korean Christian workers in northeastern China have been trying to apply their church-growth methods to the churches in Manchuria. They believe that in this way they can also enhance the growth of ethnic Chinese congregations. But because they have very little information about the Chinese churches, these Korean Christians have no knowledge about the mission work of Chinese Christians in their society.

4. How to respond?

The evangelistic zeal of the Korean churches is precious. They understand themselves as "debtors of the Gospel", and they have a passion to spread the Word of God. Many Korean Christians have made large donations to mission work in China. But I hope that Korean Christians, especially conservative ones, can gain a better understanding of the church in China as a whole, including her principle of self-determination and the need to develop a theology that takes into account the situation of all Christians in the northeast. I hope that Korean Christians will continue to work with churches in China in a spirit of cooperation, and I also hope that Korean Christians will join the efforts of Chinese Christians for the development of their society. [ANS]
Several attempts at mediation by the China Christian Council in an intra-church conflict in Shenyang, Lianoning Province, have only been partially successful, and the conflict has in recent months escalated to involve the Public Security Bureau, which arrested and charged one of the pastors involved.

The CCC was first alerted to the tensions between an older woman minister, Rev. Lü Zhibin, and two younger pastors, Rev. Gao Liangyi and Rev. Gao Peiman, at the end of last year. The basis of the conflict seems to be generational, but issues like the resurgence of denominationalism as well as different approaches to reclaiming church property not yet returned to the church also played a role. As ANS has learned, about 700 Christians in Shenyang staged a march to the city's Religious Affairs Bureau last December, carrying a large cross and demanding the return of the church's property.

A first CCC-team was sent to Shenyang in late 1993. It emphasized that any conflicts within the church should be resolved within the church through forgiveness, reconciliation and Christian love. The team asked the local church leaders to show tolerance and respect for the young ministers and to cooperate with them. At the same time, it told the young pastors to be more patient and to refrain from using "class struggle methods" such as big character posters assaulting the church leadership. The CCC team also warned the two young ministers not to break the law.

According to the CCC, the local church leadership at least partially accepted the advice from the CCC, while the two Gaos became even more aggressive. In April, the two young pastors were arrested. Officials quoted in a report by the Hongkong China News Agency stated that both pastors had incited church members to "physically assault older pastors and other workers of the church who disagreed with them" and had engaged in "unlawful activities". Immediately after the arrest of the two young ministers, the CCC sent a letter to the Religious Affairs Bureau under the State Council, requesting that the Public Security Bureau immediately release the two pastors if it was shown that they had not broken any law. Soon after, Gao Peiman was released, and the church held a welcome meeting to celebrate his return.

Gao Liangyi, who has remained in custody since April, was charged in mid-September with having violated the regulations governing the management of religious venues and article 159 of the criminal law.

Since April, the CCC has sent a second delegation which also tried to resolve the conflict, and has held talks with Christians from Shenyang who came to Nanjing and Shanghai as well. The CCC has also asked the Public Security Bureau to clarify the charges against Rev. Gao Liangyi.

The CCC leadership feels strongly that intra-church conflicts should be resolved within the church. [ANS]
A Statement Of The China Christian Council

The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) has for many years campaigned for Taiwanese independence. In recent months, it has stepped up its campaign, seeking support from churches all over the world. In answer, the China Christian Council felt obliged to issue the following statement:

We regret to note that a heightened political campaign advancing the slogan that "Taiwan is Taiwan and China is China," that is, making Taiwan and China two separate nations, is being conducted within the ecumenical community of churches. This contradicts the position commonly held by the People's Republic of China, the governing authorities in Taiwan and the overwhelming majority of the people of Taiwan.

One form of violating the oneness of China and granting Taiwan the status of a nation is to seek to seat Taiwan in the United Nations as a member of the UN.

We would like to point out that from time immemorial Taiwan has been a part of China just as much as Hong Kong and Macao have been. It is simply untrue that Taiwan was an independent country in the 19th century, or in any other century.

As recently as the end of World War II, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, in an official statement asking for the admission of that church as a member church of the (Presbyterian) Church of Christ in China, referred to China as its motherland.

The People's Republic of China maintains diplomatic relations with 159 countries all of which affirm that Taiwan is a part of China.

