

Northern Asia-Pacific Division



NEWS & VIEWS

Volume 6, Number 59

After 50 Years - Taiwan Sabbath Exemption

After 50 years of Adventist youth facing the dilemma of taking government examinations on Sabbath, Taiwan authorities have provided a way around breaking God's fourth commandment. The first breakthrough was government registration of Taiwan Adventist Academy a year ago. Promoting greater educational flexibility and reform, the government has granted the academy the status of "experimental" high school. Never mind the "experimental" tag, the bottom line is full registration for three years. Religious activities are allowed. But the breakthrough didn't solve the problem of island-wide government exams scheduled on Sabbath.

This year 26 students decided to forgo a bright future by not taking the exams they were now qualified to take. Local authorities were moved by the students' determination but always answered, "No way." Until, that is, school administrators pressed their request to Taiwan's central government. A special hearing was called on January 23, 2002.



Paul Cho, Taiwan Adventist College Board Chairman

Thirty government officials were invited to listen to the beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. Taiwan Adventist College (TAC) board chairman, Dr. Paul Cho and TAC president Dr. Alice Magarang, accompanied by Elder Bob Folkenberg Jr., President of Taiwan Mission, were allowed to speak for about 15 minutes after which the floor was opened for questions. Many questions were asked about health principles and the Sabbath.

The suspense of not knowing the results of the hearing



Entrance Gate of Taiwan Adventist Academy and College

was short lived. The following day the Ministry of Education sent an official notice of Sabbath examination exemption. This exemption is permanent. Praise the Lord!

John Ash III, *Secretary/PARL & Communication Director of Chinese Union Mission*

Two New NSD Dept. Directors - for Youth and Women's Ministries

The NSD executive committee voted recently the following individuals as successors of David and Mary Wong who had been Youth and Women's Ministries Directors, respectively.

Mrs. Young Ja Nam was appointed as Director of the NSD Children's/Family/Women's Ministries Departments at the committee on January 10, 2002. She received B.A. from Sahmyook University and M.A. from Graduate School of Education from Ewha Womens University in Seoul, Korea. She has been president during March - June in 2000 and adviser during June 2000 - January 2002 for Adventist Women's Association of Korea.

Pastor Dong Hee Shin was appointed as Director of the NSD Youth and Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries Departments at the committee on February 8, 2002. He got B.A. from

Sahmyook University and 3 different degrees of M.A. as follows: Pastoral Theology from AIIAS, Public Health from the P.U.C. and Systematic Theology from AIIAS in the Philippines. He was one of the chaplains, director of campus ministries, and head pastor of Love Church at Sahmyook University since 1999.

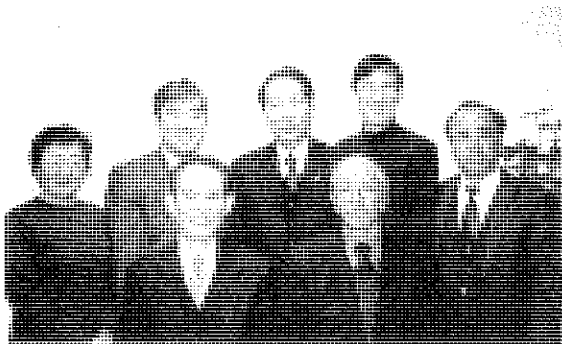
Editor

3 Rallies for Literature Evangelists

- current trend of LE in Japan

All local conferences/mission in the Japan Union Conference (JUC) recently conducted rallies for literature evangelists under the theme, "But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." (2 Timothy 4:5, NKJV)

Before the literature evangelist (LE) rallies, there was a leadership training seminar at the JUC Tachikawa office for the LE leaders in the union. Tadaomi Shinmyo, Publishing Director of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD), gave



The LE Leaders in Japan. (From left in first row) Tadaomi Shinmyo, Yoshikatsu Nakamura, (from left in second row) Kaeko Sudo, Yoshio Ikeda, Yoshimi Adachi, Yoji Kikuchi, and Chikara Shimoji.

a series of lectures about leadership and organization from January 21-23, 2002.

