

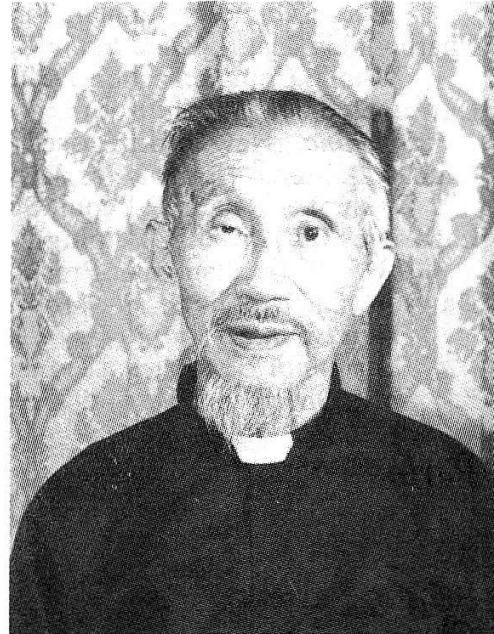
## *News in Brief*

### **Religion in the News**

#### ***Fr. Francis Wang Yung, S.D.B., dies in Hong Kong***

Fr. Francis Wang Yung, S.D.B., passed away peacefully on March 19, 1994, at St. Paul's Hospital, Hong Kong. Fr. Wang was 83.

Francis Wang was born in Shanghai on October 5, 1910. He was professed a member of the Society of Don Bosco in Turin, Italy on September 30, 1931. After being ordained a priest on August 15, 1940, he worked both in Hong Kong and in Kunming. He was detained in prison and in a labour camp from 1951 until 1979 when he was released and rehabilitated. He came back to Hong Kong in 1989.



#### ***Religious Affairs Bureau Officials Meet***

Some 100 officials of the Religious Affairs Bureau "met January 12-16 to assess and formulate means and goals for religious work to cope with China's current situation." This was prior to the January 31 issuing of religious regulations #144 and #145 (UCAN Feb. 23, pp. 14-15).

#### ***Protestants Arrested for Violating Religious Regulations***

Seven Protestants, that included two Indonesian Chinese, two Hong Kong Chinese, and one American Chinese led by Rev. Dennis Balcombe, an American and pastor of the Hong Kong Revival Christian Church, were arrested on February 10 in a village near Fangcheng, Henan Province, for conducting prayer services in a house church. They were freed on February 15, and flew from Beijing to Hong Kong the same day. Rev. Balcombe reported that the police confiscated his computer, cameras, and cash worth \$100,000 HK, and that one of the HK Chinese was beaten during the arrest. Three Chinese Christians were reported detained. These are the first arrests since the new religious regulations went into effect on January

31. Officials maintained that Articles 3,4 and 8 of Regulations #144 had been violated (*UCAN* Feb. 18, pp. 8-9; *CNCR*, 2286, 2288).

### ***Young Christian Beaten to Death Following Detention***

According to the March 11, 1994 issue of *China News and Church Report*, a reliable Hong Kong source reported that a young believer of an unregistered house church in southwestern Hunan Province was beaten to death by officials of the Public Security Bureau in early January. The young man, Zheng Musheng, was part of a group who took part in a Christian meeting in an unregistered place of worship. At about 10:00 p.m. the meeting was broken up by the PSB and about 20 Christians were detained. All, except Zheng, were released after paying a fine of 150 yuan (approximately \$18.00). After Zheng was handcuffed and falsely accused of having raped 70 women, he was taken to the Huangni River PSB office where, according to the report, he died after torture. His family was notified only eight days later. Apparently, to hide any evidence of wrongdoing, the PBS had the body cremated (*CNCR* 2291, March 11, 1994).

### ***More than Thirty members of the PBS Surround Fuan Church***

At 5:00 a.m., while Fathers Miao Lehun and Guo Xijing, with a few seminarians, were teaching about 100 novices gathered in Chengjialong parish near Fuan, Mindong Diocese, more than thirty members of the Public Security Bureau surrounded the church. Teaching materials were confiscated and the priests and seminarians were taken to the PSB office and the young women were sent back to their families. The priests and seminarians were later released. The diocese has 400 Sisters still in formation. There are 35 priests and 2 bishops to minister to an estimated 60,000 Catholics who worship in the unofficial church (*EDA* March 1, 1994).

