

THE CHURCH IN CHINA
AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN STRATEGY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chinese Christians were shut off from the Church outside China for over 30 years. Ignorance of what was happening to believers inside China meant that Christians in other countries could neither share in the suffering of their brothers and sisters nor learn from their experiences. Now that the door has been opened for limited communication, members of the global church are asking what the background is and what is going on in the Chinese Church in order to develop a meaningful fellowship with Chinese Christians. This thesis will not only answer these kinds of questions, but further discussion will be given on such topics as what is happening to the Church in China, how Christians outside of China can help, and what the strategy should be for reaching China with the Gospel.

There is excitement in evangelical circles relating to the rapid developments in China. Plans are being prayerfully formulated in the "board rooms" of some mission societies. Others, seeing the enormous promotional value of a China-related program, are rushing to get on the "bandwagon." As a mainland Chinese and a Christian of the house church, the

writer would like to contribute his knowledge about the Church in China and what he considers to be workable strategies for a Chinese ministry.

Christians outside of China have heard about Christians in China and have been praying for them for years. Now that the door is open, Christians are eager to help the Chinese. But an action without caution might bring trouble to Chinese Christians in these uncertain days of continued control and change of religious practices. To be a Christian in China today is a very serious thing, a matter affecting all of life. Chinese Christians for the sake of their faith and love of Jesus Christ have gone through problems that can hardly be imagined. Also, the actions of American and other foreign Christians toward the Chinese Church will reflect on the whole Christian scene in the eyes of the government. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the Church in China and its strategies for Chinese ministry.

The Church outside of China is generally quite different from the Church inside of China. A great gap has developed between the two. The Church in China has been forced to develop along specific lines which in most instances are quite different from that which is seen in the Church outside of China. Therefore, in order to help the Church in China, emphasis should be placed on understanding the Chinese mind under the influence of Communism since 1949 as well as the Chinese Church in its present situation, culture, and opportunity. These are the keys which will help open the

door to an effective Chinese ministry.

Christians should also be aware of the potential for disaster. Some of the information coming into America concerning the programs that are currently being rushed for the evangelization of China are formulas for disaster. The writer can see the mistakes of the past, all without exception, being repeated in some of these plans. They brought disaster in the past and will probably lead to the same end again. There are two factors in this disaster. One is the strong anti-Communist bias of many evangelical Christians who seem to be burdened for the eternal souls of the Chinese people. The second relates to promotional mistakes which are desired for their promotional impact rather than for their true value to help the Chinese people.

Christians must carefully weigh every move they make now and in the future. The actions and reactions made today will play a significant role in China's future. At present, the future of Chinese evangelism is a blank slate. Christians should not be guilty of staining that slate because of carelessness or a lack of prayerful planning.

God's strategies are the solution for avoiding disaster. Christians have a tremendous advantage in considering strategies. Because they have the Word of God, the only source of values and absolutes, they can appropriately develop strategies. God has ordained the means as well as those who will be saved. Christians can rest in the confidence that God's plans will be done.

CHAPTER II

STRATEGIC PAST AND PRESENT: COMMUNIST CHINA

The coming to power of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949 was the greatest revolution in world history. The events of the revolution are not well known in the West, and even less understood. A controlled press, the lack of outside observers, the emotional bias of all the participants made objective reporting almost impossible.

In the view of Mao Zedong,

. . . a revolution is not a dinner party, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gently, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another (1).

The Government

The leading political force in China, as stipulated by the 1978 constitution, is the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Overall policy decisions in China -- political, economic, and social -- are made by this party and its leadership. China's state government functions mainly to coordinate the national

1. Vera Simone, China in Revolution: History, Documents and Analysis (Greenwich, CN: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1968), p.174.

economy and preside over foreign affairs. In this sense, government is subordinate to the Party. Mao Zedong, chairman of the Party from 1935 until his death in 1976, was, by virtue of that position, the pre-eminent leader of the People's Republic of China (PRC). (See Appendix B for the history of The National Congresses of the Communist Party of China.) Mao was succeeded by Hua Guofeng in October, 1976.

The 1978 Constitution declares that "the State council is the central people's government and . . . the highest organ of state administration." It is headed by a premier and several vice-premiers. The premier is nominated by the Communist Party and approved by the National People's Congress, as are vice-premiers, ministers, and vice-minister. The State Council coordinates the work of the ministries, offices, commissions, and special agencies, and draws up national economic plans and the national budget in accordance with Party priorities and strategies.

The highest organ of legislative power in China is the National People's Congress (NPC). The Constitution stipulates, however, that the NPC is to function under the direction of the Chinese Communist Party. Deputies are elected by provinces and autonomous regions, cities under central government rule, the armed forces, and Chinese residents abroad. Specific NPC functions are to amend the constitution, pass laws, and examine and approve the state budget and final accounts.

The Standing Committee is elected by the NPC as its permanent working organ. As such, the Standing Committee is empowered to convene NPC plenary sessions, interpret laws, enact decrees, appoint ambassadors, receive foreign ambassadors, and ratify treaties with foreign governments. The Chairman of the Standing Committee, by right of the 1978 Constitution, can receive foreign envoys, and, with the approval of the NPC or full Standing Committee, promulgate laws and ratify treaties.

The president of the Supreme People's Court is the only appointment not made on the direct initiative of the Party; that responsibility belongs to the NPC. Until the passage of China's first national legal code in June, 1979, the Court's function on the national level was negligible because of the local orientation of the Chinese legal system.

The government hierarchical structure is as follows:

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Premier
↓
State Council (Ministries and Departments)
↓
National People's Congress
↓
Standing Committee of the NPC

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The People's Liberation Army (PLA) cannot be viewed as the counterpart of armies in other countries. It is the army of the Party. The Chairman of the CCP is the commander-in-chief of the army. During the Cultural Revolution, the PLA was the only organization that continued to hold up the nation when the other parts of the government collapsed.

The CCP had nearly 40 million members in the early 1980's. In 1982, the 12th congress of the CCP named Hu Yaobang the new Party chairman. Hu replaced Hua Guofeng (Hu was replaced by Zhao Ziyang in early 1987.) A new central advisory committee headed by Deng Xiaoping was established. Deng is the head of the military and the most powerful leader in China today (2).

China's People

China's official census of 1982 listed a total mainland population of 1,031,882,511, making China the home of nearly one out of every four persons in the world. China's urban population has remained relatively stable for the past three decades, accounting for about 20% of the total population in 1986.

China is a multinational country comprising 55 major ethnic groups or nationalities. Ethnic Chinese, also known as the Han people, make up about 93% of the total population, with the remaining 67 million people divided among 55 groups referred to in China as "minority nationalities." (3)

Urban Lifestyles: Urban lifestyles are greatly diverse

2. Most of the information in this section is taken from Lucian Pye, The Dynamics of Chinese Politics (Cambridge, Mass.: Gunn & Hain, Publishers, Inc., 1981); Peter Cheng, China (Oxford, England: Clio Press, 1983); and China, A General Survey (Beijing, China: Foreign Languages Press, 1981).

3. Statistics in these two paragraphs are taken from F. Bunge and F. S. Shinn, eds., China, A Country Study (Washington, D.C.: The American University, 1985), and People's Daily, March 24, 1987.

across the nation. When northerners or southerners are transferred to work in other parts of the country, they often complain about the difficulty of adjusting to the new environment -- climate, local dialects, lifestyle, and cuisine. With the exception of some newly erected high-rise apartment building in the major cities, architecture seems to be dominated by a mixture of traditional one-story "pingfang" (literally, "flat-houses") with their three walled-in wings facing into a courtyard, and four or five story apartment complexes. The latter provide indoor amenities such as toilets, running water, and gas stoves, with many facilities shared among two or more families.

Housing is in relatively short supply in most of China's cities. A typical urban residence for a family of four consists of only one or two rooms. Families in the newer apartment buildings have their own small kitchens and bathrooms.

Work schedules for virtually everyone -- employees of the factories, service sectors, white collar jobs, and professionals -- consist of eight-hour days and six-day weeks. Most factory workers take Sunday off but the retail sector has instituted a system of staggered rest days. Virtually everyone takes a nap during the daily two-to-three hour lunch break.

On Sundays, the day off for most city workers, the parks fill up with families and couples out relaxing together. Leisure time is also spent attending operatic, theatrical,

musical, and dance performances, and watching television and films. On summer evenings, neighborhood residents love to mingle on the sidewalks in front of their homes to play cards or Chinese "chess" and to gossip.

Salaries, averaging 80 yuan (about \$22 U.S.) per month in the cities and perhaps half that much in the countryside (4), appear appallingly meager. However, the cost of living in China is commensurately low: the average rent, including utilities, is 5-10 yuan per month, and clothing and furnishings are reasonably priced. About half of an urban household's monthly income, however, must be spent on food. Most workers use their surplus cash to buy expensive "luxuries" (bicycles, watches, radios, televisions, cassette recorders, washing machines, refrigerators, motorcycles), or deposit it in saving accounts (which earn approximately 3% interest) (5). The provision of free or extremely low-cost health care, pensions, and other social services have been gradually expanded in post-1949 China, and such benefits now extend to most of the population.

China's goal is to rapidly modernize industry in the coming years. At present, much of the machinery used is still simple by Western standards, hand work is still widespread, and the pace of work is fairly relaxed. China's system of socialism is predicated on the assurance of gainful

4. See The Economist, April 16, 1983.

employment to virtually everyone who seeks to work. In the 1980's especially, much attention has been paid to an unintended by-product of this system -- the "iron rice bowl" (6) -- a reference to the high degree of job security that has led in some instances to poor work habits, absenteeism, and even indigence on the part of workers whose salaries were in no way tied to performance. A variety of remedies to this problem are now being tried, many utilizing some form of material incentive to spur productivity. Critics have hastened to brand such policies as a drift toward capitalism. Officials have countered that the principle "to each according to his work" is wholly consistent with the fundamentals of Marxism (7).

Rural Lifestyles: The lifestyle of the typical Chinese peasant and the technology on which it is based has improved significantly during the last three decades. Yet, life in China's countryside is still arduous by any standard. In the planting and harvesting seasons, the rural population labor from dawn to dusk at backbreaking field work, while during the slack season the days are spent in construction and repair work, as well as some light-industrial activities.

Rural housing is spacious compared to city dwellings. Homes are usually family-owned. The simple furnishings

5. Wenhui Bao, (Chinese newspaper), July 4, 1984.

6. China Daily, March 7, 1984.

7. China Daily, March 20, 1984.

consist of a bed or two, a dresser -- often made at home -- perhaps a sewing machine, and a radio. Cooking and toilet facilities are located outside of the house.

Families today are encouraged to grow their own vegetables and to raise animals both for their own consumption and for sale at rural fairs as a means of earning supplemental income. The farming of small private plots by individual household was being actively encouraged in the mid-1980's as a means of both raising overall productivity as well as augmenting peasants' incomes. Most agricultural production, however, is still carried out on collectively-owned fields and income is distributed according to individual output. A common fund finances social services such as medical care, pensions, and education (8).

By 1984, a new "individual responsibility" policy was making profound in road throughout the countryside. The principle of centrally planned collectivism, on which the communes had been founded, seemed to be giving way to a variety of "mixed" local economies where units as small as a family could allocate a significant amount of work time to self-initiated and self-managed projects (9).

Cultural life is made available even in remote rural areas today through mobile film showings and touring

8. China Official Annual Report 1984-1985 (Hong Kong: Kingsway Publications Ltd., 1985), p.534.

9. Ibid.

theatrical, operatic, and ballet troupes. The government encourages the development of grassroot folk arts.

The government realizes that the livelihood of China's 800 million peasants must substantially improve if the country is to achieve its goal of modernization. It must reorder the nation's development priorities, and shift its emphasis toward raising the technological and the income level of farmers in China. Agricultural taxes were reduced, and the state's purchasing price for grain and other edibles was increased by an average of 22% (10).

Similar measures and reforms, enacted through the early 1980's, took increasing account of the need to improve living standards and economic stability in the countryside. Perhaps for the first time in Chinese history the whole of the Chinese countryside is being mobilized primarily for its own betterment.

Education

Major changes have occurred in China's educational system since 1949. During the 1950's and early 1960's the education policy was directed toward producing colleges and technically qualified students. Students were required to spend half of their school hours on academic subjects and the other half learning practical skills in factories and in agricultural fields.

