REPORT ON PROTESTANT MISSIONS (IN CHINA)

The following is an abstract of a significant article entitled "Report on Protestant Missions," which appeared in the MONTHLY REPORT, Vol. VII, No. 6 (December 31, 1949), pp. 17-24, published by the Killard Publishing Co. in Shanghai. It is said to have been carefully written by a non-Christian reporter. It is offered for the information of the member boards of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America.

---

Five religious philosophies—Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity—make up the currents of religious life in China today. Of these, two Confucianism and Taoism— are regarded as antiquated religions which are rapidly dying out and for which there is no place in New China, both religions having been deeply associated with the feudal era which has come to an end. As both Taoism and Confucianism are unorganized religions, it is impossible to give any statistical information on the extent of their influence except to mention the thoroughgoing hold of Confucianism or neo-Confucianism as a feudalistic code of life, typified in the rule of Chiang Kaishiek. Unlike Buddhism, which still has considerable following among the common people, Taoism has lost touch with the people and for all practical purposes has degenerated into a code of superstitious and mercenary practices.

The organized religions of China—Christianity, which is divided into the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches, Mohammedanism, and Buddhism which is partially organized—represent the three most important religious philosophies in Chinese life. All except the Roman Catholic Church are expected to make adjustments and indeed have already begun to do so in order to participate in the new era which China has entered. With the single exception of the Roman Catholics, all of these organized religions were represented in the recent People's Political Consultative Conference which established the People's Republic of China. The composition of the religious delegation included five Christians (Protestants), two Buddhists and one Mohammedan.

One explanation for the government's attitude toward the Roman Catholic Church may be the belief that the Catholics (who number close to 4,000,000) are too reactionary to have any place in the New Democracy. This feeling is based on two factors: (a) distrust of the Roman Catholic Church's international connections with the Vatican, and opposition to anticipated attempts of the Vatican to exercise political control over Catholics, and (b) Catholic Church ownership of large estates in the interior which has made the Church itself one of the biggest landlords. In certain regions (Shensi, Honan and Kansu) it is charged that the Catholic Church not only owns large portions of land but also controls the local governments even to the point of maintaining its own militia in some places. Gradually land reform is expected to reduce the land holdings of the Catholic Church rather drastically. The influence of the Catholic Church is likely to decline seriously unless sweeping reforms are carried out both in organization and program.

Within the Buddhist groups major reforms have been reported. The PIA has occupied many Buddhist temples which have been turned into centers of production. The main reason given for the reforms, however, was that the Buddhists, who have been declining in influence, want to strengthen their ties with the common people. The majority of Buddhist monks have already left the temples and returned to their homes to become ordinary citizens and those still remaining in the temples have for the most part taken up some form of handicraft or engaged in farming. This is a new development in Buddhist religious life and it is expected that within a few years China's Buddhism will reflect many radical changes over the old form of Buddhism.
Within Moslem religious circles there have been fewer changes so far, but the position of the Moslems is a special one. They are regarded chiefly as a racial minority rather than a religious group. Embracing more than 20,000,000 people, China's Moslems have given their support to the new government because of its liberal policy toward racial minorities. It is expected that Islam will continue as a religious faith but that its influence will not extend beyond this racial minority. The Moslems themselves are organized within the government not as a religious group but as a racial minority. While the religious delegation to the PPCC included only one Mohammedan, there were many Mohammedan delegates representing this important minority group at the PPCC.

Protestant Christianity, which numerically represents the smallest of the organized religious groups, is regarded in many circles as the religion most capable of making an adjustment in China, as well as the most liberal of the religious sects. The main change which is discussed in left-wing circles with regard to Chinese Protestantism is the need for a complete severance of relations between Christianity and foreign imperialism.