### ***John Paul II Eager to Visit China***

According to the January 26 *South China Morning Post*, Pope John Paul II would like to visit China, but Beijing repeated that the Vatican must first sever ties with Taiwan and stop "interfering" in the internal affairs of the Catholic Church in China. Normalizing diplomatic ties does not seem imminent.

### ***Young Women Seek to Join Religious Community in Taiwan***

Over 30 young women in Heilongjiang signed a letter to the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross, a community that formerly worked in Northeastern China, asking to join the Sisters in Taiwan. The Sisters of Mercy are carefully studying the situation to make sure the young women are not motivated by a desire just to leave China (*UCAN* Feb. 2, p. 17).

***Asia Watch Publishes Report on Religious Prisoners***

Robin Munro and Mickey Spiegel of *Asia Watch* issued a 600 page report in February on political and religious prisoners in China. A list of names is included (*Christian Life Weekly*, Taipei, March 20, p. 8.)

***Billy Graham Cautions Against Unfounded Accusations***

Rev. Billy Graham visited China January 18-27, met with Protestant and government leaders in Nanjing and Beijing, and preached in 2 churches in Beijing. He then visited North Korea, January 27-Feb. 1. He said that the situation in China is improving: "Two, three or four hundred years is the way they look at things, but we want them to do something overnight... We have to be patient when dealing with a culture that is the oldest continuous civilization in the world. You can't turn a country like that around on a dime as you can turn a ship in the Pacific... We need to be very careful, and I would say to Christians, very prayerful, that we don't make accusations that we can't back up" (*UCAN*, Feb. 8, 1994 p. 9).

***Auto Victim's Ashes Returned to Taiwan***

The ashes of Sr. Li Weiping, killed in an auto accident outside of Lanzhou, Gansu Province, in Northwest China, in January, were returned to Taiwan on February 22. Sister Li Weiping was the Taiwan provincial of the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit. She was traveling with two priests (cf. *Tripod* # 79), when the bus they were in collided with a truck on an icy road (*Shantao Catholic Weekly*, Gaoxiong, March 20, p. 5).

***First Island Born Bishop Dies at 59***

Bishop Joseph Lin Tianzhu of Jiayi, Taiwan, the first bishop of Taiwan to be born on the island, suffered a severe stroke on Feb. 27 and died March 4 at age 59 (*UCAN* March 11 p. 11).

***CCPA Vice Chairman and Secretary General Dies in Beijing***

Paul Zhu Shichang, 63, vice chairman and secretary general of the CCPA, died in Beijing, January 12 of cancer. Zhu joined the Patriotic Association in the 1950s. In recent years he was instrumental in helping to restore church property, and in 1993 he was elected to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. He had been the CCPA secretary general since 1987, and vice chairman since 1992. Bp. Zong Huaide, head of the Bishops' Conference of the government approved Catholic Church in China, officiated at the funeral on January 17 (*UCAN* Feb. 1, 1994 p. 9).

## Other Items of Interest

### *Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom Again!*

Many foreign experts in China found the following letter in their mail boxes recently:

"Dear Foreign Experts:

The State Bureau of Foreign Experts and the *China Daily* are co-sponsoring a new column in the paper--Foreigners' Forum.

Foreign experts working (or who once worked) in China are invited to contribute to the column by giving their opinions on China's politics, economics, culture, education, environmental protection, nationality and other topics as well as their suggestions on how to solve any other problems.

Stories should be objective and original.

Preference will be given to those written in English or those with good English translations. Please try to restrict your stories to 1,000 words.

The sponsor of the column--State Bureau of Foreign Experts and *China Daily*, as practiced everywhere, reserve the right to edit as well as to decide whether the stories are to be published or not. Authors will receive contribution fees from the *China Daily* after their articles are published.

Outstanding contributions will be selected by a special appraisal committee once a year and will be awarded first, second and third prizes.

Contributors are asked to give their nationalities, professional titles, addresses and names of the Chinese units they are working for as well as the addresses in their own countries (written both in English and Chinese).

Contributions should be mailed to: Foreigners Forum, the Policy Department of the State Bureau of Foreign Experts, Beijing, 100873 or to Opinion Department, *China Daily*, Beijing 100029.

Thank you for your co-operation."

Yes, indeed! Let a 100 Flowers bloom again!

