



LETTER FROM KOREA

A week ago tomorrow I set foot on Korean soil at Jinsen. This has been a busy week for me, constantly being waited upon by Korean workers and laymen alike. Some jigsaw puzzles are about as easy to put together as some of the tales I am hearing. However, the picture is taking shape, and soon, I believe, the whole situation can be pieced together.

In the annals of modern church history I doubt that any other Christian body has been suppressed, spied upon, and finally dissolved as actually happened to the church here. Of course we were not alone in the kind of treatment received; but I think perhaps we have suffered more loss in property and possibly former workers than any other organization. However, through this period of complete suppression, when even singing hymns in the home was forbidden—a real shaking time for our church members—many have stood firm and have been thrust into prison rather than deny their faith. I shall save some of the details until I return home and can present them more completely.

Through it all we have lost some of our workers and members. Most of those who have gone from us were of uncertain character to begin with; so no doubt the “shaking” has actually purified and strengthened the church. I hope so. Some have been broken in health and will never be the same.

Today I cabled the General Conference, requesting that R. S. Lee (Lee Ryu Sik), Philippine Union College graduate, be sent as delegate to the General Conference session. The Foreign Affairs Department of the military government gave assurance of his travel to the United States. They are wiring Washington, so I hope you can give the necessary guarantee for him. He has proved true and is faithfully carrying on.

The buildings are in poor condition at headquarters. The hospital isn't damaged but needs a new roof and paint. Prices are unbelievable. “Inflation” hardly describes conditions. A bag of rice sells for 1,700 to 2,000 yen; a pair of shoes, 700 to 800; a 100-watt electric light bulb, 175 yen. These are samples of things I priced myself.

There is unrest and insecurity, for prices continue to rise. Our homes will cost 30,000 to 50,000 yen to repair at the present rate. There is no building be-

ing done. Korea has simply been drained dry and then completely splashed with cheap yen just before the collapse. Men in the military government are greatly concerned. We now have about twenty workers drawing a mere pittance from the tithe; that includes everyone, even to the janitor. The tithe is gathered mainly by two workers, who visit the churches and carry the money in. They sew it into their clothes. Those who tried to come through from above the 38° line have been robbed of several thousand yen. Conditions in the north are deplorable. Several of our believers have come over the line in the past few days. It's the same old story—cattle, grain, land, horses, and even coolies being requisitioned and taken away.

The Lord will see that His cause triumphs, but there is plenty of trouble ahead for us over here. To carry on as we have in the past under present exchange rates will require an appropriation four times what was formerly received. Our only hope is that a change will come rapidly; and in the meantime we can add no more workers than the handful we have now—two ordained men, four licentiates, plus those few working in the press and hospital.

I am living a rugged life. I sleep at the hospital in a first-class room, heated with a small electric heater; eat at my Korean amah's house in the village nearby; and spend most of my time hitchhiking back and forth to the compound and the city. Fortunately, the big Army 29th base hospital is located out beyond us five miles, so jeeps and weapon carriers pass quite frequently. A dozen or more of our Seventh-day Adventist GI's are located out there. They are supplying me with canned food, blankets, etc. So the Lord, as the boys say, had a purpose in bringing them to Korea. They have been a great help to our Koreans. Those of our workers who are left have lost much of their energy. One more year and the Koreans say they would all have died. Korea does look depressed and shabby. Seoul isn't the same. War leaves terrible scars which take years to heal. Our lawns were pitted with trenches; bomb shelters were erected by the press and the hospital. But these reminders can quickly be erased.

I'm working on the property. We shall get it back, but the process may be slow and tedious. Some of the properties have already changed hands several

times. Most of my time will be spent in getting this matter corrected. Time passes rapidly. Brother Lee and I shall have to leave the last part of April, but I believe a great deal can be accomplished before then. When I get home I'll tell you how wonderfully the Lord led me into Korea. I am the first civilian missionary, not connected with the government, to enter the New Korea. The Korean believers were waiting. They need help, guidance, encouragement. It's going to be hard the next few years. There are so many problems, real problems. We may have to have a separate organization above the 38° line. All on that side want to move south, which creates more trouble. But God will see us through. I know God wanted me here now. The future out here holds hardships and trials, but it's a challenge.

—R. S. WATTS.