INTERPRETATIONS OF COMMUNIST ATTITUDES

One of the Christian delegates to the PPCC summarized the position of the Communists toward the Protestant religion at a meeting held in Shanghai prior to the convocation of the PPCC as follows: "The new democracy means not a dictatorship, but a united front. This common platform will be formulated and implemented by the New Political Consultative Conference, through which a coalition government is to be formed this autumn. While comprising many different parties, the coalition government will naturally be led by the Communist Party. The attitude of the new government towards Christianity will therefore be determined by that of the Communists, whose avowed policy is that of religious freedom.... The difficulties and even certain cases of persecution actually experienced by the church in China have not been in accord with the intention of top-ranking leaders, but have been divergencies from policy made by local authorities for various not unintelligible reasons."

(There follows a long quotation from Kiang, Wen-han, THE CHINESE STUDENT MOVEMENT, P. 142.)

Closely related with the Communist view of religion is the subject of religious freedom. When the Common Program was drawn up, in the original draft there was no mention of religious freedom. There was a clause in which "freedom of belief" was guaranteed. The Christian delegates to the PPCC proposed that the specific mention of religious freedom be inserted in the Common Program, for they felt that "freedom of belief" did not apply specifically to religious freedom but to any view, social, economic or political. After discussion, this suggestion was adopted and under Chapter One--General Principles, Article 5 states: "The people of the People's Republic of China shall have freedom of thought, speech, publication, assembly, association, correspondence, person, domicile, moving from one place to another, religious belief and the freedom of holding processions and demonstrations." The Christian interpretation of religious freedom is broader than this. Certain Christian leaders believe that the Communists interpret this clause as freedom of individual belief implying another freedom, "freedom of disbelief." The Christians, on the other hand, believe that religious freedom means that a group should have the right to propagate beliefs which they hold, and to them the right of propagation is a most important part of religious freedom.

While there may be difficulties in reconciling these two interpretations, the new authorities have made it clear that while they do not subscribe to the Christian doctrine, so long as these doctrines meet the needs of the people at a given stage of
society, they do not wish to suppress them. It is their belief that when society has changed there will be no need for such things as religion, but they recognize the fact that until such changes take place, certain elements of society will want the continuance of religion. Therefore, the Communists tolerate religion today and with other political groups subscribe to freedom of religious belief.

SUMMARY OF PROTESTANT GROWTH - TREATIES AND PROSELYTIZING - ANTI-IMPERIALIST MOVEMENT - WARTIME PERIOD
(The Outline of the history of Protestant missions in China is discussed with objectivity under these headings)

POST VJ DAY

Before most of the missions could investigate the extent of damage resulting from the Sino-Japanese war and re-open churches and institutions closed either by the Japanese or as a result of wartime conditions, they found themselves faced with the problems of civil war.

The nation most responsible for the upkeep of foreign missionaries and for the maintenance of the Protestant missions was the same one which was backing the Kuomintang most vigorously with supplies, arms and money. It was unavoidable that missionaries and mission institutions and even the Chinese churches which received a large measure of support from US funds should come under suspicion. Some missionaries made their position clearer than was necessary by stressing the atheistic nature of the new regime and by throwing their support openly behind the status quo. As missionary organizations are made up of individuals, the prejudices and viewpoints of the individuals and their organizations play an important part in their attitudes toward social changes such as have occurred in China in the past few years.

At the present time there are said to be close to 100 different Protestant sects in China of which there are eight or nine leading, ones representing the large denominations—the China Inland Mission, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Anglican Church (Episcopal), Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and the Friends. A number of these denominations—Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational—participate in the Church of Christ in China, the inter-denominational indigenous church which embraces approximately one-third of China's Protestant members.

