



Fire in Korea

A paper about the Modern
Missionary Movement in Korea.

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With photographs by the author

Fire in Korea

There is fire today in the "Land of the Morning Calm"! In the first place, the country of Korea has literally been burned to a crisp by the destruction of modern warfare - by instruments of war that have been supplied largely from America. Korea, at present, is a land filled with irony. The original name, "Chosen," means "Morning Calm," but Korea too often has known only the calm of death, the rest between the dissonant noises of twentieth Century warfare. The beautiful, pastoral countryside with its many straw-roofed villages nestled among secluded hills and open valleys has been transformed into a hellish pattern of ashes, stumps and rubble. Those of us who have been there can attest to this fact.

The see-saw battle for Seoul, the capital city of all Korea, left that city of a million and a half people at least eighty percent in ruins! Inchon, Seoul's port city was at least three-fourths gone by the Spring of 1951. Taejon, Waegwan, Andong, Yong Dong and hundreds of other cities and nameless villages have been completely wrecked!

With such terrific material destruction there always go scores and scores of violent civilian deaths. To say that 1,500,000 Koreans have been killed in this war may not only be conservative but unimpressive to those of us who are accustomed to treating such as mere statistics. If we should picture - as I have seen them - huge vacant lots covered with

hundreds of broken, bloody, unidentified bodies stacked twelve high, then perhaps we should be a little nearer reality. Better yet, if we could visualize these innocent victims as being our next-door neighbors whom we have known and loved, then we could begin to understand the pathos and human tragedy that exists everywhere in Korea today.

Yet there is another kind of fire in Korea at this moment that is creative instead of consuming. It is the Fire of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which has caught hold in the hearts of thousands of people -- people who are searching for something to lift them out of the sorrows and griefs that surround them. The calm in Korea is not entirely eliminated by this war as we might suppose, for the calm of the heart of the Korean Christian has not only the peace that passes knowledge, but the heart with a courage that has responded to the words of Christ, "Go, and preach the Gospel to every creature!" It is more than revival that is sweeping the country today -- it is dynamic evangelism into areas that hitherto have been untouched by the love of Christ. The fire of faith is burning brighter than ever before in Korea.- a fact that seems almost paradoxical or at least incongruous in an atmosphere of misery and ruin. What is it that accounts for this strange phenomenon? How did this come about?

In order to answer these questions we must go back into the history of the Korean missions in that land. We will find that it was the missionaries who made the permanent contributions

that have stood the test of years and many difficulties of war and political unrest. The first missionaries laid the foundations with the specific purpose in mind of having the Koreans themselves take the important positions in the growing church. The missionaries literally set about to "put themselves out of a job" which is, after all, the ideal in mission work.

The missionaries' contribution to the Korea Christianity has, of course, continued through the years and is still doing so. However, the purpose of this paper is to show the reader how greatly they influenced the Korea church in the earlier years and how the church so founded has been so strong that when it has been tried by fire "it has come forth as pure gold."

Much of the material that I have included here is what I have gathered from my own experience in Korea.

In Korea as well as with all successful mission enterprises we find a host of outstanding leaders who have determined the direction the church should go. Although mission activity in Korea was begun by the Roman Catholics indirectly as early as 1784, and two Koreans who were converted in a Roman Catholic mission hospital in China returned to their villages to spread the Gospel, priests who later entered Korea were all martyred.¹ That church did not prosper until almost

I. T. Stanley Soltau, Korea, the Hermit Nation and Its Response to Christianity (New York, 1932)

a century later. Persecution was heavy, but the Catholics remained.¹ In 1950 there were more than 200,000 Roman Catholic adherents.

Rev. John Ross, a Presbyterian missionary situated in Mukden, Manchuria, translated the entire New Testament into Korean and sent it across the border by coleporteurs. Consequently, the later years when missionaries wended their way north, they were amazed to find communities of converts already gleaning spiritual treasures from the Word of God.

The door to Korea was formally opened to missionaries following the treaty between the United States of America and Korea in 1882. Dr. Horace N. Allen from the North Presbyterian Board, a transfer from China, and Dr. John W. Heron were the first Protestant missionaries to arrive. Previous to this time, the "Hermit Kingdom" had maintained a strict policy of isolationism.

These first missionaries were medical doctors. God's Providence was soon in evidence. They successfully treated the cousin of the Queen and gained the confidence of the royal family as well as won the favor of the court. This did much to smooth the way and open the door further for Protestant missionaries from America.

The evangelistic missionaries arrived in 1885. They were Presbyterian Horace G. Underwood and Methodist Henry D. Appenzeller. Under their fine leadership with the help of many

1. T. Stanley Soltau, op. cit. p.110

other missionaries who soon came out, Korea developed a strong native church within a short time.

Dr. James S. Gale came out in 1888 from Canada and joined the Presbyterian laborers. Other churches joined the work-Australian Presbyterian in 1889; English Episcopal, 1890; Southern Presbyterian in 1892; southern Methodist in 1896 and in 1898 the Canadian Presbyterian Church.

The Presbyterian Church of Korea early became self-governing. Each new group of believers chose an unpaid leader and took turns delivering the "sermon". Several of these groups then elected a paid "substitute pastor" called a helper who later yielded to a regular pastor; as soon as these Christians acquired sufficient training they took over local, district provincial and national leadership in the Church. The mission-made a practice of passing on their own jobs to the Koreans as soon as this was possible.

The first three converts were baptized in 1886, but by 1890 there were one hundred converts. The large harvests began after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, and with the added numbers of missionaries from abroad which this struggle finally permitted. The first few years of the twentieth century began to show great harvest. By 1906, there were 18,064 Protestants with about 80,000 waiting to receive baptism.¹ By the following year (1907) there were 1000 self-supporting churches with 30,000 members and 120,000 adherents.²

1. "Save Korean Missions," Christian Century, Vol. 67. (Oct. 25, 1950), p. 1255.

2. R.H. Glover, The Progress of World-Wide Missions, p. 188

There are several reasons for this rapid growth. Probably the major factor was the lack of denominational competition, which was supplanted by a rather fine spirit of cooperation between the two American mission societies, the Presbyterian and the Methodist. Another is that the old existing religions -- Confucianism, Buddhism, and animism -- generally failed to satisfy the religious desires of the average person, who became tired of evil spirits, cold philosophy and confused polytheism. In the third place, the basic principles set down by the early leaders were of a fundamental type, looking toward an established church rather than a temporary flare of enthusiasm. Today Christianity has its greatest opportunity in Korea for it finds itself in the midst of a spiritual vacuum.

Missionaries from the beginning have brought into the Korean Church the high ethical standards of the American Church. This was particularly true in the early period 1884-1900. In Korea these high standards were adopted in Korea for church membership in order to completely differentiate the Christian from non-Christian. A special issue of Presbyterian Life on Korea that I helped prepare gives a clear description of this characteristic feature:

One cannot join the church merely by indicating his willingness. One comes first as a seeker, having previously rejected idols or fetishes. After a period of several months of instruction, he must pass an examination on the basic principles of Christianity, and then is accepted on probation. He is given further teaching. His personal habits are scrutinized. He

must not gamble or drink. He must have told non-Christians for his enthusiasm for Christianity and led at least one to Christ. He must have attempted to learn to read and write and taken steps that his family is given a chance to learn too. He must also have been regular in attendance at Sunday and midweek services, both morning and evening.¹

The Presbyterian Church of Korea, as an independent organization, has carried on quite effectively in spite of the trials of recent Japanese and Communist regimes. In 1889 the United Council of Presbyterian Missions was organized. It eventually included the American Northern and Southern Presbyterian Missions, the Australian Presbyterian Mission, and Mission of the United Church of Canada. Their objective was the establishment of but one Presbyterian Church in Korea.² How farsighted the missionaries were, for this Council was the ecclesiastical body of the Church until 1907 when an independent Korean Presbyterian Church was organized in Pyongyang under an all-Korean Presbytery. The new church adopted the Confession of Faith, the Westminster Shorter Catechism, the Form of Government, the Book of Discipline, and the Directory of Worship as prepared before hand by the Council. In 1912 the first General Assembly of the Korean Presbyterian Church met in Pyongyang.³ The missions gradually decreased their representations in the General Assembly and today are largely in an advisory capacity. The

1. Robert J. Cadigan, John T. Peters and Raymond C. Provost, "More than Conquerors," Presbyterian Life, Feb. 3, 1951, p.7

2. Harry A. Rhodes, History of the Korea Mission, p.450

3. Charles Clark, The Nevius Plan for Mission Work, p.17

Council had initiated theological instruction, but even the work of training Korean pastors was increasingly turned over to the Korean Church. In 1915 the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Pyongyang was the largest Presbyterian seminary in the world with 230 enrolled.¹ In theology it paralleled the historic Princeton Theological Seminary. The seminary, today in Taegu, is still the largest Presbyterian Seminary with over 525 students enrolled. Even in spite of the hardships of war, more than half the students are refugees from "North" Korea.

