

differentiation according to citizenship in the hiring of all civil servants," in a number of local government administrations the doors of employment opportunities for regular civil service posts have been closed, and both the status and advancement levels possible for Korean teachers have been reduced.

In this Symposium, we have confirmed that the victims among Koreans in Japan of the imperial war have been continually left out of any due redress under the "political resolution" of the 1965 Japan-Korea Treaty. In addition we were moved to take up a deeply painful burden in hearing the cries of those conscripted as army-attached "comfort women." We acknowledged that this is not simply an instance of sufferings in war; rather, that the suppression of word of its reality until the present is based upon traditional discriminatory attitudes towards women. We believe that the right resolution to the issue of compensation and redress for such victims will be made as such will make possible the prospect of peace not only between Korea and Japan, but throughout Asia.

This time, in addition, we confirmed that the presence of foreign workers and their human rights problems are pressing mission issues for the churches of both Japan and Korea, and that an ecumenical network for dealing with them is necessary.

Then also, we strongly affirmed that for a long time, because of the division of the homeland, the Korean people in Japan have lost their powers of joint autonomy, such division being a major block to the establishment of their human rights. This only increases the urgency of ending the North-South division, and we are sure that the working out of a reconciliation between "South" and "North" in Korean society in Japan will certainly contribute to the unification of the homeland.

Based upon these deliberations, we determined that the KCCJ and the churches in Korea and Japan should cooperate more in dealing with the issues of Koreans in Japan as a mission topic, and that each in its own position should

take up diligently the matters noted below for action.

Common Concerns and Commitments

* To carry out joint engagements aimed at establishing the basic human rights of the Korean people in Japan and bringing about the radical revision of the Alien Registration Law.

* To engage in activities in publications, research studies, personnel and information exchanges, and education, with a view towards improving the status and the political, economic, social and cultural roles of the Koreans in Japan.

* To carry out fact-finding investigations concerning the situations of victims of the Japanese Pacific war--specifically, the conscripted, army-attached "comfort women" and those among Koreans in Japan--jointly promote a movement to gain compensation and redress for them.

* To engage in efforts to overcome the denial of human rights of women and sex discriminations, having been conscientized about the present situation in these areas.

* To cooperate with other churches of Asia to deal with the human rights issues of foreign workers in both Japan and Korea, and pressure the governments of both countries to bring about the early ratification of relevant human rights accords.

* To work out the gospel mission of reconciliation in anticipation of the "Jubilee Year" (1995).

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MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE IN KYOTO

The Role of Religions in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Resolution and in The Creation of Justice and Peace in the Middle East

The World Conference on Religion and Peace held an International Conference in Kyoto November 6-7, 1992. There were 30 Christians, Jews and Muslims from the Middle East and 10 Christian, Buddhists and Shintoists from Japan attending the meeting. The following statement was drafted by the participants from the Middle East and approved by the entire conference.

We meet as Jews, Christians and Muslims from the Middle East and as guests of the Japanese Chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace to deliberate: "The Role of Religions in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Resolution: Construction of Justice and Peace in the Middle East." We are grateful for the constructive participation of Japanese religionists at this meeting. We acknowledge those positive values in Japanese society which can serve as a possible model for the resolution of conflict in the Middle East. Specifically we note the remarkable history of religious tolerance and cooperation in Japan and the commitment of the Japanese, by the terms of their constitution, to rejection of war as a means of resolving international conflicts.

Our religious faiths teach us that genuine dialogue among peoples of differing religions is both possible and can bear positive fruit. Real dialogue depends upon honesty and frankness, upon a willingness to say things that may be painful for the other to hear, but at the same time, to listen to the other with openness. In dialogue we commit ourselves with love and respect to the "otherness" of the other. In this spirit, we reaffirm the agreements and recommendations of previous related WCRP meetings held in Melbourne (1989), in Sigtuna (in conjunction with the Life and Peace Institute) (1990), in Rovereto and in Assisi (1991).

We note the changes and new opportunities for peace in the Middle East since Assisi and Madrid: the continuation of the peace talks which have offered opportunities for various parties to the conflict to meet for the purpose of strengthening those talks. We pray that God guide this process forward toward a just, comprehensive and lasting peace, and that this peace be achieved soon in our time.