* * *

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Reports on the overall picture are still very fragmentary. Local conditions vary considerably, as do the attitude of individuals, both on the church and missionary side and on the government's side. Some from the church side welcome the PIA: others make clear their distrust of any forces which work toward socialism or communism. Some have found the adjustment very difficult; in the past missionary leaders were sometimes "big shots"—now they must work through their Chinese colleagues who lack the prestige given a foreign missionary in the past chiefly because he was foreign and Western educated and backed—at least in popular imagination—by considerable power. Some of the local authorities have been cooperative; others have not. Where there have been fewer foreign missionaries and fewer foreigners in general, the foreigners have had greater freedom of action. Where foreigners have been engaged in medical, welfare or technical work, they have received greater cooperation than those engaged purely in evangelical work. But this attitude is not restricted to foreigners; it extends to all Chinese as well—those engaged in productive work fare better than those engaged purely in preaching the gospel.

**********
It has never been easy for foreigners in China to establish contact with the common people; language barriers, customs, and standards of living have stood in the way. All too often the pattern has been that when a foreign missionary or Chinese pastor or church leader entered an area, his educational level immediately put him in touch with the magistrate, the leading businessman or the wealthy landlord with the result that his social contacts would be with this group and his interpretation of political and economic affairs derived from such contacts. These were the groups who would seek the church leader out and this was often a grave handicap.

Another point which must be taken into consideration particularly during a period of military changes is the fact that although the Protestant churches never entered into the business of large property holdings like the Catholics, very often, particularly in isolated rural areas the only good building in the village or town would be the church and the church residence. As the PLA advanced, it needed buildings for holding meetings, accommodating soldiers, civil administrators and granaries for foodstocks; it would see a building, frequently the only building of any size in the town, used only two hours a day on Sunday and it would ask to "borrow" the building temporarily, explaining that the present use of the building for only a few hours each week was uneconomical. Church leaders have in many cases interpreted such action as confiscation rather than borrowing. In Shensi, where a number of mission buildings were borrowed last August to serve as military hospitals, when the KMT resistance in the area collapsed and no fighting was necessary, the buildings were returned to their owners. Even when the churches are "borrowed", however, it is reported that in many cases church services may be held on Sundays, and the soldiers are said to be taught to respect the articles of religion.

EARLY DIFFICULTIES IN SHANTUNG

Two years ago the churches in Shantung had many difficulties. Protestant missions reported the deaths of many pastors and church leaders at the hands of "mobs". Many attributed these deaths to the "ruthless policy" of the Communists in Shantung. The whole picture of what actually did happen in Shantung in that period and why is unobtainable.

Various interpretations have been given for the sufferings of church and missionary groups in Shantung two years ago. Some, ignoring the smoother relations of the past year, point out that this was simply in line with the avowed atheism of the Communists. Others point out that it was because of the intensity of US aid, which was beginning to be felt at this time, that the churches and pastors who had US connections through US mission boards and financial assistance came under suspicion.

Another explanation is that since the cradle of the revolution was in the Yenan area, it was unfortunate that the churches in these areas should have been so backward so that the first contacts which the local Communist forces had were with the less enlightened sections of church groups. In this area there were said to have been a large number of Roman Catholic churches as well as numerous small religious superstitious (non-Christian) sects operating in isolated districts with their own military and political administrations. These sects were said to have been used by the Kuomintang to propagate rumors against the Communists. Called "Huei" societies with names like Red Spear, Big Sword, these groups are described like the Boxers as having been primitive and highly superstitious sects. These--together with the Catholics--were the most numerous of the religious groups, and it was with these sects that the Communist cadres had their first contacts with church groups.
Which of all these stories is correct or which of the factors was most important, it is difficult to say at this point. All that can be said is that the difficulties of two years ago have not recurred nor have there been similar difficulties reported from other parts of China. There have, of course, been many cases of misunderstanding between local government officials and church groups.

SHANTUNG SYNOD

In November, 1949 church affairs in Shantung took a decided turn for the better with the calling of the Shantung synod, the first since the Sino-Japanese war, in Tsingtao. Arrangements were made at this meeting for the Christian churches to have representatives at the various peoples' public meetings with the representatives to be chosen by the local Christian councils. At this meeting it was also decided to open a number of Christian service centers in the leading cities of Shantung. The purpose of these centers is to encourage production, to give general information to the people on political and national affairs and to carry on religious education. Productive work includes training in spinning woolen yarn, bee-keeping, pig raising and similar types of work. This plan has proved very successful so far and the latest reports to reach Shanghai indicate that in certain localities the government authorities have "even been enthusiastic" about the plan which is now going forward.