10. Ibid.

In 1966, the Cultural Revolution redirected educational policies. Revolutionary committees were formed to run the schools, and for the next 11 years the emphasis was on political indoctrination in revolutionary ideology. Under the "open door" policy, workers, peasants, and soldiers were invited to lecture in universities, and university students were required to work for specified periods on farms and in factories. The traditional university entrance examinations were abolished, and students were selected on the basis of work performances and Party loyalty.

In 1977, the educational policies of the Cultural Revolution were abandoned. Bright secondary school students were permitted to go directly to universities, for which entrance examinations were reintroduced, and efforts were under way to extend the years of schooling to 10 in urban areas and 9 in rural areas, consisting of 5 years in elementary levels and 4 to 5 in secondary school. Approximately 60% of the children between the ages of five and nineteen are in school, and about 74% of the population are literate (11).

Since 1977, entrance examinations have been the primary factor in determining admission to college and technical schools. These examinations are rigorous and only about 5% of each year's senior middle school graduates are accepted

11. Brian Hook, ed., The Cambridge Encyclopedia of China. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

for further formal education (12).

College programs, which were cut from four years to three during the Cultural Revolution, have been re-extended to four years. Medical schools and institutes of specialized study have reinstated five or even six year programs. Until 1979 most colleges and universities had full programs of required courses in the third and fourth years and offered some elective courses to spur student interest (approximately 30% of college courses are now electives).

Graduate education, suspended in 1965, was reintroduced in 1978. Since then, 40,000 students have been admitted to graduate programs. Graduate students are affiliated with institutions in one of three ways. They may be admitted to a university department, to the Graduate Academy or research institutes of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, or to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (13).

Graduate school courses, usually led by senior scholars, focus almost exclusively on the students' special fields and foreign languages. Politics is a minor and altogether a secondary part of the curriculum, and manual labor has virtually been abolished. As part of China's long-term plan

12. Robert D. Barendsen, ed., The 1978 College Entrance Examination in the People's Republic of China. (Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1979). p.28.

13. The information in these two paragraphs are taken from China, A General Survey, and John Hawkins, Education and Social Change in the People's Republic of China (New York: Praeger, 1982).

to produce highly trained specialists, Chinese universities, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and the Ministry of Education have sent approximately 45,000 graduate students and researchers, largely in the natural sciences, to the United States, Japan, and Western Europe since 1979 (14). There are also a great number of self-sponsored students going overseas to study. For many such students it is their first opportunity to come in contact with a thoughtful presentation of the Christian faith. Already many have returned to China with a positive attitude toward Christianity because of friends they have made during their overseas stay. Some have entered into a living faith in Christ. Because of their position in society it is very hard for them to make a public Christian confession, and thus many remain secret believers. (Also see Appendix C for more detail about education in China.)

The Communist View of Religion

Karl Marx and his followers analyzed religion as a hangover from feudal and bourgeois culture, a means by which the ruling class controls and exploits the masses. Religion became a tool of exploitation as expressed in Marx's famous dictum: "Religion is the opiate of the people."

14. People's Daily, December 10, 1986.

The Chinese Communist Party viewed religion as a carry-over from the exploitation of the old feudal society in which landlords oppressed peasants, and in which the newly rising capitalist exploited a helpless working class. The superstitions of Chinese religions are simply one of the few means by which the poor, ignorant masses of China hoped to influence their destiny. Religion was viewed as part of that imperialism by which foreign capitalists and their diplomatic and missionary allies exploited China.

In China, Marx's views have always been somewhat tempered by those of Mao Zedong who grew up under a strong Confucian emphasis on education and reason. In 1927 Mao wrote:

The idols were set up by the peasants, and in time they will pull down the idols with their own hands; there is no need for anybody else to throw away prematurely the idols for them. The agitational line of the Communist Party in such matters should be: "Draw the bow full without letting go the arrow, and be on the alert (15)."

In 1957 when Mao and the Communist Party had taken power, Mao wrote:

We cannot abolish religion by administrative orders; nor can we force people not to believe in it. We cannot compel people to give up idealism, any more than we can force them to

15. Mao Zedong, Report of an Investigation into the Peasant Movement in Hunan [made in 1927] (Beijing, China: Foreign Languages Press, 1953), p.45, as quoted in Richard C. Bush, Jr., Religion in Communist China (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1976), p.30.

believe in Marxism. In settling matters of an ideological nature or controversial issues among the people, we can only use democratic method, methods of discussion, of criticism, or persuasion and education, not coercive, high-handed methods (16).

China's latest Constitution (1982) states: "Citizens shall enjoy freedom to believe in religion and freedom not to believe in religion (17)."

This noninterference with religion was the official doctrine. Actual practice, however, was quite different. This varied from place to place, depending on the local party functionary and the particular rightist or leftist line that was being followed at the time.

Religious freedom in China actually is something that is permitted within the walls of a mosque, temple, or church, or something that takes place within the privacy of one's home. This freedom does not include the right of religious ceremony or display in public places.

Religion

China developed a unique synthesis of her three religions in the past centuries and did not require the exclusive allegiance of its adherents. But it would be correct to refer to China as having two religions and one system of ethics because Confucianism is not usually

16. Mao Zedong, On the Correct Handling of Contradiction Among the People (Beijing, China: People Press, 1958), p.9.

17. China, Constitution Art. 46 (1982).

considered a religion.

Confucius was China's best known philosopher, born in the Zhou dynasty in 551 B.C. (18). He was not a religious teacher or prophet, nor did he speak of a personal God, only of a moral force in the universe. His ideas formed the moral code of China's upper classes right into the twentieth century and were feudal in their established ceremonies with outright class distinctions. His teaching centered around the family and its harmony as the hub of society, the state as its extension and all other relationships functioning in a status quo of orderliness. It changed centuries of Chinese people to accept their unchangeable lot in life. Confucius was not worshiped as a deity but his teachings and writing formed China's social and political structure (19).

Tacism was a withdrawal reaction against the hard realities of this world and a protest against war, which was a struggle for power, status, and wealth. It was a thinker's philosophy. The individual was only important as a part of the whole great pattern of nature which was Tao, literally "The Way," in a metaphysical sense. Founded by Lao-Zi, who may have been a myth himself, it is a philosophy of passivism and lack of desire (20).

18. Robert G. Orr, Religion in China (New York: Friendship Press, 1980), p.86.

19. Orr, Religion in China, pp.88-90.

20. China, A General Survey, pp.235-6.

Buddhism spread from India in many directions and was readily accepted in China also as an escape religion. It perceives "reality" as illusory, including the idea of self. If a person becomes "enlightened" and realizes that self is only an illusion which leads to misery and suffering in this world, he is extinguished at death, like a candle flame going out, and in that sense enters Nirvana, which is non-existence, thought to be the ideal final state. If he is not enlightened, he is reborn (reincarnated) and his life-flame is transferred to another new candle and continues the illusion of existing. Buddhism held a strong appeal to Chinese, especially as it was willing to take on certain aspects of Confucianism and Taoism and could be embraced without giving up either (21).

Ancestor worship pre-dated these and was incorporated into all three. Ancestors were thought to be alive and influencing the affairs of men, and so had to be placated.

Islam, another foreign religion, filtered in with the barbarians from the North and West, but its followers were mostly ethnically non-Chinese. Islam is considered a threat now because of its revival and power over millions throughout the world.

Christianity was introduced to China as early as the

21. Tim Brook, "Traveling to the Trigram Mountains: Buddhism After the Gang of Four," Contemporary China (Winter, 1978): 71-2.

seventh century. First the Nestorians came in A.D. 635 and flourished under the Tang Dynasty. But by the end of that dynasty (A.D. 900), virtually all traces of Nestorian Christianity had disappeared except for one stone monument in Xian. The Franciscans had their turn in the thirteenth century under the Mongol (Yuan) Dynasty. But at the end of the Mongol era all traces of Christianity had disappeared. Matteo Ricci and the Jesuits arrived at the Mongol court in 1601. They taught astronomy and mathematics and brought a new faith which they called "the religion of the Heavenly Lord." Robert Morrison, the first Protestant Missionary, arrived from England in 1807. In its heyday China was the largest "mission field" in the world. In 1926, 8,000 Protestant missionaries were serving in China (22).

(22.) G. Thompson Brown, Christianity in the People's Republic of China (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1983), p.15-40.

CHAPTER III

GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY REGARDING THE CHURCH: THE TSPM

When the People's Republic of China (PRC) came to power in 1949, it faced a Christian movement that had a considerable following. Although the baptized membership was but a tiny fraction of the population as a whole, its influence was all out of proportion to its size.

In 1949 there were approximately 700,000 Protestants of all denominations in China. Chinese churches had relationships with more than one hundred foreign mission boards, societies, orders, and international councils. There were about 6,000 foreign missionaries serving in China. A century of Protestant missionary effort had created thousands of primary schools, some 200 middle schools, 13 major colleges and universities, 500 hospitals, many clinics, as well as other institutions such as publishing houses. The colleges and universities alone had graduated over 50,000 students by 1949 (23). The contribution of these institutions should not be underestimated.

With the entrance of Chinese troops into the Korean

23. The information in this paragraph is taken from Kenneth G. Grubb, ed., World Christian Handbook (London: World Dominion Press, 1952), p.141.

conflict during 1950, all possibility of an accommodation ended. The United States froze Chinese assets in America in December, 1950. China retaliated. The Administrative Council of the PRC demanded that all Christian churches in China and related hospitals and schools break relations with American mission boards. One by one Protestant universities and colleges were taken over by the government. Finally, all of the missionaries had to leave China by the end of 1952.

There were two choices left for the Chinese Christian leaders: first, to go underground; or, second, to work out some accommodation with the new rulers of China. Except for some indigenous sects and independent churches, most of the Protestant denominations and leaders chose, in some degree, the second option.

The Rise of the TSPM

At this stage of history there emerged a man who was among the first Christians to support the Communist cause. Wu Yaozong, converted to Christianity as a young man, became a YMCA secretary after he gave up a career in the customs service. He studied in Union Theological Seminary in New York and was influenced by the Christian socialist movement of the 1930's (24).

24. Harold Tam, "Y.T. Wu: Three-Self Founder, 1893-1979," China and the Church Today 2:1 (January - February 1980): 6-7.

In May 1950 Wu led a group of Christian leaders to meet with Premier Zhou Enlai in Beijing to discuss future government relations. During the meeting, Wu discussed with the premier the preparation of a paper which would become known as the "Christian Manifesto." The first draft was written by Wu and approved by the premier. The following are some portions of the Manifesto that set forth the new direction.

It is our purpose in publishing the following statement to heighten our vigilance against imperialism, to make known the clear political stand of Christians in New China, to hasten the building of a Chinese church whose affairs are managed by the Chinese themselves, and to indicate the responsibilities that should be taken up by Christians throughout the whole country in national reconstruction in New China

Fundamental Aims

(1) Christian churches and organizations in China should exert their utmost efforts, and employ effective methods, to make people in the churches everywhere recognize clearly the evils that have been wrought in China by imperialism; recognize the fact that in the past imperialism has made use of Christianity; purge imperialistic influences from within Christianity itself; and be vigilant against imperialism, and especially American imperialism, in its plot to use religion in fostering the growth of reactionary forces. At the same time, the churches and organizations should call upon Christians to participate in the movement opposing war and upholding peace, and teach them thoroughly to understand and support the government's policy of agrarian reform.

(2) Christian churches and organizations in China should take effective measures to cultivate a patriotic and democratic spirit among their adherents in general, as well as a psychology of self-respect and self-reliance. The movement for autonomy,

self-support, and self-propagation hitherto promoted in the Chinese church has already attained a measure of success. This movement from now on should complete its tasks within the shortest possible period. At the same time, self-criticism should be advocated, all forms of Christian activity re-examined and re-adjusted, and on-going austerity measures adopted, so as to achieve the goals of reformation in the church.

Concrete Methods

(2) From now on, as regards to their religious work, Christian churches and organizations should place emphasis upon a deeper understanding of the nature of Christianity itself, closer fellowship and unity among the various denominations, the cultivation of better leadership personnel, and reform in systems of church organization. As regards to their more general work, they should emphasize anti-imperialistic, anti-feudalistic, and anti-bureaucratic-capitalistic education, together with such forms of service to the people as productive labor, teaching them to understand the New Era, cultural and recreational activities, literacy education, medical and public health work, and care of children (25).

In April, 1951, under the arrangement of the newly organized Religious Affairs Bureau of the government, the Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement was established. (The "three-self" referred to "self-support," "self-government," and "self-propagation.") Wu Yaozong was elected chairman.

