

Northern Asia-Pacific Division



NEWS & VIEWS

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Religious Freedom *one of the issues in the new millennium*

As we enter a new year as well as a new century and millennium, we cannot help but think, "How long will this sinful human history continue?" In the past century and millennium, history has witnessed countless wars on the earth. Furthermore, it can be said that most of the wars were associated with religious reasons: many wars have taken place because of religious intolerance. If we wish to have peace in the world, therefore, we have to have religious tolerance which allows for religious freedom.

We are looking forward to seeing our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will come soon to take us to the eternal kingdom of God. Before that, however, we are told by Him, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) Yes, the end will come after the gospel has been preached in all the world, but we cannot preach without religious freedom.

There is conflict between Islamic militants and Christians in Indonesia. Noldy Sakul, an Adventist Church leader in east Indonesia, reports that since the violence started on January 19, 1999, in Batu Merah, Ambon, four Adventist churches have been burned to the ground, and two have been damaged by rioters. He says that at least 125 houses belonging to church members have been burned or destroyed, and more than 350 Adventists have left their villages to escape the violence.

A Seventh-day Adventist Church building in Abuja, Nigeria's federal capital, was ordered bulldozed by local government officials on October 12, 2000. Church leaders were told that the building was destroyed because county authorities "did not want any churches in that area." Moreover, Nigeria has been torn by ongoing tension between the Muslim majority and Christians.

Seventh-day Adventist Pastor Pavel Fedotov was arrested on October 21, 2000 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan during church services and detained for three days for holding "illegal religious meetings." Although ostensibly protecting religious freedom, Turkmenistan's laws, in practice, prevent registration of all but the two dominant religious groups: only the Russian Orthodox Church and Sunni Muslims have legal status.

A bomb destroyed two buildings annexed to the Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas and blew out windows in the Sunday school and baptistry. Another bomb blew windows out of the Seventh-day Adventist church. The explosions occurred minutes apart on Sunday, December 31, 2000. There are no reports of injuries. Although the country with a population which is mostly Muslims, is impoverished and the target of frequent acts of violence and terrorism, churches are not necessarily havens of safety.

Considering the above examples, it is very obvious that we cannot do normal or regular missionary work in any country unless there is religious liberty. Religious freedom is a gift from God. God created us free to make our own choices. He gave us freedom to say "yes" or "no" because He does not force us to love Him. Ellen G. White says, "The banner of truth and religious liberty which these Reformers held aloft has in this last conflict been committed to us. The responsibility for this great gift rests with those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of His word." (Testimonies for the Church, v.6, p.402)

I believe that religious freedom is surely one of the issues of the new year, the new century and millennium. The work of religious liberty is the prevention of wars, conflicts and other controversial issues. Moreover, working for religious freedom is ground preparation for evangelism.

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

**Seventh-day Adventists will
communicate hope by focusing on the
quality of life that is complete in Christ.**

Sings of the Times Magazine

- a centennial project in Japan

Signs of the Times magazine in the Japan Union conference (JUC) will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2001. The first issue of the magazine called "Owari No Fukuin" (Gospel for the Last Days) was published in July, 1899.

Feeling the need for a church paper, William C. Grainger, the first missionary to Japan, expressed his desire to publish one. He wrote:

"We feel the need of a paper to carry the truth to those whom we can not reach personally. The Salvation Army publish the War Cry in Japanese, which they sell for one cent a copy, and receive sufficient to cover the cost of printing and something over. If they can do that, why can not we do as well! We certainly can get out a paper that will contain more truth than any War Cry I have ever seen. If any of our brethren have five hundred dollars to give to start the publishing work in Japan, we will try very hard to keep it going from the sales of the paper. Printing is very much cheaper in this country than it is in America. We pray the Lord to open the way for us to begin publishing a paper by January 1, 1899, if it is his will, and I believe it is." [W. C. Grainger, "Japan," Review and Herald, LXXV (July 26, 1898), 8,9]

**William C.
Grainger
(1844-1899), the
First Adventist
Missionary to
Japan**



In order to get funds for a paper, Grainger produced health foods like peanut butter and crackers, and sold them to foreigners. Although he was about six feet tall, he had to walk with a stick because his left foot was rheumatic. He wore a frock coat all the year round. Besides the work of Shiba English Bible School, he labored from morning till night producing health foods.