Seoul, March 20, 1946

CONDITIONS IN JAVA

In the February 20 issue of *The Christian Century*, A. L. Warnshuis shares with readers in this country portions of several letters from J. C. Hoekendijk in Java. Mr. Hoekendijk, whose letters date from September 29 and onward, was among the first civilians to enter Java, where he came to bring relief to released internees. We quote several significant portions from these letters:

September 29:

"Conditions here are terrible. In Batavia alone there are more than 20,000 European women and children in camps. Some of these camps consist of little stone houses that were meant for three or four people to live in, but into which now as many as eighty women and children are crowded—no beds, sleeping on stone floors, no sanitation, hardly any food up to the last weeks, beaten and tortured, humiliated before the Indonesians.

"We are setting up a whole scheme of welfare work. Community centers in which these people may live will be opened in all quarters. All public services will be located in the centers, thus solving the problem of transportation. These centers will offer the people whatever comforts are possible and which cannot be provided in their quarters—kitchen, reading rooms, some rooms furnished with chairs. One of the greatest discoveries of people coming out of the camps is that there are still chairs in this world. There will be radios, a piano, toys for children, sewing machines, etc. For the first few weeks my work will be the opening of such community centers all over Java.

"In the first week I was here about one hundred fifty Protestant and Roman Catholic clergymen were released from internment camps. It is surprising to see how these tired, worn-out people are willing to begin work again.

"Among clergymen and missionaries the casualties were high. We do not yet know the exact numbers, but on Java alone about thirty were killed. But these are casualties to be proud of. Most of these men and women were murdered because the churches in Java—with the magnificent help of the Chinese—organized camps. Hundreds of people have already told me that they owe their lives to this organization.

Many times this work was discovered by the Japanese, and as many times it cost the lives of men and women who, tortured for months, refused to give away any names.

"I have also made contact with the indigenous churches, but here the situation is now very difficult. As you know, the nationalists have created an Indonesian republic, and all over the country the national flag and all kinds of anti-Dutch posters can be seen. Since the occupation troops have not yet arrived (just today some arrived); we live under the protection of the Japanese. Our hotel is strongly guarded by them. The Japanese troops are always ready for action. The first nights here some Japanese guards were killed, and on our very first day here, in the center of the city in broad daylight, two yards from our truck, there was a murder party.

"In this atmosphere we can hardly have a frank talk with the pastors of the Javanese churches. All the nationalists are repeating the slogans given them by their leaders. Just this week, however, the conference of these churches turned down a motion of one of the fiercest nationalists to congratulate the president of the republic. The best thing to do will be to listen carefully and to try to make a survey of the situation from all possible angles before we begin missionary rehabilitation.

October 25:

"There is much work to be done here; only little can be accomplished. It is agreed here that we can make ourselves most useful for the reconstruction of missionary work not by making direct contact with the younger churches but by an indirect approach—working with and for the displaced persons. As soon as possible we will visit all missionary concentrations, which are D. P. camps, and discuss with them plans for the future and try to get as much material as possible for a survey. One of our group has gone to Sumatra, two will leave next week for Celebes, and a fourth will go to New Guinea. We will stay here, where our house is the rallying point for all missionary and church people.

"Up to last week Batavia was the only place on Java in the hands of the Allies. The rest was in the hands of the Indonesian republic, and that means terror. If this situation lasts a few more weeks, the casualties will be much higher than the twenty per cent of the internees that died during the Japanese occupation. Since last week, when the 'holy war' was declared, three Christian villages forty miles from here have been looted and one missionary was killed, and most of the Christian Javanese and two missionaries are missing. These Christians are without any protection. In East Java there are looting parties against the Christians regularly. Even here in Batavia the Ambonese, who are Christians, are persecuted in such a way that 10,000 of them had to leave their homes and possessions and are now interned in a prisoner-of-war camp, living under terrible conditions. We are trying to get a specially protected camp for them.

"All this, together with the official statement that before Christmas all Christians (about 100,000) are to be exterminated—and conditions now show that this is possible—made me cable to the International Missionary Council: 'Holy war against Christians costs hundreds of casualties. 80,000 Christians in

Java without protection. Survival of Javanese church at stake.' I know that it is difficult to do anything, but everything must be tried. Nobody can imagine the chaotic terrorism here. Only yesterday eleven of my officers were killed fifty miles from here. This cannot last another six weeks.