Ever since 1905 there have been numerous examples of cooperation among the various denominations represented in Korea. The near establishment of a united church at that time will probably never appear again. The General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions founded in 1905 became later known as the Korean National Christian Council.² It has been instrumental in forming a link between the churches of Korea and world Christian organizations, in cooperating in several evangelistic campaigns and forward movements, and in cooperating with the Missions in Japan for increased evangelism. At present the National Christian Council includes the Presbyterian, Methodist, Oriental Missionary Society and the Salvation Army groups. Other union undertakings were the Bible Committee, the Board of Bible Translators, and the Christian Literature Society. Because of an increasing demand for schools of higher learning, two or more missions

1. Rhodes, *op. cit.*, p.437-40.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 455-57.

united in the establishment and support of Severance Union Medical College, Pyongyang Union Christian College, Ewha Women's University and Chosun Christian University.¹

The early missionaries to Korea studied the work in other lands and at a comparatively early date arrived at two fundamental principles of organization or aims that have greatly affected the character of the Protestant churches in Korea, of whatever denomination. "Those who know the work best believe that the methods followed have had the most to do with the rapid progress of the Korean Christian Church. Other missions not following these methods have had no such gains."²

These basic principles were chiefly two: (1) the church must be self-supporting, and (2) it must be given the Bible and must be educated in the Bible.

Following the advice of Dr. John L. Nevius, from the Presbyterian Mission in China, who was prophet of a "new" way of mission methods the new missionaries courageously put his principles into practice.³ "The 'New' (Nevius) way deprecates and seeks to minimize the paid native agency, and believes that the principle of independence and self-reliance, applied from the very beginning, will soonest bring about the establishment of independent, self-reliant, aggressive native churches. It believes that the persons employed as native

1. Horace H. Underwood, Tragedy and Faith in Korea (New York) p. 28

2. Charles A. Clark, The Nevius Plan for Mission Work, p.19

3. Charles A. Clark, The Korean Church and the Nevius Methods, p.13



ABOARD NAVY SHIP SCENES IN KOREA

CH. 55/102

Chaplain Harold Voelkel and LIFE correspondent, Dr. Bob Pierce, conducting religious services for Korean prisoners of war. During the service Gospel tracts were distributed and avidly received by the men. When the prisoners disembark hardly a tract was left behind. Chaplain Voelkel is particularly effective among these Koreans because of his many years of missionary work and splendid knowledge of their language. The men crowd to hear him whenever he speaks.

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agents would be far more useful in the end if left in their original homes and employments."¹

The system may be most simply described as follows:

First, to let each man abide in the calling wherein he is found, teaching that each was to be an individual laborer for Christ, and to live Christ in his own neighborhood, supporting himself by his trade. Second, to develop church methods and machinery only so far as the native church was able to take care of and manage the same. Third, as far as the church itself was able to provide the men and the means, to set aside those who seemed the better qualified to do evangelistic work among their neighbors. Fourth, to let the nationals provide their own church buildings, which were to be native in architecture, and of such style as the local church could afford to put up.²

Thus, under this method, the first Christians became the teachers. They would meet in the classes for study. As each showed ability, so would each be given a specific area of work, and their support was undertaken by the group to which they were to minister. Graded classes developed into which have now become the basis for the theological seminaries and for strong church government.

Only a "peoples' church" could survive the rigors known to the Korean Christian Church. The attitude has been phrased by one who gave a witness in terrible suffering. Kim Chang Sik was in the persecutions of 1890; and after a glorious witness through persecution and flogging said, "God loves me and has forgiven my sins. How can I curse Him?"³ So has the church of Korea testified in the past and is so doing at the present.

1. Charles A. Clark, *op. cit.*, p.17

2. Horace Horton Underwood, *The Call of Korea*, pp. 109-10

3. Arthur J. Brown, *One Hundred Years* (New York) 1936

Because of the Nevius methods the Korean Church seems to have solved most of the problems of comity or organic union with its neighbor churches, and to have attained a large measure of control over former mission institutions ("Devolution"), yet with the most cordial relations continuing between itself and the missionaries and the Boards that helped found it. It has found a way of utilizing its foreign missionary associates to the full without sacrificing its own autonomy.¹ We have noted, then, that from the beginning the Korean Church had always been self-supporting, the early believers met in each others' homes until they could afford to build a church. They at once began to pay towards the pastor's salary. No pastors of single churches were ever supported by funds from America. Even the schools could only receive partial subsidies, and then only during their early development. It was the responsibility of the churches in that area to finance this project. The churches could only support a very simple organization and at first this looked discouraging, and its spiritual powers were not weakened and soon the results were quite amazing.

The Korean Church also became self-propagating. Each believer was taught that he was an individual worker for Christ, witnessing in his own neighborhood and supporting himself by his trade. As far as each church was able, men and funds were set aside for special evangelism work among

1. Charles A. Clark, The Korean Church and the Nevius Methods, p. 13

their neighbors. Eventually, the church under its General Assembly sent their own missionaries to work among the Koreans in Japan, Manchuria and Siberia. The results of this training are evident today in the spontaneous spreading of the Gospel throughout the refugee areas. "Christian work in Korea has become very really a Korean work by a Korean Church."¹

Behind the Nevius method of an indigenous church is a Bible centered emphasis which is at the heart of its strength. The Korean Church has been built upon the Bible as the infallible Word of God which instructs men in the true way of Christian life. From the very beginning, every phase of its work has been based upon it. Week-long, all day "Bible Classes" have enrolled as many as fifty percent of the total number of baptized Christians.² Sunday Schools were held for believers of all ages. Each summer brought hundreds of thousands of children out for Daily Vacation Bible Schools and as many adults for the Bible Institutes lasting a month. This really meant a sacrifice on their part for most of them were farmers. Bible Clubs were organized by the missionaries for the underprivileged children and Bible Correspondence Courses for the adults. A visitor needs only to be in Korea for a short time to see how much the people love their Bibles. Following the liberation of Pyongyang in October, 1950, an American Army Colonel, whom

1. Horace Horton Underwood, Tragedy and Faith in Korea, p.30

2. T. Stanley Soltau, Korea The Hermit Nation and Its Response To Christianity, pp. 38-42

we were taking to church with us the first Sunday, told us he had never seen any other city in the world where there were so many people carrying their Bibles to Church. This was how the Christians were flocking to church in the north Korean city. (Communist capital city).

The decision to give the Bible to the people in their own language resulted in early translations, which were put into use immediately. Bible classes were held by the missionaries in various centers, and sometimes the classes reached as many as a thousand!

One of the first tasks of the missionaries was to teach the Christians to read. This effort soon developed into a social enterprise, the parochial school. Moreover, between 1900 and 1920 literally hundreds of church elementary schools were established. Most of them were founded by the missionaries but were supported entirely by the local churches, often at great sacrifice. Today most of these schools have passed from the church's control, due to Japanese suppression and gradual establishment of government schools of better equipment and higher standards.