As religious people we are convinced that this peace must be based on justice, the legitimate rights of all peoples in the region, self-determination, all relevant UN resolutions and security on an equal basis for the state of Israel and the state of Palestine in the Occupied Territories. Moreover, the mutual recognition of states should provide the basis for working toward agreement on the rights of return for all peoples concerned with the implementation of addressing these rights.

We agree that religions should foster rather than hamper efforts to achieve peace. The Abrahamic tradition - sacred to Judaism, Christianity and Islam - reminds us of our distinctive identities as well as our shared heritage. This shared heritage and belief in one God, which sees human beings as God's most noble creation, summon all believers to be peacemakers. As religious believers we recognize the importance of the holy city of Jerusalem to be included on the agenda of the peace talks.

We agree that the stereotyped images of Jews and Christian and Muslims Arabs do not do justice to the reality of these peoples and do not serve the cause of peace. We call upon religious groups, governments, media and educators to eradicate the demonization that results from such stereotypes. Such actions are essential to building mutual trust.

Trust must be built upon the full protection of human rights. Continuous violations of human rights in the Occupied Territories is intrinsically wrong and imperils the peace talks. A cessation of building and expanding settlements in the Occupied Territories is essential to fostering confidence during the peace talks. Further, we condemn all forms of violence and the proliferation of arms in the Middle East which also threaten the peace process.

Our religious commitments, combined with the urgency of the moment, compel us to call upon our religious communities, governments and international organizations to take bold and heroic decisions for peace.

We also call upon the World Conference on Religion and Peace to make known the work of this conference and to continue its efforts to promote cooperation among religions for peace with justice in the Middle East.

We respectfully call upon our Japanese religious colleagues to be more significantly involved in peace making efforts in the Middle East. Further, we respectfully call upon the Japanese

government to exercise its good offices in playing a positive role in peace making and in promoting development in the region.

Confident in the goodness of our religions, we live in hope of peace.

WORKSHOP ON "COMFORT WOMEN" ISSUES

On November 6 there was a one-day workshop with Christian women on the issue of what the Church can do about the "comfort women" issue. This workshop was sponsored by the NCC Women's Association, Japan YWCA and the JWCTU and was held at the St. Barnabus Seikokai (Anglican) Church. There were 75 women representing various denominations who participated in the meeting. The special speaker for the day was Ms. Yoon Young Ae, general secretary of Korean Church Women United.

In the morning there was a Bible study. The Bible study was given by Dr. Hisako Kinukawa. She spoke on the topic of sexual violence against women in the Bible. She read the passage from John 8 about the adulterous woman and dealt with the perspective through which we see this story and with perspectives through which we can re-interpret this story. She categorized sexual violence against women from three points. First, Leviticus 18 deals with the law which calls for the separation of women from men as possessions of men. Second, she dealt with sexual relationships with prostitutes as related in the Bible. Her third point was that women have become the victims in the sustenance of male social status or objects only for male comfort. Dr. Kinukawa said that when the word "prostitution" is translated into Japanese the translator (usually a man) does not translate it directly as prostitution but uses "softer" words.

During Jesus' life there were prostitutes and men, by law, had the right to divorce women. However, Jesus refused to recognize that right

whether we can take the transgressors to court and take legal action to get things changed. If this law passed, then all the churches in Malaysia would have to become accessible to the disabled. However, as a Christian, it is sad to see that it requires a law to force the church to finally change its attitude toward the disabled. The church should be the first to set an example to others and make the places accessible so as to include everybody.

KCCJ

Statement from the 9th Human Rights Symposium of the Korean Christian Church in Japan

The 9th Symposium on Human Rights for Koreans in Japan was convened Sept. 13 to 15th at the Japan Christian Academy Kansai Seminar House in Kyoto with 60 persons attending. The Symposium was sponsored by the Social Action Department, the Korean Christian Center and the Research-Action Institute for Koreans in Japan of the KCCJ. This time, the Symposium was especially meaningful, being strengthened for solidarity action and deepening discussions through the participation of several persons from both the churches in Korea and the Japanese churches.

Through understandings built up in the 8 symposiums held since 1977 and 2 mission consultations on "Current Issues of Koreans in Japan," we have been led to engage in the KCCJ's callings in the context of where it is placed, learning from Jesus Christ, the initiator and the fulfiller of the mission of God's Kingdom toward all people. That engagement has given us determination to go forward in the way of gospel mission, always seeking new strength within the life struggles of Korean folk in Japan against the dehumanization (alienation / assimilation) forced upon them as they continue to be oppressed politically, exploited economically, isolated socially and marginalized

culturally. Through the Bible study on Micah this time, we gained a common commitment to go on with new fervor in the calling to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8).