Grainger established Owari No Fukuin Publishing Association in June, 1899 and published the first issue of the *Owari No Fukuin* on July 1, 1899.

The name of the paper, *Owari No Fukuin*, was suggested by Hide Kuniya when Grainger consulted him as to the name. The publisher of the paper was Teruhiko Okohira and the editor was Mokutaro Kawasaki. In order to send the paper to friends and notable men throughout the country, they got their addresses and names from a Christian Yearbook and a Who's Who. This eight-page monthly was issued regularly thereafter.

Currently, *Signs of the Times* is one of the oldest monthly magazines not only among religious but also secular publications in Japan. The magazine was obliged to stop printing for two years during World War II. Therefore, the year 2001 is chosen as the 100th year rather than 1999. The JUC has made two special plans in conjunction with centennial of the magazine.

The first plan is to print 10,000 additional copies of *Signs of the Times* for free distribution besides the regular 31,000 subscription copies mainly through literature evangelists. Since the magazine is designed to attract the general public, the JUC has decided to set up a fund to print it as an evangelistic tool. It is expected that many people will be found who will be interested in the Bible and the Savior, Jesus Christ, by the paper. In the meantime, the leaders of Publishing Department of the union, including Mr. Yoshio Ikeda who is the JUC Publishing Director, wish to see the subscription of the magazine increased through this project, because the subscription trend of the magazine is declining year by year. There was a time when the Japan Publishing House printed 55,000 copies of the magazine. Regarding the free distribution, literature evangelists will be responsible for 3,000 copies and church members, 7,000.

The second plan is to hold the Centennial Anniversary of the *Signs of the Times* on July 1, 2001, at the East Japan Conference headquarters in Tokyo. This anniversary will be the culmination of the All Japan Literature Evangelists Council starting on June 27. There will be many guests including Publishing Directors of the General Conference and Northern Asia-Pacific Division, former managers and editors of the Japan Publishing House, etc.

According to statistics from the year 2000, there are 18 full time and 129 part time literature evangelists in Japan. They worked for 76,214 hours and their total sales of books and magazines was 162,632,282 Japanese Yen. There were 31 baptisms through their first contacts. They distributed 129,856 pieces of free literature, offered 6,591 prayers, gave 1,653 Bible studies, recruited 388 Voice of Prophecy Bible School enrolments, and invited 1,488 people to church services.

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

New Officers & Departmental Directors

of the Chinese Union Mission

The Chinese Union Mission has conducted her regular session and annual council on December 11-14, 2000 in Hong Kong. Consequently, the following departmental directors were chosen, while the officers were elected at the Northern Asia-Pacific Division Annual Council last year in Korea.

President	Wu, Sze-Fai, James
Secretary	John Ash III
Treasurer	Cho, Fu-Sheng, Paul
Field Secretary (Global Mission)	Bob Folkenberg, Jr.
Assistant Treasurer	Wong, Kwok-Leung, Johnny
Assistant to President	Wong Yew Seng
Administrative Assistant	Lin, David
ADRA Managing Director	Scott Christiansen
Public Relations Coordinator (ADRA)	Phoon, Rachel
ASI Coordinator	Huang, Chin-Chen
Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries Director	Liu, Billy
Adventist Volunteer Service Coordinator	Bob Folkenberg Jr.
AMiCUS Director	Liu, Billy
Children Ministries Director	Chuah, Verna
Chinese Ministries Network Coordinator	Wong, Robert
Chinese Union Media Center Director	Jiao, Daniel
Church Paper Editor in Chief	We, Sze-Fai, James
Communication Director	John Ash
Education Director	Cho, Fu-Sheng, Paul
(Assistant)	Chuah, Daniel
Family Ministries Director	Chuah, Verna
Field Director (East)	Liang, Jack
Field Director (South)	Chan, Jason
Field Director (West)	Jiao, Samuel
Field Director (North)	Ng, David
Health Ministries Director	Wu, Sze-Fai, James
Legal/Corporate Affairs Dir.	Wong, KL, Johnny
Language School Coordinator	Bob Folkenberg Jr.
Managing Editor of Last Day Editor	Chow, Christie
Ministerial Association Secretary	Chuah Daniel
Shepherdess International Coordinator	Chuah Verna
PARL Director	John Ash
Publishing Coordinator	Wu, S F James
Retirement Committee Secretary	Wong, KL, Johnny
Sabbath School and Personal Ministry Director	Huang, Chin-Chen

Stewardship Director	Huang, Chin-Chen
Trust Services Director	Wong, KL, Johnny
Women's Ministries Director	Chuah, Verna
Youth Director	Liu, Billy

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

New Officers & Departmental Directors

of the Japan Union Conference

On January 21-23, 2001 the regular session of the Japan Union Conference was held at the East Japan Conference headquarters and the Palace Hotel in Tachikawa city, Tokyo. There were around 250 delegates from all over the country.