Institutional work should always be considered as an integral part of missions, since Christianity is here to serve the body and mind as well as the spirit. In 1932, there were twenty-five Bible institutes, forty schools (higher and middle) seven cloogoes (all types), and twenty-eight hospitals, and similar mission institutions in Korea. ¹ The most prominent

¹ L. Soltau, op. cit., p.96

institutions have been the Chosun Christian University, where I taught chemistry and English Bible from 1948 until the day the present conflict began, and Severance Hospital at Seoul, the first really modern hospital in Korea. Today most of these mission institutions have been practically destroyed by war.

Where medical work and education are so strongly emphasized there is sometimes the danger of subordinating the evangelistic aim, but in Korea this has been kept uppermost. The sixty years of work from 1885 to 1945 has been almost miraculously fruitful in that there are more than a million Christians in Korea today, both Protestant and Catholic. However, when one considers that there are still 28,000,000 non-Christians in Korea, it is important that this evangelistic program remain unrelaxed.

There were many favorable accomplishments in Korea by the summer of 1950 when the Korean War began. The people were increasingly adopting Western characteristics.¹ The Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. were organized in many of the cities. The status of women had so greatly increased under the influence of the missionaries, that they were able to carry on a number of reforms. Licensed prostitution was abolished; child welfare and relief work was expanded. Agricultural advancements had been increased greatly. In other than political developments, Korea had great prospects for the future.

The Christian Church of Korea has grown in great spurts. These spurts have been usually started by revivals which have

¹ I. H. H. Underwood, Op. Cit. pp. 38-42

swept across the nation with the heat of a prairie fire. The revival of 1907 was possibly the most intense in time and intensity. It was begun in Pyeng Yang, a city noted for its immorality and corruption. Pyeng Yang was literally a modern Sodom. In the late summer of 1906, the Christian band met day after day with the missionaries to pray. In 1907, more than seven hundred Christians gathered for the famous Bible Study Classes¹ which I shall discuss later. The Holy Spirit visited this meeting with a deep heart-searching conviction. There was an intense consciousness of the presence of God, accompanied with private and public confession. Schools were closed for a two-week period, as were all ordinary activities, to give place to prayer. The revival spread to Seoul, the capital city, and then through the entire North, even to Manchuria. Korea since that day has hardly fallen from under the spell of that indigenous spirit of revival and evangelism. This has all been the response to earnest, united, persevering prayer by the Korean Christians and the missionaries for a deeper, fuller experience of divine grace and power.

The latest revival took place in the summer of 1950, six weeks prior to the Communist invasion of the Republic of Korea. Prior to 1945, during the Japanese occupation, religious freedom was denied. Following the liberation of Korea the Christians satisfied their longing for spiritual fellowship

through day-break prayer meetings. The Protestant Christians all gathered together daily for five years in thankfulness to God for their freedom. Later their concern was more for their persecuted brothers who were above the thirty-eighth parallel. In the last eighteen months before the present conflict they prayed for a spiritual re-awakening throughout their land. Dr. Robert Pierce, better known as Bob Pierce, came to Korea in April, 1950, invited by the Korea National Christian Council. He planned to spend a month of evangelistic work in Korea before a big campaign in Japan. Eventually he remained in Korea for nine weeks to begin one of the greatest revivals the Far East has ever known.¹ In an exhibition race at the Pusan Stadium, Gil Dodds, the internationally famous runner who was with Bob Pierce, was instrumental in challenging many Korean soldiers with the Gospel of Christ. A few weeks later, sixty percent of the three thousand Korean soldiers present became casualties of war.² Bob Findlay of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, in the same series of meetings was used by God to lead almost ten thousand students in high schools and universities to a public confession of Jesus Christ as Saviour. Tens of thousands of Koreans responded to the challenge of the Gospel made by Bob Pierce and his team throughout the cities of South Korea. In Seoul alone the nightly meetings had as many as twenty thousand people present. Missionaries cooperated with the

1. Ibid. p. 53-54

2. Robert Pierce, The Untold Story p. 37

months of preparation for the evangelistic campaign and then during the weeks of the meetings gave their entire days to the work and their nights in prayer that there might be a real revival. However, the main work of personal follow-up was of course effectively undertaken by Korean pastors and laymen. This demanded extreme sacrifices on their part. The Spirit of God prepared the hearts of many Koreans in that time for the many days of terribly suffering which were to follow a few days later when the Communists invaded South Korea.

The fifth period of mission work in Korea, 1945 to the present, has been a time of testing. This is a time of terrible trial and persecution. Few people, who haven't been in Korea, realize that the persecution of Christians by the Red Regime in Korea which still continues today is greater than that of the Roman Empire of the first few centuries in its proportions and in its stories of brutality, atrocity, and man's inhumanity to man. Few people realize that this tremendous purge has produced heroes of faith and courage equal to those remembered martyrs of ancient days. More than four hundred pastors have been "liquidated" at various times and places during the past seven years.¹ Other leaders have been scattered, some to places unknown, others to areas of refuge south of the thirty-eighth parallel. The number of Christian laymen who have lost their lives in this struggle

1. Underwood, Op. Cit. p. 49

is difficult to determine, but some congregations in the north had lost almost half of their former membership -- through army conscription, refugee evacuation, compromises, death by bombs and bullets and outright slaughter. It has truly been a time of testing -- a testing by fire.

The present persecution began before World War II when the Japanese put pressure on the Christian ministers to conform to Shinto practices. Many outrightly refused and consequently suffered persecution and martyrdom. Some said the church should go underground but most favored compromise. Therefore, Shinto shrines were sometimes, but seldom, installed within sanctuaries. Others led their congregations outside to bow before a shrine in the churchyard, and in a few minor instances pastors received investitures as Shinto priests.¹ In addition many pastors were forced to do defense labor. In some cases church buildings were torn down for needed material. Yet the faithful kept on.

Then came the days of Red Regime following the Japanese defeat in 1945. The situation now became ten times worse than at any time under the Japanese rule, according to North Koreans who had witnessed and experienced both persecutions.²

The Reds (Russians) directed their attack mainly against the Christian young people and children. They hoped in this way to stamp out Christianity from its roots. An example of this was the attitude of the public school teachers (Red in North

1. "Save Korean Missions," Christian Century, Vol 67, p. 1256.
2. Robert J. Cadigan, John T. Peters and Raymond C. Provost, "More Than Conquerors," Presbyterian Life, Feb. 3, 1951 p. 7

Korea toward the children's church attendance. Often they gave the Christian school students extra chores to be performed at the public schools on Sunday mornings to keep them from attending Sunday School and church. At Christmas time, 1949, they kept the Christian children in school all night long on Christmas eve without previous warning to prevent them from attending the church services on Christmas morning. A few escaped and went to church anyway, and older non-Christian boys were assigned to go to the churches and bring the escaped youngsters back. The teen-age youths who persisted in attending church school always failed their examinations for admission to or graduation from high school merely because they were Christian.¹

In May, 1950, the Presbyterian Seminary students at Pyongyang were requested to sign the pledge -- "Although I am a Christian, I promise full obedience to the authority of Kim Il Sung." Out of the six hundred students, four hundred and eighty refused to sign. The Seminary, of course was closed, and the four hundred and eighty resisters scattered and fled to the hills. In November when we were there only a few of them had returned and most of them had not been heard from.²

Besides Christian children and young people, special targets for persecution have been the pastors and lay church leaders. Most of their stories are yet untold, and in most cases it is doubtful whether all the details will ever be known. One minister,

1. Ibid. p.8

2. Ibid. p.9

Kim Hi Seun, had the following story:

After leaving the Presbyterian Seminary in PyongYang, Kim Hi Seun in 1941 translated from English into Korean the services for the World Day of Prayer. The Japanese judged one of the prayers subversive; there was a phrase about a foreign power -- something about the Kingdom of Heaven -- and so Kim Hi Seun was jailed for forty days and severely beaten. In 1947, when he refused to sign the Communist loyalty pledge he was again arrested and tortured -- this time by the Russians. At his trial he was condemned to six years of hard labor. He was finally taken to Whey Chang, a small town in the mountains, and with a thousand other prisoners was forced to work in the gold mines twenty-one out of every twenty-four hours. Prisoners were not expected to live. On October 17, 1950 the Red guards started the prisoners on a long march into the mountains. The UN troops were cowering, and the prisoners were to be executed. Pastor Kim, however, crept unnoticed into the brush and escaped. He told us that all during the time he was expecting to die, he kept repeating Stephen's last prayer: (Acts 7:60) "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."¹

A more gruesome story was told by Pastor Han Joon Myung of Wonsan (see details in the appendix), who in October 1945 had been beaten by a Russian officer so severely that he was not able to use his arms for six months following. "Why," he was asked, "Do you oppose Russia?" Until the war in 1950, Pastor Han continued his work in spite of violent opposition from lawless ruffians who broke the windows in his church, started fist-fights, pulled light switches, and beat Christians as they came out of his church. Shortly before the invasion in June 1950 most pastors, elders, and seminary students were arrested, Pastor Han among them. Six hundred prisoners, most of whom were held on political charges, were marched at night to a cave in the mountains where they were mowed down by several Communists with machine guns.