This year's Symposium gathered to set out new objectives based upon the struggles against the Alien Registration Law (A.R.L.) which spread widely after 1980 from the fingerprinting refusals, and upon the actions taken in respect to the "1991 Problem" of reviewing the legal status of the Koreans in Japan.

The A.R.L. struggles in the 1980's gave birth to wide solidarity with many Christians, citizens' movements, and others within Japan and abroad. This solidarity continues as a movement which is striving to create a society where Japanese and foreign residents in Japan can live together. All of these things, together with expressions of international opinion regarding the human rights of the Korean and other foreigners in Japan, are the fruits of an extensive, powerful movement.

However, by their January 1991 "Korea-Japan Memorandum," the two governments of Japan and Korea (R.O.K.) imposed a "political solution" which contained no basic resolution of the issues of Koreans in Japan. Under the memorandum, the new special permanent status (for former Asian colonial citizens and their descendants in Japan), rather than being recognized as a right, continues as nothing more than a residence permit still with the possibility of deportation. Besides, anyone who returned temporarily to his homeland has been disqualified. Also, no advances were made to establish legal guarantees of rights of return to Japan, of ethnic education, or of participation in even local civic affairs and government. The fingerprinting system (in the 1992 A.R.L. revision) is maintained with only permanent status foreign residents exempted. For them, in its place, a detailed family registration system has been initiated, indicating the lack of any change in the basic nature of the ideology of control and exclusion. In addition, because the Korean government accepted "a reasonable

group in Malaysia. If they were, there would be official statistics regarding them. However, there was a survey done by the Social Welfare Office in 1958 and 1959 which showed the following statistics; out of the 5% of the population surveyed, there were 15,000 visually impaired people, hearing impaired people were numbered at 7,000, mentally disabled people were 9,000 and physically disabled people were at 15,000. Registration of disabled people is voluntary but recently there has been talk of making registration compulsory. Forcing disabled people to register can result in some drawbacks.

I expected to see more disabled people in Japan. The disabled people in Malaysia are very poor and beg for money. This is how society sees the disabled. People feel better about themselves by giving money to these disabled beggars. In fact, I myself once went out into the town wearing shabby clothes and some people tried to give me money because they felt sorry for me. They got angry when I didn't take the money. In the eyes of non-disabled people, the disabled have a role to play in society.

Social work among the disabled started with the Christian missionaries in the early 20th century. In 1911 a Catholic group established a home for the handicapped. In 1926 the Anglican medical missionaries established the St. Nicholas Home for the Blind which is still very active today. At the present there is a growing number of welfare organizations even though the actual number is very small. These organizations are starting to move away from pure charity to more progressive reforms.

I belong to one of these small groups. We have been taught to believe what the church says is always right. We are now beginning to understand what the church is saying is based on abled bodied theology. We are, thus, starting to redefine the roles that disabled people are made to play in the church. We want to play a different role, which would be more accurate of our lifestyle, as opposed to what is expected of us by the church.

At first, we thought the Bible itself was the problem, but we later realized that the bigger problem was in the theology. What we decided to do was to re-read the Bible from our own life experiences. When the subject is about disability, it is always better to see things through the eyes of a disabled person. I think that the Biblical writers, who probably had their own prejudices against disabilities, used disability to lead to some other messages relating to charity or healing.

Culturally, disability and sin have been associated together as seen in Leviticus. If God is the God of love, why would he want these people barred from his sanctuary, especially when these disabled people did not ask to be disabled. If the Old Testament did not allow the disabled into the sanctuary, it is no wonder that Jesus Christ took these people right into the sanctuaries and into the temples to heal them. Jesus took these people into the temple to show that they are acceptable in the presence of God as they are. The God of Immanuel is with us.

Moses had a speech impediment. God did not say, "I will heal you of your disability," but rather said, "Go and I will be with you." When Jacob wrestled with an Angel, who was actually God, God struck Jacob's hip before blessing him. God first disabled Jacob before blessing him. If we go to an extreme, we can even say that Jesus Christ himself was disabled to a certain degree. He disabled himself at the cross. He understood what it meant not to be able to move. He knew what it meant to bleed. The Christ I worship is a disabled Christ. In fact, when he was resurrected from death, he showed the scars on his hands. With these examples, I am beginning to see that disabilities are something that are quite natural.