In the next 15 years (1951-1966), the Protestant church was brought under the full control of the state through the TSPM. Thousands and Thousands of Christian leaders who refused to join the TSPM were condemned as anti-revolutionaries, and most of them were put into prison during

25. Orr, Religion in China, pp.44-5.

1955 and again in 1958. Many of them died during their imprisonment.

The Problems of the TSPM

In the summer of 1966, The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution started. All Christians of whatever denomination, theological conviction, or political persuasion suffered. No one was exempt -- Christians and non-Christians alike. Leaders in the Three-Self Movement who had tried to cooperate with the government spent time in the work camps the same as those known to be resistant to government policies. The offices of the Three-Self Movement were closed down. The Religious Affairs Bureau of the government ceased to function.

For 13 years (from 1966 to 1979) there was no public worship in the whole nation. But in September, 1979, the large church formerly known as Moore Memorial Church opened its doors with the new name Mo-en Tang (Bathed in Grace Church). Then churches across China began to open. Arrangements for the opening of the churches were made by the TSPM, which is responsible to the Religious Affairs Bureau and serves as a liaison between the government and the churches. However, the TSPM has faced many problems since it has been resurrected.

In 1979 the TSPM had practically no influence among the thousands of house churches, and the great numbers of new believers had never heard of it. TSPM leaders recognized

that their organization was only about to affect the small number of newly-opened churches restored by the government.

Church buildings of the TSPM, now occupied by government agencies, needed to be reclaimed and restored for worship services.

It was not easy to find other accommodations for the present occupants because of the shortage of buildings. During the first year, only a few churches in the major cities were opened. Later, the number of churches being opened each month increased rapidly.

Most of the pastors available were men between 60 and 80 years of age, almost all former TSPM pastors from the 1950's. Because there are no longer denominations in China, most of the reopened churches had a team of pastoral workers that reflected different denominational backgrounds. The provision of pastors is an obvious problem.

Because of the extreme politicization of the Church and the persecution in the earlier years of Christians who would not join the TSPM, those who had been worshiping in house churches were now reluctant to join. Although the TSPM has instructed pastors to preach from the Bible instead of liberal and political sermons, the confidence of the Christians toward the TSPM is still a problem.

Another critical problem facing the TSPM is the training of future pastors.

The Leadership of the TSPM

In 1980, Bishop Ding Guangxun was appointed as the chairman of the TSPM following the death of Wu Yaozong in 1979.

Ding had been a student worker in North America from 1946 to 1951. He returned to China and became president of Nanjing Theological Seminary. In 1955, he was consecrated Anglican Bishop of Zhejiang province (26). The seminary was closed in 1966. It has now been reopened with Ding as the dean again.

Whoever accepts the chairman's position has a job description written for him in Beijing. His guidelines are specifically written down for him as follows:

1. Steering the church along the right political lines or, as the party puts it, "guiding the church in the correct implementation of the policy of religious freedom," which according to Article 40 of their constitution states that "citizens shall have the freedom to believe in religion and not to believe in religion."
2. Direct the various Protestant seminaries in China.
3. Keep the church pure from such problems as "denominationalism."
4. Oversee and direct the official churches that have opened across China.
5. Oversee the printing and distribution of all Bibles allowed in China.
6. Travel to the West as an emissary of Beijing to convince the world as to the "freedom of religion" that exists in China and how the TSPM is the only

26. Silas Chang, The Family Church in Mainland China (Oxnard, CA, 1984). p.17.

officially recognized spokesman for that church (27).

The leadership within TSPM has several subgroups. First, there are the top leaders who formerly were leaders in the movement in the 1950's. Some of them actively persecuted evangelicals during the first decade of the communist regime. For this reason many Christians are afraid to associate with them.

Both the Three-Self Movement and the Chinese Christian Council (28) have among their top leaders these very politically minded leaders of the past. Most of them were in the early days extremely liberal in their theology. This is one of the reasons why evangelicals in the 1950's did not associate with the movement. Today this liberal theology is kept very much in the background.

A second subgroup consists of pastors who were active in the Three-Self Movement in the past. Some of them betrayed other Christians, but they also went through suffering during the Cultural Revolution and may indeed have been restored spiritually. Some of them are indeed true evangelicals. There are, however, those who are thinking more of maintaining a job through the church than of truly feeding the flock of God.

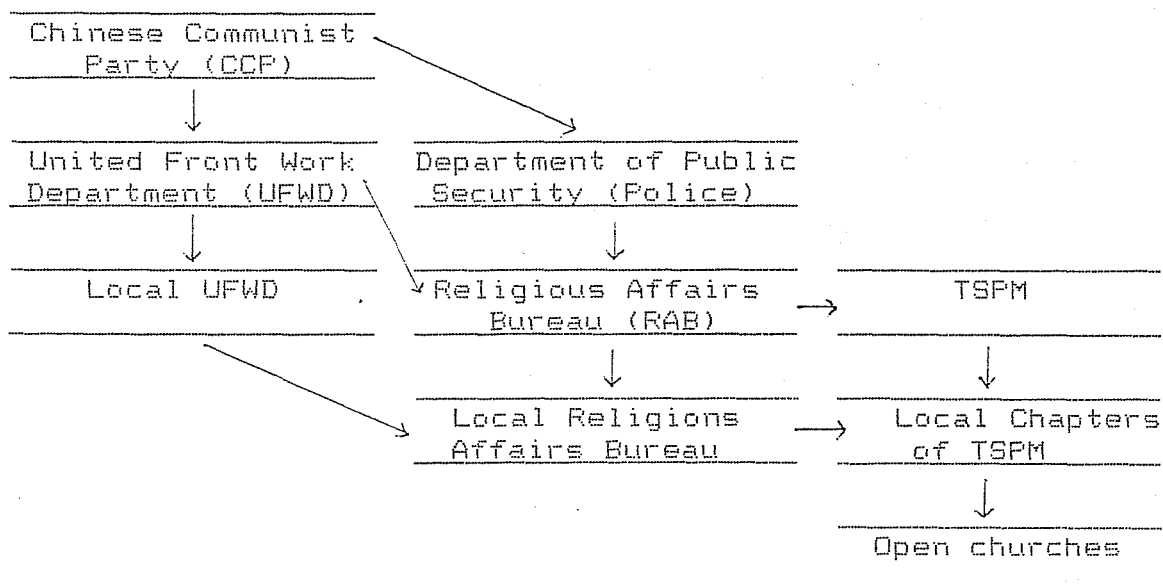
27. Carl Lawrence, The Church in China (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers, 1985). p.99.

28. China Christian Council (CCC), formally brought into existence in October 1980. The relationship of the CCC to the TSPM is one of "division of labor." In administration and leadership, however, it remains intimately associated with the TSPM, and Bishop Ding chairs both organizations.

A third subgroup are people who have had contact with the house churches during the Cultural Revolution. Now that the open churches have appeared, they feel that they can have the most influence if they will work through the Three-Self Movement. In this way it gives them the opportunity to minister to large numbers of people. They also believe that they can influence the policy of the church as a whole and maintain an evangelical witness within the church.

Government Control of the Church through the TSPM

It is important to see clearly the TSPM's place in the overall system of control used by the government (see charts: TSPM and the Government).



TSPM and the Government

The Party organ involved in religion is the United Front Work Department (UFWD), which also handles oversea-Chinese

and minority affairs. This Party department controls and staffs the government's Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB). Staff members of the RAB, including the lowest clerks and office boys, are members of either this Party or the Chinese Communist Youth League.

While the UFWD is a Party organ, and the RAB is a government agency, the two are interlocked at each level, and also work closely with the Department of Public Security -- the national police system.

Under the RAB there are five religious "people's organizations": the Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement, the Catholic Patriotic Association; and Islamic, Buddhist and Taoist associations. These associations also have hierarchies.

One function of the UFWD is to see that the party's religious policy is properly executed through the RAB. On the other hand, the TSPM directs the actual affairs of the church in accordance with the state policy as a "Protestant organization."

Its task is essentially political: to lead Christians to support the party and state programs, and to ensure that no anti-revolutionary elements emerge among Protestants. In a way, the TSPM polices Christians for the government. But it also serves as a bridge between the two.

In implementing the government's religious policy with Protestants, all three organizations are involved: the UFWD,

the RAB, and the TSPM. For example, the TSPM has no authority to evict a factory from a former church building. But as a government bureau, the RAB does have this authority, and so helps to facilitate the transition. But the RAB is only a state organization; it might not have enough clout to carry out such orders. So in many cases, the larger party organization, the UFWD, comes along to negotiate in the matter.

On the other hand, if the TSPM officials discover a Bible distribution ring with connections in Hong Kong, it has no right to interfere, except to make inquiries and do "persuading." But it can report the case to the RAB, which does have the authority to investigate "anti-revolutionary activities."

But if a house church leader is found printing Bibles at home, the RAB officials have no right to arrest him. Any arrest would have to be made by the police.

Policies are made at the highest level of the Party, according to the overall political philosophy and priorities of the ruling faction. All lower officials, including the TSPM, basically implement these policies (29).

(See Appendix D, a government's internal document of controls on Christianity, for more detail about the government control of the church.)

29. The information in this section is taken from Grace Reigns in China (Hong Kong: Christian Witness Press, 1983) p.13-25.

CHAPTER IV

STRATEGIES BORN OF GOD: THE HOUSE CHURCH

House churches are not new in China. Right from the first century the Christian Church began as a "house-church." Soon house-churches had sprung up all across the Roman Empire. It was not until many years later that the first buildings dedicated exclusively for Christian worship were erected. A study of the New Testament church reveals that the church in the home was a virile and powerful force that shook its society.

The Chinese Church was forced into a true New Testament pattern. This pattern seems to fit the Chinese culture much better than the imported variety. The family-orientation is possibly the single most consistent characteristic of the Chinese. Consequently, to make the home the focal point of Christian worship, almost guarantees not only family participation, but the faith of succeeding generations. The house-church seems to truly belong in the Chinese culture.

The Beginnings of the House Church Movement

Before the 1949 revolution in China, many believers began meeting in homes. During the pre-1949 period, house churches were connected with indigenous movements such as

"The Jesus Family," "The True Jesus Church," "The Independent Church," and "The Little Flock." There were hundreds of such churches throughout the country.

Following the 1949 revolution, the TSPM was responsible for organizing the institutional church. Indigenous house-churches were suppressed by the TSPM and meetings in homes were declared illegal. In 1955, the authorities started persecuting the "Wang Mingdao Counter-Revolutionary Gang" movement. In 1956, they started to purge the "Watchman Nee Counter-Revolutionary Gang" movement also. In 1958, they pushed the "Anti-Rightists Struggle" from inside the churches. After these movements, TSPM easily won the control of all churches in China. At this time, the government announced that any Christian activities outside of TSPM direction were illegal (30).

In 1954, under the strict control of the government, the TSPM was awarded the leadership and actual control of all churches in China. (Prior to 1954, the TSPM did not have actual control of the local churches.) With this new power from the government, the TSPM started to purge all those who were against the TSPM. They actively did the following three things:

1. They combined churches in every city, forcing the Christians to hold joint services. They reduced the number

30. Chang, The Family Church in Mainland China, p.19.

of places to worship. The extra church buildings were offered to the government. (There were practically no churches left in the countryside.) For example, in Peking, they combined 64 churches into 4. In Shanghai, they combined over 200 churches into 15. The empty church buildings were changed into schools, factories, and warehouses (31).

2. All churches were forced to preach the sermon of "unity church with patriotism." All sermons were censored ahead of time. Later, they even stopped preaching this kind of "sermon;" and all they talked about was news and current events from the newspaper. Before the start of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, there was no open church in China that preached according to the teachings of the Bible (32).

3. All preachers were put together to "study." It emphasized that the profession of the clergy, who did not have to physically labor to obtain a salary, was shameful. The TSPM started sending Christian ministers and preachers to the factories and farms to labor. Most of the preachers therefore were forced to leave their ministries (33).