Reports reaching Shanghai indicate that about 20 percent of the Christian-supported hospitals in Shantung have closed though some of these closures date back to the Japanese war. Of the 40 hospitals in Shantung still operating all are self-supporting.

While no easy generalizations are available from the data on hand with regard to the condition of mission work since liberation, for reports are still too fragmentary as to what has actually happened in many areas and contradictory reports are
made, one generalization seems to hold true. While the city churches have been able
to carry on without interference, the rural churches have suffered heavy losses in
terms of the number of churches which have closed. This has been particularly true
in North China and Manchuria, but holds true as a generalization for most of liber-
ated China. Church leaders estimate that between 70 to 80 percent of the rural
churches have closed. Before the Sino-Japanese war, the Church of Christ in China,
which was the major church in Manchuria, had 290 churches throughout the province.
Now it has only 47 churches functioning in Manchuria and these are mainly in the
cities; almost all the rural churches have ceased functioning. While the Church of
Christ in China used to operate 14 hospitals in Manchuria, there are now only four;
whereas formerly it sponsored four middle schools, there are now only two.

Why did Christian work in these areas suffer so seriously? There were a number
of reasons; first, some church buildings, schools and hospitals were completely
destroyed by the fighting during the Japanese war and later during the civil war;
second, before the approach of the People's Liberation Army, a number of Chinese
pastors and church leaders fled, leaving their posts without leadership, with the
result that many of the churches and institutions automatically closed. The most
prosperous members of the church also fled in a number of cases. Once closed, it
was extremely difficult if not impossible for the church leaders to try to return
and reopen their churches and institutions. Third, misunderstanding between local
church people and the local authorities resulted in a number of cases of rural
churches being suspended or closed completely. Chinese church leaders who have made
a study of this situation say that the cadres assigned to the rural areas have in
general been less educated than those who entered the cities, that these rural cadres
saw little difference between the churches and regarded them all as superstitious
gatherings which exploited the common people without recognizing the welfare aspects
of some of the Protestant programs.

In the cities government workers were usually people with wider contacts and
better education, with the result that they knew something about Christianity. There
have been very few cases of churches or church institutions in the cities being
closed down.

One of the most interesting facts to emerge from this recent survey of the con-
ditions of the churches in Manchuria is that every one of those 47 churches which
are still operating is self-supporting for the first time. They have had to become
so as funds from abroad were unobtainable once they were cut off from headquarter
offices in Shanghai. Church pastors and personnel associated with these 47 churches
realized that if foreign subsidies were to continue, this would not help their posi-
tion with the local authorities who were already suspicious of their connections.
Pastors started to engage in farming, raising bees, handicraft work and became fully
self-supporting or partially self-supporting aided by contributions from their con-
gregations.

While the number of churches operating in Manchuria seems to represent a stag-
gering decline, Chinese Christian leaders feel that a winnowing process has taken
place which has left those churches which have survived in a far stronger position
than ever before.

SITUATION IN NORTHWEST

In the Northwest, in the provinces of Shensi and Kansu mission work is function-
ing practically as normal. Reports state that foreign missionaries are able to
travel freely in the area provided they keep to places along the railway and main highways. An evangelical team of the China Inland Mission has proceeded from Lanchow to Sian without any difficulty whatsoever.

In response to the challenge of the new era the Chinese Christians in Shensi recently held a church conference on the subject of "The Church in the New Age" in which the question of productive work was raised, showing that there is a genuine attempt on the part of many to reorient themselves.