He also attended the union publishing annual committee at the JUC Yokohama office on January 24. This committee covered many areas and issues related with LE. The statistical report tells that there were altogether 273 LEs in 2001 and

among them were 5 credential LEs (over 1,680 working hours), 8 licensed (over 1,440), 1 full time (over 1,440), 138 part timers (over 200), and lay (under 200) 121.



The participants of the Okinawa Mission Literature Evangelist Rally

Generally speaking, the current trend of LE in the JUC is declining year by year in the past years. For example, working hours dropped from 108,295 in 1996 to 71,326 in 2001. Total sales from 230,781,019 Japanese yen (about US\$ 1,775,238) to 137,952,694 yen (\$1,061,174). The number of subscriptions of "Signs of the Times" magazine 26,097 to 16,535. Thus, the LE leaders have deep concern and sense of crisis about LE in the future. The main reason for the decline is the decreasing number of credential and licensed LEs. Current experienced LEs are aging and retiring from their front line work.

In such a situation, the East Japan Conference LE Rally was conducted at the Tachikawa Church in Tokyo on January 26 and 27 with an attendance of 45 people. NSD Publishing Director presented a Bible study about Revelation two times and delivered a sermon on the Sabbath day (attendance of 125) under the title of "No Higher Work than This." Mrs. Nobuko Kitabayashi, JUC Women's Ministries Director, spoke of "Women and LE." Masaki Shoji, East Japan Conference President, served as speaker for morning devotion. Yoshikatsu Nakamura, JUC Publishing Director; Yoshio Ikeda, East Japan Conference Publishing Director; Tetsuya Yamamoto, Japan Publishing House Editor; and Masao Fukushima, Adventist Book Center Manager, also played their important roles during the rally. Besides these presentations, LEs participated actively in sharing their LE experiences.

Under the direction of Chikara Shimoji, Okinawa Mission Publishing Director, 18 people attended the Okinawa Mission LE Rally at the Koza Church in Okinawa on January 29 and 30. The contents of the rally program were almost similar to the previous one. Two of the differences were not to have the Sabbath program and the lecture, "Women and LE." Hidenori Kojima, Okinawa Mission President, gave morning devotional messages two times and Shuichi Sekiya, Koza Church Pastor, spoke on prayer.

Finally, the West Japan Conference LE Rally was held at the Kyoto Kosei Nenkin Retreat Center in Kyoto from February 1-3. Yoshimi Adachi, Publishing Director of the conference, prepared the meeting for 45 participants. Kazuo Morita, Kyoto Church Pastor, preached at the sundown worship on Saturday. Yujiro Sagawa, President of the conference, concluded the rally with his message of dedication.

One of the conference LE leaders confessed, "This rally was not an ordinary one. The programs were so rich and spiritual. The LEs were very much encouraged." Another leader wrote, "I have got several good responses from LEs about their positive plans for literature evangelism in 2002." These comments are outcome of clear understanding of the current critical trend of LEs in Japan.

Tadaomi Shinmyo, *Communication/PARL/Publishing/ATN/SOP Director*

Okinawa Revival at Campmeeting in Japan

On February 15, 2002, the Zanpamisaki Royal Hotel was bustling with Seventh-day Adventists. The Okinawa Mission holds a campmeeting once every three years, and this year they had planned to have the meetings at this beautiful resort. The general theme of the campmeeting was "Prepare to Meet Him."

The weather in Okinawa could not have been any better. The beautiful trees and flowers, along with the blue sky and the widely spread ocean, helped the people sense a peaceful, heavenly atmosphere. The participants, who were from 18 churches in Okinawa, were excited about reuniting with their fellow brethren, who were faithfully serving the church of God in their respective places.

Hidenori Kojima, president of Okinawa Mission, welcomed the participants with Christian love. He expressed gratitude to the Lord for His goodness upon the people of God during the half century of Adventist church history in Okinawa Mission.

On Sabbath morning about 800 people packed the auditorium for the worship service. The Okinawa Junior High School choir presented inspiring music. Songs, prayers, testimonies, and a Bible study brought the people together in the Word of God. It was clearly seen in their faces the joy and happiness they felt in worshipping together on God's holy Sabbath day.