Under this open attack on the churches, many Christians and some preachers withdrew from their churches. They

31. Chang, The Suffering Church in Mainland China, (1984) p.20.

32. W. W. Kerr, "China Unlocks Some Church Doors," Alliance Witness 115 (January 1980): 17.

33. Ibid.

started the house churches. This was a new beginning for the house church movement in China. However, this group of Christians who wanted to follow the Lord paid a very dear price for their faith by insisting on worshiping the Lord at home in spirit and in truth. The government and the TSPM did not like this new group of Christians and started to suppress these house churches even more. Many Christian students were expelled from their schools and sent to indefinite periods of "labor educations (34)." Some preachers in the TSPM were sent to labor camps because they were sympathetic to the house churches. Many Christians were sentenced to ten or fifteen years of hard labor because they organized or attended the house churches. Some of them died in the labor camps because they could not stand the cruel punishment there. Many unknown Christians, because of this faith in Christ, offered all to their Lord, including their youth, property, and even their lives. They sowed the seeds of life that have caused this great people movement growth in the house churches of China. The fruit that they bear today is in the thirty-fold, sixty-fold, and even hundred-fold.

There was a special common "crime" in the sentences handed to those who were arrested in the late 1950's: "conspire to organize illegally assembled family church (35)." Thus, house churches, as a counterpart of TSPM,

34. Chang, The Suffering Church in China, p.25.

35. Ibid.

existed since the late 1950's.

The Church During the Cultural Revolution

In August, 1966 the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution broke out at Mao's instigation. Young radical Red Guards sprang up and went on a rampage all over China. Armed with Mao's Little Red Book, and encouraged by the Chairman, they set out to destroy old ideologies, old customs, old ideas, and old systems, including the Party structure and state machinery. They stormed city halls, police headquarters, university administration buildings and publicly humiliated and beat up Party revisionists, intellectuals, and anyone whom they considered not totally "proletarian." In the sphere of religion, they destroyed temples, monasteries, and stormed the few churches that remained. They searched practically every believer's home, looking for Bibles, hymnals, and every other type of Christian literature they could find in order to confiscate or burn them. In many cities, the Red Guards gathered all the Bibles that they could find, piled them up into a great heap in the public square, and set fire to them. Believers were rounded up and forced to kneel in front of that pillar of fire. In those days both Christians from secret house churches and TSPM leaders were attacked, publicly "struggled against," and forced to parade through the streets. Some of the believers were literally beaten to death. others

suffered permanent paralysis. Many house church leaders who secretly propagated the Gospel were arrested and sent to labor camps where they were further interrogated and forced to do hard labor.

After the first wave of Cultural Revolution attacks, all traces of visible Christian activities were removed from the face of the Chinese society. All Christians had to go through the baptism of suffering and humiliation. For a while even clandestine house church activities were suspended. The church in China was practically dead and buried.

But the glory of God did not depart from his people in China. His Spirit overshadowed them. Out of a valley of dry bones a great spiritual army began to rise up. It was a slow process which began after the initial waves of attack during 1966-69. A few servants of God, moved by the situation of spiritual desolation that characterized the Church, began to pray for a revival. They started to search out every believer that they could find and urged them to rise up from their fears and to call upon the name of the Lord. Two's and three's began to meet secretly to pray and to encourage each other with God's Word. Gradually these small groups grew into Spirit-filled house churches. Deprived of ministerial leaderships, lay leaders rose up to lead prayer meetings and to minister to a growing number of God's people. The Spirit

of God was at work all over China, and silently but surely house churches sprang up in countless cities, towns, and villages. Out of suffering and death a new Chinese church had emerged.

The Church Alive

After the death of Mao Zedong, and the arrest of the "Gang of Four" headed by his widow Jiang Qing in 1976, China began to change. Politically China moved away from Mao's radical leftist line of continuous revolution, which implied a more open attitude toward the West. 1976-1980 was an era of transition from the rule of Hua Guofeng, Mao's designated heir, to that of Deng Xiaoping, China's present strong man. By the end of 1980 Deng's power was well established. During these four years of the transition, the Chinese society began to thaw, and underground house churches began to surface in semi-clandestine activities. The house church movement enjoyed a short period of unprecedented freedom, especially in the countryside. Politically, Chinese Communist cadres adopted a laissez-faire attitude, and religiously, the TSPM was not yet fully organized to implement control.

In the North, where the house churches in the cities were small, particularly in Beijing, the climate was quite unfavourable to house church meetings, and they had to meet very quietly. The size ranged anywhere from five to twenty-five people. They held meetings in a very quiet way,

and often they moved from home to home in order to avoid surveillance by the Public Security Bureau.

In the South, East Coast, and Central China, the house churches in the cities met in a semi-open way. Some of these churches were large, and had up to five hundred people. These churches were usually found in communities where the Christian population was strong. Some of the house churches met outdoors. They gathered in the parks or countryside, apparently just having a picnic. They would sing, pray, and conduct evangelism.

In the countryside, there were many meetings in believers' homes with up to three hundred people who would meet every day. In some areas, as many as one thousand people gathered together to worship God. These churches were organized locally by believers who emerged as house church leaders without any formal training.

It was during this period of power transition before the control apparatus was restored that house churches grew in size and number. The Church that suffered so long was now able to enjoy a temporary season of peace, and the people of God took advantage of this unusual season of grace to preach the Gospel. As the Spirit of God descended upon them, the people of God freely experienced the power of Christ's resurrection on a large scale. God worked signs and miracles among them: the sick were healed after much prayer, demons

were exorcised in Jesus' name, and even the dead were reported to have been raised. Communist party and Youth League members believed. This was a period of great ingathering.

The Conflict with the TSPM

Since the early 1980's, the party's new leadership has brought out new ideas represented by "the four insurances": 1) insistence on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought; 2) insistence on the people's democratic dictatorship; 3) insistence on the leadership of the Communist Party; and 4) insistence on walking the socialist road (36).

This tightening of political control found its expression in the increased control by the Religious Affairs Bureau and the TSPM over house church activities. As the TSPM became more organized, establishing branches on the provincial and county levels, house church activities in both the cities and in the villages were soon brought under control. Christians are now being urged to worship only in churches designated by the TSPM, only designated pastors were allowed to preach, and they could do so only within designated districts (37). Under this new policy, house church leaders were forbidden to do itinerant preaching, and

36. People's Daily, January 20, 1980.

37. Grace Reigns in China, p.26.

churches not recognized by the TSPM were being forced to close down.

Desirous to see the whole nation turn to Christ, many house churches in recent years have organized evangelistic teams to do cross-county and cross-provincial missions. These evangelistic outreaches have run into direct conflict with the government's religious policy of containing Christian activities within the four walls of the TSPM churches. As a result, many itinerant preachers have been arrested or are on the run because their names are on an arrest list. House churches in the cities are being driven underground again, and those in the countryside are constantly being harrassed. Those who continue to hold meetings are being arrested, beaten, and put into prison.

In Guangdong (Canton), a well known Christian leader, who after his release from prison had meetings in his home for three years, was forced to stop all activities. The local TSPM church issued a letter to Christians in the city supporting the action of the Religious Affairs Bureau. It said that because the church leader had been deprived of his civil rights for five years, the meetings in his home were illegal (38). But why did the government wait for years before closing down his meetings?

38. David M. Paton, "Chinese Authorities Close Canton's Last House Church," China Watchers 53 (March - April, 1983): 6.

He was charged with printing books and distributing tapes without permission. The TSPM statement said that "he allows some foreign missionaries to carry out religious activities in his home without the agreement of the China Christian Council, thus harming the sovereignty of our church and disobeying the government's policy (39)."

The statement ended with a warning to others:

There are still according to our knowledge some rather abnormal religious activities in existence in Guangdong. We hope that they will seriously consider and draw a lesson from this experience, quickly changing their attitude; and that they will uphold the policy of the TSPM and be patriotic, law-abiding, going along the road of 'loving country and loving religion' and striving together for the unity of the church (40).

Even so, 90-95% of the Christians in the house churches still refuse to join the TSPM (41). They still remember the past history of the TSPM. Some have spent many years in prison because they have refused to join the TSPM. They feel that Christ is no longer head of the TSPM church, and, therefore, it is not the true church. They also point out that Bishop Ding and the TSPM leaders are not interested in evangelism and an outreach to the large numbers of unreached people. One of Bishop Ding's delegation members abroad said

39. China Daily, December 27, 1982.

40. Ibid.

41. According to the TSPM official report, there are about three million members in the TSPM. The total number of Christians in China is at least fifty million according to the Chinese Church Research Center in Hong Kong.

that he was 100 percent political and 100 percent spiritual (42).

Many house church Christians are still very uncertain about the government's future policy toward religion. They know that there are strong elements within the government that believe religion is evil and must eventually be rooted out of society. Christians fear that when once all believers are forced to join TSPM it will be easier to enforce regulations that will prevent the growth of the church.

Some Reasons for Church Growth in China

There are six factors contributing to the rapid growth of house churches throughout China:

1. Bible-based. All activities are centered on the Word of God. The Bible is greatly prized, with passages copied by hand from other copies or while listening to gospel radio broadcasts. The vast majority of believers have faith in the evangelical truths of Scripture. The top leaders of the TSPM are generally liberal in theology, but it is the evangelical gospel that has been the base for the great growth of Christ's Church in China.

2. Praying. Experiencing answers to prayer through thirty years of pressure and persecution has taught many Chinese Christians about the power of prayer. Its existence has depended entirely on God's power. With no human support,

42. China News and Church Report 101 (19 April, 1985): #465.

and surrounded by those seeking to destroy them, Christians have been cast on God, and in simple faith have expected God to hear their cry. For the Church in China, prayer has been essential to its life. Prayer had to have priority; it was not only communion with God, but was also a way to share in the spiritual conflict. In answer to prayer, the sick were healed, Christians were able to endure suffering and those in danger experienced protection.

3. Indigenous. The house churches are not associated with any foreign church or organization. Christians come from different kinds of denominational backgrounds and have fellowship on a local level. Without any organizational structure, they are not bothered with committee meetings, reports, and the power politics so common in large organized churches. The Christians meet anywhere that is convenient, whether in homes, city parks, open fields, fishing boats, cemeteries (funeral services are a good opportunity for open witness), or on mountains (a good place for retreats). The Church is no longer a building, but truly the body of believers among whom Christ dwells.

4. Lay Leadership. Most of the pastors who have been trained in Bible schools or seminaries before 1949 are over sixty or seventy years of age. Many pastors have died in the last thirty years while imprisoned. God has raised up younger lay leaders without formal theological training to preach and pastor. In some areas there are quite extensive

systems of eldership, pastoral care and training.

5. Witnessing. Christians share their faith by their lives and testimonies. Many are burdened to travel at great personal cost from village to village to lead meetings. Others quietly share their faith with relatives and close friends. They have learned that the Church could grow through personal friendship and by the sincere one-to-one sharing of faith. The main method of witness in China today is through the personal life-style and behavior of Christians, accompanied by their proclamation of the gospel, often at great personal risk.

6. Caring and sharing. Christians care for each other's practical needs. Christians in China have impressed non-believers with their love. Such love creates a tremendous force of spontaneous evangelism. Their love and concern even for those who have persecuted them has led to the conversion of Communist cadres.

CHAPTER V

EXTERNAL STRATEGIES:

THE CHURCH OUTSIDE CHINA

To be more specific: Can Christians outside China minister to the Christians in China?

The answer is "Yes, but"

We have to understand that the Chinese government has no love for any religion, much less that brought in by Christians from abroad. Residence and travel permits for foreigners are limited. Hospitals and schools are under direct government management. There is no opportunity for public preaching outside of the churches. Christian activity on the part of foreigners, even with the best intentions, would undoubtedly be perceived quite differently by Christian groups. Some would probably be enthusiastic. Others would be fearful.

However, these do not negate the possibility that some real weaknesses in the Church in China today could be overcome by "outsiders." There is no doubt that China ministries in radio, literature, research, teaching, and prayer can play important roles in helping the Church in China.

But Christians outside of China must carefully weigh

every move they make now and in the future. The job could be done through prayerful strategy and planning.

Radio Ministry

When foreign missionaries were driven out of China in the early 1950's, Gospel broadcasts from overseas began coming in. Those first programs originated from the facilities of the newly formed Far East Broadcast Company (FEBC) in Manila (43). Since then the strength and quantity of evangelical Gospel broadcasts have increased as new facilities have been added. In 1977, Trans World Radio (TWR) joined with FEBC in sending the Good News through the air into China (44). Later, many other organizations have joined in producing programs for China, such as Overseas Radio and Television, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, Asian Outreach, Chinese Church Research Center, Christian Communications Ltd., and many others.