We hope and pray that denominational ties will not be allowed to influence political sympathy, and that churches maintaining relations with both the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and the China Christian Council will do their best to promote understanding and reconciliation and guard against steps to deepen division and enmity.

We in the China Christian Council wish to have Christian fellowship and friendly relations with all Christians in Taiwan. We believe that members and leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and all churches in Taiwan will see the need of Christian solidarity and national unity across the Taiwan Strait.

September 2, 1994

CHINA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL
Excerpts From The Letter Pages Of Tian Feng

The letters to the editors of the Chinese church magazine, Tian Feng, give readers a glimpse of daily church life with all its joys and problems. To give our readers an idea of the breadth and width of the issues discussed, we are documenting a selection of questions and answers from the July and August issues of Tian Feng.

Can A Teacher Become A Christian?

To the editors:

We had a case here recently of a primary school teacher who turned to our Lord and became a Christian. Not long after, the village and county cadres said that this person was not allowed to be a Christian. According to the cadres, teachers cannot be religious believers and if this person went to church again, she would be removed from public employment. There was nothing the teacher could do but stop coming to church.

Is it legal to prevent a teacher from holding religious belief in this way? Is there a law which says teachers cannot be religious believers? -- Cai Chuanjiang in Jiashan, Anhui

Response:

The Chinese constitution bestows freedom of religious belief as a fundamental right of Chinese citizens. Since a teacher is naturally a citizen, he or she is fully entitled to this right which cannot be violated. We have never heard of any law or document stipulating that a teacher is not allowed to hold religious beliefs. Religious belief is the private matter of the individual citizen and does not conflict with that citizen's job. A teacher will not propagate religion in the classroom just because he or she is a religious believer. As a believer, a teacher will be law-abiding and base lessons on the actual classroom situation, in order to do a good job. In our view, religious belief, far from making someone a bad teacher, will make that person a more loyal and devoted teacher. In last year's June issue of Tian Feng, we published a story about Sister Yu Yingzhu, who teaches in the No. 3 Central Primary school in the Chabeli district of Shanghai and how, in spite of illness, her achievements as a teacher were so outstanding that she received a commendation. Nor has Professor Li Mingqing of Zhejiang University been ostracized or discriminated against because of his faith. He too made a great contribution to the nation as a teacher: not only is he a professor in the Chemistry Department of the university, but serves as the editor-in-chief of the university engineering general chemistry section of the unified national curriculum, and his lectures have been broadcast many times by Central Television. Brother Li had this to say: [OVER]
to our reporter: "The leadership of Zhejiang University has a good grasp of policy; they respect my religious beliefs." (See Tian Feng, no. 10, 1992)

These examples amply illustrate that teachers who are religious believers not only enjoy equal freedom of belief with their fellow citizens, but that they, too, like their fellow citizens, are qualified to take part in national construction. If the cadres in your school object to teachers having religious beliefs and even censure them, please do not lose heart. You should calmly explain and strive to win them over. If it becomes necessary, you can request the cadres of the United Front Department or the Religious Affairs Department in your area to come and explain the policy, so that the religious policy can be thoroughly implemented and legal rights protected.

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Uphold the Principle of Mutual Respect in Matters of Faith and Practice

-- When the editors Tian Feng received the following letter, they forwarded it to Bishop K.H. Ting. Both the letter and the answer are reproduced below. -- the editors

To the editors:

We are patriotic citizens who have always upheld the three-self principle, but because we are Seventh Day Adventists, we have been the objects of unjust treatment by the Three-Self organization, which does not allow us to use the church on the Sabbath, but insists that we take part in Sunday services. We hope Tian Feng will support the cause of fairness so that our faith can be accorded the respect it deserves.

-- a group of Christians who keep the Sabbath

Response:

Whether Christians observe the Sunday or the Sabbath is a faith issue and should be fully respected. Disputes should be avoided in the interests of unity. Otherwise, the principle which is meant to guarantee mutual respect in faith and liturgy becomes so many empty words. When there is a minority of Christians in a place who observe the Sabbath, the two local Christian bodies must work harder to look after their special characteristics and customs, so that they may be able to hold services according to their liturgy in suitable surroundings on the Sabbath. Christians who observe the Sabbath should be given the same treatment as those who worship on Sunday.