Jairyong Lee, ministerial secretary of the Northern Asia-

Pacific Division, had been asked to speak at the campmeeting. Through a series of four sermons, and with the help of translator Yoshikazu Watanabe, he appealed to the audience to be faithful to the Lord until the end, until the day of His coming. His message compared God's people today to the people of Israel who had wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Just as the people of Israel had finally arrived at the border of Canaan, God's people today are near the heavenly land of Canaan.

Before they could enter the promised land, however, the people of Israel faced the Jordan River, which was flooded because of the snow melting in the mountains. It was impossible to cross the river at the usual fording places using ordinary methods. There was a need for a miracle from God. When the priests carrying the ark of the covenant on their shoulders moved forward trusting God, the people of Israel followed after them. It was a great movement of faith. God performed a miracle for His people. He parted the Jordan River, and the people of Israel entered the promised land.

As God's people in these last days, we too encounter many big and small Jordan Rivers that prevent us from entering the Heavenly Canaan. We need miracles from God in order to live good Christian lives and to accomplish the gospel commission. God will surely perform miracles for His people when we move forward by faith. When we see the signs of the times being fulfilled in the world, we can be sure that Jesus is coming soon. Let us prepare to meet Him who will soon appear in the clouds of heaven.



Arround 800 attended at the Sabbath programs on February 16, 2002 in Okinawa, Japan.

After the three-day weekend campmeeting, the participants returned to their respective homes and churches with a renewed hope of the soon return of Jesus Christ. It was a newly revived step of faith to meet the Lord.

Jairyong Lee, *Ministerial/Stewardship/GM Director*

Public Evangelist Group Retreat - 50 lay groups in Korea

The 7th Nationwide Public Evangelist Group Retreat has been held from February 14 (Thu.) - 17 (Sun.) at "Naksan Preya Condominium" in Yangyang, Korea. It was organized by the Personal Ministries Department of the Korean Union Conference (KUC) and supported by Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries (ASI).

In spite of cold weather, this retreat beginning at the next day of the Lunar New Year gathered KUC officers including KUC and 5 local conference personal ministries directors, along with the ASI officers and members of each conference Public Evangelist Group. The meeting bringing about 600 participants, more than 400 expected number, was filled with the excitement of Year 2002 evangelism.

The purpose of the retreat was to give practical help to the public evangelists who serve at their local areas through learning biblical truths and sharing evangelism experiences including testimonies so that they could get the renewal of evangelistic mission and spiritual restoration to spread truth as evangelistic workers. Furthermore, the evangelist group members who are scattered to do activities could have time to unite and strengthen their will through this meeting.

Under the theme, "Truth will make you free," the invited local conference personal ministries directors lectured on various religious subjects with an intensive analysis inspiring the mission of remnant church. Pastor Park, Nak Yong spoke about "Shamanism," followed by Choi, Byung Nam, "Protestantism," Bae, Hei Joo, "Catholic," Shon, Sun Keun, "Buddhism," and Joo, Young Jong, "Jehovah Witness."

On the Sabbath worship during the meeting, Shin, Kei Hoon, KUC president, said, "Thank God for the evangelist groups' effort guiding many souls into the Lord in spite of difficult situations," with an appreciation to the groups. "Today we will be the remnant delivering the truth, as we can remember the history of God's works through a small number of people instead of a large number," he added.

Among all the programs, the special testimony time got into the spotlight that they could share deeply being touched and joyful time together. One of the evangelist group members said, "we could experience oneness and the power of God by His Word through this event."

The Nationwide Laymen Public Evangelist Groups have grown showing an eye-opening progress since Immanuel Mission Group was founded belonging to the KUC in July, 1984. In 1995 there were 2 groups at the Choongchung (Middle West) Korean Conference, and 6 at the West Central Korean Conference. Now in February, 2002, we have 52, and 34 of them have been in full of activities. Specially, Immanuel Mission Group has conducted evangelistic meetings 200 times since it was established, and Caleb Mission Group, 32, Joshua Mission Group, 37, Choongchung Public Evangelist Group, 20, and Adventist Evangelist Group, 11. Last year all the groups had held a total of 62 times bearing the fruitful results of evangelism.

Lee, Hark Bong, *SS/PM Director of Korean Union Conference*

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