There is no doubt that radio broadcasts are the most effective way of preaching the Gospel in China today. Although Christians outside of China have no way of knowing how many people in China actually listen, Voice of Friendship (FEBC) and Trans World (TWR) are very popular among the Christians and even non-Christians. Before 1979, listening

43. Ben Armstrong, The Electric Church (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc., 1979), p.68-9.

44. Paul E. Freed, Let the Earth Hear. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc., 1980), p.195.

to what was considered to be "enemy" radio stations was forbidden, but many Christians and often other young people would listen secretly at night, with their receivers hidden under their bed rolls. Christians were encouraged and unbelievers were converted.

In 1979, the Chinese people were told that the Gospel radio stations (such as FEBC and TWR) and other Western stations (such as BBC and Voice of America) were no longer "enemy stations" and all could listen. Then, after 1982, the TSPM warned Christians not to listen to the Gospel radio stations. Notices have even sometimes been posted (45). Their reasons were: "(1) Christian broadcasting from outside is a form of cultural imperialism; (2) it violates the Three-Self principles, since the content is not controlled by the TSPM; and (3) some of the programs are very Western and therefore unsuitable (46)."

It is true that some programs may be too Westernized in character, and some script writers and program producers might lack the knowledge of Chinese contemporary terminology, but the Christian broadcasters can avoid some of these problems through some strategies.

Since most of the programming is produced in Hong Kong, and since Hong Kong is to revert to China in 1997, the

45. China Feng 14, No. 1 (1982): 38.

46. David H. Adeney, China: The Church's Long March (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1985), p.209.

writer suggests that the following strategies for the radio ministry to China should be considered:

1. Western radio ministries should turn the work over to local Chinese Christians as a way of making Gospel radio more acceptable to the Chinese government before and after 1997.
2. Chinese churches worldwide should support these radio ministries and not depend on foreign sources.
3. The radio programs should be prepared by Chinese Christians who know the Scriptures and understand Chinese thought patterns.
4. Christians outside of China should encourage gifted Mainland Chinese Christians who have moved out of Mainland China and who have had formal Bible or communication training to hear the call of God to this strategic radio ministry.
5. Although programs currently go out in at least five dialects (Mandarin, Cantonuese, Shanghainese, Swatow, and Amoy), over fifty minority groups (67 million people) in China remain virtually untouched by the Gospel (47). Perhaps the time has come to adopt a strategy of narrowcasting -- dividing up the available airtime into small segments aimed at specific language groups. Such a strategy would require greater cooperation and sharing of resources among the various programmers, possibly to the extent of

47. Brent Fulton, "Gospel Waves," China and the Church Today 7:4 (August 1985): 6.

giving each one sole responsibility for a particular audience segment.

According to the population statistics, of the more than one billion people in China today, half are under the age of 20, of which 200 million are teenagers; 65 percent are under 30, which means that there are 650 million people in that age bracket (48). Will they hear of Jesus Christ from the church or their parents? The government says, "no." A document distributed among party officials states "inculcating religious thinking in youths under 18 or leading children to participate in religious activities is not acceptable (49)." The "Ten Commandments" of Henan province's TSPM include: "Do not convey religious thoughts to persons under 18 years of age. Do not sing religious songs to youths under 18 years of age. Do not pray every day, only on Sundays. Keep religion to yourself (50)."

So the radio programs for young people and children are very important. Some special programs dealing with science and other subjects will interest young listeners. Since teaching English is another good area for study, it offers listeners the opportunity to learn another language and give

48. Lawrence, The Church in China, p.123.

49. "Documentation of Tactics for the Control of Christianity," China and the Church Today 4:6 (1982): 10. Also see Appendix C.

50. "The Ten Don'ts," China and the Church Today 4:4-5 (1982): 12.

the programmers the opportunity to introduce various topics related to the Gospel. Gospel radio could have significant impact upon China's future generation of leaders.

For China's rural population of approximately 800 million, it is the largest group of the listeners. The radio programmers should plan and produce various programs to meet their needs.

For the past ten years, many people, young and old, have come to believe in Jesus Christ. These new Christians need to be nourished in sound Christian doctrines, but there are not enough house church pastors and evangelists with the necessary Biblical knowledge and theological training to do the job. Because of this, many of these new believers have turned to self-proclaimed preachers who have no Biblical training at all. Heresies and superstitions have broken out in many areas of China, which have not only hindered the work of evangelism, but have also brought about apostasy in the Church (51). Therefore, broadcasting seems to be the most effective way to bring the necessary instructions to the house church preachers.

According to the research, there are about 260 hours per week of Christian broadcasting into China (52). But up to

51. "Heresies Threaten Rural Church," China Prayer Letter 74 (October 1986): 3.

52. "Stay Tuned," FEBC Broadcaster 9 (January, 1987): 5.

now most of the existing radio programs have been directed to the non-Christians in China. Current program contents range from pre-evangelistic and evangelistic materials to music and the teaching of English. These are valuable in themselves, but the Christian broadcaster needs to consider providing more theological education for the leadership training.

The research from the Chinese Church Research Center has shown that there are around 50 million believers in China. It is likely that around 80% of these are rural people. They usually meet in one another's homes, some in very small groups and others in rather large groups. These groups average about 75 people per group and there are perhaps two or three persons per group who exercise leadership. Thus, there may be around 1.3 million Christians who exercise some kind of a leadership role in the house churches. Most of these new leaders are younger people in their 20's and 30's (53). Therefore, the necessary theological training for these young house church leaders is urgent. The radio training programs should include not just basic biblical training, but broad curricula, such as Systematic Theology, Chinese Church History, Biblical Theology, Apologetics, and even the Second Coming of Christ. (It is illegal to preach on the Second Coming of Christ from both TSPM and house churches.)

53. "Equipping Shepherds to Lead the Flock," China and the Church Today. 7:4 (August 1985): 16.

Following the broadcasts, the programs could be compiled on cassette tapes. Future plans call for providing these tapes to house church leaders and itinerant preachers, who will use them to train others for ministry and thus multiply the impact of the programs. Then the courses could be published and the books also made available to Christian leaders as permanent ministry tools and reference works. The combination of radio, tape and literature ministry is one of the most effective ways to train the house church leadership.

Cassette recorders with short wave radio are also a useful tool for house church leaders. They can reproduce some of their good sermons and make them available to faraway village churches. Also they can listen to and record the training programs. But very few house churches have cassette recorders. An effective way to provide such materials is to cooperate with a certain contact, a mature, wise Christian leader in a trade city in China. They then distribute these materials to known church leaders. It also can be done through a combined effort in the tourist cities, Christians from Hong Kong, and Christians from various parts of the world.

Literature Distribution

For many years Chinese Christians were almost completely deprived of Bibles and books that could build up their faith. Without Christian literature, the Church becomes spiritually impoverished. So it is not surprising that, when

communications were again opened with China, the great cry was for Bibles and literature.

What is the need for Bibles in China today? To answer this, the number of Christians should be dealt with. Bishop Ding stated recently that China's Protestant Christians numbered "over two million (54)." The estimates of ministries working closely with China vary. Fifty million believers would seem a reasonable mean. (There were several different sources from China which place the number of believers at 100 million!) If, as the Christians outside China believe, there are about 5 million Bibles, New Testaments and scripture portions in China today, including TSPM (55), then somewhere between 90% and 95% of the Chinese Christians do not possess a Bible or portion of it.

The TSPM's position has been that the needed Bibles must be supplied from within China. The Chinese government and the TSPM leaders deeply resent the smuggling of Bibles into China. They believe that these activities are flagrant violations of the sovereignty of their nation and church.

Open Doors and Brother Andrew International believed that although large deliveries of Bibles might violate China's sovereignty, God's authority is higher than government's sovereignty. On June 18, 1981, Open Doors towed

54. Ding Guangxun, "Open letter from the Fourth National Chinese Christian Conference," Chinese Theological Review (1986), p.1.

55. Ibid .

a barge with waterproof packages of a million Bibles to a beach in Southern China. (This operation was called "Project Pearl.") There, they delivered the Bibles to some 20,000 Christians with many trucks on the beach to pick them up. Although they were discovered by police, Open Doors was later told that the Christians gathered at least 60-80% of the Bibles (56). Such attempts at Bible smuggling is dangerous for Christians in any way involved, and is sure to increase the surveillance of the government over all Christian groups.

Even after Project Pearl, Bibles still remain the number one need of Christians in China. The question is how to most effectively meet this need. The ideal situation would be to secure the good will of the Chinese government to permit free import of Bibles into China from the West under the auspices of TSPM and that these could be distributed legally within China.

In 1985, the Amity Foundation (A joint organization of the TSPM and overseas Chinese Christian businessmen) and the United Bible Societies (UBS) announced a joint plan for the establishment of a modern printing facility in China which will give priority to the printing of Bibles and Testaments and other Christian publications (57). But most of its

56. Brown, Christianity in the People's Republic of China, p.174.

57. May Cheng, "Introducing the Amity Foundation," Pray for China 67 (July-August, 1985): 10.

projects emphasize China's social needs. Although this is a limited opportunity, the foundation itself already took a positive step.

Can tourists solve the need for Bibles and Christian literature? When tourists take Bibles into China in their luggage, China takes a lenient attitude. Bibles are not regarded as contraband, and so taking them in is not in any sense illegal. It cannot be called smuggling. But customs does discourage taking in large quantities by impounding large numbers discovered in spot checks. Hong Kong and overseas Chinese Christians need to be encouraged to take Bibles with them when they visit their relatives in China. According to the Chinese official report, more than 13 million Hong Kong and overseas Chinese visiting China in 1986 (58). Obviously, getting the Scriptures and Christian literatures into China through overseas Chinese Christians is an excellent opportunity.

The Christians in China also do not have background information on the Bible. So they need Bible study tools like concordances and books on biblical history, church history, systematic theology, principles of interpretation, and so on. These materials are particularly needed for the house church leaders.

Other tracts and booklets which were written by house

58. People's Daily, November 24, 1986.

church leaders in China were formerly produced by mimeograph, but it was poor in quality and limited in quantity. What Christians outside China can do is to take their manuscripts, polish them up, print them in Hong Kong, give the printed materials back to them, and let them distribute their own material.

Publishing and distribution are not the only problems. The Church in China needs writers who are able to express the faith in ways their people can understand. A writing program needs to be developed, and Chinese Christians, as well as Chinese theologians living in the West, need to be encouraged to face the challenge of presenting the gospel to intellectuals. Others must consider creating ways of explaining the message of Christ to the millions of country people with low levels of education.

China Research

China is a socialist state that has made several drastic and rapid ideological and social changes during the last eight decades. She has moved from a traditional imperial rule to a faltering democracy, and from an autocratic democracy to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Her society has gone from a stagnant Confucianist ideology to a loosely open semi-feudalistic democratic society, and from that to a socialist-collective society. The convulsion of China is still in process. In seeking to plant the seed of the Gospel into China's soil today, the Christian church must

have a comprehensive and sound analytical knowledge of the multiple facets and changes of Chinese historical, social, and political realities. The function of research, therefore, is to understand and to interpret these realities and changes for the Church and its mission. There are many China specialists in Hong Kong. Most are engaged in studying China's political scene. Very few are involved in the study of the people's lifestyle and religion -- particularly the latter. Christians in a free society should have a deep interest in the Church in China -- not merely as onlookers, but to improve their knowledge and so be able to pray more effectively. God is able to re-open the door of China to the Gospel. Christians outside China should be studying China and preparing themselves for such an event.

Currently, the Chinese Church Research Center, Christian Communication, Ltd., and Asian Outreach all have excellent research programs on the Chinese Church. These research groups are very important to the current ministry to China. Without research there could be much wasted effort.

One important principle is that a researcher must be careful to use accurate information. The information usually comes from two different sources, published and unpublished. With most published information in China, there is usually informal circulation of the information well beforehand, sometimes orally. But all publications are controlled to some extent by the Communist Party, and so documentary

evidence from China and should be handled with care. Oral reports, accounts of travelers, relayed messages, hand-written letters, hand-written copies of internal documents are all unpublished sources. This kind of source has to be evaluated. Christian researchers must consider whether the information comes in from a house church leader or from a chance meeting of someone in the street. Is the message a personal opinion of the information or does he or she carry a report of the consensus of a number of leaders? Is the report confirmed by more than one source?