1. Ibid., p. 9

Pastor Han miraculously escaped death when one of the gun-men was distracted for a moment. God still works miracles among his servants today (See Pastor Han's personal account, which I have heard him give, in the Appendix).

The personal experience of Pastor Kim Yoon Chan of Pyons-Yang is equally as miraculous (again please see the appendix for details of this account). The hair-raising details of his flight and his hiding place in a hole in the ground under a stable for three months are untypical only in that Pastor Kim is still alive.

And so the story goes. Persecutions still continue in the Communist territory of Korea, while in the United Nations section the people are beginning to recover from this onslaught and to dig themselves out of the ruins of their country.

When the present war began in June 1950, there were one hundred and ninety Presbyterian self-supporting churches in Seoul alone. This made the Seoul Presbytery one of the largest Presbyteries in the world.¹ A strong indigenous leadership has always existed, which should be the ultimate aim of any foreign mission society. Today the missionary goes to Korea to cooperate with the church of Korea, and the work that is done there is largely Korean.

This fact has three important effects. (1) It has been of vital significance in the present conflict. Even though many foreign missionaries had to flee the land, the church was still able to carry on under native leadership and in circumstances

1. Robert J. Gadigan, John T. Peters and Raymond C. Provost, "Korea: The Country that Never Had a Chance." Presbyterian Life, Feb. 3, 1951, p.6

relatively more safe than when in direct contact with foreigners, which suggested political activity to the unenlightened Communist.

(2) It has given the Korean churches a degree of economic stability, freeing them from the popular accusation of being "rice-Christians" who lean on the generosity of foreigners for their daily food.

(3) And finally, it has given them valuable training in the basic theories of democracy, so that they feel that this is truly their church. All this has been a direct result of Dr. Nevius' methods which we discussed earlier. For the Korean church "is not dependent on the charity of the direction of the church in other lands."¹

The parochial schools of the early days (1900-1920) have left a profound effect on the people of Korea. At least 200,000 men and women in Korean society today got their educational start in such little village church schools.² When the Reds invaded in 1950, forty out of the two hundred and ten members of the Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Korea, were Christians.³ Moreover, nine members of the twelve-member cabinet were Christian. It is a significant fact that the President himself, Dr. Syngman Rhee, was a student of Princeton Theological Seminary. An educational policy has ment strength.

Today Korea is one of the most devastated lands the world has ever know. No figures or words can begin to describe all

1. Underwood, Tragedy and Faith, p.25

2. Ibid., p.29

3. John Coventry Smith, "The Church Prospect in Korea," Christian Century, Vol. 69, Sept. 20, 1950, p. 1105.

the losses endured by this nation of thirty million people -- a nation listed among the thirteen most populous in the world. North Korean civilian deaths alone have been estimated at three million.¹ No one can estimate the destruction on homes, churches, colleges, seminaries, hospitals and other buildings caused by the continuous bombing above the thirty-eighth parallel. In the past twenty-three months more than a million South Korean civilians have been KNOWN to have been killed by gunfire, starvation and cold. Another million have suffered wounds that will permanently disable them. At least four million refugees are still far from their homes. A government survey showed that six hundred thousand homes had been destroyed in the Republic of Korea alone. The Communists have attempted to liquidate all leaders all educated people, and particularly all Christians. When the United Nation Armies liberated PyongYang, the northern capital, they discovered that eighty percent of the pastors and leaders of the Protestant Churches had disappeared.² More than four hundred ministers have been martyred so far. It is possible for the Korean Church to survive through this trial by fire?

YES!! The whole world has been amazed at the fortitude of the Korean Church. The way that the Korean Christians have reacted to all this persecution, peril and destruction is becoming classic in Christian history. The more the Christians

1. Harold E. Fay, "Will Korea Perish?" Christian Century, Vol. 69, Jan. 16, 1952, p.66

2. Mission Board Report, "Korea," Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. p.21



soldiers who are now prisoners of war in the United Nations POW Camps are turned back to the Communists, it is believed that every Christian among them will be killed. This means at least ten thousand of the best potential Christian and democratic leadership in Korea.¹ From the period of Japanese occupation, the churches have been discovering and preparing men and women for leadership at any cost. "Today there is no other institution in Korean life that compares with the churches in this regard."² Education first began under church initiative and gradually was turned over to the government. Again the Church is repeating its history. Many local groups are now supporting teachers who are barely existing. These teachers have little if any school equipment with which to work. About the only books available in many locations are the Bibles. The best education the Korean can have is the experience of democratic self-government which comes through the churches. The Korean Church has a tremendous challenge in the field of education.

Another problem that the Korean Church faces is the influence of the "Christian" nations, the United States prominent among them. In many ways the influence has been beneficial. Koreans have said that they could see a difference in the methods of fighting between the Communist armies and the United Nations troops. The latter were anxious to save the lives of as many civilians as possible. Our soldiers have shared their clothing

1. Dr. W.C. Blake, "Leaders Tell of Needs A, road," Monday Morning, Jan. 28, 1952, p. 7

2. Fey, "How Churches Help Koreans," Christian Century, Feb. 6, 1952.

and food with civilians. Contrary to orders, they have taken care of many stranded orphans. Huge collections from the soldiers are not being used to support orphanages. Yet there have been many times when an apology had to be made for the actions of many of these men. Rape, looting, and drunken brawls were not uncommon, especially earlier in North Korea. The Christian youth have often followed the example of their liberators and secretly smoke and drink. They have been attracted to the Western ideas of social practices where controlled moderation is the rule. Misuse of the Lord's Day has confused many of these Christians. These influences have cast many doubts in their minds concerning their puritanical standards.

Some think that it is not necessary for the Korean Christians to maintain their former standards. They must relax their standards and adapt themselves to the changing circumstances. Others believe that the Christians must not allow these new ideas to permeate their high standards. As the past years have demonstrated, the strength of the Korean Church is dependent upon the power of Jesus Christ in transformed lives. These new lives have spiritually matured and produced fruits, while even our churches in America have too often failed. While we have allowed our high standards to be modified and have identified ourselves with the moral non-Christian world, the Korean Church has guarded against this. One needs only to make a study of some of our colleges, including denominational colleges, to see this deadening effect upon the spiritual life of Christians.

Would we compare favorably with the strength and witness of the Christians in Korea if our nation were plunged into a similar situation? No one really know; yet we wonder if we could likewise overlook, our own misfortunes and be as concerned about the spiritual as well as physical well-being of our fellow-sufferers. The Christians of Korea have surprised us in the way they have utilized opportunities to testify of the love of Jesus Christ.

Most of the Christian leaders in Korea are anxious to maintain their puritanical standards. They felt that these standards must likewise be upheld in higher education. Dr. Eugene Carson Blake in his visit to Taegu last winter was presented with a petition asking for the establishment of a college similar to the one formerly at Pyongyang which enrolled only baptized Christians.¹ They felt that the Chosun Christian University at Seoul even when re-established would not produce the ministers that a pre-seminary college would. Chosun Christian University, recognized as the leading Korea mission university, has always permitted non-Christians to enroll.² It thereby performs the needy function of reaching potential leaders in government, industry, and education who otherwise might never be influenced by Christianity. Yet it will always be necessary to do more than just expose them to Christianity in its by-product form. They must be introduced to the living Christ through concentrated efforts. The danger is always present that the evangelistic

1. Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, "Leaders Tell of Needs Abroad," Monday Morning, Vol. 17, Feb. 4, 1952. p.6.