In Malaysia, the biggest news for the disabled is the new building by-law that is being considered. According to the newspaper, if all the buildings, including the places of worship, do not become accessible to the disabled within three years, the owners will face large fines. We do not know whether this by-law will be enforced at

and emphasized the equality of men and women as described in Genesis.

Ms. Yoon talked about her visit in North Korea and shared the stories she heard from former "comfort women" living there. She was only able to talk to four women personally although there was a group of 74 women who came to say they were once "comfort women." Most of them were over 70 years old but they still remembered the violence inflicted on them. She explained what it is that Church Women United has struggled for in terms of the rights of former "comfort women." She became a counselor for them and established a caring community for these women and for all church women.

Church Women United has issued many statements on behalf of "comfort women" but the Japanese government has ignored these statements. Therefore, every Wednesday at noon Church Women United holds a demonstration in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul.

The anger of the former "comfort women" is rooted deep within them. To give love or to receive love are two of the most important things in a human life but for these former "comfort women," this is very difficult for them to do because of the pain of their past experience. They are requesting an apology from the Japanese government rather than the covering up of the issue through the payment of a small amount of money.

Ms. Yoon talked about the human rights issues the Korean Christians are struggling with and how Japanese and Korean Christians can work together in the future to support "comfort women" court struggles in the Tokyo District Court. Also, she said we must emphasize the importance of a special organization being created within the Government and within the Diet to make a survey on the issue of the "Comfort Women." In addition, this issue should be included in the history textbooks of Japanese students and the Church should talk about why this issue was not dealt with in the church in the first place. The idea of sex is

taboo in the Church and yet discussion on this issue must be opened. Also, the group decided to raise a certain amount of money for aid to former "comfort women" in their daily lives.

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER

An Open Letter to Japanese Prime Minister Miyazawa

It is reported that the Japanese government is considering the establishment of a foundation to aid the former "comfort women" in Korea in place of compensation for these women. Your action makes us angry, for you are only trying to cover up the shameful criminal act of the imperial army which has been made known to the world community today. It is clear that your intention is to resolve the problem by paying a certain amount of money hurriedly to these women.

We know that your government has insisted that the reparation issue was concluded by the Korea-Japan Treaty established in 1965. However, we repeatedly emphasize that the "comfort women" issue was never discussed in 1965.

The Japanese government should make thorough investigations into its past actions before the compensation issue for "comfort women" is ever discussed on the table. We believe that an investigation into the issue would prove your sincere concern and then efforts towards legal responsibility and compensation amounts could be clarified.

The former "comfort women" are getting old and health conditions are not good. Therefore, they are hoping to receive an appropriate compensation as soon as possible. However, they are crying out that they cannot accept the money without the Japanese government first recognizing its criminal acts. Without a sincere

apology it would only insult them once again.

If you are trying to close the issue by paying a certain amount of money, using the excuse of the women's poverty, then you are making a great mistake. We think that it is our obligation to support those "comfort women," and to expand the movement of raising funds for them.

We sincerely wish that your government would give up the idea of establishing a foundation for these women, and first begin by taking action into a fact-finding search of past realities.

We ask that Japan, as a nation, take responsibility for respecting the human rights of others and for world peace.

October 13, 1992

The foregoing statement was taken by Yoon Chong Ok, with other women's group representatives, to the cabinet foreign affairs council and handed to Mr. Kimura with the request that government representatives visit former "comfort women" in Korea. The Japanese government officials did not comment.

CHERNOBYL DOCTORS VISITATION

The NCC/J welcomed the third team of medical doctors from Minsk city of the Republic of Byelorussia between October 26 and November 9, 1992. The team was composed of Dr. Igor Solovei, Dr. Elena Tolstaia and Dr. Valentin Mouruchko of the "Samaritanin" medical center which was founded in June, 1991 by the Byelorussian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

The relationship between the Orthodox Church in Moscow and the NCC/J was initiated in June, 1990 when two doctors from Hiroshima University joined in a fact finding team organized by the World Council of Churches in order to scrutinize the site of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant explosion of April 26, 1986. As was suggested, the first team of five doctors, including also Dr. Solovei (an Orthodox

Priest), who came to Japan in June of 1991. In March 1992 the second team, consisting of two doctors, visited Hiroshima and Tokyo. Then, six ecumenical church delegates from Japan were invited to Moscow, Minsk and other places in May of 1992. Through these personnel exchanges the third team visitation was realized.