The Tentmakers or Bi-Vocational Workers

China's Four Modernization policy needs large numbers of "foreign experts" to help the Chinese to rebuild their nation. Not only English teachers, but also other specialists are needed. Most of them serve on contract in key universities. Usually more openings exist than can be filled. Salaries, 400 to 800 yuan per month, are paid by the government or the university (59), and are usually for one year though they can often be renewed. Foreign experts live in special dormitories, and free furnished three or four room apartments are supplied by the university. According to the Chinese official report, last year there were 10,000 foreign experts serving in China (60). China's "open door" policy

59. Currency exchange rate: \$100.00 = Y371.00 (yuan).

60. People's Daily, March 26, 1987.

gives increased opportunities for Christians to enter China. Increasing numbers of Christians are finding opportunity there through secular positions. They cannot engage in active evangelism, but they can reveal the true meaning of the Christian life through the quality of their lives. Because the "tentmaker" is a specialized person, he or she needs special qualifications. The writer would like to contribute his best knowledge in giving some suggestions to this kind of bi-vocational worker.

1. They must have spiritual preparation. Under constant observation, they will feel isolation from other Christians, and will be bewildered by culture shock as well as being frustrated with other difficulties. They should begin to prepare before they arrive.

2. A Chinese proverb advises, "Whenever you enter a country, inquire as to what is forbidden; when you cross a boundary, ask about the customs." Cross-cultural communication is an important key for the tentmakers or bi-vocational workers.

3. Keep the principle: pray first and act last.

4. They should have an understanding of the history of the Christian Church in China, the TSPM, and the house church.

5. They should understand the government's attitude toward the "tentmakers." Secretive Christian penetration is

not appreciated. So they should keep their faith openly.

6. They should spend some time in a Chinese church before going to China. They should eat and live with a Chinese family, especially a family from Mainland China, and absorb some of the aspects of a Chinese lifestyle.

Prayer

The writer believes the basic strategy is to have men of prayer ready to evangelize China. Prayer for China has been widely offered by Churches throughout the world. Believers in China greatly appreciate this spiritual ministry. However, communication between the needs of believers and the praying community in the rest of the world needs to be improved and expanded.

Prayer can be made:

1. For China's success in modernization.
2. For an improved standard of living.
3. For wisdom for China's leaders.
4. For greater liberty to be given to Christians to worship openly and to witness freely.
5. For all the house church meetings, large and small, throughout China.
6. For the house church leaders, that they may be kept united, preserved from error, given all wisdom in relation to the authorities.
7. For the Christians who are prepared to accept government sponsored organizations and the Christians who

have maintained an independent witness with the cost of great suffering.

8. For the scriptures already in print in China and the new script Bible available in Hong Kong to be allowed into China in larger quantities.

9. For the freedom to import Christian literature into China.

10. For the FEBC, the TWR, and other Christian broadcasting organizations.

11. For thousands of Mainland Chinese students who are studying or will be studying in America and in Europe; that the churches may be alive to the opportunities for witnessing to them.

12. For the Christian experts in many fields who are invited or will be invited to assist in China's modernization program.

13. For China's one billion souls.

Ministry to Mainland Chinese Students

Since 1978, China's new "open door" policy has been to send students and scholars overseas to obtain up-to-date training, especially in technical fields. This will help China make up for the time lost because of the political turmoil of the Cultural Revolution. In the years 1978-86 more than 55,000 Chinese were sent abroad to continue their education. Of these, 45,000 were supported by the state, and

10,000 were self-supporting (61). This figure is already triple the number of students sent abroad for the twenty year period 1958-1977. At any one time about 10,000 of these students are studying in the United States (62).

The number of those sent abroad appears to be rising steadily. In 1983 it was 3,000, but in 1985 11,000 (63). Despite this, competition to study abroad is fierce, and only a fraction of those interested received needed official permission to enter foreign universities. In 1986 only 18 out of 10,000 people in China were university students (or 0.18%) and of this very small number only a minute percentage were allowed to go abroad (64).

Throughout Chinese history, highly-skilled Chinese who went overseas to study and returned their return, have had a significant impact on their country. Strategies for reaching Chinese students abroad should also have a significant impact on Chinese Christianity in the future.

Understanding Students from Mainland China

These Mainland Chinese students who come to the United States or Europe from a totally different environment and

61. People's Daily, November 29, 1986.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

64. In 1986, 1.8 million students studied in 1,016 colleges and universities. See "Pray for China" 74 (September - October, 1986): 10.

culture are even different even from that of overseas Chinese.

Many of their attitudes have not only been influenced by Maoist Communism but also by underlying traditional Chinese ways.

They fall mainly into three groups. First, there are the senior scholars who have been sent by the government and who are usually professors or research scientists, coming to work for a year or two. Many of them suffered during the Cultural Revolution and tend to be very cautious. Second, there are younger graduates who have been in government service for at least two years (65) and are regarded as politically reliable. They may be allowed to stay as long as five years to work for a Ph.D. During this long period they are allowed to return home to visit their families once at government expense. These two groups of students hold J-1 visas (66). Third, there are the private-sponsored students. They are either sponsored by their relatives, friends, or under scholarship programs. They have F-1 student visas (67). Almost every one of this group of students plans to stay as long as possible and tries to get permanent residence status in the United States and other

65. College graduates are required to have been in government service for two years before they go abroad for further education.

66. The J-1 visa is for visiting scholars and graduate students sponsored by the Chinese government. The Chinese and U.S. governments have an agreement that these students cannot apply for U.S. permanent residentship. So they have to go back to China right after their graduation.

Western countries. Many Chinese students from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and other Southeast Asian countries seek the same five life goals of "zi's" in the U.S. as this last group of students from mainland China. The five "zi's" are mao-zi (cap and gown), chi-zi (wife), er-zi (son), fang-zi (house), and cher-zi (car). Therefore the emphasis of the ministry to the Mainland Chinese students should be on the first two groups.

In the last few years, the Chinese educational system has been completely remodelled in an effort to raise up a new generation of qualified specialists to fill the void created by the mindless equalitarianism of the Cultural Revolution period when all intellectuals were regarded with suspicion. Those who study abroad are, in the case of older professionals, already highly trained in their specific fields. Those who are younger are the children of intellectuals or government officials and, in most cases, the highly intelligent.

For the most part, mainland students study hard and take life seriously. They have little comprehension or sympathy for Western students who spend a lot of time going to parties and listening to pop music. For this reason, they may politely refuse the invitations to activities which they deem a waste of their valuable time. There will always be

(67.) Students who hold F-1 visas can be allowed to apply for permanent residency in the U.S. through job opportunity and marriage to a U.S. citizen and resident.

exceptions to the rule. The younger the students are, the more willing they tend to be to become involved in a wide scope of activities. Some of them have a genuine desire to build up their country while others may be more intent on furthering their own career.

In general, Chinese students abroad live simply. The majority receive fairly modest funding from their government, which allows for tuition fees, board, and a small amount of pocket money. Often, Chinese students live together in their university or college dormitories, taking turns to cook for each other. In some cases the Chinese government has bought apartments for its students and this can further isolate them from their host country.

To the Chinese, many Westerners may seem materially selfish, lazy, and over-individualistic. Living and studying in such an alien environment can cause tensions. Many of the older scientists and other post-graduates have wives and families back in China from whom they are separated for as long as two or three years without the possibility of any holiday to go back to visit them. Beyond loneliness, other strains may result from learning or constantly using English, from the pressure to study hard, even from adjusting to Western food, if they are placed in a position where they are unable to cook Chinese food for themselves. Another strain may result from political pressures. If it is found out by the Chinese government that Chinese scholars or students are

planning on not going back to China, they may face the immediate threat of being sent back to China and face some kind of punishment. According to the writer's understanding, there are over 100 Chinese scholars seeking political asylum now in the United States. The fact that a few have been known to commit suicide shows that these pressures do exist. Many of these scholars and students wish to immigrate to Western countries because of the freedom and material richness. When they have found out this is hopeless and that they have to go back to their nation, they experience great depression.

The most important thing is to know the universal need of the Gospel, and so approach Chinese students as any other human beings, with all their aspirations of life, work and success, frustrations and fears, and above all, their need for divine indwelling. Christians outside China should also know that as future leaders in China communicating the Gospel to these students is of utmost importance.

Making Friends with Mainland Chinese Students

In making friends with Chinese students, Western Christians must trust the Lord to guide them to the right person or persons at the right time. Prayer for guidance and wisdom is vital. Those who work or study at colleges and universities where Mainland Chinese are also studying have many opportunities for making contact.

No one can prescribe how to develop a friendship. However, the following are some of the activities Christians can enjoy together with Chinese students which may be helpful suggestions:

- Invitation to a meal at home with the family.
- Practicing English conversation or helping them understand a difficult word or passage in a book.
- Invitation to a meal at a restaurant.
- Accepting an invitation to eat a Chinese meal with them and learn how to cook Chinese recipes.
- Visit places of historical interest.
- Visit a school or hospital.
- Going to church together.
- Invitation to a Christian wedding ceremony (especially for the Chinese girls).

Knowing that these students are under heavy study loads, what they need is largely non-programmed, recreational time. So the suggestion is not to invite them to go out too frequently. But also, do not invite them so infrequently that Christians never really get to know them. Probably about once a month is right. During times of greater study pressure, such as mid-term and final exams and deadlines, they may enjoy having a meal with Christian friends, but they cannot come for an entire afternoon or evening. At other times, he may even be interested in staying overnight in one's house if he is permitted to do so. Seeing a movie or

watching television is not a good idea because Christians can not communicate with them during that time. Having some activity that involves meeting many of one's friends is not a good idea either.

Christians can expect some difficulties in communicating -- their English is probably broken, and they will not be able to express their thoughts as completely as they would like. Talk a little slower than usual, but not too slow. The most important thing is to pronounce one's words clearly and be ready to repeat one's question or comment in different words. Never repeat something the exact same way in a louder voice. It is not that they can not hear the first time, it is that one does not say it in a way that they understand.

Christians can talk about virtually any subject that interests both of the parties. The students' listening comprehension is very high, they are probably brilliant, and "child talk" will bore them. Search for some common interests to talk about -- hobbies, family, professional interests. The Chinese students are interested in learning about society and life in the host country. The local education system is a good topic too. Explain one's favorite interests to them, whether it is local or national politics, the stock market, or football.

There are at least two specific areas which Western Christians should not bring up. One is asking about their past under the Communist government in China. This is an

area often related to very dark experiences and an area which China is publically repudiating today. They may bring it up themselves eventually, but the host never should raise the subject. The other area is comparing any western countries with China. Comparisons between advanced countries and developing countries always prove embarrassing to the latter. China today should be compared to China in history so that Christians can genuinely talk about the tremendous progress China has made.

Religion is a topic that will come up naturally. It is worth waiting for this because when it comes naturally, talking about it will be far more meaningful!

In general, making friends with Mainland Chinese students should be an all-rounded approach, rather than a narrow concentration on purely "spiritual" activities and communication. Also, as friendship is a two-way affair, Christians should seek to learn from them and to appreciate the richness of Chinese culture.

Witnessing to Mainland Chinese Students

Witnessing to Chinese students depends a lot on the relationship of trust and friendship already established. There is a real need to pray for patience and discernment, to know the right moment to present that aspect of the Gospel most suited to the particular student's need.

An indirect approach may be best at first. The Christian festivals, especially Christmas, present

opportunities for inviting students to carol services and other Christian activities where there will be a clear Gospel message. Many have a keen interest in all aspects of Western culture, including religion. Some have visited churches and Christian activities on their own initiative. Some feel happier to attend a church, or Christian meeting if they can later tell their embassy that they went out of interest in American culture. If some politely refuse, or never seem to turn up -- they may have their own reasons. But do not use that as an excuse to give up on them.

One excellent way of attracting mainland students is to arrange a dinner, or other meal, for the particular professional group, such as doctors, scientists, or other group. A Christian speaker, who is also a member of that particular profession, may attract more interest than a minister or other lay Christian. However, it is wiser not to have such functions specifically for Mainland Chinese, but rather for foreign students in general, so that they will not feel conspicuous in attending. There is no reason why they should not be invited to church. A Gothic cathedral with a handful of old ladies may interest them as a cultural museum piece. But it may be better to take them to simple, more modern buildings, -rather than Gothic churches.

Witness through personal conversation is another good way. When the topic of religion comes up naturally, start with the basic ideas -- Who is God? Where did the universe

come from? Who is Jesus? What did He do? How do you know? Review your own personal salvation experience and viewpoints. Be ready for sharp questions about the Bible, Christian doctrines, and the history of Christianity. Explain the influence of Christianity on modern science, law, and arts.