2. Rhodes, op. cit., pp. 423-28.

emphasis will be lost. This partially has been the case, but it is largely due to the fact that the faculty is inadequate in size and greatly over-worked. More Christian professors are needed, especially those with sound evangelical zeal. Secular education has its rightful place, but it must not be allowed to have priority to the exclusion of evangelism and spiritual instruction. Until this is more nearly accomplished, both types of colleges are necessary. The pre-seminary college needs to be continually striving to raise its scholastic standing, for this often can be its greatest weakness.

These problems, along with many others, have evidenced themselves within the Korean Church itself. Some division in Korean Christianity comes as the result of its own growing pains. More often however it can be traced to the influence of the various missions.

Although the Christian must guard his Christian heritage, he cannot do it at the expense of other Christians. We have no right to exclude another Christian from our fellowship because of a difference in opinion. This has happened in the Independent Mission. They have refused to cooperate with any group associated with the World Council of Churches. The Korean Presbyterian Church is strongly conservative (their most liberal man would be classified as conservative in America) and cooperates with other denominations under the National Christian Council. This Council is organically associated with the World Council. When the Korea National Christian Council sponsored the revival carried

on by Bob Pierce, in the spring of 1950, the Independent Missions attempted to hinder its effectiveness. Even though they needed not to cooperate, they had no right before God to hinder His work. The General Assembly, a Korean organization, has bent over backwards to make the situation agreeable to them, but still they decline from cooperation. They have followed a policy of proselytizing from among the established churches and have largely failed to reach the unsaved millions for Christ. These policies have been detrimental to the unity of the Presbyterian churches in Korea. All the missions would do well to overlook their differences and curb home affairs before they are spread into the foreign field. The Korean Church has enough problems of its own, and from past experience is capable of working out these problems through its own leaders. Korea appreciates our love and cooperation from America, but she does not appreciate our problems. Korea has too long been the victim of the differences of others.

This means that we must rethink and reorganize the entire missionary set-up in Korea. There is need for a full-dress review. The evangelism of Korea cannot be accomplished within the present denominational framework, even if such denominations were united within Korea itself. This is a problem for all Christendom.

It looked as though a step made by the Japanese Government back in July 19, 1945, would go a long way in solving the divisive problem in Korea. At that time the government forced all the



an open door which no man can close."¹ This is the challenge which makes the future bright. It is not so much one of inward potentiality, but external possibility in the presence of the harvest fields and the need of workers to execute the command that has already come to us: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Let us examine the national labor of the future so we will know how to direct the foreign aid. Hundreds of graduates of the Korean colleges and seminaries will now be able to enter the field of Christian evangelism in a much more effective way than has been done by the "foreign" workers of the past. It is very well possible that "western" leadership and guidance must be surrendered. The Christian Church must be allowed to adopt itself in a way that "western" guides might declare unthinkable. Moreover, we must be cautious and remember that we are to transmit a Gospel and not a culture. The type of aid that Korea will now need is the highest type available in the several schools of inquiry. Technicians in propagating the Gospel will certainly be needed. The religious public which is yet unborn in Korea must be gotten into action. Efficient techniques must be taught, but the Korean mind must be allowed to broadcast the Gospel to the Koreans themselves. Any variations from this would be to overlook and possibly nullify the great advances due to the Nevius methods in the past. The Churches of America must be ready to give all the help that they can,

1. Incrucel, Op. Cit. p. 45



APPENDIX

Personal experience of Pastor Kim Yoon Chan, Pyeng Yang, Korea, under the Red Regime, 1945-1950, as told to Dr. Bob Pierce, Chaplain Harold Voelkel, and Raymond C. Provost, Jr.

Pastor Kim had defied the Japanese in their compromising demands upon the Church and had succeeded in evading capture by them. Upon his return to his home at liberation, he was therefore held in honor by the people of the community, the town of Sung Haw Ri, thirteen miles from Pyeng Yang. He joined Chew Man Sik in the temporary government of North Korea until the Russians took over. They entered Sung Haw Ri September 18, 1945. One of their first demands was two million suk of grain and 2,000 head of cattle which Chew and Kim considered excessive and for which judgment they were dismissed. Kim as a representative leader of the community had been attending all the official functions but after observing the Russians at work he reached the conclusion he could not subscribe to their regime and on November 5 absented himself from a reception for Russian dignitaries. An anti-Japanese demonstration was held on February 20th which Kim was invited to join but he begged off giving poor health as his excuse. The local Russian authority, a captain, urged him to come out, "If for only five minutes to say just a word", and sent his car to get him. But Kim declined.

On March 3rd two Koreans came to Kim's home, on one ruse and another got him down the street, and blew a whistle and called five Russians who drove him to the police jail in Pyeng Yang. In the jail were a number of other pastors. At twelve that night they were released but Kim was taken to the Court House where he was pushed into a dark cell three spans square. The cell had a cement floor and a ceiling high enough to permit him to stand erect but was so cramped he had room only to squat. He was fed crusts of black bread and given three cups of water a day. In the midst of this darkness there came to him the words of Rev. 22:5, "There shall be no night there." "Here," he said, "There is no day but all night; in Paradise there will be no night but all day."

In order to maintain his sanity and health, Kim decided on a program as follows: he would devote in turn an hour each day first to prayer, then to hymn singing, reciting Scripture, exercising his arms and legs, and finally listening carefully to the conversation of the Russian guards in an attempt to learn something of the language. The hymn singing soon came to an end for the guards would not permit the "noise" and Kim from then on was limiting to listening his praises. After some days, apparently after a change in the guards, during his prayer hour Kim forgot himself and in his fervor cried out, "Chew Yuh, Chew Yuh" (O, Lord, O, Lord). At this the guard flashed a light through the peep-hole of the cell and saw Kim with eyes closed in an attitude of prayer. He opened the cell door and in the conversation that followed, by pantomime I suppose, when the Russian discovered that Kim was a Christian pastor, he took his hand and kissed it and laid Kim's head on his shoulder and put his cheek next to him. From then on Kim received bread instead of crusts at meal time and soup instead of, or rather, beside water.

"I am a Christian, too," said the guard.. His mother was an earnest believer, his father had been killed on the German front.

Once a week in the small hours of the night Kim was led out for questioning by a Russian colonel, a Korean lieutenant interpreting. Sample question: "Why did you go to theological seminary?" Kim considered this an excellent opportunity for personal evangelism and answered, "I have been a Christian since childhood and from that time I have thought of the pastorate as life's highest calling."

Russian: "What do you think of Communism?"

Kim: "The meaning of the word is good."

R. This is the first time I've heard a pastor say Communism is good.

K. In the Bible we find Communism, "All that believed were together and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need." (Acts 2:44, 45.) But that is different from what I see of taking by force the goods of one man to give to another. In the Bible it was voluntary and until a man has his heart changed through faith in Jesus as Saviour, he has no desire to share with the needy. To take peoples' possessions by force results only in strife. Nowadays I heard, "There is no God" but I also have heard that you have Christianity in Russia and the Bible whether there or here is the same and I can answer only what anyone in Russia would answer concerning its teachings."

Second Interview

R. Why did the American missionaries come to Korea?

K. To preach.

R. No, they didn't, they came for political purposes.

K. I've seen their work for years. I know their purposes.

Kim's hometown was in Dr. Clark's territory where the Japanese, during the war, had established a military training center. In doing so, they resorted to unfair practices, cheating the people out of their homes and land and Kim led in the opposition to these practices. This had been reported to the Colonel.

R. Did you oppose the Japanese (as above) while carrying on your church work?

K. Are not Russia and America partners in the U.N.? Why, as a U.S. partner of America, are you condemning me for opposing your enemy?

R. You are an agent of America.

K. I am not.

R. After you endure some suffering, you'll speak the truth.

K. Is there evidence that I am a U.S. agent?

At this point the Colonel opened his desk drawer, took out a pistol and held it against Kim's heart.

