

Northern Asia-Pacific Division



NEWS & VIEWS

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Centennial Anniversary *of the "Signs of the Times" in Japan*

The year 2001 is the 100th year for the monthly magazine of the Signs of the Times in Japanese. The church leaders and members of the Japan Union Conference conducted a special Sabbath program for the centennial anniversary at the Tachikawa Church in Tokyo on June 30, 2001. Howard F. Faigao, associate director of the Publishing Department of the General Conference, preached on "Publishing - A Powerful Agency."

It is very rare for both secular and religious magazines to exist for 100 years in Japan. In fact, the Japanese Signs of the Times was forced to stop printing during World War II because allegedly the teachings of the Adventist church were not in harmony with the military government. Kenyu Kinjo, president of the Japan Union Conference, says, "There is no Christian magazine in Japan besides the Signs of the Times, which has continued to publish more than 100 years and has printed more than 30,000 copies."



The Participants of the All Japan Literature Evangelists' Convention in Tokyo

The first issue of the Japanese Signs of the Times was published on July 1, 1899 through the great sacrifice of the first official missionary from the U.S.A. to Japan, William C. Grainger. In 1937, in the April issue of the magazine, the title was forced to change from the Signs of the Times to the Health and Life by the oppression of the military. Then, in October 1943, the magazine ceased to publish. While the Japanese government had proclaimed deity of the emperor and eternity of the country, our church had preached that Jesus Christ is God and all countries including Japan will perish at the time of His second coming.

The oppression of the government was not only to the publishing ministry, but also to all the activities of the church. On September 20, 1943, finally forty-two Adventist church leaders were arrested by the police and put in jails all over the country. Consequently, four individuals lost their lives because of persecution and unhealthy life in jails. Thus, the Adventist churches in Japan seemed to die.

After World War II, however, the Japanese Signs of the Times was published again from October 1946 as well as restoration of other activities of the church. The title of the magazine was renamed the Signs of the Times instead of the Health and Life. The editor of the magazine after the war, Toshio Yamagata, former president of the Japan Missionary College, says, "At that time I was responsible both to the Japan Missionary College and to the Japan Publishing House.



Howard F. Faigao (left) preached on June 30, 2001 with Tadaomi Shinmyo (right) as translator.

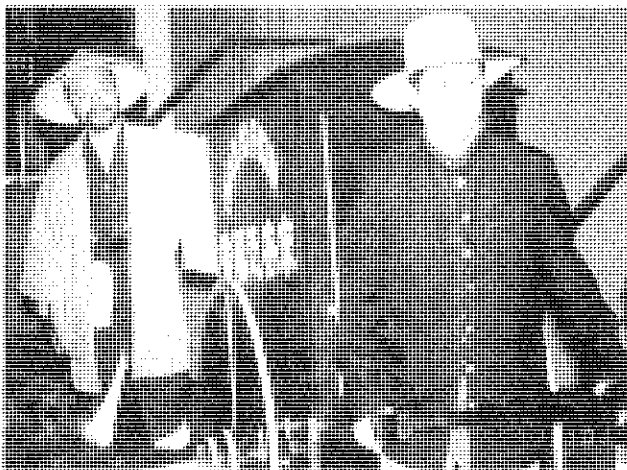
We wanted to publish the magazine, but there was lack of writers and papers. ... I had to continue to write for the magazine by myself using six different pen names. ..."



Kenyu Kinjo, JUC President, spoke at the All Japan Literature Evangelists' Convention

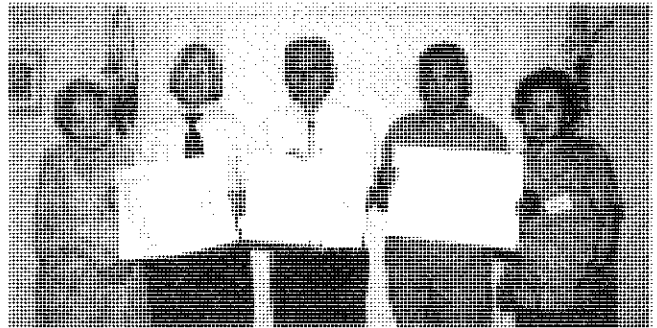
There was a panel discussion by publishing directors, publishing managers and editors of the respective ages in the afternoon of the Sabbath day. Yonezo Okafuji, former president of the Japan Union Conference and manager of the publishing house, says, "The Japanese people were hungry in reading the printed pages, so the Signs of the Times were sold well. I tried to sell them to the people waiting for street cars in Osaka in 1952 and more than half of the people bought our magazines."