SOUTH OF THE YANGTZE

A number of Chinese church leaders believe that with the crossing of the Yangtze and the announcement of the convening of the PFCC, the Communists took a more conciliatory attitude toward the problems of the Protestant churches and mission supported institutions. Church leaders believe that this was in line with the policy of the United Front which included representation from Chinese Protestant groups. Others say that there was no basic shift in policy, but that after the crossing of the Yangtze there was so little resistance that liberation took place more easily and a more lenient policy was possible.

South of the Yangtze all the mission groups have reported that conditions as far as the churches and church institutions are concerned have been good. There have been very few reports of interference with church services or confiscation of church, hospital or school buildings. A training program for Chinese pastors in Soochow has run into difficulties but this case is now being deliberated. In Fukien reports indicate no major difficulty of any kind and in this province foreign members have actually been freer to travel than in the Shanghai area.

Early reports from Kwangtung indicate that mission work in South China underwent liberation smoothly, that most missionaries were staying on their jobs, and that "there has been no pressure for alteration of curriculum and no demand for the rejection of Christianity in education." The situation at Lingnan, the large Christian University in south China, is described as "normal in every respect."

SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS

All of the 13 Christian Colleges are functioning though many have found their enrollments considerably reduced. For example, at Ginling College the student body has fallen off from 400 to 160 this term. Many of the students have joined the government's foreign language school or entered other special training courses which the government has established for the training of future administrators and leaders. In certain cases, like Yenching, there is close cooperation between the school authorities and the local government.

The 236 mission schools (middle schools) scattered throughout China have had some difficulties on the question of religious education. Many of the schools—in the belief that a ban on religious education will come sooner or later—have dropped the subject. Others who interpret the regulations to mean no religious education on the school grounds are holding classes voluntarily in mission residences. The problem of religious education in middle schools and colleges harks back to the era of the 20's when the problem was much discussed.
On a local level, the attitude toward voluntary religious education seems to vary. In Shanghai, for example, regulations have not been set up with regard to religious education on the school grounds. A meeting of middle school representatives toward the end of November discussed the subject with representatives of the Educational Office: regulations were drafted saying that school buildings cannot be used for religious services, but then the point of Sunday Schools was injected into the discussion and no final decisions were reached. In general, the attitude of the government authorities seems to be to permit religious fellowship activities on school grounds but to ban what is termed "religious propaganda." However, this whole subject awaits clarification. In the meantime, many mission schools have dropped the subject from the curriculum though the colleges continue to offer it on a voluntary basis.

The schools and colleges of the Protestant missions are approximately three-fourths self-supporting through China funds which include tuition fees, contributions from alumni and special grants. Mission contributions pay for the services of a teacher or teachers, special projects and equipment for the school. If foreign support for these Christian schools and colleges were cut off tomorrow, most of them could continue. There are exceptions, however, like the University of Nanking, which is still supported largely through foreign funds.

Throughout China, there are 19 theological seminaries, 14 theological training schools and 17 Bible schools. There have been cases of local difficulties, and in the case of the religious seminary located on the campus of Cheloo University, the local authorities ordered the seminary closed; appeals were made to Peking stating that without the opportunity to train religious leaders, freedom of religion was incomplete. Peking issued instructions to the local authorities to allow the seminary to reopen.

Of the 322 hospitals in China established by the missionaries, 62 have been closed over the war years since 1937, nine are reported to have been destroyed or burned during the civil war fighting and three were looted. Of those continuing, the usual practice of approximately 20 percent free patients is going on. The hospitals have reported very little difficulty in carrying on their work as usual.

CHINESE LEADERSHIP

Before 1914, the development of Chinese leadership in church and missionary institution work was not emphasized very much, but after that date foreign mission boards realized the importance of such leadership. The nationalism of the 20's pushed the process along, and though in some cases transference of responsibility to Chinese was purely a paper matter, in others real transfers were made.

Before the Sino-Japanese war it was estimated that there were approximately half a million Protestant Christians. Present day statistics are still very rough but range between 600,000 and 1,000,000.