R. You're lying, aren't you? Speak the truth or I'll you.

K. If I lie, I cannot be saved and go to Heaven.

R. What is salvation?

Kim eagerly seized the opportunity to tell what salvation is after which the Russian smiled, put the pistol away, and said, "You will tell us later about your political activity for America."

Third Interview

R. Today is the last interview. If you speak the truth you will be released; otherwise, I'll have to hold you. If I bring a witness here, what will you do? Will you admit your guilt?

K. I am not guilty. I will welcome a witness.

In walked Kim Pyung Jun, graduate of our Pyeng Yang Soong Sil Middle School who, for some time, was Dr. Clark's secretary. The witness claimed he had known the pastor for ten years but the latter proved that it had been only two years and otherwise discredited all the charges. Finally the Colonel yelled out in condemnation of the witness and asked the pastor if he wanted to beat up his accursor.

K. No, I pity him. I don't hate him but I hate his sin.

The colonel's attitude changed. Having failed to break Kim he now attempted to win him.

R. While you are doing your church work couldn't you at the same time work for your country, too? It will help your church work. In working for your country, there is much glory and authority.

K. It doesn't mix. From childhood I have considered the ministry a spiritual vocation. I haven't the qualifications for political work.

Three days later Kim was released and in leaving asked his new friend, the Russian guard, to be helpful to other Christians. They shook hands as they parted.

While in the jail, police had ransacked his home, arrested his 17-year-old daughter and 15 year-old son, and driven off the family. They had been accused of possessing guns and sheltering Westerners. "We are going to kill your father and you," they told the daughter and soon after holding them a night in jail.

Upon his release, Kim suffered keenly from nerve pains in the legs and from a general run-down condition. A group of elders in Pyeng

Yang, out of sympathy and love for the homeless man, bought him a house. In a few months Kim was called to the pastorate of a local church.

In September, 1946, Kang Yang Ook attempted to organize the Christian League in Pyeng Yang. Kang had been a student in our Soon Sil Middle School and College and attended the P.Y. Seminary during the war. He was apparently won over to the side of the Russians by an appeal similar to that made to the other pastors that by siding with the Reds he could help his country, and having taken sides with the Reds, he had to go along with them even when he saw that his work meant the extinction of the church.

When word got around that the League was to be organized the Pyeng Yang pastors met, discussed its political significance, and out of the costly lessons of the Shinto Shrine issue under the Japanese, decided as a group not to have anything to do with it. Representative pastors from other sections of North Korea were summoned for the organizational meeting but aside from Pak San Soon, former missionary of the Korean Church to China who accepted the Vice-Chairmanship of the League under Kang, no Pyeng Yang men signed up. This action of the local men upset the plans of the Russians and for the time being they concentrated on the hinterland.

(At this juncture in our conversation I raised with Kim this question: since the essential requirement of League membership was a pledge to uphold the laws of the North Korean Government, by what right, in view of the Bible teaching "to obey the powers that be", and on what basis could you object? He answered, "With their lips they told us that this was merely a pledge to obey the country's laws but by their actions they demonstrated that their ultimate aim was to strangle the Church. We knew Communism to be sheer propaganda, for while announcing freedom of speech, of assembly, of publication, and religion, we could not preach what we wanted, could not meet when we wanted, could not print, even mimeograph a tract, and our children were forbidden by teachers in the public schools to attend church.")

While the Pyeng Yang pastors as a group had refused to join the League gradually individuals here and there unable to resist the pressure, yielded and signed up, and those who signed were granted special favors.

A General Election was announced for November 3, 1946, a Sunday, from 5 a.m. to 12 midnight. This Sunday election created a dilemma for the Christians for whom it was a violation of the Lord's Day, and they asked to be allowed to vote either the day before or the day after. When their request was rejected, they replied that in that event they couldn't vote but the authorities told them that would not be permitted; that they would have to vote.

On election day, Kim's congregation gathered as usual for worship. During the service, hoodlums came to the church and created a disturbance. The Christians drove them off, protested to the authorities, closed the gate into the church yard and continued in their fellowship. That afternoon a Korean army officer came to apologize for the disturbance (which probably they had arranged) and urged the

Christians now that their worship was over to come to the polls and vote. "Why no comply, now that you have time?" "Because of the command of God's Word to keep the Lord's Day holy. And," Kim added, "since we could conscientiously vote immediately after midnight, can you not permit us as a congregation to reach the polls a few minutes after 12 tonight and vote?" "No." When the clock struck twelve, Kim took the Christians to the polling place where they were told the time is past. Voting consisted of putting ballots in either a white or black can in the presence of the election officials.

From then on detectives continually watched Kim, writing down his Sunday and Wednesday evening sermons and questioning him on them. In one sermon, in illustrating a Christian's attitude in meeting difficulties, he said, "When you see a fish floating down a muddy stream you know it is dead for a live fish will not be content with a life in dirty water but will swim up out of it into clear, clean water. Our religion is life clear water, the water of life, freed from the filth that brings all the difficulties and troubles of life. "Is this not urging the Christians to leave North Korea and go South?" (to the American zone), the police asked Kim.

On November 23, 1946, three policemen came, arrested him and took him to the police jail. A number of pastors were already there. Kim was beaten and kicked but not given the water cure (water forced up the victim's nose until he loses consciousness) like the others. He believes the others probably received this torture as a result of their answering evasively. Kim was made to lie still, not permitted to turn to the left or right, and having already been weakened physically by his previous incarceration, his condition became such the authorities feared for his life and sent him to the jail hospital. After a month there, he was returned to his cell. The doctor who recommended Kim's hospitalization had attended church as a boy. Kim was released February 29, 1947.

About April 13, 1947, the Russian-American Commission set up by Yalta to establish an independent government in Korea met in Pyong Yang. When the news of this meeting first broke, a number of pastors decided this was their chance to gain religious freedom and under the leadership of Kim Wha Sik sent out invitations to all the churches and pastors to take part in organizing a Christian Independence Society. A number signed up as promoters but Kim declined on the ground that it was political for while political agitation was permissible, he reasoned, for elders and deacons as individuals it was not becoming for pastors in their official capacity. Kim, together with all the signers of the petition, were arrested but after a week in jail, he was released. The signers were later tried, sentence to seven years imprisonment and were shot when the Kim Il Sung Government evacuated Pyong Yang last October.

It became increasingly difficult to hold revival meetings and Bible Conferences. Sometimes non-League pastors conducted these special meetings under another name but League pastors for the most part

either did not receive invitations from congregations to hold meetings or were embarrassed to conduct them since most sentiment was anti-League. On August 7, 1947, Kim was invited to conduct a revival for a week in Sin Ui Joo, border town between Korea and Manchuria. One day during the meetings his brief case disappeared with his sermon notes in it and the theft was reported to the police. Some Christians said they saw the detective assigned to watching the members of the congregation leave the house with it. Kim got the bag back just before leaving the city. Enroute to Pyong Yang after a big send-off at the railroad station by the Christians, Kim was taken from the train at a small town. During the night he was returned to Sin Ui Joo and put in the Provincial Police Station so that his whereabouts were unknown. Here he was questioned on his sermon material. The police had carefully combed his notes and now raised questions like this -- what did he have in mind when preaching on the subject, "CONFLICT OF THE SPIRIT AND FLESH" (Romans 8:5-13). "Did he not," they insisted, "really mean to use these words as a parable to clothe an appeal for the people not to follow Communism but Christianity? Did not the Flesh stand for Communism and Spirit for Christ? So that they that are in the Flesh cannot please God."