### *Party Leaders Seek to Tighten Controls*

At the January 24-27 Chinese Communist Party Conference, Party leaders, in an effort to secure more social stability, sought to tighten controls over ideology, culture and the media. President Jiang Zemin urged all present "to strengthen and improve Party leadership in ideological and media work" ((SCMP Jan. 26, 1994). *Xinhua* reported that more surveillance would be exercised over videos, pornographic materials, magazines and newspapers. The problem of maintaining stability in the post Deng Xiaoping era, and of maintaining party leadership are major concerns of the Communist regime. Intellectuals report that the CCP has tightened its control over publications, media and cultural performances. Part of the

problem stems from the fact that the Party itself is suffering from an identity crisis and failing to provide "spiritual and ideological guidance for the government and the country." Deng has urged the Party to preserve the "spiritual purity" of the people and to fight against the negative influences of the capitalistic world. According to Deng only "patriotism" can fill the ideological vacuum. Deng's definition of "patriotism" is love for the Communist Party (CNCR 2281, n. 28, 1994, and SCMP Jan. 22, 1994).

### *Academy of Social Sciences Report Surfaces Problem Areas*

The March 3 edition of Hong Kong's *Dagong Daily*, leaked the main points of an Academy of Social Sciences report entitled, *China in 1993-1994 - Social Situation, Analyses and Forecasts*. The five problem areas noted in the "Blue Paper" are

1. Disputes over allocating tax dollars;
2. Corruption;
3. Development disparity - gap between rich and poor regions, also between rich and poor individuals;
4. Unrest among ethnic and religious groups which may lead to incidents;
5. Public order - floating population, not enough police officers, loopholes in the public security system, spread of social evils;

Reforms and good government, plus crime fighting and propaganda are all needed, the report concluded (*China News Analysis* #1506, March 15, 1994 p. 4).

### *Delegates to National Party Conference Advocate Mercy Killing*

A group of delegates to the NPC proposed a law in support of mercy killing, which they claim would promote socialist humanitarianism. Reasons alleged for the law are that old people are often in deep pain, or incapable of taking care of themselves and become a financial and psychological burden on their children, relatives and their country (SCMP, March 21, 1994).

### *New Rules to Govern Marriages*

The State has just approved a new marriage law geared to stem the rise in illegal marriages, unauthorized fees and to protect people's rights in divorce. The Ministry of Civil Affairs estimates that there are 2 million illegal or improper marriages in the country each year. Violations include underage marriages (20 for women and 22 for men), parental arrangements of marriages, marriages for money, bigamy and marriage with close relatives. There are about 10 million marriages yearly in China. The number of divorces in 1992 (last available figures) was 310,000 as compared with 190,000 in 1979 *China Daily*, Feb. 26, 1994).



### ***China Reduces Work Week to 44 hours***

March 5 marked a new experience for many Chinese workers-a two day weekend. China's 48 hour week working schedule has been reduced to 44 hours giving people extra time to rest, to be with their families and even to take on a second job! (*China Daily*, March 7, 1994).

### ***Shanghai Work Force Dissatisfied***

In Shanghai, 120,000 workers have been forced to leave their posts as a consequence of the present restructuring. They must now live on their basic salary. This is between 50 per cent and one third of their previous income. Even though only 6 per cent have actually been dismissed, all feel that they 'have been sacrificed to the development of society' and that they are no longer as important as the Party claims. Women, the handicapped and the sick have been the first targets of this reduction in personnel. Given the rise in medical fees, the handicapped and the sick have become the poorest in the city (*China News Analysis* #1505 March 1, 1994 p. 6).

### ***Universities in Beijing Set up Fee System***

Starting this year, freshmen in Beijing's ten universities will pay fees. The tuition fee will be fixed in accordance with educational costs, and will vary between 1000 and 1500 yuan. A system of scholarships and of loans to students will also be set up (*Wenhui Daily*, Feb. 4, p. A3).

### ***Drop in Hong Kong Residents Emigrating to the West***

The number of emigrants from Hong Kong to Western countries dropped for the first time in four years. According to government figures, 54,000 local residents left Hong Kong in 1993. This is 20% fewer than the expected number. Many attribute the reduction to the fact that compared with the economic conditions in the West, where young people often find it difficult to find a good job, Hong Kong provides many opportunities. For the most part Hong Kong people choose to emigrate to Australia (5,925 from July 1992 to July 1993), the United States (13,142 in 1993 compared to 14,882 in 1992) and Canada (31,200 in 1993 against 29,900 in 1992). Most who leave the territory are young professional between the ages of 30-40 (*China Daily*, Feb. 16, 1994).