Again, figures are incomplete, but the number of ordained Chinese pastors is estimated to be between 3,000 and 4,000. Of the ordained pastors, through mission funds in most cases paid directly to the Church organization, about one-third are partially supported and one-third are largely supported by mission funds, whereas one-third are said to be entirely supported by their congregations. Church work itself is not nearly as self-supporting as the hospitals and schools which the various
missions have established. In addition to 3,000-4,000 ordained Chinese pastors there are 10,000 salaried church workers. Their support too follows the pattern of the ordained pastors.

In general those Chinese Christians with the greatest talents who remained in Protestant work were attracted to the fields of education, welfare and the social sciences. Realizing the tremendous needs of their country for technical and specialized skills, these leaders combined the propagation of Christianity with the propagation of improvement of the country's educational and welfare facilities. Many of the best talents of Chinese Protestantism were directed into the YWCA, YMCA, social services and education. One Chinese Christian said that in general the most backward went into evangelical work, those who were tied psychologically to foreign missions and who were the least conscious socially. If this generalization is true even in part--for there must be exceptions--it would help explain the great timidity of Chinese pastors in the face of PLA advances, particularly those pastors who left their churches without any leadership. It would explain too the suspicion which some pastors faced after liberation.

ATTITUDES OF CHINESE CHRISTIANS

Within the Chinese Protestant groups most of the leadership, particularly in the cities, now supports the new government in varying degrees. On the one hand, there is a small core of "philosophical" Christians who support the new government wholeheartedly and who believe that a successful adjustment between their Christian beliefs and the New Democracy is possible. Although this group is very small in number, it has considerable following, particularly among the students.

The great majority of present-day Chinese Christian leaders are people who were Christian leaders under the Kuomintang, people who in many cases had friendly relations with individual Kuomintang leaders. For the most part this group is trying earnestly to make an adjustment and encouraging foreign mission boards and foreign missionaries to do likewise. Many leading Chinese Christians, among them several university presidents, are making this adjustment. The united front has given these people an opportunity to adjust themselves and their thinking in order that their talents may be used to the full in the new era. In addition to the five Protestant delegates who represented the Christians on the Religious Delegation, there were between 20 to 30 delegates participating in the PPCC who had had some connection with Protestant organizations.

On the extreme right are people like the Chiangs, H. H. Kung, T. V. Soong and lesser reactionary lights who have fled to Taiwan and abroad, people who will never make an adjustment with the new society emerging in China. This group is small in religious influence but one which until recently wielded enormous power. Of this group it has been said: "They used Protestant Christianity to build up their prestige abroad, while certain Protestant leaders used them (the reactionary Kuomintang leaders) to build up the prestige and influence of the Protestant missions in China." In fairness it must be pointed out that throughout the last decade of Kuomintang rule there were a number of Chinese Protestants as well as foreign Protestant missionaries who were very unhappy about this mutual exploitation.

In October 1949, an influential and varied segment of Chinese Christianity represented by 21 Chinese Christians, sent a message to Mission Boards abroad in an attempt to explain the changing conditions to these organizations.
ATTITUDE OF FOREIGN MISSIONARIES

Most of the foreign missionaries still in China feel pessimistic about the future position and contribution of foreign missionaries but hopeful about the development of the Chinese church. The major difficulty which the missionaries report is the restriction on travel which they say makes it impossible for them to attend meetings or inspect church work, and prevents them from keeping in touch with various parts of their program. Most missionaries, however, acknowledge that this problem is probably connected with the issue of recognition which many of those in China wish would come quickly.

Another problem is the question of land tax which a few have protested vehemently, pointing out that schools and hospitals are for the people. However, many missionaries did state that upon appealing for land tax reductions, they were successful in reducing taxes on hospitals and schools by 50 percent and in some cases, a small reduction was made on the taxes for missionary residences. Cases of total exemption of taxes for hospitals and schools have been reported wherever the local authorities believe that the mission hospital or school has been of real service to the community. In Shanghai, for example, the YMCA and YWCA have received special privileges with regard to land tax reductions because of the unique social contributions which these two agencies have made among poorer groups.