The next morning of the Sabbath, the Centennial Anniversary Service was held at the Amanuma Church in Tokyo, where the publishing house had been once located. Kenyu Kinjo, president of the Japan Union Conference, spoke and significant guests both inside and outside the Adventist church gave the congratulatory messages. Further, there was a special lecture by Minoru Inada, former editor of the magazine, in the afternoon.



A demonstration of a literature evangelism trip from Tokyo to the south in May 1902.

In conjunction with the Signs of the Times Centennial Anniversary, All Japan Literature Evangelists' Convention was conducted from June 28 - 29, 2001 at the Tachikawa Church and the Tachikawa Grand Hotel in Tokyo. There were about 120 attendants including the publishing leaders from Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa in the south. The main guest speakers were Howard F. Faigao, associate publishing director of the General Conference, and Tadaomi Shinmyo, publishing director of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division.



M. Yuda, Y. Oiso & S. Saito working more than 50 years as colporteurs (from second left).

It was an amazing experience for me to find an active female literature evangelist at 92 years old, to meet three old gentlemen who have worked more than 50 years as literature evangelists, to know a former church school principal who begins literature evangelism recently after his retirement, and so on.



Komura Udaka, 92 Years Old

Currently, there are about 270 full and part time literature evangelists among 14,000 Adventist church members in Japan.

Tadaomi Shinmyo, *Comm./PARL/Pub./AGCN/SOP Director*

Korea's 2nd Nation-wide Primary School Student No-Smoking Speech Contest

On May 30th, 2001, Korea's 2nd Nation-wide Primary School Student No-Smoking Speech Contest was held at the Sahmyook Nursing and Health College auditorium in Seoul, Korea. This event was organized and conducted by the Korean Headquarters of the International Temperance Association.

The Grand Prize was presented by Kim, Won Kil, Korea's Minister of Health and Welfare, at Korea's celebration of the "International No-Smoking Day." Two 1st Prizes were given by Kim Il Soon, the president of the Korean Association of Smoking and Health, and by Cho Won Wng, the president of the Korean Headquarters of the International Temperance Association. The "1st Primary School No-Smoking Speech Contest" developed as one of the health education programs originating from the "1st Korean Health Fair 2000," which was held by the Korean Government in Olympic Park, Seoul, Korea.

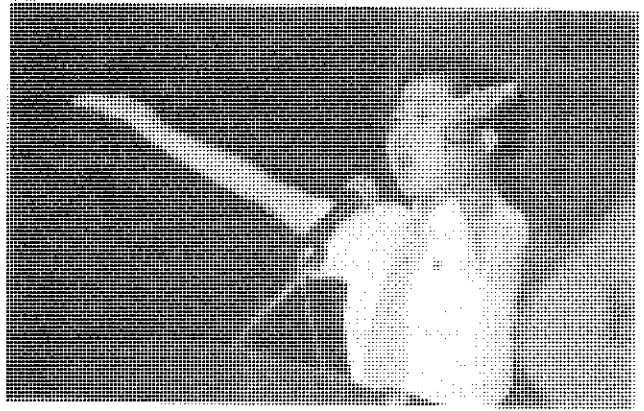
A five district pre-contest eliminations were held in Kwangju, Taegu, Wanju, and at two locations in the city of Seoul. The three prize winners from each district competed in Seoul on May 30th, 2001. The Grand Prize winner was Hyun-Min Lee, a fifth grade student, from the Taegu Sahmyook Primary School. Two first prizes were given to Chang-Min Rang and Sung-Min Ko, 5th and 4th grade students from the Taegang Sahmyook Primary School.

The Korean Government subsidized the Speech Contest with 10 million Korean won (about \$10,000 US) this year, which is an indication of their concern for their people and their willingness to be involved in Health Education and Preventive Medicine.