"I now have before me the list of the missionary casualties during the Japanese occupation: Missionaries, 38 men (out of about 80), 15 women, 13 children. Medical missionaries, 9 men, 10 women. Administrative missionaries, 12 men. Clergymen for European churches, 9 men, 6 women.

November 11:

"Christian Indonesians refuse nearly all contacts. They fear reprisals. I can understand this attitude as regards us 'newcomers.' (Though it is difficult, never was I so much aware of the fact that I was born here!) But it is the same with the experienced missionaries who have spent a lifetime here. Letters are returned unopened, greetings are unanswered. The 'nation' has won over the church. A uniform does not matter; the color of your skin decides whether you are 'in' or 'out.'"

AMONG THE TELEGUS OF MALAYA

By R. J. MOSES

We have experienced many difficulties and hardships in this part of the field, such as famine, bombing, machine gunning, shelling, and other evils of war. When the war broke out in the Far East, I was at Telok Anson.

I wish to narrate one experience of how the merciful God, who has called us out of utter darkness into this wonderful light, saved us from bombing. As you know, Telok Anson is on the bank of a large river. In the year 1941, December 25, we were asked to leave our premises and go to a safer place. So we went to an estate about four miles from the town. On the morning of the 26th a unit of the British and Indian Army came to the same estate. At 10 A.M. on this same morning three Japanese bombers flew over and dropped the first bomb. People began running in several directions for safety. I started with all my family, but in her haste my wife slipped and fell into the canal. While helping her, we heard another big noise, and I thought we were finished by a direct hit; but by His mercy the bomb fell one hundred and fifty yards away from us, killing twelve people and severely injuring several others. So you can see how our loving God saved us. Now I shall not attempt to write any more of these experiences.

Regarding the work of God: soon after the foreign brethren left Singapore, a meeting was called of all union committee members. During the session the brethren felt that it would be better to divide the Malayan field. So they divided it into three sections; namely, the Southern Malayan Mission, consisting of Singapore, Malacca, and the state of Jahore, with Pastor Phang as director; the Northern Malayan Mission, with Brother Daniel Liem as director, consisting of Penang, Kedah, and Butterworth; and the Central Malayan Mission. I was asked to look after

the latter, consisting of the old Federated Malay States (Negri, Sembilan, Selangor, Perak, Pahang, and Dindings), with my headquarters at Kuala Lumpur.

Soon after the Japanese came, we were instructed not to open churches; however, after some time we could do so, but were not allowed to preach—only to sing songs, read a portion of the Bible, and pray. I am sorry to say some of the Japanese officers did not have any respect for churches. They used some of the churches as MP headquarters, and some for storing foodstuffs. Our Kuala Lumpur church had been used as a storage place since March, 1945. Soon after the arrival of the British forces I approached the authorities for permission to open the church. They are removing the stuff stored there, and soon we shall be happy to enter the doors of our church again.

You will be sorry to know that many of our church members in Bahan, Bagan Datok, and Telok Anson, as well as Singapore, were taken to Thailand for labor services. According to information received, most of these died in the jungles of Siam and Burma.

While the Japanese were administering this country, prices of commodities soared to such an extent that the middle class of people were unable to maintain their families, and as a result, many died by the roadside, under trees, and on estates. The laborers died like rats, as there was no proper medical care available for these people. Most of us had to live on tapioca roots. Some church members died of beriberi as well as from famine.

I hope this gives you an idea of how we lived in Malaya during the war. I pray God that you brethren will be back in Malaya soon to relieve us from our distress.



West Visayan Academy Was a Total Loss in the War. The School Will Start the Next Academic Year in Rented Quarters Near Iloilo



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W. P. Bradley - - - - - Editor

News Items

R. S. Watts arrived in Korea on the morning of March 13, the first missionary to return to that country in a purely civilian role. His first letter from Korea, which starts on page one, is full of interesting information about his activities there.

L. F. Bohner reached Bangkok on March 3, and Singapore on March 7. We are printing on this page excerpts from his first letter to reach the General Conference since his arrival.

E. L. Becker has been working for several weeks in the Auditing Department of the General Conference, preparing for the time when he will go forward to the Far East, where he will serve as cashier and assistant division auditor.