What the missionaries predict as a ban on religious education in the middle schools is another problem which worries a number of them. They point out that this may be a setback in the long run to the propagation of Christianity, for by the time students reach universities where voluntary courses in religion are offered, they are less likely to take up the study of religion. As one missionary leader said, "They are more independent."

FOREIGN PERSONNEL AND FINANCES

Unofficial reports from Peking indicate that the attitude of the new authorities toward the problem of the Chinese church receiving grants from the United States, Canada and Great Britain is to permit the continuance of such grants provided the money contributed is from the people and not from any government source, that the money is used for projects and not for the salaries of Chinese church workers and that the money has no strings whatsoever attached to it. Chinese church leaders have been worried as to whether continued financial support from the US, Canada and Great Britain, which they feel is still necessary, would be misunderstood. Informal talks between church leaders and the authorities in Peking have indicated that if the Chinese church can comply with the two conditions specified, there will be no difficulty.

In this connection, a recent report from the North China Synod of the Church of Christ in China notifying the foreign missionary boards participating in its program of a decision that for the coming year no Chinese pastor or church worker in that area would be paid from foreign funds is significant. Word has come from Hankow saying that for the coming year at least a portion of the funds used to pay Chinese church workers and pastors would be raised locally. If the Chinese churches can
succeed in raising funds locally to support their work, they will surely continue on a far sounder basis than before. However, it is expected that this process will take a long time.

With regard to the question of foreign personnel, the attitude of government officials, as explained in informal and unofficial talks with Chinese church leaders, seems to be: 1) no foreigners should occupy administrative positions in any part of the church program or in the institutions supported by the churches; 2) the people's government would prefer foreign workers in the fields of medicine and the technical sciences. To date several new foreign doctors have received entry permits for China whereas evangelists have had no such encouragement.

These two points concerning finance and foreign personnel are closely tied to the relations of the Chinese church groups with the foreign missionary boards. Many of the foreign missionary leaders understand the situation and some even welcome the opportunity to accelerate the transfer of responsibility to Chinese hands. One difficulty which they mention is the lack of trained administrators among Chinese church leaders, but this is a shortcoming which they expect to be a temporary one. There is, of course, a small diehard group which is determined to hang on to administrative posts just as long as possible, but this group includes people who have no understanding or sympathy for developments which have taken place over the past 25 years. Administratively, the transfer to Chinese of responsibilities is proceeding, but the transference of financial assets has not been nearly so rapid. Various reasons are given for this—that the Chinese church bodies cannot afford to pay for the maintenance of mission properties, and that there is more "protection" for the property as long as it remains in foreign hands. This latter reason is based on the belief of certain Protestant missionaries that in some cases government officials might attempt to pressure Chinese church groups into turning over the property for uses other than originally planned, perhaps even for government use.

An interesting development with regard to the transference of administrative responsibility is the recent decision of the American Episcopal Board in the United States to withdraw all Episcopal bishops from China and turn the responsibilities which these bishops carry at present to Chinese church leaders. For the most part, Chinese welcome the changes in administration which the new era has speeded up; but many Chinese church leaders say that they hope that their foreign colleagues will continue in advisory posts.

At the present time the Protestant churches of America, Canada and Great Britain (who represent the three major countries active in mission work) have close to 2,000 foreign missionaries in China. In 1937 there were over 6,500 foreign missionaries. The China Inland Mission, with 770 missionaries in China last summer, has the largest representation followed by the Presbyterian and Reformed Missions.