In the 1970's and 80's many schools and churches had held Anti-Smoking and Drinking Speech Contests throughout the cities and towns of Korea, even though the pressures of Business and Industrialization have been more awake while Temperance Work mostly slept. Even though the 1st National No-Smoking Speech Contest originated with and was started by the Korean Headquarters of the International Temperance Association in 2000, the 2nd National Contest was sponsored by the Korean Department of Health and Welfare through the Korean Association of Smoking and Health.

No-Smoking speech Contests provide a wonderful incentive and opportunity for primary school students to think about and take an interest in Temperance work. Seoul has one of the world's highest women smoker's rate, so the more children are involved in the Anti-Smoking Movement, the more positive will be the results in Korean society. Lives will be saved, lives will be prolonged and the quality of Korean life may be improved.

Thousands of primary students will become candidates for the Grand Prize Scholarship money, thus assisting their families and Korean society at the same time. 21st Century



Grand Prize Winner, Hyun-Min Lee

Korean Temperance Work can be given a "New Start" by the involvement and efforts of the younger generation. They can become the X-cited generation.

Michael E Welch, Vice Committee Chairman of International and Government Relation of Korean Headquarters of International Temperance Association.

Student Literature Evangelism Seminar *conducted in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan*

The Publishing Ministries are not easy now in the Northern Asia-Pacific Division. In fact, the total sale and the number of working hours by the literature evangelists have decreased year by year. The student literature evangelism is not an exception. Our earnest desire and prayer are to change the current declining trend of literature evangelism.



A student canvassing on a street in Hong Kong

Consulting with the publishing leaders of the Chinese Union Mission (CHUM), Japan Union Conference (JUC), and Korean Union Conference (KUC), I began to strengthen the student literature evangelism program at the Adventist university and colleges in the division territories. Before the summer vacation, fortunately I was able to have appointments with the Taiwan Adventist College (TAC), Hong Kong Adventist College (HAC) and Japan Missionary College (JMC) for conducting a student literature evangelism seminar.

First of all, I visited Taiwan and worked with Hanson Cho, publishing director of the CHUM as well as manager and chief editor of the Publishing House; and James Wang, assistant publishing director. After holding a seminar for the regular literature evangelists on June 11, 2001 in Taipei, we moved to Taichung the next day and conducted a seminar for the students of the TAC. There were about 80 college students participating in the seminar. It is reported that three students are doing the holy task now. I hope that more students will engage in literature evangelism next summer.

Secondly, I flew to Hong Kong and was able to work with Howard Fung and Choke Woh Lee, president and publishing director of the Hong Kong - Macao Conference, respectively on June 14 - 16. It was already summer vacation for the students in Hong Kong. Therefore, some academy and college students began literature evangelism. As I conducted a seminar for them, there were ten students of the HAC. Another 10 academy students joined a morning devotion presented by me. I was very impressed by their willingness and enthusiasm to learn the fundamental instructions of literature evangelism based on the book of Ellen G. White, *Colporteur Ministry*. I was amazed to see that they were doing literature evangelism on streets. They are catching some people who are walking on the busy streets. In a short time, they are explaining who they are and what they are doing. Choke Woh Lee wrote me that they sold more than HK\$40,000 (about US\$5,128) in two weeks. Later I was informed that the number of student literature evangelists increased to 32. The academy students will work for 8 weeks and college students for 13 weeks.

Finally, I visited the Japan Missionary College and conducted a seminar for the students with Yoshikatsu Nakamura and Yoshio Ikeda, director and associate of the JUC publishing department, respectively on June 23 - 24. Three students have already decided to engage in literature evangelism during the summer vacation. However, after the promotion of literature ministries through the Sabbath church service, another three joined in the seminar. We were very happy to see more students responding to the program.

In Korea the faculty of Korean Sahmyook University has helped mainly theology students to participate in literature evangelism during the summer vacation. It is reported that 24 students are participating in the program for this summer. I expect that the number of student literature evangelists will increase to 40 next year, because there were over 40 students in 1998 and 1999.

Let us pray for the student literature evangelists as well as regular ones who are working for the Lord in spite of the hottest season.

Tadaomi Shinmyo, Comm./PARL/Pub./AGCN/SOP Director

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