Later on, if the students seem interested and comfortable with the idea, it may be good to invite them to a special meeting or a concert in the church. This would be better than going to a full worship service first. Taking them to morning church if they stay over Saturday night, may interest them. But taking them to both Sunday School and church would probably not be appropriate.

When a student shows genuine spiritual concern, do not tell everyone in the church or other Christian friends. News gets around, and that may cause difficulties for him. Some students are frightened that their embassy will find out about their interest or new found faith. Their feeling should be respected. If they are living with other Chinese students, it may be necessary not to talk about spiritual things when others are around, and even to take them to a church some distance from the neighborhood or possibly home. Remember that to become a Christian for them is a serious decision which, in the future, could bring persecution upon them in China, and may even cause them difficulties. By all means give them Bibles (in English, and in the Chinese simplified script) and good, simple Christian literature

which will help them when they go back. There are some Chinese and American Christian organizations involved in the printing and distribution of the Chinese Bibles, booklets, and Christian literatures to Mainland China and Chinese scholars in the United States. There are the American Bible Society (New York), the Christian Literature Crusade (Fort Washington, PA 19034), the Ambassadors for Christ (P.O. Box AFC, Paradise, PA 17562-0276), the Christian Communications Ltd. of North America (313 West 23rd Street, Suite 202, Chicago, IL 60616), the Pray for China Fellowship (P.O. Box 4037, Berkley, CA 94704), and the Chinese Christian Mission (951 Petaluma Blvd, S. Petaluma, CA 94953).

CHAPTER VI

OVERALL STRATEGIES: CONCLUSION

Over all, the Church in China is a Church which has impressed non-believers through patience and faithfulness in the midst of suffering. People who have become frustrated and hopeless have seen among Christians manifestations of the power of God and the love of Christ as they have comforted those in trouble, often seeing the healing power of the Gospel in body and minds.

Often the seed has been thrown into the ground and has died. But from it there springs forth life. The Church in China is not dead. While in relation to the vast population the percentage of Christians may seem to be very small indeed, God is continuing to preserve a people for Himself and that China will not be left without the light of the Gospel.

It is important that Christians outside China should understand the following qualities which have enabled the Church in China to remain true in spite of great difficulties:

1. The Church has been purified by suffering. There are no ulterior motives for people joining the Church.

2. Love and loyalty to the Lord Jesus is central in the thinking of the Chinese Christians. They realize that faith in Christ involves obedience and the taking up of the cross.

3. The power of prayer has become very real to them. They experience the healing ministry of the Holy Spirit and see other people delivered from disease and the oppression of evil spirits in answer to prayer.

4. Loyalty to one another is essential. They have learned to uphold one another in times of difficulty and realize the importance of mutual trust, for if one betrays the group, great suffering follows.

5. A Church that is rooted in the home and integrated into the family system finds itself less bound by the Western trappings of the past. The organizations and types of meetings so familiar to Christians in the West do not apply to the Church in China.

6. It is a Church which witnesses more by actions rather than words. There is little opportunity for preaching to the non-Christian world. The Christians show their faith by lowly acts of service and love to their neighbors.

7. The Word of God is precious. Although they lack teaching and suffer from the scarcity of the Scriptures and other Christian literature, they show their love for the Bible by the way in which they copy out and share portions of

Scripture.

It is our conviction, that it is the will of God that every man, woman, boy, and girl in China hear the Gospel. If man is going to accept or reject Jesus Christ, then man must have the opportunity to know of Jesus Christ. We believe that one quarter of the human race has not been forgotten by God. God, in His sovereign power and His sovereign plan, is going to make the evangelization of China possible. I believe that the time for a massive thrust is not very far away. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that we do as much as we can now in preparing for what we believe God is going to do, lest we be caught shorthanded and unprepared for the moving of the Holy Spirit.

It is my personal conviction that the Church of Jesus Christ must be deeply involved now in preparation for that great ingathering. This of course is in addition to what the Holy Spirit Himself is doing now to prepare the people and the Church of China for revival. God in His Sovereignty has certainly been working in China.

The Church is one Body. The Church in China is a part of the universal Body of Christ. We must be involved and concerned. We must be available. When one portion of the Body is in need, then the balance of the Body must be ready to respond to that need. The writer believes that it is the responsibility and the obligation of Christians outside of China to be involved now in what God is going to do in the

land of China before Jesus comes.

Ministry to China must be distinguished from the efforts of the Church inside China. Both efforts must proceed with great vigor. We must "Spare not," as Isaiah the Prophet adjures us. Above all, we must work in harmony with China's living Church and the Church around the world towards the strengthening of China's Church and the evangelization of her one billion souls.

On the other hand, Western Christians' action without prudence and caution might bring trouble to Chinese Christians in these uncertain days of continued control of religion. So, Christians outside of China need to be careful with the way that they treat China and the practices they use in presenting the Gospel.

Although it is impossible for Western Christians to go into China as missionaries, massive radio transmitters can be beaming the message into China, specially targeted literature which, written by expert editors and writers, can be delivered to China, and dedicated and qualified Christian educators and medical personnel can become a part of the witness of the Church in China. Beyond this, research groups, oversea Chinese Christians, foreign mission agencies, and Christian tourists can join hands together as a powerful mission force to push the evangelization in China.

The time has come for God's people to respond in love and unity. China offers the greatest challenge to the Church since the Great Commission was first issued.

APPENDIX A

A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY*

Christianity and Chinese History

<u>Dynasties/Dates</u>	<u>Events</u>
Shang (1766-1122 B.C.)	Prehistory Mythical rulers. Beginning writing. Silk culture.
Chou (1122-400)	Golden Age of Antiquity Confucius. Lao-tzu. Taoism.
Warring States (400-246)	Civil Strife Mencius.
Ch'in (246-206)	Unification of All China Great Wall begun. Burning of Confucian classics.
Han (206 B.C.-A.D. 220)	First Chinese Empire Triumph of Confucianism. Pcelain. Paper Foreign trade. Literature. Empire extended.
Three Kingdoms (220-617)	Feudalism Nomadic invasions. Strife. Romantic literature. introduction of Buddhism.
T'ang (617-907)	400 Empire Extended Buddhism flourishes. Trade with the West. 635 Nestorian missionaries come to China. 841 Buddhism persecuted. Confucianism resurgent. 900 By the end of the T'ang Dynasty traces of Christianity have all but disappeared.
Five Dynasties (907-960)	Barbarian Encroachments Civil Strife

*Quoted from G. Thompson Brown, Christianity in the People's Republic of China (Atlant, GA: John KNOx Press, 1983), p 1-3.

Sung
(960-1270)

Golden Age of Culture
First printed book. Painting. Foreign trade. Abacus. Footbinding introduced.
1206 Genghis Khan unifies Mongol tribes.
1227 Genghis Khan dies after having defeated the Chin.

Yuan (Mongol)
(1271-1368)

China Conquered By Mongols
China culture prevails. Trade with the West. Paper Money. Religious toleration
1260-1294 Kublai Khan
1271-1292 Marco Polo visits China
1294 John of Montecorvino and Franciscans begin missionary work in Beijing (Peking).
1368 All traces of Christianity disappear from China.

Ming
(1368-1644)

Mongols Expelled
Orderly government. Social stability. Examination system. Gentry class.
1601 Matteo Ricci and Jesuits arrive in Beijing.

Ch'ing (Manchu)
(1544-1911)

China Conquered By Manchus
Confucianism supreme. Rapid rise in population.
1645-1742 The "Rites Controversy." Jesuit influence declines. Persecutions.
1807 Robert Morrison, first Protestant missionary arrives in Canton.
1839-1860 "Opium Wars." "Unequal Treaties."
1844 Beginning of American Presbyterian mission work in Ningpo.
1866 Hudson Taylor founds China Inland Mission
1867 Beginning of Presbyterian, U.S. mission work in Hangzhou (Hangchow).
1883-1885 Sino-French War. French take Indo-China.
1894-1895 First Sino-Japan War. Taiwan ceded to Japan. China loses Korea.
1900 The "boxer year." Thirty-thousand Chinese Christians, 235 missionaries lost their lives.

Republic
(1911-1949)

	Nationalism
	Modernization. Wars and civil strife.
	Economic woes.
1911	Sun Yat-sen establishes the Republic.
1912-1927	Period of the warlords.
1919	May Fourth student antiforeign riots.
1921	Organization of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).
1927	First General Assembly of the Church of Christ in China - eleven synods, 120,000 communicants. Break between Kuomintang (KMT) and Communists. Chiang Kai-shek begins northern campaign against warlords to unite country.
1931-1932	Japan occupies Manchuria
1934-1935	Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung) begins "The Long March" to Yanan (Yenan).
1937	Outbreak of Sino-Japanese War
1941	Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor. Most missionaries in China interned, evacuated.
1945	Japan surrenders
1946	Missionaries return and resume work
1946-1949	Civil war. Inflation, chaos, corruption.

People's Republic
(1949-)

	Revolution
	Social reform. Marxist ideology. Self-reliance.
1949	October 1-proclamation of the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) by Mao Zedong.
1950	Beginning of the Three-Self patriotic Movement
	Accusation meetings. Missionaries begin to leave. The Korean conflict.
1952	Last PCUS missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Frank W. Price, leave China.
1956-1957	"Let a hundred flowers bloom" followed by antirightist campaign.
1958-1960	Great leap Forward
1960	China and Russia break relationships
1966-1976	The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution
1971	Beginning of "thaw" in U.S.-China relations. PRC seated at the U.N. "Ping-pong diplomacy."
1972	U.S. President Richard Nixon visits China. Shanghai Communique.
1975	Chiang Kai-shek dies.

- 1976 January: Zhou Enlai (Chou En-lai)
- September: Mao Zedong dies. Hua Guofeng (Kuo-feng) appointed chairman and premier. October: Gang of Four arrested
- 1977 Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-ping) reappointed as vice-premier. The Four Modernizations.
- 1978 "Billboard Democracy." U.S. President Jimmy Carter announces recognition of PRC.
- 1979 Mo En Church reopens. First public worship service in Shanghai in thirteen years. Churches across China begin to open. Bishop K.H. Ting leads first delegation of Christian leaders from PRC to visit U.S.
- 1980 Formation of the Chinese Christian Council
- 1981 NCC delegation from U.S. invited to China in first official visit.
- 1982 Twelfth Party Congress adopts new constitution.
- 1983 Anti-spiritual Pollution Movement.
- 1986 Universities' students hold democracy demonstration in 12 large cities.
- 1987 Hu Yaobang resigned. Hu was replaced by Zhao Ziyang.

APPENDIX B

The National Congresses of The Communist Party of China

ORDER	TIME	PLACE	NUMBER OF DELEGATES	PARTY MEMBERSHIP
First	July 1-5 1921	Shanghai	12	70
Second	July 16-23 1922	Shanghai	12	123
Third	June 10-20 1923	Guangzhou	Over 30 *	432
Fourth	Jan. 11-22 1925	Shanghai	20	950
Fifth	April 27, 1927	Wuhan	80	Over 57,900
Sixth	June 18- July 11 1928	Moscow	84 Alt. Delegates 34	Over 40,000
Seventh	Apr 23- June 11 1945	Yan'an	547 Alt. Delegates 208	1,210,000
Eighth	Sep. 15-27 1956	Beijing	1,026 Alt. Delegates 1,512	10,730,000
Ninth	Apr. 12-18 1973	Beijing	1,512	
Tenth	Aug. 24-28 1973	Beijing	1,249	28,000,000
Eleventh	Aug. 12-18 1977	Beijing	1,510	Over 35,000,000
Twelfth	1982	Beijing		Over 40,000,000

*(Among these, 27 delegates with recognized representation.)

Source: Quoted from China, A General Survey (Beijing, China: Foreign Languages Press, 1981): 64-5.

APPENDIX C

Education in China (1986)*

830,000 Elementary schools with 130 million student, 5.4 million teachers.

100,000 Secondary schools with 51 million students, 2.1 million teachers

1,016 Colleges/Universities with 1.8 million students

116 Medical Colleges with 157,000 students

30% of teachers in elementary and secondary schools not properly qualified

Of this year's university graduates:
69% were assigned to State directed jobs
21% entered jobs by negotiation,
10% to engage in postgraduate studies.

China only has 20,000 professional & part-time lawyers, but will need at least 300,000 by 200 A.D. Only 3,000 graduate in law each year from China's colleges/universities. 70,000 are currently taking correspondence courses in law.