ROLE OF MISSIONARIES

Over the past 100 years, arising out of their proselytizing activities, the missionaries have made a number of contributions to Chinese life particularly in the fields of medicine, public health, engineering, education and the sciences. Training work in these fields has been another valuable contribution, as well as the introduction of Western techniques in scientific and educational work. Other contributions included the establishment of the first modern schools for women, crusades against bound feet, against the use of opium, and language experiments with romanization and phonetics.
The most serious criticisms levelled against the missionaries—and against a large section of Chinese church workers—cover two points. First, that the foreign missionaries and their Chinese colleagues passively and, in a minority of cases, actively gave support to the facets of imperialism, sometimes in the hope of promoting their own work though there were, of course, individual missionaries who spoke up against the unequal treaties, extraterritoriality and similar impositions. While many missionaries today fail to see how this charge can be levelled at their present-day activities, actions like those of former Ambassador J. Leighton Stuart, himself long associated with missionary groups in China, in calling together a group of Yenching alumni in Shanghai after liberation and advising them to enter the government and serve as a "moderating influence" have been criticized in Chinese circles as unwarranted interference. Another instance which could conceivably bring the "imperialism" charge against foreign missionaries is the inclusion of a number of Protestant mission leaders with China missionary connections in the newly formed "Anti-Communist China" Committee recently formed in the United States which advocates a three-point program calling for "non-recognition of the Chinese Communist regime, moral support to anti-Communist resistance in China, significant aid, military counsel and supplies to anti-Red forces."

Missionaries were often accused of wanting to make China into the shape of the West, ignoring China's own environment and culture and emphasizing Western cultural values at the expense of Chinese culture. This, too, was associated by many Chinese with imperialism.

The second major criticism directed against missionaries and Chinese Christians was the accusation that in most cases they were blind to the inequalities of society under the Manchus and the Kuomintang and failed to protest against the repression and corruption of the Kuomintang until its very last stages of decay. And sometimes, not even then.

The Chinese Christian community in the cities which was largely confined to the business and industrial class also closed its eyes to the inequities of society and tolerated and even supported the forces of reaction. Apart from the efforts of the YMCA and the YWCA in particular and of a handful of foreign missionaries who made a special study of work among the laboring groups, the churches generally neglected the welfare of the industrial proletariat.

It is still too premature to see what the future holds for Protestant groups in China. Clearly they have been presented with a challenge in the social program of New Democracy. If they can meet that challenge by showing through their work that they have a contribution to make for the common welfare of the nation, if they can purge themselves of ideological traditions which the new authorities associate with imperialism, and particularly with American imperialism, their chances of survival are good.

As for the Chinese churches themselves, the more independent they can become of foreign assistance, and the more indigenous is the basis of their support, the more likely it will be that they will make a successful adjustment to the new environment. Already reports have been received from Chuhsien (Anhwei) and Hofei (Anhwei) that the Protestant pastors there have been invited to participate in the local people's councils. In any case, Protestant Christianity as an influence on society is likely to be felt for some decades to come. As to the direction of the influence this is largely up to the Chinese Protestants themselves.
When the Central People's Government was established, a Bureau of Religious Affairs was set up under the Department of Interior. This bureau will deal with the problems of all religious groups—Christians, Mohammedans and Buddhists. The Protestant bodies are considering establishing a joint liaison office of all Protestant denominations in Peking through which all problems will be channeled to this Bureau. Many of the Chinese and foreign church leaders are hopeful that once this Bureau begins functioning, difficulties which they have had on a local level will be ironed out and greater harmony will be established between the Protestant church groups and the government authorities.

Chinese church leaders who have talked with Pu Wah-ren, a former Christian pastor who is now a Communist and the person considered most likely to head the Bureau of Religious Affairs, report that his attitude toward Protestant church groups is a very understanding one, which makes them feel optimistic about the possibilities of working out difficulties in trouble-spot areas.

(A portion of this article has more recently appeared in the CHINA WEEKLY REVIEW, Vol. 116, No. 8 (January 21, 1950) and is signed by Rose Yardumian.)