According to the teachings of the Bible, salvation comes from faith in Jesus Christ. Churches which observe Sunday as the Lord's Day have never taught that one must worship on Sunday in order to be saved. Nor have churches which observe the Sabbath ever taught that one must observe the Sabbath to be saved. Only Christians who are unclear about doctrine link the issue
of the day of worship with the issue of salvation. To connect the
two in this way distorts doctrine and sows seeds of disunity
among Christians.

We do not condone forcing people out; we advocate drawing
people together in unity. It is my hope that we can achieve
mutual respect in the matter of the use of places of worship as
well as in faith issues concerned with salvation, in order to
make three-self patriotic unity a reality among Christians.

-- K.H. Ting

**********

Superstitious Religious Rites are being held in the village and
we have been asked to participate. What shall we do?

To the editors:

There is a supersititious custom in our village which has
come down through the ages: on the 15th day of the first lunar
month and the 8th day of the fourth month, incense and paper are
burned in the temple and idols are worshipped. Sometimes there
is a performance of local opera and everyone in the village is
asked to contribute their share of the expense. We Christians,
concerned to keep our faith pure and maintain the true way,
refused to give any money, and so relations between believers and
non-believers went sour, causing conflicts and disagreements.
This gave us a bad image in the non-believers' eyes. They called
us selfish and tight-fisted. We don't know what to do for the
best. Can we give money for this? Please give us an answer.

-- Wu Xiancheng in Qingshui River, Inner Mongolia

Response:

Christians have chosen their own beliefs and freedom of
religious belief is guaranteed by the laws of the nation. No
individual or unit may infringe upon this fundamental right of
the citizen. You can try to explain things to the villagers and
village organizations as much as possible on the basis of the
national laws and policies, in the knowledge that justice is on
your side. You should also explain why, according to Christian
faith, Christians cannot take part in superstitious activities.
Let them know it is not because we are selfish and "tight-
fisted". And when you speak with them, your attitude must be mild
and friendly, avoid conflict and confrontation and put up with
some criticism for the Lord's sake. No need to make a fuss. And
afterwards you should pray for them. If it becomes necessary, ask
government cadres who understand the religious policy to come and
try to win them over.

Our Lord Jesus said we are the salt and light of the world.
We should strive wherever we are to be witnesses to the Lord, to
be light to the people. Here is another story of witness we
heard: Whenever there was some superstitious rite to be held, a
sacrifice or some other ritual, the Christians there would be
asked to give a donation and take part in the ceremonies. [OVER]
ANS Feature 1: Excerpts From The Letter Pages Of Tian Feng

They would then patiently explain to the other villagers that because they believed in the Lord they could not worship idols and could have no part in the proceedings. Belief in Jesus means you must do things that benefit people, so they decided to build a road for the village. This both solved the transportation problems of the village and resolved the original dispute. Once the road was built the villagers were extremely grateful and erected a stone tablet beside the road praising the Christians' virtue and giving glory to God.

Many Christians across the nation have encountered the same problem you have, but, relying on the inner love and endurance God has given them, they have turned a distressing [OVER] incident into an opportunity for spreading the gospel and witnessing to the Lord. We are certain that through your prayers and relying on the guidance of God, this incident too will have a happy ending. [ANS translation]

ANS 94.4/5.19

ANS Feature 2: How Many Christians Are There In China?

This is our second attempt to estimate the number of Protestant Christians in China. We have indicated a minimum and a maximum number for each province, municipality and autonomous region, based on variations in reliable estimates received. In some cases, we confess, we simply do not know.

Compared to our estimates published in ANS 2.2 (1993), the minimum estimate has gone up by a little less than 900,000, while the maximum estimate has increased by almost 2 million. This increase, we believe, is due partly to church growth, and partly to more accurate information.

Again, we want to stress that our figures are estimates only. With the exception of some urban churches, most Christian groups in China do not keep records of their members, and different people may have different reasons to over- or underestimate the number of Christians in their church. An even bigger problem is that in some areas, only baptized Christians are counted while in other areas seekers, many of whom may have been waiting to be baptized for years, are included in the number of Christians given. But while we admit that our figures may in some cases be off by 50% or even 75%, we believe that the order of magnitude suggested is reliable. Reports, based on an alleged government report, that there may be as many as 60 or 80 million Protestants in China can not be substantiated. [OVER]
## The Protestant Population Of China, 1993: An Estimate

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**Totals:**

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