Kim was held in jail 3½ months without anyone knowing where he was. By this time the condition of the nerves in his legs as a result of the first Pyong Yang experience had worsened but despite the terrible suffering he was not allowed to change his position from side to side but required to remain constantly in a fixed posture. From sheer exhaustion despite his agony he fell off to sleep. In what he later discovered was a vision he heard a voice saying, "We may boldly say, the Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what men shall do unto me. Remember them which have the rule over you who have spoken unto you the Word of God whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." (Hebrews 13: 6,7,). When Kim awoke, his pain was gone. He could stretch himself and sit up without any discomfort. Those who previously heard him groan wondered at his deliverance. He was in solitary confinement for two weeks and then moved to a cell with other prisoners. After 3½ months he was called and told that since he was a Pyong Yang resident, he would have to be taken there for trial. As he left the jail, a Christian saw him, learned that he was to be taken to Pyong Yang, wired the news ahead and at the train waiting for him was his family and a large number of Christians. This time he was held for 25 days given the usual brow-beating and released. "It was all a mistake," they said. "So sorry, if only you had told us you were going to Sin Ui Joo, we would have cleared you with the authorities there." This didn't fool Kim who knew that Pyong Yang had been contacted by the border people.

1948. From now on all realized that it was unwise to try to hold any special meetings. So many leaders pastors and elders were suddenly disappearing, Kim and other pastors of the larger churches never went out unaccompanied. They always had two strong, young deacons as body guards with them. By summer, the situation became so tense Kim's elders advised him to go off for a few months!

vacation. This he decided to do and began making his plans assigning various responsibilities of the congregation to different officers. On the Monday he arranged to leave four policemen appeared at his door to take him off but he hid and later dressed as a farmer escaped. He borrowed a little boat from a friend on the Han River and paddled up past the rapids to the quiet isolation of the mountain beauty where the early F.Y. missionaries visited on their vacations. He bought a supply of rice on the way and caught enough fish day by day to complete his diet.

Presbytery was scheduled to meet in October and according to the rule when a pastor is absent from his church for two months or longer without sufficient reason, he must resign. Both Kim and the congregation knew this and through secret channels the people sent word to their pastor not to return because of the danger. By this time two-thirds of the pastors had joined the League and they dominated the Presbytery. The Presbytery took action dissolving Kim's pastoral relationship, extended a call to a successor and forced the former's family to vacate the manse (doubtless under government pressure).

Only League members were allowed to celebrate Christmas in '48 and only their congregations could carol on Christmas morning.

1949. With the opening of the new year, the League had complete control over the churches and the seminary. In the latter, both the teachers and students had to have League endorsement. Now regulations for church activity became more rigid, worship was restricted to Sundays and Wednesday prayer meetings. Public school teachers forbade youngsters to attend church and beat them if they did. Middle school students were not accepted if known to have Church sympathies, and had to get guarantors who agreed to see that the student did not attend church. Schools held celebrations and arranged visits to the hills on Sundays. But strange to say, church attendance continued good. The banning of Christians from jobs in factories and government offices which began wildly in 1948 was strictly enforced in 1949.

1950. At the urging of Kang Yang Ook, a General Assembly of the Church was called for in March, 1950. The pastors questioned the need for the meeting but under government pressure it was held and took two actions:

1. To approve the League as the only Church authority for Korea.
2. To require the Presbyteries to bar non-League men from the ministry.

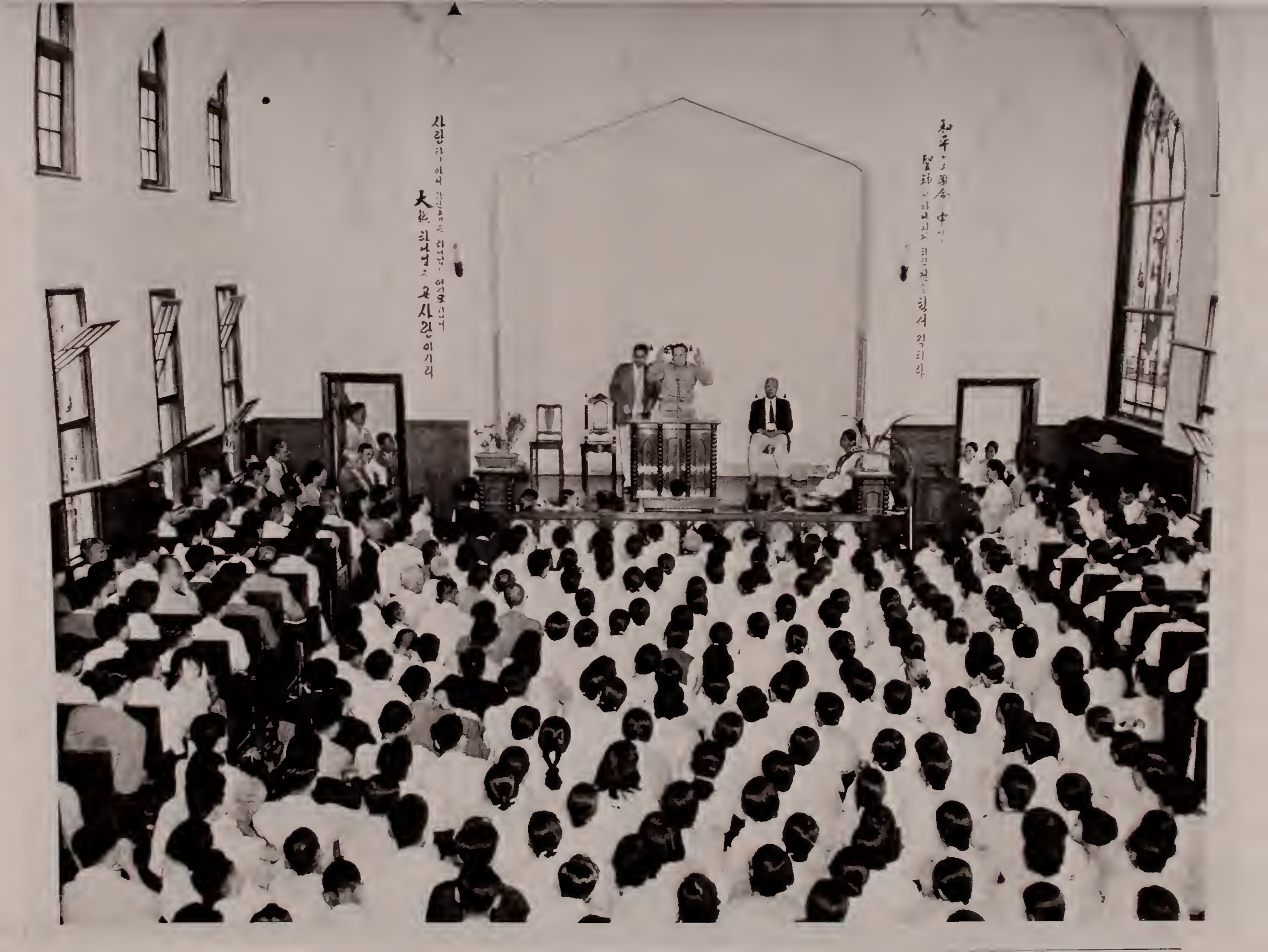
Fyeng Yang Presbytery met the following month, in April, and carried out this second action erasing the names of the non-conformists. A book had been placed at the entrance of the church where the meeting was held for any who had not thus far signed up to do so. Presbytery in turn directed every session to bar all non-conformists from the pulpit and to eject their families from the manses.

On May 27th, the police caught up with Kim in the country, arrested him and took him to a rural police box (my hair stood on end as he went on with the following details). The day after his arrest when he was to be taken to Pyeng Yang, the police were busy rounding up the local youth for the army, and Kim knowing the return to P.Y. would mean his death, decided after prayer to take his life in his hands and attempt and escape. When a policeman left the cell block, Kim climbed out of an open window of the cell and over the back fence to freedom. Being late May, the barley was high and he crawled through fields to a neighboring village. In an hour he heard shots that indicated the police were after him. He sought refuge that night in a friend's home in the village but as the friend pointed out, the police would continue their man-hunt during the night and since there was no possibility of hiding him in such a small house, he urged him to go to a larger one nearby where there would be some opportunity to conceal. Kim went to the larger place but discovered that 12 local Christians had already taken up hiding under the eaves. Kim slept for a few hours and at dawn heard the sound of approaching voices. He rushed to the back door of the fence and saw through a crack in the door a squad of police surrounding the house. The police that came to the front door discovered the 12 Christians, seven of whom were later shot, and the rest of the police attracted by the discovery came to the front door. This enabled Kim to escape by the rear door.

