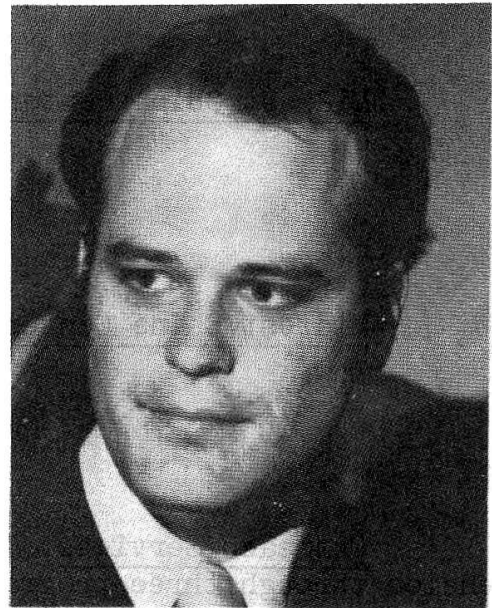


MIDWEST CHINA CENTER

An Overview

Background. The Midwest China Center was established in March 1975 and is supported by a unique collaboration of Upper Midwestern church, academic, civic, cultural, community, and business organizations. The only independent, regional center of its kind in the United States, it is a non-political, non-sectarian, not-for-profit educational institution dedicated to raising levels of information and awareness about the Chinese people and their culture. Its purposes are to (1) provide briefing and information services, resources, and programs to constituencies, (2) stimulate academic research and study project, and (3) serve as liaison for China concerns at regional, national, and international levels. The Center's service and outreach programs encompass churches, seminaries, universities, colleges, secondary and elementary schools, civic, cultural, business, and community groups.

The Center's first Executive Director, Dr. Donald E. MacInnis, left the Center in February 1980 to take charge of the oral history project and the missionary research activities of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers in Maryknoll, New York. Dr. P. Richard Bohr, formerly Assistant Professor of Asian History at Ohio Wesleyan University, Ohio, and a specialist on Sino-Western cultural encounter and religion/Christianity in China, assumed the Executive Directorship in July 1980. (Dr. Bohr served as Lay Chaplain at Diocesan Boys' School in Hong Kong, 1972-74. He is author of Famine in China and the Missionary (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), Religion in the People's Republic of China: The Limits of Toleration (Washington, D.C.: The China Council, 1982), and the soon-to-be-published The Politics of the Heavenly Kingdom: Hung Hsiu-ch'uan and the Rise of the Taiping Revolution.)



DR. P. RICHARD BOHR

Resources. The Center's China Research Library has over 1600 circulating volumes, 60 noncirculating serials, newspapers, and translation series, and 60 films and audio-visual materials, covering all aspects of China. This library is the Mid-west's largest accessible private library on China.

Publications. Until recently, the Center was one of a very few sources of information about the Chinese people and their culture. But as the growing number of media and other resources has begun to educate the American public in the past few years, the Center's role has become one of interpretation and analysis of this information explosion. For this reason, we publish the following:

China Perspectives: occasional journal of the Midwest China Oral History, Archives, and Museum Collection, described below, published since September 1977

China Update: topical treatment of current events in China; circulates throughout North America, published three times a year since October 1977

China Spectrum: in-depth analysis of issues on the contemporary China scene (including articles on religion in China today, agriculture in China, the condition of Chinese factory workers); published three times a year since March 1981

Midwest China Center Newsletter: current overview of events in China and how they relate to Sino-American relations, books, resources, services, activities, events, etc. relating to China available in the American Midwest; published three times a year since September 1982

Midwest China Center Occasional Papers series: monograph-length publications of matters of contemporary importance in China; the first number is that of P. Richard Bohr, The Meaning of Montreal: The Chinese Churches and Us (1981)

Outreach Services. The Center serves its Upper Midwest constituencies through three programs, described below:

(1) Church Education. Our outreach services to church communities is a top priority at this critical juncture in our relationship with the religious communities of the PRC. After three decades of isolation from Christians outside China and after ten years of persecution during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), Christians in China are beginning to seek contact with global Christianity.

The major thrust at this point is to educate our church membership about the nature of Christianity in China today and about the need to relate to Christian sisters and brothers in China based on mutuality--the theme of the Montreal Conference. We endeavor to educate all levels of church organization -- especially at the grass-roots -- about Chinese church life, theology, and church-state relations. We are soon to publish a Religion in China Newsletter, which will bring this material, written by Chinese Christians themselves, to our constituencies. We will share with Chinese Christians news of our Christian life as well as resources, publications, and other material in the spirit of mutuality. We are trying to establish sister congregation relationships through a simple exchange of letters and religious materials between congregations in China and those in the Upper Midwest. This principle of sharing has proven to be very meaningful to our constituencies.

The highlight of our sharing effort was our hosting Dr. Jiang Wenhan, Associate General Secretary of the Chinese YMCA and a renowned Christian scholar now at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, as the Center's Scholar-in-Residence during November and December 1981. He shared with a host of Center constituencies and was able to bring Chinese and Americans closer together in the spirit of mutuality.

Currently, our Center is involved in wide-ranging efforts to serve as a national consulting resource on religion in China.

(2) Schools and Community Outreach. The Center works with the schools to develop curriculum materials so that the teaching of China is responsible and accurate. Community outreach is carried out largely through the organization of forums which bring important issues before the general public.

(3) Midwest China Oral History, Archives, and Museum Collection. This unique Collection links the Center's outreach function with its mandate for research. The Collection, under the direction of Mrs. Jane Baker Koons, is a rich source of primary material on the lessons to be learned from the U.S.-China encounter -- especially as it was conducted through the missionary presence in China. It contains 110 published narratives of Midwesterners, primarily missionaries, who were in China before 1950 and has served as the basis of a great number of published articles, monographs, and books as well as doctoral dissertations. Center staff are now making increasing use of the vast museum collection in public education to show the importance of the American missionary encounter in China.

Liaison. The Center's third purpose is liaison among China-interested organizations at regional, national, and international levels. The Center is linked with all study centers around the world studying

religion in China. It also forms coalitions with academic institutions, linking them with the Center's academic members through the operation of the Upper Midwest East Asia Seminar. The Center also maintains relationships with a wide variety of China-interested organizations. Their materials are made available at the Center.

Facilities. The Center is located on the third floor of the library building of Luther-Northwestern Seminaries in St. Paul, Minnesota.



THE LIBRARY

Special projects are funded by designated cash grants.

Here, we maintain our library, an extensive museum with permanent displays of Chinese artifacts, and offices. (We have no formal relationship with the Seminaries other than the fact that they donate space, utilities, and maintenance to us.)

Staff. The Center's staff includes the Executive Director, program coordinators, Office Manager, and work/study-intern students from member institutions.

Funding. The Center's operating budget is derived from annual dues of Institutional Members, from contributions from Corporate and Individual Associates (over 200), and from income derived from service fees.