94,000 minority people now study in universities i.e. 119% more than in 1980 and 38% more than 1983/4.

60% of the minority population (67 million) are still either illiterate or semi-illiteracy in China being about 23%. (80% in 1949)

By 1990 enrollment in fulltime vocational & technical schools (at secondary level) is expected to be 3.6 million, an increase of 65% over 1985.

* Quoted from "The People's Life -- Spelling It Out In Statistics," Pray for China 74 (Sep. - Oct., 1986): 10.

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APPENDIX D

Documentation of Tactic for the Control of Christianity

Summary of materials on the strengthening of controls on Christianity (for internal use).

1. Why should our country enact a policy of freedom of religious belief?

We are a socialist country directed by Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Mao Zedong. The communist party is atheistic and does not approve of the idealistic world-view of religion. Our general policy toward religion is step-by-step to weaken its influence, to reduce its domain, and to hasten its destruction. But this is a long-range historical task. What is religion? Religion is the opium which poisons the people. In certain historical conditions, religion arises from certain people who lack culture and knowledge as well as the theories of Marxism and the thought of Mao Zedong. They do not understand natural phenomena (such as wind, rain, thunder, and lightening), nor social realities (such as class oppression, human inter-relationships, material wealth, etc.). Because of this, they seek help from some mysterious power (illusions, idealism, etc.). It is a social and intellectual phenomenon.

Why is it said that destruction of religion is a long-range historical task? Because the birth, growth, and death of religion has social (i.e. political and economic) and cognitive origins. It is unrealistic that religion will very quickly disappear following the development of the socialist enterprise. It is even more incorrect to think of "eradicating religion" in a short time by a method of administrative fiat. Only through the entire process of socialist reconstruction will religion's power and influence be weakened naturally, indirectly, and tactically by eradicating the roots on which religion depends for its existence and by raising the level of people's knowledge. The policy of the freedom of religious belief is a correct response to the laws of the production, expansion, and demise of religion. It realizes correctly the guiding principles of the correct policy for handling religious problems.

2. How is the party's policy on the freedom of religious belief to be correctly and fully comprehended?

Our constitution decrees, "Citizens of the People's Republic of China who are 18 years old have freedom of religious belief, and they also have the freedom not to believe in religion and to propagate atheism." (1) . . . Religious workers have the freedom to propagate theism and

the validity of religion in legally recognized places. Non-believers also have the freedom to propagate atheism. . . . But to avoid unnecessary disputes between believers and non-believers, the believers may not propagate religion outside of churches, nor may non-believers propagate scientific atheism within the churches.

3. What are the legitimate religious activities, and what are illegitimate religious activities?

As citizens of the People's Republic of China, whether we are believers or non-believers, we all have the obligation to fervently love our country, support socialism, and uphold the leadership of the communist party. Given these premises, the following activities are legitimate:

- 1) People are allowed in their thoughts to believe in religion.
- 2) Believing masses may study scriptures, pray, and hold meetings in their homes.
- 3) Believing masses may go to lawfully recognized places to carry out collective religious activities.
- 4) Religious leaders may conduct religious activities in places legally recognized for religious activities.

The above are all legitimate religious activities; they are legal and entitled to the government's protection.

The following things go beyond the bounds of religious activities:

- 1) To instill religious thinking in one less than 18 years old; to lead a child or young person to participate in religious activities.
- 2) To interfere with politics, education, or marriage.
- 3) To disrupt production or social order.
- 4) To engage in economic exploitation under the name of offerings, to engage in financial deception, or to harm a person's health.
- 5) To use communal property for religious activities.
- 6) To restore religious privileges and oppressive, exploitative systems which have already been abolished.
- 7) To ask for or receive gifts from abroad and/or propaganda materials from Hong Kong or Macao.
- 8) To travel from place to place for free itinerant evangelism.

The above items are all illegitimate and not permitted. We must not allow things to drift, but must stop these activities through education.

When the cases are serious, they must be dealt with

severely. As for elements who use wild religious talk to deceive the masses, who cheat others out of their money, or who wear outer garments of religion in order to promote counter-revolutionary activities - these are no longer religious problems, but political problems. We must thoroughly disclose these acts and firmly halt them. As for those among them who have already committed crimes, they must be punished according to law without mercy.

4. How should the places of Protestant Christian meetings be managed?

Collective religious activities ought to be conducted in legally recognized places. Our country's pastors are very few, and there are not many believers who have received baptism. The vast majority of the masses who have become believers in the last two or three years do not have a religious knowledge which corresponds to their faith. These people engage in congregational activities under the signboard of "house meetings" and are very confusing. These meetings are not profitable for production. On the contrary, they disrupt social order. Therefore, they are not legitimate. We must control their illegitimate meetings and select methods of educating them by persuasion and dissuading them by positive leadership, thus causing them to progressively weaken and decrease. However, do not casually declare them illegal and avoid making the believing masses antagonistic. Towards protestant activities one may not take a laissez-faire attitude of "hear nothing do nothing," nor may one engage in the repressive measures of administrative orders or rough handling. We must guide them through firm persuasive education and energetically win them over. This is the only correct method.

5. How should one work vis-a-vis believing masses?

That the masses believe in Protestant Christianity can only be a question of individual belief. But why have they expanded so rapidly in the past two or three years? When we look for the causes, we see they are manifold. The most important is the severe destruction and disruption by Lin Biao and the "Gang of Four". Some people, because of illness or depression, ended up with a mental vacuum, so they found mental sustenance and pleasure through believing in religion. They have taken religious preaching as norms for their personal behavior and have accepted Christianity through the fraudulent propaganda of the petty leaders. The vast majority of them are working masses. For these people, on the one hand, one must energetically conduct political and ideological education on the four basic insistences as well as scientific and cultural education. With boldness and assurance one must positively guide the masses, especially the believing masses, by providing atheistic education and

6. Can party members believe in religion or not?

. . . No members of the Chinese Communist Party or of the Chinese Communist Youth League may believe in religion. Party members who have participated in religious activities must go through criticism and analysis sessions with party members so that they can self-consciously throw off the influence of religious thought. . . . Those who are firm over a long period and will not change must be persuaded to resign from the party and/or league, or otherwise be expelled from them. Cadres, staff, and teachers may not participate in or support religious activities. As for those who use the power of office to instigate religious activities, they must be seriously dealt with.

7. How must one act toward religious personnel?

Toward religious workers, one must continue to carry out the guiding principles of unification, education, and reform. In the case of influential figures, one must make political arrangements for them, show confidence in their work, and take care of their affairs of life. . . . As for ordinary religious workers, one may give them the necessary assistance and subsidy according to relevant documents and regulation. Frequently one must teach them to be patriotic and law-abiding, to hold fast to the policy of handling religions by the "Three-Selfs," and to resist outside infiltration firmly.

As for the Three-Self Patriotic Organization, one must bring their function into full play. As for the petty leaders who arrange the meeting places, one must meet with them at regular intervals, educate them on the legal system, communicate government policy, clarify their orientation, positively lead them, and urge them to increase their knowledge, to be patriotic and law-abiding, and not to engage in illegal activities. The kind of thinking which wants only freedom and no controls is mistaken. As for the minority who must be educated by criticism, and everyone else whose bad conduct produces bad results must be severely dealt with after ascertaining the real situation.

8. In what way can one fully and correctly implement the policy on religion?

To work with religions correctly is extremely important. It is related to the basic benefits received from political stability, economic adjustment, and the establishment of the Four Modernizations. It is an integral part of the Party's whole work. The implementation of the Party's policy on religion must not be mistakenly construed as supporting religion. It is precisely the opposite - it is to weaken religion. Whether the religious policy can be thoroughly

implemented or not depends on the one hand on whether the large believing masses have been united or not, and on the other hand on whether or not it has contributed to the weakening of the force and influence of religion.

To strengthen the leadership and control of the basic-level party committee over religious work is the key to working with Protestant Christianity correctly. A special task force on religious work must be formed in districts, communes, and neighborhood residence committees where there are Christian activities. To these task forces cadres who work in the areas of propaganda, public security, youth, and women must be attracted, with a party vice-secretary as the head of each force. This arrangement produces better results than simply allowing comrades in the public security or propaganda departments to run the whole work. If only we can strengthen our leadership, and accomplish our work, the chaotic situation of Christianity will be overcome, and the churches will be set straight on a patriotic and law-abiding track. This will greatly benefit the gradual reduction and weakening of the strength and influence of religion, and the unification of the large believing masses in the service of the Four Modernizations. (April 2, 1982)

Sources: Quoted from China and the Church Today 4:6 (1982), p 10-2.

APPENDIX E

CHURCH GROWTH IN CHINA -- PLAYING THE

NUMBERS GAME*

No one told the Holy Spirit that Christianity cannot flourish in an environment dominated by an atheistic ideology. So, when missionaries were forced to leave China after the communist revolution, God stayed on. And in the following 40 years, he did some remarkable things.

Sorrowful missionaries departing China in the waning years of the 1940's left behind some 7000,000 Protestant believers -- the fruit of more than a century of labor.

In the years that followed, the tiny Christian minority was buffeted from every side. Their leaders were imprisoned or killed, their churches closed, their Bibles destroyed, their children re-educated. They were ridiculed, beaten, threatened. Many lost their jobs, their educational opportunities, their homes. Some even lost their lives.

When at last China's doors began once again to open, anxious Christians from outside entered the country to see whether a faithful remnant remained. What they found was a vibrant, growing church many times the size of that left behind by the missionaries.

Since then, the 15 years of on-again-off-again tolerance toward the practice of religion the church has continued to flourish. Today, no observer disputes the fact that the church in China has grown remarkably -- despite its communist environment.

What is hotly contested is the actual number of Protestant believers in China. Estimates range from less than four million to over 100 million. In fact, no one knows how many Chinese Christians there actually are today. Statistics are compiled from reports of church leaders throughout China. Some groups carefully cross-check information, comparing data from a variety of sources. Others may take information from trusted sources at face value.

Why does it matter whether we believe there are four million or 100 million Christians in China? No matter which figure we take, when it is compared with China's billion-plus population, the number of non-Christians is staggering. Although it is obvious God has done great things in China, it is equally obvious a large task remains.

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Yet, many Christian China watchers believe the numbers are critically important. The smaller numbers invariably are stated publically be representatives of China's officially-recognized China Christian Council and the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM), a government-mandated organization that deals with church affairs.

The top Protestant leader in China is Bishop K. H. Ting, who is president of the China Christian Council and chairman of the national committee of the TSPM. He estimates the number of baptised Protestants is close to four million, and he labels as "untrue" the reports of 50 million or more Protestants not related to the China Christian Council.

The only people not related to the CCC are "scattered small groups that we can't reach," Bishop Ting told me recently. He cited the large size of the country and geographical distances as the only reason for the existence of Christian groups not associated with the CCC. "There is no theological or political ground for the existence of two groups," he said.

Yet, most China watchers say it is these kinds of differences that account for the existence of an independent house church movement that far outnumbers churches associated with the CCC.

Jonathan Chao, founder and director of the Chinese Church Research Center of Hong Kong, estimates there are 200,000 to 300,000 independent house churches. "This is about 95 percent of the Christian population of China," he said. Chao believes there are at least 50 million Protestant Christians in China today.

"Independent house churches refuse to join (the government-authorized TSPM) in order to keep their freedom of conscience not to submit to the state in church affairs and to have freedom to preach the gospel as they wish," Chao said.

However, Chao and others sympathetic to the independent house church movement readily admit that most churches and house churches associated with the TSPM would be considered evangelical. Most, however, must agree to some restrictions concerning evangelism and church policy.

But the bottom line for Christian China watchers is that the independent house church movement exists as a vital, growing body that comprises the majority of the church in China. David Wang, executive vice-president, Asian Outreach International, Ltd., believes Bishop Ting denies the existence of the independent house churches "because the government would have less and less confidence in the TSPM, since they are not controlling that many groups."

Others, like former China missionary David Adeney, warn that Christians outside China must beware giving unqualified support to the TSPM at the expense of the millions who attend unregistered churches. Adeney, who is now a minister-at-large with Overseas Missionary Fellowship, said full acceptance of the TSPM would make it easier for the government to put pressure on the independent house churches.

How many Christians are there in China? Estimates abound. One thing is sure. God continues to build his church in China.

* Quoted in Sharon E. Mumper, Pulse 22:7 (April 10, 1987): 8.

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