Immediately after arriving at Narita airport, the team went to Hiroshima and was received by the Research Institute for Nuclear Medicine and the Genetic Pathology Department in the School of Biology of Hiroshima University. Since this was the second time for Dr. Solovei to make this visit, he was interested in knowing more about various methods of radiation treatment through the intake of natural health foods. He also was able to visit the Asian Rural Institute for three days and had the chance to learn about processed soybean foods.

The Tokyo symposium was held on November 8 in order to present information on the conditions of radiation polluted areas and what techniques they are using to deal with these problems through the "Samaritanin" Medical Clinic. The audience was very much impressed by the medical explanations. Although their clinic lacks suitable equipment for the treatment of radiation victims, their passion for caring for radiation victims was very moving.

They indicated that the polluted area around the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, which is located in the Republic of Ukraine, has expanded by 3,000 square kilometers in the Ukraine and 15,000 square kilometers in Byelorussia. This fact has been proven by surveys conducted every six months which indicates that the area poisoned is enlarging. In these polluted areas, radiation is continuing to be emitted and people are losing their resistance. As a result, all are suffering from all kinds of sicknesses.

About 1,000 farmers were moved forcefully to a completely different life environment in Minsk, thereby giving up everything which they owned. They are suffering not only physically but also psychologically. Some of them have

returned to their former locations even though they know that death is waiting for them.

Economic conditions are serious. The government cannot do anything. Although the patients want to go to radiation specialists for treatment they are restricted to area hospitals and cannot choose their own doctors.

In the "Samaritanin" Medical Center there are 22 doctors under Dr. Solovei, the director and Ms. Tolstaia, the vice director. They indicated the directions will be as follows:

1. Under extended time span exposure to radiation, all types of sicknesses are evident. It is necessary for the clinic to meet the needs of many people, and professionals from many fields must be trained.
2. It is necessary to encourage patients to eat more whole rice, soybean products and marine plants.

As to juvenile radiation victims, children should not be taken outside of Russia for care. He said that for the sake of the health of a child it is good to go but these children must again return home. The psychological stress in this regard is great and the fact that all children are not able to go abroad has created a problem among children. Hopefully, with a well-equipped treatment facility near home, the amount of money spent to have some children go abroad will be used for the treatment of all children and their families.

Without any aid from the government and without any medicine and equipment, this medical center has opened its doors, and the doctors are praying that the center will be a continuing hope for the community.

This article was written by Kiyoko Yamanouchi

GOD OF IMMANUEL

Mr. Anthony Tanasayan from Malaysia, visited Japan between November 6 and 17 under the sponsorship of the Christian Conference of Asia. With his wheelchair he travelled to Osaka, Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, and Hiroshima and visited churches and the Asia Health Institute (Nagoya). The following is an excerpt from his speech delivered in a Tokyo meeting on November 8, 1992.

The economy of Malaysia is one of the fastest growing in the world. Of the 17.5 million people, over 50% are of the Malay race and mostly Muslim. The rest of the population is made up mainly of Chinese, Indians, and other races. Malaysia is a multi-religious and multi-racial country. Christians make up about 7% of the population.

The mass media is very much censored and what we see and read in the newspapers and on television is also controlled. In addition there is a law called the Internal Security Act which allows the government to arrest people without any trials and Christians have been arrested under this act. Furthermore, we are not allowed to hold demonstrations without permission from the police. We also have a law called the Official Secrets Act which prevents people from speaking out against the government and this is one of the ways the media is controlled.

Other aspects of the Malaysian legal climate are the death penalty for drug trafficking and the ban on homosexuality. We also have the problem of deforestation. Furthermore, our judicial system used to be very independent from the government but recently the foremost jurist was dismissed and replaced. One of the greatest concerns for Christians in Malaysia is the recently enacted Islamic Law. One aspect of the law is that, for example, if you are caught stealing, your hands will be chopped off even if you are not a Muslim. The church is very involved in concern with respect to this law.

As for the number of disabled people in Malaysia, this we do not know for sure. We could only make guesses because we do not have any accurate statistics concerning the disabled. Disabled people are not a priority