Doctor and Mrs. Ralph S. Waddell and children, Elder and Mrs. A. P. Ritz and children, and Brother and Sister Elden B. Smith sailed from San Francisco for Siam on March 23. Brother Ritz will have charge of the work in Siam, and Dr. Waddell will again take up his duties as superintendent of the Bangkok Mission Clinic and Hospital. Brother and Sister Smith will enter upon language work in preparation for their coming period of service in Siam.

Elder W. B. Riffel, who is attending the Theological Seminary, has shared with us several interesting letters from workers in the Philippines. Brother L. L. Villanueva writes: "I think we left Mindanao at almost the same time. When I was in Manila for the annual meeting in January, 1944, I heard that

you had just arrived in Manila from the Davao concentration camp. To let you know I was in Manila I slipped a can of pineapple juice into the basket of foodstuffs sent by the union folk. I wonder whether you received it. Though it was insignificant it carried with it our desire for you and the family to be back with us once more, to labor in our field."

Brother A. L. Sumicad says: "I have just lately arrived in Zamboanga City after two months away, visiting all the churches in my district. I left Zamboanga in a sailboat, as there is still no regular transportation available. I distributed the relief clothing, took census of the members, and at the same time collected tithes and offerings to be brought back to the office. As the weather was not favorable, we were delayed. It took us thirteen days to reach Labason. Our provisions were just enough for two days, and for the rest of the time we lived on fish and coconuts. Four different times the sea became so rough that we thought each moment would be our last. In the midst of these dangers we bowed our knees to the Master Pilot. Three meals we had passed up, and Labason was far away. At last in answer to our prayers the sea calmed, and we came safely to our destination.

"I found the brethren anxiously awaiting the arrival of mission workers. A goodly number of souls were prepared for baptism. Two new church buildings have been erected. The church at Sindangan was burned but has been replaced by a smaller one. From Labason I hiked up to Jimenez, a distance of 275 kilometers. It took me twenty days, and I visited churches on the way. After that I returned to Cagayan.

"In Aurora I organized a Sabbath school. In Pantar they are preparing for a big cottage meeting, which will begin the first week of March. I would have led out in this, but there will be a change of territory, and my assignment will be to Jolo.

"I am sending a picture of the brethren in Pagadian. This church was rebuilt just after the liberation. It has a membership of 114. Pastor Yovan and I are going to hold a tent effort right here in this city as soon as the tent is erected, and we are beginning on that this week."

Report From L. F. Bohner

"It hardly seems possible that I have been here almost two weeks. I flew from Manila to Bangkok on the morning of March 3, then to Singapore on the seventh. The plane trips were wonderful, with perfect weather.

"If only Dr. Waddell can hurry back to Bangkok! There is unlimited surgery awaiting him. At present there are no foreign doctors there, but others may arrive at any time. With the doctor on the job we shall have a tremendous amount of business. Several of our good friends have promised substantial amounts toward a new building.

"Exchange is about 15 or 18 to 1. Clothing is out of sight all over the country. Suits in Bangkok are 500 ticals each, and here in Singapore you can't get the cheapest suit for less than 50 Straits dollars. Our poor workers present a pitiful appearance, and their clothes have many patches. Very few of our workers own any furniture, for they had to sell what little they had in order to live. Black marketing was common. You had to sell what you could lay your hands on at the best possible price, or starve. It was simply a matter of survival. All the lawns around the school, the press, and the workers' homes were made into gardens. People lived mostly on tapioca, which is all right for an occasional dessert, but a very deficient food for daily consumption.

The war ruin in Malaya that is most reminiscent of poor Manila is the *Mote* house on the division compound. The floor, roof, front, and most of one side are all gone. Dutch people are using the other buildings and paying us rent. In order to make them livable they had to do considerable repairing and restore fixtures which had been looted.

Transportation here is exceedingly poor. Some days my taxi and ricksha bills run over \$6 (Straits) and I don't seem to have accomplished much either. It takes influence to ride second class on the train, and then one sleeps without mattress or mosquito net. I used to complain when we had those hard mattresses. Now I can sleep on the bare seats. There is no train service to Bangkok. Boats are infrequent and prohibitively expensive.

L. F. BOHNER.

Singapore, March 20, 1946.