The police having heard that Kim had been in the house, kept up a relentless search and his enterprise in eluding them is amazing. That day a Christian in the village took him in and helped him feign illness, proving towels to wrap around his head and native medicine pot in which they boil herbs and roots over a brazier. He had allowed his beard to grow and being wan and weak from his imprisonments he must certainly have looked like a patient. A policeman came to the door, quizzed the sick man and left unaware that it was Kim. That night four men worked furiously until dawn digging a cave under the place where the cow stood in the yard. Cows are tethered to a pole near the barn, and having dug a cave entered by a hole just large enough to enable Kim to make the descent, they covered it with boards and straw. For over three months Kim lived in that dug-out, coming out only at night for air, exercise and food. I hadn't believed it possible to maintain a secret that long in Korea but they did it. Police kept up their search, appearing at unexpected hours and virtually turning the village upside down but it never occurred to them that the soolid bovine sheltered their man.

On October 19, American tanks roared past the village and Kim emerged to shout Mansai for freedom. He rushed out to greet the tank outfits and to welcome them. They offered to take him as a pastor to Pyeng Yang but thought it safer to wait a few days which he did. On October 28, I arrived in P.Y. and on the next day joined Kim and many other Christians in a victory celebration at West Church. With the new war, Kim joined the trek south and is now here as my associate in a ministry among POW's, many like himself victims of Communist deception and cruelty.

(After Kim finished his story - it took two days to tell - the enthusiasm with which he recounted the arrival of the Americans passed and he fell into subdued conversation about life-long comrades in the bonds of the Gospel, friends faithful unto death who had made the supreme sacrifice for the Lord Jesus. He mentioned their names and then the tears came and he could not go on. We closed the session in prayer, and I trust the devotion and heroism of this humble servant of God will move many to new love for Him who first loved us.)



和平... 聖...

大...

Experience of Pastor Han Joon Myung, Wonsan, Korea, Under Red Regime, 1945-1950, as told to Dr. Bob Pierce, Chaplain Harold Voelkel, and Raymond C. Provost, Jr.

Japan surrendered mid-August, 1945, and by August 21st the Russians had entered Wonsan, large port city of northeast Korea and organized the Peoples' Committee as the governing body. At first the Christians were told to go ahead and conduct their worship services and were given back the church property seized by the Japanese. At that time as is frequently the case in a change of government, groups of people hung signs on buildings claiming them as their own but to organizations that attempted to take church property the Russians issued orders to return it to the congregations.

From October on, spies began operating. People were summoned day or night, quizzed by a Russian through an interpreter from the Political Defense Corps, and the means employed to force confessions for real or imaginary offences were:

1. A pistol placed at the temple of the victim.
2. The victim emersed in a tub of scalding hot water, not hot enough to kill him but burn him.
3. Starvation.
4. Beating. Pastor Han, after being beaten on the arms, was not able to use them for six months. "Why," he was asked, "do you oppose Russia?"

At Christmas time the churches conducted their regular festivities including daybreak caroling.

1946

By spring, 1946, informers began their activities and it became necessary to secure permission for any special church gatherings like a Bible conference or revival meetings. Permission was sometimes granted but frequently after having received permission it was rescinded after only two or three days of a projected week's program.

Numbers of relatives of pastors were arrested at this time, held as hostages in an attempt to force the pastors to act as spies south of the 38th parallel. The great exodus from the Russian to the American zone was on and the Reds knew that pastors could most readily gain the confidence of the people in the American area. No objection was made to people leaving for the south in the spring but from the fall on, relatives of any who were known to have taken off were quizzed.

At Christmas time, boys threw stones through the windows of the churches and with loud yelling broke up the meeting. When the Christians complained to the authorities, the boys were publicly rebuked but later it became known that the authorities had ordered the boys to do it.

1947

In February, the Christian League was organized which all the pastors in Wonsan joined. The organization began first on the Provincial level and extended to the counties. From now on, all church activity had to be channeled through the League.

In the fall, permission was granted for the mens' Big Bible Class, an annual event to which men from all over the Presbytery gathered. This year 500 came. No Bible institute was conducted in 1946 because of a lack of time for preparation but this year one was held attended by 200.

1948

In September, the Russian troops began leaving and by October had all gone. This called for expensive gifts from the populace, food, silk brassware, to which Christians had to generously contribute. The Korean officials who took over were worse, decidedly so, than the Russians and personally confiscated watches, bicycles, fountain pens, Bibles, cows, pigs, etc. The people were not allowed to butcher cattle or pigs at this time. Spies of the Intelligence Defence Corps swarmed everywhere, in churches, schools, factories, inns, and even in the police offices.

At Christmas time, the disturbance was worse than 1947. As then the windows were pelted with stones and the exercises drowned out by loud yelling, but this year the electric switches were pulled, darkening the church and the Christians beaten as they left the service. Beforehand, children had been told in the public schools that they would have their names crossed off the rolls if they attended the service.

By fall, all food was rationed and none issued to those attending church. No Christian was permitted a job in a factory or permitted to work in a government office.

1949

The above prohibitions began to tell on the churches. The congregations were shrinking. Sunday schools all but disappeared. Permission was granted to conduct a Bible institute for a month but after two weeks it was closed. Marxism had to be included in the curriculum.

At Christmas time, in view of the trouble of the previous years, the Christians appealed to the authorities in schools and offices to see that the young fellows who had conducted the disturbances before would not repeat this year. But with the beginning of the services the trouble-makers appeared, started fights, broke glass, pulled the light switches, and broke up the meeting. Sunday School pupils were held in the public schools at the time of the Christmas program, but there they sang carols and conducted their own meetings.

1950

In the spring, conscription for the North Korean Army began but Christians were not inducted but sent to factories and mines instead.

In June, shortly before the attack, pastors, elders and seminary students were arrested. Following is Pastor Han's terrible experience as he tells it:

"On 8th October 1950 there were about seven to eight hundred prisoners in Wonsan jail of whom about 500 were held on political charges.

"On or about 3rd October it had been reported that U.S. Marines went ashore to the Jan Jun port, 80 miles south of Wonsan.

"On 8th October, about 300 of us had our hands tied behind our backs with rope, four men in a group. Then we were taken out of the jail by N.K. soldiers to a mountain where there was an air-raid shelter, in a cave. When I arrived at the cave past midnight, there were about 100 bloody bodies of political prisoners who had been shot that evening by two prison wardens. It was a horrible scene under the gloomy candle lights.

"The warden yelled to my group, 'Kneel down on top of the bodies'. We knelt too terrified to resist. Another warden was standing with a candle light in his left hand and a sub-machine gun in his right hand. One of the other prison wardens shot all the prisoners in the head with a sub-machine gun from behind at close range. When he used up all his ammunition, he exchanged his sub-machine gun with the other guard.

"As soon as we knelt, the prison warden began to shoot our group from the left side. When my turn came, the head of a previously shot man in front raised up and seeing it, the other prison warden shouted, 'Shoot that head.' 'Where is it?' and as he asked, he stepped on my head with his right foot and shot the head that had moved. Because of this distraction, the warden seemed to have forgotten me, skipped me, and shot the prisoner on my right. Thus it was that I miraculously escaped from their frightful slaughter.

"After that, the warden killed about 200 more men in the same cave. About three hours later, I heard many weeping and screaming women outside the cave. When the warden finished the massacre, they closed the entrance of the cave with a dynamite blast. After three days I escaped through a hole blown in the top of the cave by a bomb, dropped, I imagine, by an American plane. It was four in the afternoon of October 11.

"On the next morning I found a body shot in the head lying on the ground near the pigsty of Wonsan prison. The most part of the head was broken and scattered but I recognized this form as pastor Cho Wee Ryum, leader in the Ham Kyung Provinces. He had studied in Toronto and Chicago. He was arrested on October 6th for pro-Americanism. We were in the same Wonsan Prison room until that evening of October 8, 1950."

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The Appendix contains material from my files which I personally collected in Korea.