They participated in discussing agenda very actively and voted one by one. In the meantime, the nominating committee worked continuously during the general session. Consequently, the following leaders were reported to the session and approved.

President	Kenyu Kinjo (new)
Secretary	Katsumi Higashide (new)
Treasurer	Teruo Koromogawa
Evangelism Director	Masumi Shimada
Education Director	Yutaka Oshiro (new)
Institution Director	Teruo Koromogawa
Publishing Chief Editor	Tetsuya Yamamoto

Since there will be local conference/mission regular sessions in the beginning of February, 2001, other departmental leaders will be chosen at the JUC executive committee after the sessions.

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

**United by
the Word of God**

Coming Events...

- Language School Directors Meeting*
February 5-8, 2001 Taichung, Taiwan
- Children's Ministries Seminar*
February 9-11, 2001 Deer Mountain, Korea
- Youth Leaders Retreat & Strategic Planning*
February 13-17, 2001 Hong Kong
- Global Mission Advisory*
February 20-22, 2001 Maulek, Thailand
- Lay Leaders Public Evangelism Training Seminar*
February 23-25, 2001 Seoul, Korea
- Soul Winning Training Seminar*
March 7-April 27, 2001 Seoul, Korea
- Secretariat Council*
March 12-13, 2001 Ilsan, Korea
- CHUM Seminar for Committee/Board Members*
March 14-15, 2001 Hong Kong
- JUC Seminar for Committee/Board Members*
March 19-20, 2001 Yokohama, Japan
- GC Family Ministries Advisory*
- GC Trust Service Advisory*
- GC Sabbath School/ Personal Ministries Advisory*
- GC Publishing Advisory*
March 19-23, 2001 Silver Spring, USA
- KUC Seminar for Committee/Board Members*
March 21-23, 2001 Seoul, Korea
- International Youth Leadership Conference*
March 22-April 1, 2001 Brazil
- GC Ministerial Association Advisory*
March 25-31, 2001 Silver Spring, USA
- GC Women's Ministries Advisory*
- GC PARL Advisory*
- GC Health Ministries Advisory*
March 26-30, 2001 Silver Spring, USA
- GC Communication Advisory*
April 2-6, 2001 Silver Spring, USA
- GC CM/Shepherdness International Advisories*
April 2-6, 2001 Hagerstown, USA
- GC ACM Advisory*
April 2-6, 2001 USA
- GC Education Advisory*
April 2-6, 2001 Silver Spring, USA
- Trust Services Seminar for Ministers*
April 2-4, 2001 Taiwan
- ADRA/Asia Board Meeting*
April 4, 2001 Bangkok, Thailand
- NSD Trust Services Advisory*
April 5-6, 2001 Taiwan
- World Stewardship Summit*
April 6-10, 2001 Columbia, USA
- Educational Council*
April 7-9, 2001 Berrien Springs, USA

Northern Asia-Pacific Division Officers & Departmental Directors

President	Pyung Duk Chun
Secretary	Ng, Wai Chun (Stanley)
Treasurer	R. Martin Moores
Associate	Kwang Doo Kim
Assistant	Young Chin Kim

Communication, PAR L, Publishing
AGCN, SOP Tadaomi Shinmyo
Education, Language Schools
Masaji Uyeda
Family, Women's, Children's,
Shepherdess Mary Wong
Health Ministries, Ministerial Ass.
Global Mission
Jairyong Lee
International Health Food
R. Martin Moores
Corporate Affairs, Trust Service
Kwang Doo Kim
Sabbath School & Personal Min., ASI,
Stewardship Myung Kwan Hong
Youth, Adventist Chaplaincy
David Wong

NEWS & VIEWS

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